

Best Start Year 7: Information for schools

CSNSW

What is Best Start Year 7?

Best Start Year 7 is an online literacy and numeracy assessment for students on entry to Year 7. It is optional and was first made available to NSW secondary schools in 2019.

Best Start Year 7 includes two online assessments:

- reading assessment
- numeracy assessment

The reading assessment covers the literacy progression sub-element: Understanding Texts and the numeracy assessment covers multiple sub-elements of the numeracy progression with a focus on those in the Number Sense and Algebra element.

Each assessment has 40 multiple choice questions (including 10 questions included for trial purposes) and can be administered by any secondary teacher. Each assessment is designed to be completed within a usual school period. There is no prescribed time for each assessment – students may work at their own pace.

Best Start Year 7 is designed: to provide teachers with a snapshot of literacy and numeracy skills students demonstrate on entry to Year 7; help teachers identify students who may require additional support with the development of key literacy and numeracy skills useful in accessing learning across the curriculum; and inform teacher planning and programming to meet the learning needs of all students.

Secondary schools may choose to use Best Start Year 7 to supplement existing literacy and numeracy assessment and transition practices.

Assessment window

Best Start Year 7 assessments will be available to participating schools from 9 February to 11 March 2021.

The Best Start Year 7 administration platform will be available to participating schools for assessment preparation activities from Wednesday 2 February 2021.

Schools have the flexibility to schedule and complete each assessment anytime during the assessment window to suit school and timetabling needs. The scheduling of assessments may be staggered and students do not need to sit all the assessments at the same time.

Accessing Best Start Year 7 assessment feedback

Feedback from Best Start Year 7, including links to teaching strategies, will be available in Scout within two working days of the student completing the assessment. Student assessment information is also mapped to the NSW Syllabuses and National Literacy and Numeracy Learning Progressions and can be accessed in PLAN2. Schools determine how to best use the assessment feedback, in combination with other information available to them, to plan and implement more targeted strategies to support student learning.

Information sessions

Wednesday 20 October 3:30 – 4:00 pm

Tuesday 26 October 3:30 – 4:00 pm

<https://nsweducation.zoom.us/j/65339795930?pwd=UnJtUVFYV1J0SWQ5RVB2ZGxFRERiZz09>

Meeting ID: 653 3979 5930

Passcode: 091549

Professional learning

Professional learning sessions are designed to support schools participating in Best Start Year 7

- End Term 4, 2021 – Phase 1: Preparing for Best Start Year 7 eLearning and
- Term 1, 2022 – Phase 2: Using Best Start Year 7 student assessment feedback

Full details of all professional learning opportunities will be provided to opt in schools during Term 4.

How do schools participate?

Principals at schools wishing to opt into the Best Start Year 7 assessment will need to register by Friday 12 November using the link below

<https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/6513339/BSY7-2022>

Adjustments for students with disability

Test items cover content from Stages 2, 3 and 4 and students with disability can access their school-based disability adjustments to enable an equivalent learner experience during the Best Start Year 7 assessments.

Individual schools are able to determine the suitability of the assessment for their students. There is no need to apply for special provisions.

Large print and Braille versions of the assessment are available for students who already access Braille and Large Print Services and are supported by a Specialist Vision Teacher. You should assess the visual suitability of the online assessment using the Best Start Year 7 demonstration site prior to requesting alternate materials. This includes checking the inbuilt magnification software and the interaction with additional assistive software.

More details, including how to access the demonstration site are included in the request for large print and braille materials form, available [<sector details>](#)

Professional learning and support

The Best Start Year 7 assessment is supported with resources and professional learning to assist schools to administer the assessment, analyse assessment feedback and plan for teaching. This will include:

- a range of online professional learning including preparing for the assessment and how best to make use of the assessment package
- a user-guide for school coordinators and supervisors, containing information and instructions on how to prepare for and administer the assessment
- teaching strategies to address areas of focus.

Technical requirements

The Best Start Year 7 assessment is accessed via a URL. There is no need to download additional software or a locked down browser to administer the assessment. The Best Start Year 7 assessment can be completed on a laptop, desktop PC, Chromebook, Android tablet and iPad (not iPad mini). Students may use their own devices, though devices need to meet the Best Start Year 7 technology requirements.

Headphones or earphones are required as audio is used in some parts of the assessment.

Full technical requirements will be available in MS Teams for participating schools.

More information

- Frequently asked questions (included in this fact sheet)
- Check-in assessment webpage
<https://www.education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/literacy-and-numeracy/assessment-resources/best-start-year-7>
- Email the Best Start Year 7 team - beststartyr7@det.nsw.edu.au
- Visit the demonstration site (school staff only):
<https://beststartyear7training.cese.nsw.gov.au>
 - Username (numeracy): trainingnum | Password: BSY7
 - Username (literacy): traininglit | Password: BSY7

Frequently Asked Questions

Why isn't the assessment administered at the end of Year 6?

Best Start Year 7 provides teachers with a snapshot of the key literacy and numeracy skills their students demonstrate on entry to Year 7. It is designed as an assessment for secondary teachers to target their teaching to students' needs.

Can students that enrol after the assessment window closes complete the assessment?

Students enrolling after the assessment window closes may undertake other forms of assessment as decided by the school.

Is the assessment adaptive?

The assessments are not adaptive. They target a set of key literacy and numeracy skills foundational to a student's success across all subjects.

Will there be reports for parents on their child's performance?

Feedback from the assessment is designed for secondary teachers to analyse individual student needs and target their teaching accordingly. Schools may choose to use the information from this and other assessments to facilitate discussions with parents.