

2010 HSC HONOUR ROLL



Ashley Phillips will study nursing. Photo: Daily Examiner/Brendan Ray

All the hard work boils down to this

Today's wave of HSC results will deliver a big break or a new direction for students, write **Anna Patty** and **Hamish Boland-Rudder**.

Ashley Phillips has not given her final Higher School Certificate results a lot of thought since gaining early entry into a nursing course last month. "I haven't even thought about them coming out," she said. But for most other HSC students—a record 71,310 this year—the nervous wait for results is finally over. Students started receiving them from 6am yesterday, online and by SMS or phone. A summary of each student's results will arrive in the mail from tomorrow. From 9am today more than 50,000 students will be able to access their Australian Tertiary

Admission Rank online. Universities use the rank to select school leavers for entry into their courses. Students will also receive their ATAR notices in the mail tomorrow. Phillips, 18, completed her studies at Grafton High School. She has already been admitted into a bachelor of nursing degree at Southern Cross University in Lismore. She visited the campus on Monday to familiarise herself with the setting. "I'm looking forward to the independence of living away from home on campus and meeting new people," she said. Phillips chose the university because of its proximity to Grafton, her home town. She hopes



Nathan Perks, of Collaroy, has swapped books for a board and a butcher's shop while he awaits his HSC results. He hopes for a career in economics, starting with a business or commerce degree. Photo: Fiona Morris

to work in a rural setting and specialise in mental health care. "I don't want to live in the city yet," she said. "I'm quite happy in the country. It is a lot more easygoing. My mum is a special-education teacher. I find mental health very interesting and helpful." Phillips decided on a career in nursing after completing a traineeship in aged care in years 11 and 12. "The traineeship put me on the path to nursing." For Nathan Perks, 18, finishing the HSC was a huge relief. "It was the most stressful thing I have ever done in my life," said the former captain of St Luke's Grammar School on Sydney's

northern beaches. "It felt like everything I'd done in my life from kindergarten to year 12 all led up to this time." Perks, of Collaroy, spent his HSC year working hard and attended a week-long study camp to improve his study routine. "I put my head down and worked hard all year," he said. "I didn't want to regret not studying. Otherwise all the work I'd done all year would have been wasted." Economics was his favourite subject. "It was probably the toughest subject I did, but it was the one I found the most fun because it was the most challenging." Perks says that using study time

effectively was far more important than spending long hours locked in the library, and credits his family and friends for helping him keep a positive attitude. "The ex-HSC students who live in my street helped make sure that I was having proper breaks, getting to the beach, shooting some hoops or playing some cricket. "One thing I found helpful was going down to the driving range, lining up a golf ball, and hitting it as far as I could." Since the exams Perks has been taking a much more relaxed approach to life. He hopes his ATAR will be over 80, but he is not going to get stressed about it.

"If that doesn't happen, I won't be disappointed. I know I've tried my best." After work experience at an investment company, Perks plans on doing a degree in business or commerce and pursuing a career in economics. But for now he is enjoying "the longest holiday I'll ever have in my life", dividing his time between a part-time job at the butcher's and relaxing at the beach. "Depending on what my results are, I might do a gap year. I'm just going to take things as they come." Georgia Buckley thought it was important to maintain a good balance between studying

hard and having fun during her HSC year. "I took it seriously and I wanted to do well, but I didn't want to stress out too much about it," said the 18-year-old from Pymble Ladies' College. "I did artistic gymnastics and competed at the IGSSA [Independent Girls Schools Sports Association] competition during my exams. It was fun – I'd been training for it all year. "Doing sport during the HSC was really good. If all I had to do was study, I'd get really, really bored." Apart from gymnastics, Buckley is a keen hiker, rock-climber and fire-twirler. She has plans to hike Cradle

Mountain during her summer break. Hoping to become a teacher, she has her sights set on a bachelor of secondary education in human movement and health education at the University of Sydney. "I'm pretty sure I'll get it, but I'm not 100 per cent, so it's pretty scary waiting for the marks to come out." Applications for university study are open until Thursday, February 3. Students who have already applied can change their preferences until midnight on Wednesday, January 6 for the main round of university offers, which will be published at 9pm on Wednesday, January 19.

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Emma

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1. Plan my study overseas
2. Join a sports club
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4. Meet new people
5. Choose a career



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