

# HSC Student Profile: Kieran

## Question 1

Please state your name.

*Kieran*



## 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?

*SCECGS Redlands*

## 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>Chemistry</i>	<i>92</i>	<i>92</i>	<i>92</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Physics</i>	<i>91</i>	<i>89</i>	<i>90</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>English Advanced</i>	<i>73</i>	<i>81</i>	<i>77</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Geography</i>	<i>92</i>	<i>92</i>	<i>92</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Mathematics Extension 1</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>E4</i>
<i>Mathematics Extension 2</i>	<i>90</i>	<i>93</i>	<i>92</i>	<i>E4</i>

## Question 6

What was your final ATAR?

*97.30*

## Question 7

Which tertiary course did you enrol into?

*Bachelor of Science (Adv)*

## Question 8

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

*I attend University of New South Wales.*

*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?

*Honestly, I spent hardly any time studying unless there were tests. However I always completed my homework and did my best in classes. Homework took up 2-3 hours each day. I would read the chemistry textbook on occasion, and look up anything I had problems with. I'd spend a few hours each week doing extra questions in maths.*

**Question 10**

What was your typical weekday routine?

*I typically went to sleep at 11pm and woke up at 7:00am. Due to my parents being separated, I had to travel between two houses; one was a 20 minute walk from school and the other a one hour train and bus ride. I would arrive home by 4:30 and relax. I usually started homework at 5pm, or did it on the train or during lunch or study breaks. If there was a test I would stay up to about 11pm reading over notes and doing exercises, occasionally past midnight but this meant I felt tired the next day and performed badly in the test.*

**Question 11**

Where did you engage in the bulk of your study on a day to day basis?  
(eg. bedroom, school library etc).

*I did most of my studying in my bedroom, some in the dining room where it was less distracting. I studied more at my dad's house as I didn't have a computer or TV there, but only studied a few days before tests and in the weeks before the final exams. I did two great study weeks at Cru-Camp, even though I'm not Christian. I found that both fun and I did a lot of work.*

**Question 12**

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

*I would plan to study after the first few days of the holidays, but lose track of time and end up doing no study until the end of the holidays. I did go on two crucamps, one in the winter and one a couple of weeks before HSC exams, which gave about 30 hours of study each.*

**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.

*I tried playing soccer for the first month, but became uninterested in it. I kept up piano and did my seventh grade exam in March, and aimed to do eighth grade exam in September but ended up missing it. I participated in the Duke of Edinburgh scheme, which entailed going on a few camps. I nearly finished the Gold award. I also got my learners license in July and took some lessons.*

**Question 14**

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

*I went on most of my family holidays, and played a lot of tennis with my dad in the weeks before the trials and the HSC exams. I found myself playing a few too many computer games, but through motivation in class I was able to achieve highly in Chemistry and my other subjects apart from English.*

*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 usually began by doing a practise exam to get a feel for what I need to study, and then I would go over the syllabus. I'd have photocopies of the syllabus for the science subjects and tick off the parts I had written notes on. For example in Chemistry, I used my Conquering Chemistry textbook by Margaret Grove, and the Blackline Masters booklets to look over problems and the practicals.*

**Question 16**

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

*I would typically study one subject in one day, and study for a solid five hours with small breaks. I would study all day on Sunday, and in the afternoons when I had study periods. I'd take Saturday off to do recreational activities.*

**Question 17**

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

*In the holiday before the exam, I would try to have a decent sleep, so go to bed by 11pm and wake up at 9 or 10am. I would eat at least three meals a day, breakfast being the most important. I'd start studying late in the morning or early in the afternoon, and then relax after dinner time.*

**Question 18**

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

*I spent more time than ever on extracurricular activities such as sport- tennis and soccer- and playing the piano.*

**Question 19**

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

*To learn quotes in English, I would write and re-write the quotes until I knew them perfectly. In other subjects I would try to understand the concepts by doing exercises, rather than memorising.*

**Question 20**

When did you start preparing for your TRIAL exams?

*I started preparing for the trials about two weeks before hand.*

**Question 21**

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

*I engaged in very little study after the trials, but picked up in the month before the final HSC exams.*

**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?

*I would have benefited by keeping up my studying momentum from the trials.*

**Question 23**

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

*People studied quite hard for the trials.*

**Question 24**

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

*They were like me and got lazy after the trials, then picked up significantly in the weeks before HSC exams.*

**Question 25**

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

*The trial exams were very good in my opinion at showing the style and difficulty of questions in the final HSC exams. The only difference between them was my mindset, with the HSC exams being more stressful, though I felt better prepared and was glad the end was in sight.*

**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?

*I had mind blocks in the Extension 1 Mathematics exam when I found a lot of problems that covered binomials, one of my pet hates. To alleviate the stress I skipped the questions and went to the next one, though I was unable to fully control my emotions. The questions kept getting harder and I was under a lot of pressure from myself to get a high mark. I feel if I had been better prepared in my areas of weakness I would have felt much less stressed.*

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

**Question 1**

Which subject does this report relate to?

