

HSC Student Profile: Mandy – Lee

Question 1

Please state your name.

Mandy-Lee

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?

Baulkham Hills 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>96</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>English Extension One</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>47</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>English Extension Two</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Mathematics</i>	<i>98</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Mathematics Extension One</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>47</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Economics</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Legal Studies</i>	<i>98</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>6</i>

Question 6

What was your final ATAR?

99.80 ATAR

Question 7

Which tertiary course did you enrol into?

Bachelor of Commerce

Question 8

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

Monday to Thursday – 3-4 hours of study each night

Friday and Saturday off

Sunday – 3-4 hours

Question 10

What was your typical weekday routine?

Wake up at 7:30am → catch the bus at 8:10am → get to school at 8:25am → finish school at 3:06pm → get home at 3:35pm → start studying at 5pm – 6:30pm → dinner and a shower → study from 8pm – 10:30pm → sleep at 11pm - 11:30pm

Question 11

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

Library or bedroom.

Question 12

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

6-7 hours of study each day, 3-4 days a week.

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 used a rough timetable of what I would do each day and allocated time fairly loosely to each task. I would reward myself after completion of tasks by spending time with family, friends, my boyfriend and pets. I also spent 45-60 mins, 3 times a week exercising.

Question 14

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

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).

For Economics and Legal Studies, I wrote notes summarising each topic. However, for English Advanced and English Extension One, I wrote practice essays and tried adapting a generic essay to different questions. For Mathematics and Mathematics Extension One, I did exercises from various textbooks and did past papers.

Question 16

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

From Monday to Thursday, I typically studied 4-5 hours each day. On Saturdays, I would study about 7-8 hours. However, on Fridays and Sundays, I would study about 1-2 hours but use them to take time off studying and spend time with family and friends.

Question 17

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

My routine was much the same in the lead up to exams, except that I would go to the library after school and start studying at 3:30pm – 4pm. I came home at about 8:30pm, ate dinner, showered and would recommence studying at 10pm if I did not complete the tasks that I had set for myself. The latest I would sleep would be about 11:30pm.

Question 18

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

I didn't continue extracurricular activities in the lead up to Trial examinations.

Question 19

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

English Advanced and Extension One: I memorised my essays as speeches then rewrote them a few times.

Mathematics and Extension One: I did many questions to memorise formulas.

Economics and Legal Studies: I reread my notes a few times.

Question 20

When did you start preparing for your TRIAL exams?

I started preparing for my trial exams about 4-5 weeks before they began.

Question 21

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

English Advanced and Extension One: I made minor corrections to the essays that I had used in my trial examinations, if necessary, according to the marks and comments written by my school teacher and marker.

Mathematics Advanced and Extension One: I determined which topics I needed the most help in and did a variety of questions in these topics. Once I was comfortable with all topics, I did past papers from different schools and HSC Papers.

Economics: I memorised the key points of each topic and statistics relevant to each. Following this, I did questions from the Workbook and wrote practice essays.

Legal Studies: I memorised the key points of each topic and cases relevant to each. Following this, I did past HSC papers and wrote practice 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?

I believe that the Trial examinations drilled much of the information necessary for each subject into my head. However, the time spent studying in this period was valuable in solidifying this knowledge as well as correcting any mistakes that I had made in the Trials. I do not think that additional study would have benefitted me.

Question 23

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

My Year 12 peers invested enormous amounts of time into study in the lead up to Trials, essentially influencing me to also study harder.

Question 24

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

The time between Trials and the HSC exams was spent with many of my peers, collectively studying to help each other achieve the greatest possible marks in the HSC examinations.

Question 25

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

I feel as if the difficulty of the Trial Exams positively influenced my preparation for the HSC exams as they were in the same format, yet slightly more difficult, making the HSC slightly less stressful.

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?

Although I was definitely stressed, I did not experience any anxiety attacks or mind blocks. A positive attitude and adequate preparation helped to prevent these situations.

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

Question 1

Which subject does this report relate to?

English Advanced, English Extension One, English Extension Two, Mathematics Advanced, Mathematics Extension One, Economics and Legal Studies.

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?

In English Advanced, English Extension One, Mathematics Advanced, Economics and Legal Studies, I was fairly confident that I would achieve a Band 6 result due to my consistently high marks in each assessment task. However, there was uncertainty about English Extension Two due to the external marking process and possible subjectivity in the allocation of marks. Also, I experienced difficulty in Mathematics Extension One throughout the year, however worked hard to increase my marks in the Trial examinations to make up for my poorer performance throughout the year.

Question 3

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

English Advanced: Module C, Representation and Text – Conflicting perspectives; mainly because I had not done this module in Year 11 and it was therefore completely new to me.

English Extension One: Creative writing; the subjectivity of marking in creative writing made it difficult for me to write a story that satisfied the criteria in the syllabus.

English Extension Two: Critical Analysis; the sophistication and level of research involved in the formulation of my Major Work was quite challenging.

