

**ASSESSMENT POLICY – SENIOR SECONDARY**

**Introduction**

This Assessment Policy – Senior Secondary provides information to students, parents and teachers on the following:

- how the required curriculum and assessment documents will be provided to students
- security of assessment tasks
- rules for the conduct of school examinations and externally set tasks
- assessing students who do not complete the assessment programme
- procedures to be implemented if assessment is affected by a catastrophic event
- assessing students with special education needs
- reporting of student achievement
- authentication of student work (including cheating, collusion, plagiarism, appropriation, etc.)
- assessing students transferring between courses and/or units
- assessing of students transferring between schools
- retention and disposal of student work
- assessment review and appeal processes.

Every student studying a WACE course must be provided with this policy, whether as hard copy, embedded in another document or electronically.

**1 School Assessment Responsibilities**

The School must:

- have a senior secondary assessment policy based on the School Curriculum and Standards Authority's assessment guidelines;
- have a course outline and an assessment outline for each pair of units
- implement appropriate assessment and grading practices, and provide procedures for managing assessment information
- provide individual assessment information to students
- implement assessment review and appeal processes
- participate in the Authority's:
  - School moderation programme
  - Consensus moderation procedures
  - Small group moderation procedures, where applicable.

These assessment requirements do not apply to VET courses or to endorsed programmes.

**2 Student Responsibilities**

It is the student's responsibility to:

- attempt all in-class assessment tasks on the scheduled date and submit all out-of-class assessment tasks by the due date
- maintain a folio of evidence for each subject studied and to make it available whenever required
- 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 unit or pair of units**
- initiate contact with teachers concerning absence from class, missed assessments, extension requests and other issues relating to assessment.

### **3 Teacher Responsibilities**

It is the teacher's responsibility to:

- develop a teaching/learning programme that meets the WACE syllabus requirements
- to ensure that the syllabus used to develop the learning and assessment programme is current
- provide students with the course syllabus, a course outline and an assessment outline for each pair of units
- ensure that assessments are fair, valid and reliable
- provide students with timely assessment feedback and guidance
- maintain accurate records of student achievement
- meet school and external timelines for assessment and reporting
- inform students and parents of academic progress as appropriate, including those students deemed at risk. The Deputy Principal – Curriculum must be informed of students at academic risk.

### **4 Curriculum and Assessment Documents**

Every student studying a WACE course must be provided with:

- This Senior Secondary Assessment Policy
- The SCSA syllabus for the pair of units (or unit) which includes the grade descriptions
  - a course outline for the pair of units (or unit or semester) 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 unit or pair of units.
  - an assessment outline for the pair of units (or unit) that contains the following information:
    - the number and type of assessments
    - the weighting of each assessment task
    - the weighting for each assessment type, as specified in the assessment table of the syllabus
    - a general description of each assessment task
    - an indication of the outcomes covered by each assessment task
    - the approximate timing of each assessment task.

This information is provided to students before teaching begins as a hard copy or electronically.

### **5 Assessing Student Achievement**

In each pair of units (or unit) a number of assessment tasks occur during the year. 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 marks from all assessment tasks when assigning a grade at the completion of the pair of units (or unit).

The requirements for each assessment task will be clearly described in writing. Wherever appropriate, the criteria against which the task will be marked will also be provided.

Some courses may include assessment tasks to be completed by a group of students. In such cases, teachers will use strategies to enable them to assess the performance of each individual in the group. Typically this will be identified in the task provided to the students at the commencement of the task.

### **6 Modification of the assessment outline**

When a student's **specific education needs** do not allow him/her to complete a particular assessment task, the teacher may modify the task. The individual student's assessment outline will be adjusted to show any modifications to the assessment for the unit or pair of units.

When a student's **cultural beliefs** do not enable him/her to complete a particular assessment task, the teacher may modify the task. The individual student's assessment outline will be adjusted to show any modifications to the assessment for the unit or pair of units.

When a student's **personal circumstances** limit his/her capacity to complete a particular assessment task, the teacher and student 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.

If circumstances change during the teaching of a unit (or pair of units), requiring the teacher to make adjustments to scheduled assessment tasks then an updated copy of the assessment outline will be provided to students clearly indicating the changes.