*Chemistry.*

**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?

*I was quite confident I would receive a band 6, as I was in the top few for most of the assessments.*

**Question 3**

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

*I found the history sections of the syllabus most challenging, and had to write comprehensive notes on the history sections to revise them.*

**Question 4**

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

*I spent far too few hours preparing for assignments, completing the bulk of them the night before.*

**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).

*N/A*

**Question 6**

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

*N/A*

**Question 7**

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

N/A

**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?

N/A

**Question 9**

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

*I found my teacher to be the best source of help, and directed most of my questions to him during class time. I also found learning from my friends useful, especially working through problems together after I had completed them. Teaching someone helps a lot more than learning from them.*

**Question 10**

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

*I spent a lot more time on relaxation and recreation compared to my friends. Though in class I found I directed more input during discussions and I took longer to do exercises, as I looked up anything I didn't fully understand in the textbook.*

**Question 11**

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

*I read a lot of books and discussed general topics with my family. I found this gave me a lot of general knowledge that I was able to bring in to class, that other people didn't have. Also I remembered a lot more from previous years at high school, and I believe this is because I put effort in each year, giving me the necessary foundations to build on.*

**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.

*I received 96 for Extension One Mathematics, and 77 for Advanced English. I found class time in maths to be more useful, as I was able to contribute more discussions and I found more work was done. In English we had to write essays, and were given a choice to write practise essays, and I rarely did any. Though I feel I still put effort in English outside of school, I believe I was just more naturally inclined to mathematics and the sciences.*

**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?

*I invested about 10 hours for the trial and 10 hours for HSC writing up notes, although I spent the bulk of the time reading the text book rather than writing. I felt this helped a lot.*

**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?

*I did not buy any notes, but I read through some. I though they weren't useful, as I learnt much better summarising myself, rather than just reading.*

**Question 15**

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

*I worked through about 10 papers, though did multiple choice questions from about 15 papers.*

**Question 16**

Which exam papers did you work through?

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

*I worked through the previous HSC papers, found in the Success One book. I also did a paper by NEAP and a few multiple choices from them.*

**Question 17**

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

*I worked through three. One in class, one on the crucamp, and one at home.*

**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?

*I put in about 20 hours for each exam. I found the final examination more difficult due to nerves.*

**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?

*There were a few things I hadn't covered exactly, but I didn't panic. Instead, I left that question and came back to it later and by then I knew something to write.*

**Question 20**

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

*I completed every question, and found I had time to look over my work, which was good.*

**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 completed every question.*

**Question 22**

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

*My technique was to read through the whole thing, then work through each question in order, rushing the multiple choice and coming back to them later. I found from experience doing practise exams I would generally get 14 or 15/15 for the multiple choice, and they used the same general areas for the multiple choice questions. In the longer answer responses, I always had an introductory and concluding statement along with a topic sentence for each mark. I sometimes skipped 5 mark and above questions, and did the short calculation/ formulae questions first, coming back to the longer answer questions when I had built up confidence.*

**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?

*I didn't realise the importance of knowing chemical formulae, especially to do with polymers. I found I lost quite a few marks in the trial due to mistakes in formulae, receiving 89/100 for the trial. Did you do anything differently when preparing for the final HSC examinations? I went over the syllabus in more detail and looked at each of the chemicals listed, along with all the practicals and environmental aspects.*

**Question 24**

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

*I found my success one book very helpful and completed every multiple choice question in it along with of the HSC exams. The Margaret Grove textbook was very instructive, and although it was wordy I found it to be quite interesting.*

**Question 25**

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

*Practise, practise, practise! The more questions you do the more you will understand the subject, and the better prepared you will be for the final exam. Make sure you are up to the maths, which is easy for a four unit student, as these questions gave me confidence in the exam which is a very important trait!*

### General Advice

**Question 1**

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

*One of my biggest problems was time wasting at home, I overcame this by being honest with myself, and spending more time at a place I am less distracted. I gave away my computer game 'COD4: Modern Warfare' to a friend and found I spent less time on games afterwards.*

**Question 2**

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

*I would spend more time on English, reading the texts more and doing more practise essays. One of my downfalls was my marks in Year 11 English, which meant I was in a low stream class which did less interesting texts than the upper stream classes.*

**Question 3**

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

*I wish I knew how to write a good essay in English!*

**Question 4**

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

*A study college would've been nice, where I could go after school and be strictly told to study. And there should be more study camps in the school holidays!*

**Question 5**

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

*Think about what you want to do after school and work out what you need to get there, and then work as hard as possible to get it!*

### Additional Comments

*I found HSC to be challenging but not overly difficult, because I was lucky to be gifted in science and maths. However, English was not my strong suite, but I avoided studying the subject as I kept getting bad marks at school. My advice for future HSC students is to work on areas of weakness, and don't give up until the very end! If I had done this and achieved a band 6 I would be well into the 99s in ATAR and would have a fighting chance of getting into medicine, which is what I wanted to do.*