Mathematics: Probability; it was one of the later topics that I found difficult to wrap my head around.

Mathematics Extension One: Parametrics and Projectile Motion; some of the questions in these topics were particularly challenging.

Economics: Case Study; the enormous amount of information necessary in a Case Study made it a challenging topic.

Legal Studies: Focus Study: Family; the changing nature of the law in Family made it difficult to remain up to date with the legislation and cases.

Question 4

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

English Advanced: I began organising my information and writing a practice essay about 2-3 weeks before an assessment to allow adequate time for the teacher to look over my work.

English Extension One: I began organising my information and writing a practice essay about 2-3 weeks before an assessment to allow adequate time for the teacher to look over my work. I also wrote several creative writing pieces to ensure adequate preparation for any stimulus.

English Extension Two: I began preparing for assessments about 2 weeks before.

Mathematics and Mathematics Extension One: I generally started doing past papers about 2-3 weeks before an assessment to allow time to ask my teacher questions.

Economics: I began memorising information about 3-4 weeks before an assessment and continually looked for new statistics.

Legal Studies: I began memorising information about 3-4 weeks before an assessment, continually on the lookout for cases, media articles and statistics.

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).

Textbook, school teachers, tutors and internet.

Question 6

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

I did not have a private tutor in any of these subjects.

Question 7

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

I attended a tuition class in Mathematics Extension One; I felt that the tips and questions provided were very beneficial.

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?

I feel as if going to Maths tuition significantly helped my marks.

Question 9

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

School teachers.

Question 10

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

No.

Question 11

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

No.

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.

My highest mark (97) was attained in Mathematics and Legal Studies whilst my lowest mark (47 = 94) was attained in Extension One English and Mathematics. My keen interest in Legal Studies made it easy for me to continue researching and studying the topic materials, solidifying and extending the material covered at school. I also particularly enjoyed Mathematics as I found it to be fairly straight forward and thus revised the work a lot. I had particular trouble grasping concepts in Extension One Maths which made me feel like giving up, negatively impacting my study time for the subject. Lack of planning in the HSC examination for Extension One English impacted my mark as I was not adequately prepared for my creative writing piece.

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 would have spent about 30-40 hours writing notes for Economics and about 20 hours writing notes for Legal Studies. I did not write notes for other subjects.

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?

No.

Question 15

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

English Advanced and Extension One: I would have worked through 5-6 past papers.

Mathematics Advanced: I would have done about 10-15 papers in the lead up to the HSC exams.

Mathematics Extension One: I would have done about 10 papers.

Economics and Legal Studies: I would have done about 3-4 past papers each.

Question 16

Which exam papers did you work through?

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

I mainly worked through HSC exam papers for each subject, however acquired other schools' past papers from school. I also did many of the Catholic Schools' examination papers.

Question 17

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

No.

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 would have spent the equivalent of one day a week's study for each subject in preparing for the Trial exams.
English Advanced and Extension One: about 2 weeks memorising essays.
Mathematics and Extension One: the equivalent about 4-5 weeks.
Economics: 3-4 weeks
Legal Studies: 3-4 weeks*

I found that the trial examinations were more difficult, mainly because it was the first set of exams in which I had all of my exams within 2 weeks and exactly as they would be in the HSC.

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?

*English: I was not prepared for the requirement of "one related text" in Belonging. However, I had enough knowledge on the one related text to sustain half of an essay; therefore I did not panic as much as many did.
English Extension One, Mathematics Advanced, Mathematics Extension One, Economics and Legal Studies: I had previously covered the different concepts required.*

Question 20

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

All subjects - 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.

All subjects - Yes.

Question 22

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

All subjects - No.

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?

N/A

Question 24

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

Past papers were the most beneficial in allowing me to become familiar with the format of exams and questions.

Question 25

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

Try not to stress, it's easier said than done but it is definitely more beneficial to have a positive attitude to exams than it is to be so stressed that it affects your exam preparation. Don't be afraid to approach your teachers for any questions that you may have, even if they are annoyed, it will help you.

General Advice

Question 1

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

The urge to procrastinate when studying, the easiest way to overcome this is to set goals and reward yourself.

Question 2

If you had your time over again, would you do anything differently across Year 11 and/or 12?

Why/Why Not?

No, I feel as if I enjoyed myself throughout Year 12 and maintained a good work/life balance.

Question 3

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

It's definitely not the end of the world, there are many other ways of getting into university and the paths will appear no matter what.

Question 4

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

Online tutors would have been good for when I didn't understand a question and had no access to a teacher/tutor.

Question 5

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

Enjoy yourself throughout Year 12, maintain a good work/life balance and try not to stress as it won't be beneficial for you in any way. Always use the syllabus when making notes and studying and ask your teachers questions.

Additional Comments

Pick your university course wisely, don't do a course because your parents want you to or you feel as if it will make you appear more elite. Ultimately, it's you who will be studying these subjects and sitting these exams. Do a course that you will enjoy as it dictates what you will be doing for the rest of your life.