



# Understanding DATA & TESTING

Data is one of the most powerful tools to inform, engage, and create opportunities for students with their learning. Data is much more than test scores. Data gives us insight and helps us make connections that lead to improvements.

At Catherine McAuley College, new students and Year 7 students are all tested upon enrolment, which allows teachers to best prepare for their needs in the classroom.

All students are continuously tested using various tests and platforms. Teachers at Catherine McAuley College use data to collaborate and develop informed and differentiated lessons for every student.

The types of tests used at Catherine McAuley College are:

- Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) General Ability Tests (AGAT)
- National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)
- Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT)
- Renaissance Star Reading

## AGAT

The ACER General Ability Test is designed to test for general reasoning skills in three areas: Verbal, Numerical and Abstract (visual). AGAT results are usually reported as a percentile and stanine.

The AGAT testing is conducted for Year 7s when they commence.

## NAPLAN

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy is an annual national assessment for all students in Years 3,

5, 7, and 9. All students in these year levels are expected to participate in tests in reading, writing, language conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation) and numeracy. NAPLAN is conducted annually as prescribed by the Australian Curriculum and Reporting Authority.

## PAT

The Progressive Achievement Tests provide objective, norm-referenced information to teachers about their students' skills and understandings in a range of key areas. Progressive Achievement Tests are multiple-choice tests designed to help teachers determine achievement levels of students in Mathematics, Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary, and Listening Comprehension. The test results help teachers decide what kinds of teaching materials are needed and which methods or programmes are most suitable for their students. PATs are also important because they identify the progress a student is making from year to year. We conduct the following test annually.

**Progressive Achievement Tests in Reading** assess students' reading comprehension skills, vocabulary knowledge and spelling.

**Progressive Achievement Tests in Mathematics** provide information about the level of achievement of students from Year 1 to Year 10. The tests assess students' skill and understanding in multiple-choice format in the six strands of:

- |            |               |
|------------|---------------|
| • Number   | • Measurement |
| • Algebra  | • Statistics  |
| • Geometry | • Probability |



## Renaissance Reading

Renaissance Reading provides interim data on students' reading skills, so you can set goals, respond quickly to student needs, monitor progress, and maximise growth. Students read a novel at their lexile level and then complete an online test on completion. Students are given a reading age after each test and a lexile level. The lexile level measures the students' reading ability and enables them to select appropriate tests. Renaissance reading is ongoing.

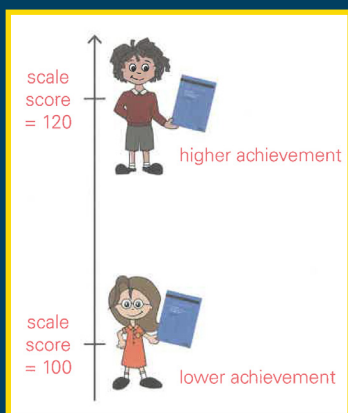


## INTERPRETING THE DATA

### Scale Score

Students receive a raw test score (e.g. 22 out of 40), which is converted onto a scale. Each set of tests has its own scale, e.g., the PAT: Mathematics scale, and the units are particular to that scale.

The process used to convert raw scores to scale scores takes into account the difficulty of the questions in the tests. Each scale covers all the year levels each test is aimed at, so an individual student's progress can be tracked over time. As students learn more and move through the year levels, they should move up the scale.

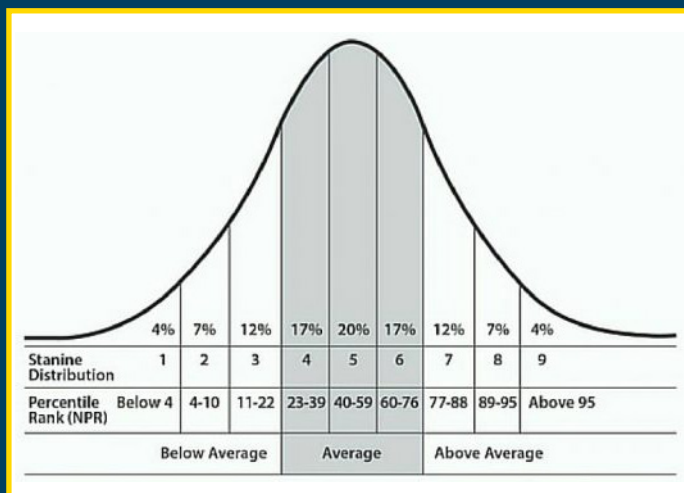


### Stanines

Stanines are used to compare an individual student's achievement with the results obtained by a national reference sample representing a certain year level.

Stanine scores are derived from percentile ranks. Percentile ranks are divided into nine categories called stanines (short for 'standard nine') and the digits '1' to '9' are used as category labels.

Stanine scores are particularly useful for grouping students; however, it is recommended that only differences of two or more stanines should be regarded as indicating a real difference in performance.



### Percentile ranks

Percentile ranks provide a simple means of indicating the rank order and position of a student's result in relation to a norm-reference sample. A National Reference Group is a sample group of thousands of students nationally. Its data has provided the PAT averages, score ranges and stanines.

For example, a student's percentile rank of 45 means that 45 per cent of the reference sample achieved a test score lower than or equal to the test score obtained by the student.

