

Report of 2025 NAPLAN test incidents

1 Introduction

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) tests are held during March each year. In 2025, the tests were held between 12 and 24 March 2025. In total, over 4.5 million tests were sat by over 1.3 million students.

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) is responsible for the central management of NAPLAN. The test administration authority (TAA) in each state and territory is responsible for the administration of the tests in the schools in their jurisdiction.

ACARA works with state, territory and non-government representatives to ensure the NAPLAN tests are delivered in accordance with nationally agreed protocols so that the results validly, reliably and fairly capture student achievements. The *NAPLAN national protocols for test administration* (the “protocols”) provide detailed information on all aspects of the administration of the tests. The protocols specify security requirements, uniform processes and procedures. This is to ensure students complete the tests under standardised conditions so that all students’ results are comparable across Australia. Where individual students require special arrangements to complete the tests, these are provided at the school in consultation with the student, their parents/carers and the relevant TAA.

In the context of over 1.3 million students at over 9,400 schools across the country participating in NAPLAN in 2025, there were very few allegations of breaches of the protocols. Where an allegation is made that the protocols have been breached, the relevant responsible entity¹ investigates and takes appropriate action. Reports are provided to ACARA summarising the test incident, including investigations and outcomes. This information is then compiled by ACARA and used to produce this test incidents report.

ACARA, in cooperation with states and territories, reviews the protocols annually to ensure they effectively support educators to administer the NAPLAN tests as required. This review is informed by analysis of the test incident information reported to ACARA to improve processes and education about the program.

All schools administer online tests, with the exception that Year 3 students continue to complete the writing test on paper and schools using an approved alternative curriculum. In total 36 schools completed NAPLAN 2025 on paper.

Technical issues associated with NAPLAN online are **not** considered test incidents for the purposes of this report, unless they result in a breach of the protocols.

NAPLAN test incidents are defined as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| Cheating (C) | A breach of the protocols amounting to cheating occurs when there is intent to gain an unfair advantage or improperly influence test results. This category does not include instances of student cheating, which, in itself, is not considered a breach of the protocols. Such incidents are dealt with through schools’ existing procedures. |
| Security (S) | A breach of the protocols affecting test security occurs when early knowledge of test content is obtained, which has the potential to compromise the integrity of the test results. Breaches of test security committed with intent to gain an unfair advantage are considered as cheating. |

¹ For the purpose of investigating breaches of the *NAPLAN national protocols for test administration*, the relevant “responsible entity” will be determined by the school governance arrangements and any existing agreements that allocate the responsibility for this activity. Responsible entities can include individuals, such as principals, or organisations, such as school boards or system authorities (including public education authorities), which have authority to receive and assess initial reports of test incidents. More information on investigating test incidents is provided in the *Guidelines for managing test incidents in schools* on the NAP website.

General (G)

General breaches of the protocols include all other maladministration practices that are not in accordance with the agreed protocols, but that do not amount to cheating or affect test security.

This report does not identify individuals or schools but provides information on breaches of the protocols in 2 tables as follows:

- **Table 1** provides a summary of the total number of incidents, as well as the total number after incidents are aggregated. These relate to allegations of cheating, security or general breaches of the protocols. They include all cases that are substantiated, unsubstantiated and still under investigation at the time of reporting.
- **Table 2** provides further information about the substantiated cases only, including the substantiated cases after aggregation. It provides a brief description of each incident and information on what action has been taken as a consequence.

Test incidents are only aggregated within jurisdictions and where incidents are of a similar nature and the outcomes were the same.

2 Analysis of 2025 NAPLAN test incidents

The 2025 NAPLAN test incidents report reinforces the fact that teachers and schools continue to work hard to ensure the integrity of the tests. This is evidenced both through the small number of incidents across the entire country, and through the number of schools reporting their own inadvertent breaches.

This report also plays an important educative role in reminding schools of the correct procedures. The transparency and concern shown by schools in reporting incidents demonstrates the schools' commitment to ensuring that the information they and their students receive from the tests is as useful as possible.

