

Frederick Irwin Anglican School

ASSESSMENT POLICY – LOWER SECONDARY

Introduction

This Assessment Policy – Lower Secondary provides the overall general policies for the lower secondary section of the School.

The conditions adopted in the policy are in line with the conditions and expectations of the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA).

1 Student Responsibilities

It is the student's responsibility to:

- maintain a good record of attendance, conduct and progress. **A student who is absent from a class for five lessons or more per term is deemed to be 'at risk' of not achieving the best possible result for the course;**
- initiate contact with teachers concerning absence from class, missed assessments, extension requests and other issues relating to assessment;
- complete all unit requirements by the last date for submission;
- maintain a folio of evidence for each unit studied and to make it available whenever required.

2 Staff Responsibilities

It is the teacher's responsibility to:

- develop a teaching/learning program that meets the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment outline requirements for the course;
- provide students with a course unit outline and assessment outline at the commencement of the course;
- ensure that assessments are fair, valid and reliable;
- provide students with assessment feedback and guidance;
- maintain accurate records of student achievement;
- meet school timelines for assessment and reporting;
- inform students and parents of progress as appropriate, including those students deemed at risk. Contact must be made in a timely fashion.

3 Information provided to students

At the start of each unit the teacher will provide a copy of the following to each student:

- a unit outline that includes the following information:
 - the content
 - the sequences in which the content will be taught
 - the approximate time to teach each section of the course.
- an assessment outline that contains the following information:
 - the assessment types
 - a general indication of the content covered by each assessment task
 - the approximate timing of each assessment task (i.e. the week in which each assessment task is planned or the due dates for significant stages of each extended task).

In core subjects a number of assessment tasks occur during the semester/year (including, end of semester examinations). Some tasks are completed in-class and others are completed out-of-class. Each task provides evidence of student achievement. The teacher uses the total weighted mark from all assessment tasks when assigning a grade at the completion of the semester. Teachers will notify students of an in-class assessment at least one (1) week before the assessment date.

During every unit, the requirements for each assessment task will be clearly explained (i.e. what the student needs to do, often indicating the steps involved for each task). Wherever appropriate, a marking key will also be provided.

4 Modification of the assessment outline

When a student's personal circumstances limit his/her capacity to complete a particular assessment task, the teacher in consultation with the student and Head of Department, may negotiate a variation to the submission date. The teacher will consider fairness for all students when making decisions about adjusting timelines for a particular student.

5 Completion of a subject

A grade is assigned at the end of each semester (unless for reasons acceptable to the School, the student is not able to complete the School's assessment program).

Students are required to:

- complete all in-class assessment tasks on the scheduled date
- submit all out-of-class assessment tasks for marking by the due date.

If a student is absent on the day an in-class assessment is scheduled or an out-of-class assessment task is due for submission, the reason for the absence must be communicated to the School by the parent. This can be done by the parent contacting the School through either the absentee email or message service.

In-Class Assessments:

If a student is absent on the day an in-class assessment task is scheduled it must be for a reason which is acceptable to the School (see Section 6 for details). In this case the student will complete the assessment without any penalty being applied.

If the reason for non-attendance is not acceptable, the following may apply:

- the student is required to sit the assessment to complete the unit requirements; however, a mark of zero will apply;
- this will result in the student receiving a lower grade than expected at the end of the semester; however, this will not affect any streaming which is applied based on a semester grade.

The student will be required to sit the re-scheduled assessment during the next available Assessment Catch-up period. A sticker with information will be placed in the student's Diary and a parent signature to acknowledge the information will be required.

Out-Of-Class Assessments:

If the student is absent on the day an out-of-class assessment is due for submission, it is the responsibility of the student to either contact the School or to find a suitable method to submit the work e.g. parent or sibling to hand in to the front office, email an electronic copy.

If this requirement is not met the following will apply:

- 10% reduction in the mark if submitted one school day late, a weekend is classed as one (1) day. **OR**
- 50% reduction in the mark if submitted two school days late **OR**
- a mark of zero if submitted more than two days late

Where a student is likely to experience difficulty meeting a deadline he/she must discuss the matter with the teacher at the earliest opportunity before the due date.

The student must still submit the assignment, even if it is incomplete, to meet the unit completion requirement.

Practical In-Class Assessments:

If a student is absent for a practical in-class assessment which cannot be re-scheduled such as a cooking assessment or a music performance, a note is required from the parent to confirm that the parent is aware that the student has missed the assessment and the reason for non-attendance. If the reason for non-attendance falls within the guidelines outlined in Section 6, no penalty will be applied. If a note is not received, the parent will be notified in writing that the student missed the assessment and that a mark of zero will be applied.

Where a student is aware in advance that he/she will have difficulty completing an assessment on the scheduled date he/she must discuss the matter with the teacher at the earliest opportunity **BEFORE** the due date.

