



N Award Warnings Explained

The awarding of external credentials such as the Record of School Achievement (RoSA) and the Higher School Certificate (HSC) is a worthy goal for students from Years 10 through 12 as these credentials can be used as a means of accessing post-school training and other career opportunities. For these reasons, and to maintain the integrity of the system, the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) has put in place for all schools – state, Catholic and independent – strict guidelines regarding students’ satisfactory completion of courses.

If a student is not meeting the requirements, they are awarded a ‘Non-completion Warning’ (or N award). A copy is posted home, which outlines: 1. any issues of concern or outstanding work, and 2. a date by which students should redeem the outcomes of the missed work.

The community’s confidence in valuable school-based credentials (RoSA and HSC) can only be maintained if high standards are consistently and equally applied to all students, regardless of their school. The N award warning system is therefore explained to students in detail. We are also aware that parents may appreciate some clarifying points in relation to this system:

- NESA requires TWO warnings for a student in order for an N determination to be made by the principal at the end of a course.
- A warning is not issued for disciplinary reasons. It is not intended as a ‘stain’ on a student’s character or record. Simply, it is a concern that the student is not meeting course outcomes and that she may be in danger of not satisfactorily meeting course requirements.
- A warning is not issued for work that may be below the standard of which a student is capable. Teachers apply a grading system (A – E) associated with benchmarked standards to individual student work. It is, however, unfortunate if a student’s credential does not represent a level commensurate with their ability.
- A warning is typically given if a student does not submit, or is absent for, an assessment task, and/or, has not demonstrated sustained diligence and application in class.
- A student may not be showing sustained diligence and application for reasons such as disengagement in class activities, not completing required class or homework and/or not making a serious effort to achieve outcomes. A teacher will make this assessment over a period of weeks.
- An N warning can also be issued for a non-serious attempt in an assessment task (e.g. a frivolous or inappropriate response).
- A student will be awarded zero if they do not submit a task or are absent for an assessment task.
- Extensions are usually not granted for tasks. Legitimate misadventure is only granted if, for example, a student has a doctor’s certificate and this has been presented to a head

teacher at the time of or immediately following the missed task. If approved, the head teacher will arrange an alternative assessment.

- A zero mark for a significant assessment task (see assessment book) may have an impact on a student's rank order and overall grade awarded at the end of the course.
- Redeeming a task (e.g. submitting after it was due) is required by NESAs as evidence that a student has satisfied the requirements of a course.
- Redeeming a task supports ongoing learning and demonstrates that a student can achieve the intended outcomes.
- Redeeming a task does not, however, credit the student with marks above zero if the warning is for a missed assessment task.
- Students may appeal if they believe the appropriate process has not been followed. They cannot, however, appeal on the basis of a disputed mark. The appeal process is outlined in their assessment booklet, available on the school's website under [Assessment and reporting](#).
- Teachers do their best to avoid an N determination for any student, which is why warnings are given. Unfortunately, N determinations are occasionally made due to a student's unwillingness to comply with the requirements outlined above. This upholds the currency of and faith in the system for all students.

[Translated Non-completion Warning letters](#) are available in a range of languages at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/going-to-a-public-school/translated-documents>, under 'W – Warnings' for HSC, Preliminary and Year 10.