

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is moving online. One of the main benefits of taking NAPLAN online is a feature known as ‘tailored testing’, where the test automatically adapts to a student’s test performance and asks questions that match the student’s achievement level.

Tailored testing is more engaging for students, it matches student achievement levels without increasing test length, and measures student achievement more precisely (especially for higher performing students and students who are experiencing difficulty) to inform teaching and learning.

How does tailored testing work for NAPLAN Online?

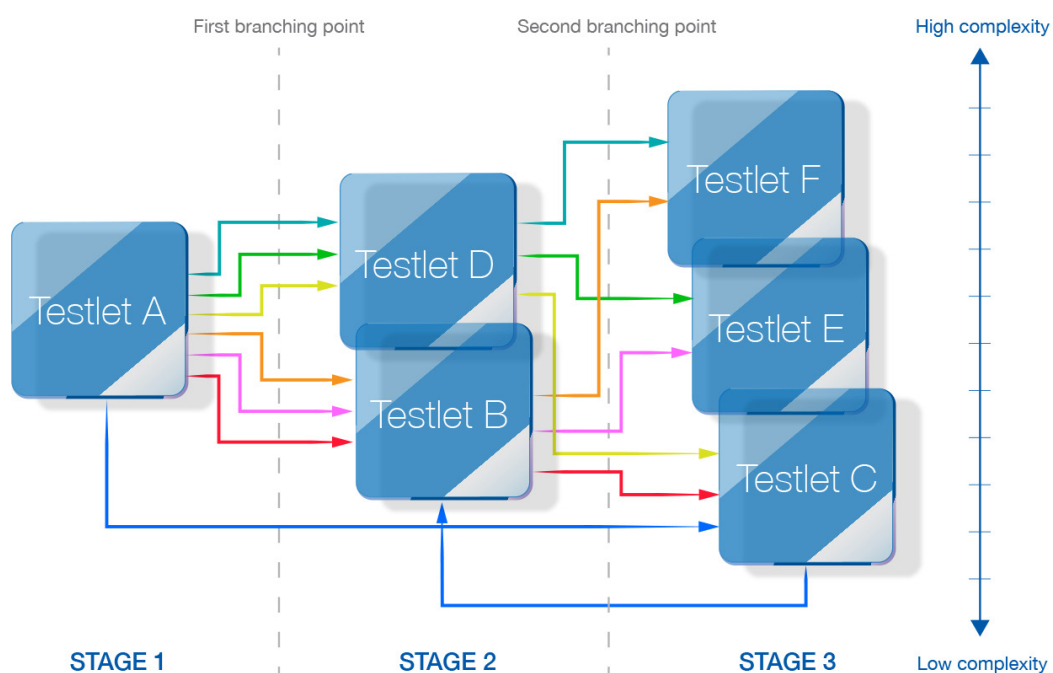
Students are presented with sets of questions based on their performance during the test. Many of these questions are of mid-range complexity for each year level, but some are of higher or lower complexity.

All students at each year level start with questions that test the same range of complexity. The computer system scores a student’s answers automatically and the student then progresses to the second testlet. The second testlet

includes a set of questions that may be easier or more difficult than the first testlet, depending on the student’s performance.

Based on their test performance in the second testlet, the student is directed to the final testlet that includes sets of questions of low, medium or high difficulty.

This model provides all students with the opportunity to better demonstrate the range of their literacy and numeracy skills. Not only does this provide a more precise assessment of their performance, but it is also more engaging for students.



Do all students sit the same test?

The majority of the NAPLAN questions presented to students test the same range of difficulty. What differs from student to student is targeted questions of either higher or lower complexity, depending on a student's performance. These targeted questions are designed to test a wider range of student abilities and provide more detailed results that can be used to target teaching.

Does NAPLAN Online test the same skills as NAPLAN on paper?

Both paper-based NAPLAN and NAPLAN Online test the wide range of skills in literacy and numeracy taught through curriculum content. Student results continue to be measured against the NAPLAN assessment scale, and while each student answers the same number of questions as for the paper tests, the number of items in the whole test is larger.

How do the various pathways affect a student's results?

Students who complete a more complex pathway are more likely to achieve a higher score (and a higher band placement). Students who answer the same number of questions correctly, but follow a less complex pathway, will achieve a lower score.

Can students go back to a previous testlet and correct an answer?

The platform notifies students when they are about to go to the next testlet. Students can change their answers before they progress to the next testlet.

From the second testlet, students can go back to the first testlet questions and change their answers; however, a student will be returned to the same second testlet, as their pathway has already been 'locked in'.

A student's responses to all questions in the first and second testlets, including any changes, determine whether the student progresses to a set of questions of a higher or lower complexity in the final testlet.

Once a student reaches the third testlet, the pathway is 'locked in'. However, a student can go back and correct answers to any question at any stage. The changes a student makes will be reflected in their results.

If students get different questions, how can results be compared?

Every student is tested on the same curriculum content and knowledge for their year level, regardless of the questions they are asked. Questions will continue to be placed on the NAPLAN scale, ensuring results are comparable for all students.

Have Australia's schools used tailored testing before?

Many school testing programs use a form of tailored testing; for example, the Progressive Achievement Test in Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary and Spelling, which uses adaptive testing to match questions to each student's level of achievement.

What studies has ACARA undertaken on tailored testing?

ACARA has trialled tailored testing in more than 250 schools across Australia. More than 2,500 students in Years 3 and 5, and 1,500 students in Years 7 and 9 participated in the trials. **ACARA's research** found that most students who completed the test were feeling positive and motivated to do their best, and the test results were more useful in supporting the next stage of their learning.

For more information, visit the NAP website: nap.edu.au or email: naplanonline@acara.edu.au