

Media release – Wednesday, June 10, 2009
Embargoed 5am

New university entrance rank for NSW and ACT students

NSW and ACT Year 12 students will this year receive an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) to determine their entry to university.

The ATAR will replace the Universities Admission Index (UAI).

Universities Admissions Centre Director Information Services Kim Paino said other states (except Queensland) would adopt the name ATAR next year.

“The change of name will be accompanied by some other minor changes to bring NSW and the ACT into line with other states,” Ms Paino said.

“These changes will come into effect for this year’s NSW HSC students and ACT students completing tertiary packages with the ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies.

“Students should not be concerned about the changes – they will have no impact on their current studies, or their choice of university courses for 2010.

“To make sure everyone understands the changes a letter has been sent to all Year 12 students affected by the change and there is comprehensive information on UAC’s website. There is also a UAC hotline that students, parents and teachers can call if they have questions.”

There are three key changes:

- the name change - the UAI (Universities Admission Index) will now be known as the ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank);
- the highest rank will now be an ATAR of 99.95, as opposed to a UAI of 100; and
- the ATAR will indicate a student’s position in relation to the Year 7 students they began high school with, rather than the Year 10 group.

“The changes mean NSW and ACT students will now be in line with their interstate peers,” Ms Paino said.

“In other states the top rank is 99.95. Achieving an ATAR of 99.95 will be the same as achieving a UAI of 100 – putting a student in the top ranking.

“The scaling process for students will be the same, the rank order of students will be the same, and the same applicants will be selected for the same uni courses. Any small change in an ATAR compared to a UAI will see an equivalent change in the course cut-off.”

Emeritus Professor George Cooney, who served 20 years as Chairman of the Technical Committee on Scaling, said the Australasian Conference of Tertiary Admissions Centres (ACTAC) decided to adopt the

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universal name ATAR across Australia (excluding Queensland) and the NSW Vice-Chancellors' Committee agreed to the other changes in NSW and the ACT.

"I know students are stressed at this time, but they should forget the UAI or the ATAR. Nothing has changed for them in terms of getting into the course they want," Professor Cooney said.

Comprehensive information on the changes will be available in the *UAC 2010 Guide* which students will receive free of charge in late July.

For more information, including tables comparing the ATAR to the UAI, go to www.uac.edu.au or phone the UAC call centre on 02 9752 0200.

ENDS