6 Acceptable reasons for non-completion or non-submission

If a student is absent on the day an in-class assessment task is scheduled or an out-of-class assessment task is due for submission, it must be for a reason which is outside the student's control i.e. where sickness, injury or significant personal circumstances prevents a student attending.

The reason for the absence must be communicated to the School by the parent or guardian. This can be done by the parent contacting the School through either the absentee email or message service.

Events that can be rescheduled are not valid reasons for non-completion or non-submission of an assessment task. (See list below.) Family holidays during the term are not considered a valid reason for non-completion or non-submission of an assessment task. In exceptional circumstances, the parent/guardian may negotiate an alternative plan with the Deputy Principal – Curriculum.

Examples of events which are not valid reasons for missing an in-class or out-of-class assessment:

- routine dental appointments, but not including orthodontic appointments
- routine medical appointments, but not including specialists appointments
- cultural events such as music concerts, school balls

Where the student provides a reason which is acceptable for the non-completion or non-submission of an assessment task the teacher will:

- negotiate an adjusted due date for an out-of-class assessment task or an adjusted date for an in-class assessment task (generally within two days of the student's return); **or**
- re-weight the student's marks for other tasks (if, in the opinion of the teacher, sufficient evidence exists in the other tasks completed to enable a grade to be assigned); **or**
- decide on an alternative assessment task (if, in the opinion of the teacher, the assessment is no longer confidential); **or**
- statistically estimate the student's mark for the assessment task on the basis of their marks in similar tasks.

Where a catastrophic event affects delivery of the teaching programme, the completion or submission of one or more assessment tasks and/or completion of the School's examination timetable, students will be advised of modifications to the task requirements and/or the assessment outline, including the due date.

7 Cheating, Collusion and Plagiarism

Students must not cheat (i.e. engage in a dishonest act to gain an unfair advantage).

All work in each individual assessment task must be the work of the student. Students are not permitted to submit for marking, as original, any work which contains:

- Identical or similar material to the work of another person (e.g. another student, a parent, a tutor)
- Identical or similar material to a published work unless the source is acknowledged in referencing or footnotes (plagiarism)

Note: Where a student permits others to copy his/her work he/she will also be penalised (collusion)

Mobile telephones or MP3/iPod devices must not be taken into a classroom or examination room during an assessment. If, due to a security risk, the device cannot be left outside the room, then it must be turned off and left at the front of the room with the supervisor.

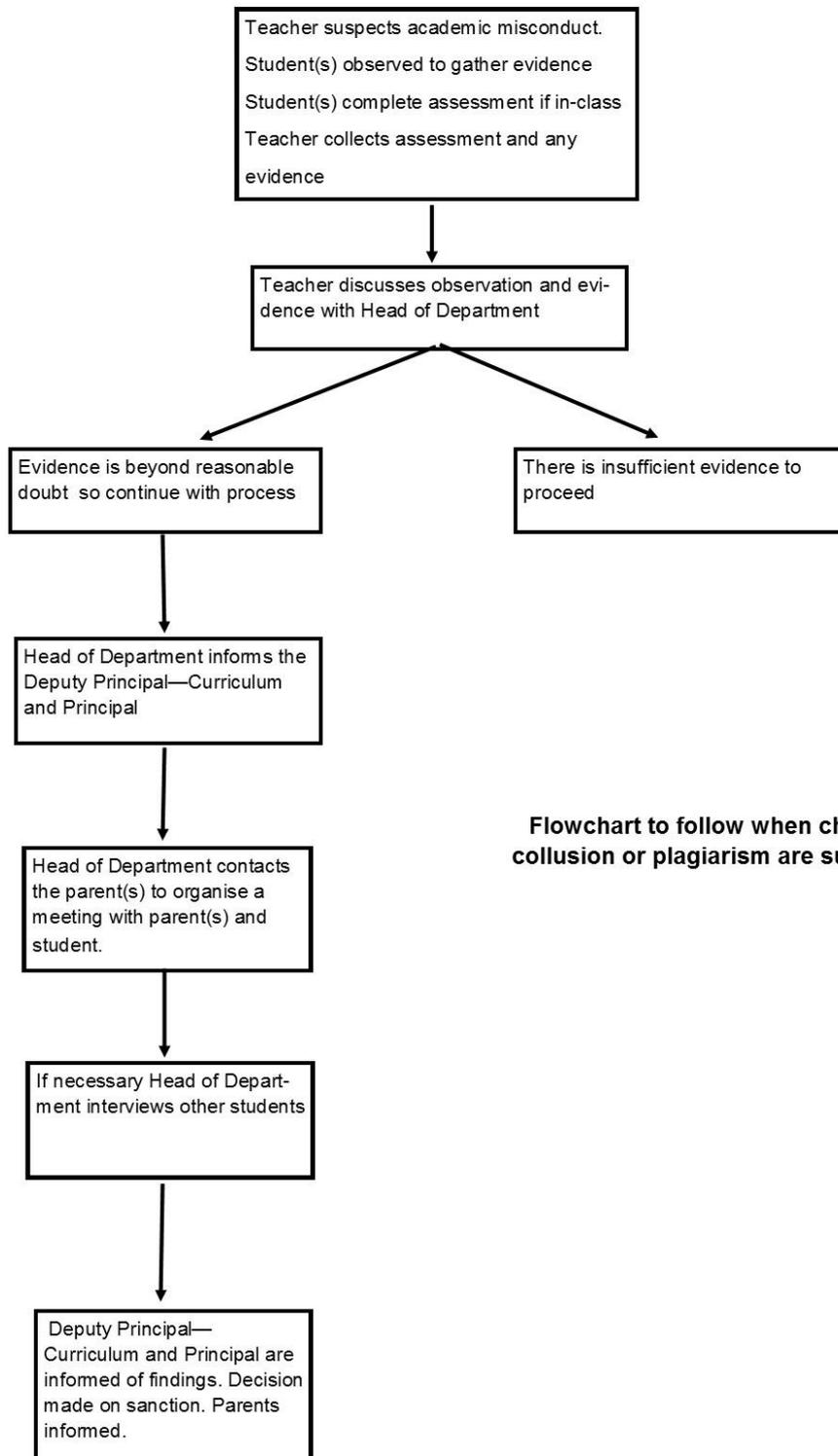
Students who use a mobile telephone or any other electronic device in a test or examination situation will have the device confiscated and a zero mark will apply.

