



Trial online Critical Thinking Test – fact sheet

The trial Critical Thinking Test is a multiple choice test for Year 11 students that will assess critical thinking skills associated with analytical and quantitative reasoning. The test will provide the basis of research NESA is undertaking into improving the critical thinking capabilities of senior secondary students in order to better prepare them for university and the workforce.

How will my students benefit from sitting the trial Critical Thinking Test?

The test will provide:

- formative feedback as to a student’s strengths and weaknesses in the domains of analytical and logical reasoning, which should improve their performance in the HSC and beyond
- an indication of a student’s critical thinking capabilities that is not affected by external issues that can impact upon the HSC – for example, long-term illness or social disadvantage
- practise in online tests, which students will be increasingly required to do in university
- an additional, potentially different, report of a student’s capabilities that can be shown to potential employers.

How will my school benefit from my students sitting the trial Critical Thinking Test?

- Teachers will receive feedback on student performance. This information will inform their understanding of student capability and help them to provide meaningful support.
- Schools will have an opportunity to trial online testing with senior secondary students.

What sort of questions will be asked in the trial Critical Thinking Test?

The trial Critical Thinking Test will ask students 60 questions covering qualitative and quantitative analytical reasoning, and logical reasoning. The questions will test:

- analytical reasoning, quantitative reasoning, critical interpretation, evaluation and problem solving with respect to applied mathematics and science
- critical interpretation, evaluation and problem solving in typical humanities areas
- identification of plausible inferences from situations, rules and information
- critical interpretation and evaluation of purpose, ideas, information and relationships
- identification of plausible solutions to problems based on complex and potentially ambiguous situations.

The questions will be both multiple-choice and technology-enhanced (e.g. drop-down boxes). For some questions, students may receive marks, even if they do not get the final answer.

How long is the test?

The trial Critical Thinking Test takes 1.5 hours.

Is there a sample trial Critical Thinking Test available?

A demonstration test is available at <https://criticalthinking.nesa.nsw.edu.au>

Do the students need to sit the test as a single group?

No. Students can sit the test in class groups or at individual times. There is no need for them to all sit the test at the same time.

Do all my Year 11 students need to participate in the trial?

While we believe all Year 11 students may benefit from sitting the trial Critical Thinking Test, it is not necessary for all students to participate.

What equipment does a student need to sit the test?

The test is browser based and will work with all common browsers and configurations. The operating system should be Windows, Macintosh or Linux.

We recommend latest version of Internet Explorer, Safari 5+, Chrome or Firefox Latest and ESR (Extended Support Release).

Your system needs to have:

- an active internet connection – the test will not run offline
- cookies enabled
- javascript enabled
- screen resolution set to a minimum 1023 x 768 pixels
- all portable computers should be connected to mains power.

Can a student use a mobile device such as an iPad?

Students will be able to use desktops computers, laptops and mobile devices such as tablets.

Are disability provisions available?

Most provisions can be accommodated. The disability provisions of extra time to work and extra time to rest can be approved by the principal. All students can change the font size, and foreground and background colour of the screen.

Do the tests require supervision?

Yes. A teacher needs to provide students with their student number and PIN so they can log on. They also need to be on hand in case there is a power failure, to ensure students sitting together don't talk to each other, or in case a student becomes ill or needs to leave the test room.

Will NESA pay for this supervision?

No. As this is a trial test, there are no funds available to pay for supervision.

Is a test co-ordinator required?

Yes, a test co-ordinator is essential. The Year 11 Co-ordinator at your school would be an appropriate person.

What is the test co-ordinator's role?

- ensure students and parents are aware of the trial Critical Thinking Test purpose and its benefits
- enter students for the test via Schools Online
- arrange for an appropriate examination room for the tests
- carry out the demonstration test on the computers the students will be using

- check that all IT requirements are met
- generate and print the personalised student PIN letters before the tests and issue them to the students
- arrange for adequate supervision of those sitting the test.

Will NESA provide information for students?

Yes. There are information guides available for download via Schools Online.

How do I enrol my students?

Entries will be done via Schools Online. The facility to enter students will become available on 13 June 2017.

If you have any further questions, please contact Online Test Support on
tel. 02 9367 8104, email: examsupport@nesa.nsw.edu.au