The below summary reports on the total number of incidents in 2025:

- Over 4.5 million NAPLAN tests sat by students nationally, 239 test incidents were substantiated, affecting 235 schools across the nation.
- Of the 239 substantiated test incidents, there were no substantiated cheating breaches on the part of a school.
- Test incidents are only aggregated within jurisdictions and where incidents are of a similar nature and the outcomes were the same. After aggregating, there was a total of 51 substantiated aggregated incidents; slightly lower than the reported total in 2024 (53).
- The majority of total substantiated incidents were general breaches (188) that related to maladministration practices that are not in accordance with the agreed protocols, but that do not amount to cheating or affect test security. This includes instances of test procedures not being followed correctly, and/or tests being delivered in the incorrect sequence. Schools and TAAs are increasingly identifying and reporting these types of breaches.
- Of the total substantiated incidents, there were 51 substantiated security breaches that included instances of test materials not being kept secure during the test security period, and/or photos being taken during testing that were posted on social media.
- Some of the substantiated incidents were directly reported to the TAA by the schools, representing a broad level of understanding of the protocols and significant efforts by schools to ensure transparency in their processes. This is testimony to the professionalism of teachers and school administrators.
- At the time of reporting as of July 2025, there were three General incidents still under investigation. ACARA continues to follow up with relevant authorities until all cases are resolved.

Table 1: Summary of all reported incidents – all allegations of cheating breaches, security breaches and general breaches of test protocols, 2025

Incident category	Substantiated	Unsubstantiated	Under investigation	Total
Cheating (C)	0	1	0	1
Security breach (S)	51	0	0	51
General breach (G)	188	4	3	195
Total incidents	239	5	3	247
Total incidents after aggregation*	51	5	3	59
Total schools affected	235	5	3	243

* Test incidents (within jurisdictions) were aggregated where incidents are of a similar nature and where the outcomes were the same. Total incidents after aggregation show the total of each type of incident, where one or more schools was impacted within a jurisdiction.

See Table 2 for details of substantiated incidents and aggregations.

Caution should be taken when making comparisons with previous reports' test incident figures.

Table 2: Substantiated incidents only - after aggregation, 2025

	State/ Territory	Incident category (C, S, G)	2025 National protocols clause(s) breached	Description of incident	Action taken and outcome
1	ACT	G	8.4.2	Tests provided/distributed to students in incorrect sequence. Relevant to four schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
2	NSW	G	8.6.1	Incorrect test administration instructions given to students. Relevant to three students across two schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
3	NSW	S	2.5.8	Test materials not collected and stored securely at the end of the tests. Relevant to one year level.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
4	NSW	G	1.2.2	School administered tests in incorrect sequence. Relevant to 11 schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years.

	State/ Territory	Incident category (C, S, G)	2025 National protocols clause(s) breached	Description of incident	Action taken and outcome
					Data not compromised.
5	NSW	S	4.3.13	Photo taken of test environment and made public during test security period. Relevant to 29 schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
6	NSW	G	6.11.9	Scribe rules not followed. Relevant to 16 students across 12 schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data compromised and withheld.
7	NSW	G	6.11.9 6.11.8	Permission not granted for the use of a scribe and scribe rules not followed. Relevant to two students across two schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data compromised and withheld.
8	NSW	G	6.11.8	Permission not granted for the use of a scribe. Relevant to four students across four schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
9	NSW	S	2.5.8	Test materials lost and not recovered before the test. Relevant to one year level.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
10	NSW	G	6.12.2	Inappropriate assistance available to student/s during the test. Relevant to one student.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data compromised and withheld.
11	NT	G	4.3.13	Photo taken of test environment and made public during test security period. Relevant to five schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. No evidence that data were compromised.
12	NT	G	1.2.2	Tests provided/distributed to students in incorrect sequence. Relevant to three classes across three schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. No evidence that data were compromised.

	State/ Territory	Incident category (C, S, G)	2025 National protocols clause(s) breached	Description of incident	Action taken and outcome
13	NT	G	1.2.3	Test administration procedures not followed relating to test timetable, test administered outside the test window. Relevant to three schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. No evidence that data were compromised.
14	QLD	G	1.2.3	Test administration procedures not followed relating to test timetable, test administered outside the test window. Relevant to two schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
15	QLD	G	1.2.2	School administered tests in incorrect sequence. Relevant to 28 schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
16	QLD	G	3.3.2 6.6.1	Adjustment/s provided without appropriate approval. Relevant to 24 students across 12 schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
17	QLD	G	3.3.2 8.4.1	Adjustment/s not provided to student. Relevant to one student.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
18	QLD	G	6.11.8	Permission not granted for the use of a scribe. Relevant to seven students across four schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
19	QLD	G	6.11.9	Scribe rules not followed. Relevant to three students across three schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
20	QLD	S	4.3.13	Photo taken of test environment and made public during test security period. Relevant to five schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.