If it is demonstrated **beyond reasonable doubt** that a student has cheated, colluded or plagiarised one of the following penalties will apply:

- a mark of zero for the whole assessment task
- a mark of zero for part of the assessment where the teacher can identify the part of the assessment task that has been copied or plagiarised.

Note: Where a student permits others to copy his/her work he/she will also be penalised.

The parent/guardian will be contacted and the information will be recorded on SEQTA.



Flowchart to follow when cheating, collusion or plagiarism are suspected

Where there is more than one class studying the same course at the School, most or all of the assessment tasks will be the same. In such cases, to ensure that no students are unfairly advantaged, the question papers used for in-class assessment tasks will be collected at the end of the lesson. In their own interests, students must not discuss the nature of the questions with students from the other classes until after all classes have completed the task.

Discussion of the questions will be treated as cheating and the students will be penalised.

9 Retention and disposal of student work

Students are responsible for retaining all of their marked written assessment tasks and/or folios. To assist students with this the School will retain all written and non-written assessment tasks. This material is required by the teacher/s when assigning grades at the completion of the unit.

The School will establish an assessment file for each student for each course/stage in which to hold marked assessment tasks. Assessment tasks cannot be removed from School; however, classroom teachers can supervise student access to his/her file for revision purposes.

The School retains the files until the marks have been finalised at the end of the semester.

10 Assessing students with special education needs

Students who are unable to complete an assessment task because of their special education needs are provided with alternative opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understandings.

A student with a special education need who requires additional assistance to complete an assessment task is provided with considerations and/or arrangements which are informed by the Deputy Principal Curriculum. This applies to practical and/or written assessments, including school examinations.

11 Examinations

Written examinations will be held in Years 8 - 10 at the end of Semester 1 and the end of Semester 2. In those courses with a practical/performance/oral, an examination may also be held.

Students who are absent for individual examinations due to illness or exceptional circumstances must contact the Deputy Principal – Curriculum as soon as possible. If possible, an alternative time to write the examination will be arranged.

Students cannot expect to be permitted to sit for examinations at a time other than the scheduled time unless the absence is due to illness (which should be supported by a Medical Certificate).

A student who is unable to write the examination at an alternative time before the closure of assessments will have his/her final grade determined by the teacher, in consultation with the Head of Department.

12 Reporting achievement

Student progress is reported at the end of Term 1 in the form of an Interim Report.

Student achievement is reported at the end of Semester 1 and at the end of Semester 2.

The report provides a comment and effort rating by the teacher for each unit and the following information:

- A grade (A-E)
- A mark (optional)

13 Reviewing marks and grades

If a student considers that there is an issue about the marking of an assessment task or about the grade assigned for a unit, he/she should, in the first instance, discuss the issue with the teacher.

If an assessment issue cannot be resolved through discussion with the teacher then the student or parent/guardian should approach the Head of Department of the learning area.

The student or parent/guardian can request, in writing, that the School conduct a formal assessment review, if they consider that the student has been disadvantaged by any of the following:

- the assessment outline for the course unit does not meet Australian Curriculum guidelines
- the assessment procedures used in the class do not conform with the School's assessment policy
- procedural errors have occurred in the determination of the mark and/or grade
- computational errors have occurred in the determination of the mark and/or grade

The Deputy Principal – Curriculum will conduct the review. The reviewer will meet with the student and the teacher independently and prepare a written report. This report will be provided to the student and the parent/guardian.

14 Moratoriums

No assessment or assignments are to be set or to have a last date for submission which falls five (5) school days prior to the start of the examination period, except for in-class practical assessments.

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