	State/ Territory	Incident category (C, S, G)	2025 National protocols clause(s) breached	Description of incident	Action taken and outcome
21	QLD	G	2.5.6 3.3.2	Test administration procedures not followed relating to finalising the test session. Relevant to two schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
22	QLD	G	3.3.2 8.2.1	Incorrect test administration instructions given to students. Relevant to one school.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. No evidence that test results were compromised.
23	QLD	G	8.5.4 8.5.10	Unauthorised access to item. Relevant to three students at three schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data compromised and withheld.
24	SA	G	8.6.1	Inappropriate assistance provided to student prior to and/or during test. Relevant to one student at one school.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. No evidence that data were compromised.
25	SA	G	8.5.4	Test administration procedures not followed correctly relating to administering tests – appropriate behaviours. Relevant to nine students at four schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. No evidence that data were compromised.
26	SA	G	8.5.4 8.5.9	Test administration procedures not followed correctly relating to delivering alternative format (paper) test. Relevant to one student at one school.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. No evidence that data were compromised.
27	SA	G	8.5.10	Unauthorised access to device. Relevant to one student at one school.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data compromised and withheld.
28	SA	G	8.5.4 8.5.11	Unauthorised access to device.	School counselled and undertook to improve

	State/ Territory	Incident category (C, S, G)	2025 National protocols clause(s) breached	Description of incident	Action taken and outcome
				Relevant to one student at one school.	procedures for future years. No evidence that data were compromised.
29	SA	G	8.5.11	Incorrect test administration instructions given to students - unauthorised access to device. Relevant to one class at one school.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
30	SA	G	4.3.8	Unauthorised access to material prior to test. Relevant to one student at one school.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
31	TAS	S	4.3.13	Photo taken of test environment and made public during test security period. Relevant to two schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. No evidence that data were compromised.
32	TAS	G	1.4.1	Test administration procedures not followed relating to catch-up test, test administered outside the test window. Relevant to less than three students at one school.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
33	TAS	G	8.7.5	Test administration procedures not followed relating to test disruptions. Relevant to less than 20 students at one school.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
34	TAS	G	8.4.2	Test administration procedures not followed relating to prescribed sequence, students commenced incorrect test. Relevant to less than five students across three schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
35	TAS	G	8.4.1	School administered tests in incorrect sequence. Relevant to less than 40 students at one school.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.

	State/ Territory	Incident category (C, S, G)	2025 National protocols clause(s) breached	Description of incident	Action taken and outcome
36	VIC	S	1.2.1	Test administration procedures not followed correctly relating to test schedule. Relevant to two classes across two schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
37	VIC	S	4.3.13	Photo taken of test environment and made public during test security period. Relevant to multiple students/classes across 11 schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
38	VIC	G	1.2.2	School administered tests in incorrect sequence. Relevant to multiple students/classes across 28 schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
39	VIC	G	1.2.3	Tests administration procedures not followed correctly relating to test timetable. Relevant to multiple students/classes across four schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
40	VIC	G	2.2.4	Test administration procedures not followed correctly relating to disability adjustments. Relevant to two students across two schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. No evidence that data were compromised.
41	VIC	G	1.2.3	Tests administration procedures not followed relating to test timetable. Relevant to 11 students across two schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. No evidence that data were compromised.
42	VIC	G	6.12.5	Tests administration procedures not followed correctly relating to support person. Relevant to one student.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. No evidence that data were compromised.
43	VIC	G	2.6.4	Incorrect test administration instructions given to students.	School counselled and undertook to improve

	State/ Territory	Incident category (C, S, G)	2025 National protocols clause(s) breached	Description of incident	Action taken and outcome
				Relevant to one class at one school.	procedures for future years. No evidence that data were compromised.
44	VIC	G	6.11.9	Scribe rules not followed. Relevant to two students across two schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data compromised and withheld.
45	VIC	G	2.3.8	Unauthorised access to device/material. Relevant to six students across six schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data compromised and withheld.
46	VIC	G	2.3.8	Unauthorised access to device/material. Relevant to five students across four schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. No evidence that data were compromised.
47	VIC	G	2.3.2	Tests administration procedures not followed correctly relating to test access. Relevant to one student.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
48	WA	G	1.1.2	Test administration procedures not followed correctly relating to participating year levels. Relevant to eight students at one school.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.
49	WA	G	8.7.5	Test administration procedures not followed relating to test disruptions, incorrect test administration instructions given to students. Relevant to two students at two schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data compromised and withheld.
50	WA	G	6.11.9	Scribe rules not followed. Relevant to 12 students across 11 schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data compromised and withheld.

	State/ Territory	Incident category (C, S, G)	2025 National protocols clause(s) breached	Description of incident	Action taken and outcome
51	WA	G	1.4.2	Test administration procedures not followed correctly relating to scheduling NAPLAN tests. Relevant to three students across three schools.	School counselled and undertook to improve procedures for future years. Data not compromised.

At the time of reporting there were 3 incidents still under investigation in WA.