## **7 Students with special education needs**

Students with a special education need who require additional assistance to complete an assessment task are provided with considerations and/or arrangements which are consistent with those provided in the WACE examinations conducted by the Authority. This applies to practical and/or written assessments, including school examinations.

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.

## **8 Completion of a pair of units (or unit)**

A grade is assigned for each pair of units (or unit) completed. Students are required to:

- attempt all in-class assessment tasks on the scheduled date
- submit all out-of-class assessment tasks 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 9 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 will apply:

- the student is required to sit the assessment to complete the unit requirements; however, a mark of zero will apply
- this may result in the student receiving a lower grade than expected at the end of the unit, and may mean a student does not meet WACE requirements.

### **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.

If a student does not submit an assessment task or attend a scheduled in-class assessment task, without providing an acceptable reason, the teacher may contact the parent/guardian to discuss the possible impact of the penalty on the student's grade and to negotiate actions to prevent this re-occurring.

## **9 Acceptable reasons for non-completion or non-submission**

The penalty for non-completion or non-submission of an assessment task will be waived if the student provides a reason which is acceptable to the school. For example:

- Where sickness, injury or significant personal circumstance prevents a student attending on the day that an in-class assessment task is scheduled
- Where sickness, injury or significant personal circumstances for part or all of the period of an out-of-class assessment task prevents completion or submission by the due date.

In such cases the parent/guardian must:

- Contact the school before 9.30am on the day of the in-class assessment task or due date for submission of an out-of-class assessment

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

- Negotiate an adjusted due date for the submission of an out-of-class assessment task
- Determine the adjusted date for an in-class assessment task. **The student will normally be required to sit the re-scheduled assessment during the next available assessment catch-up period. Parents and the student will be emailed details of the catch-up arrangements. A sticker with information will be placed in the student's Diary and a parent signature to acknowledge the information will be required.**
- Decide on an alternate assessment task (if, in the opinion of the teacher, the assessment is no longer confidential), 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).

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 a catastrophic event affects delivery of the teaching program, 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.

## **10 Examinations and Externally Set Tasks (EST)**

A written examination will be held in ATAR courses at the end of Semester 1 and the end of Semester 2. In those courses with a practical/performance/oral WACE examination, a practical/performance/oral examination will also be held.

Examinations are typically 2 or 2.5 hours in Year 11 and 2.5 or 3 hours long in Year 12. The examination timetable and a copy of the examination rules will be issued to students at least two weeks before the commencement of the examination period.

An EST is conducted for each General course in Year 12. The EST is:

- Compulsory for all students enrolled in a General course
- Set by the Authority
- Is administered by the school under examination conditions and following the same protocols as for WACE examinations.

Students who are absent for individual examinations or ESTs 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 or EST will be arranged.

A student who is unable to write the examination or EST 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.

## **11 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)

If a student is believed to have engaged in cheating, collusion or plagiarism, the teacher will refer the matter to the Head of Department. 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 or
- 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.

The parent/guardian will be informed of the penalty and the information will be recorded on SEQTA.

Mobile telephones or any other electronic device must not be taken into a classroom or examination room when an assessment is being written. 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 MP3/iPod in a test or examination situation will have the device confiscated and a penalty may apply.

## **12 Transfer between courses/units**

When a student commences a unit (pair of units) late he/she is at risk of being disadvantaged compared with others in the class. An application to transfer between courses or units is made through the Deputy Principal - Curriculum. A meeting may be held with the parent/guardian to discuss student progress and the requirements necessary for the student to be assigned a grade in the unit (or pair of units) into which he/she wishes to transfer.

### **Changes to enrolments for Year 12 students**

The last date for changes to enrolments in courses for Year 12 students is **Thursday, 5 April 2018**. After this date no further changes will be accepted by SCSA.

### **Changes to enrolments for Year 11 students**

The deadline for transfer to another course for Year 11 students is **Thursday, 5 April 2018**.

When a student transfers to a different unit in the same course, or a unit in a similar course, the marks from any assessment tasks that assess the syllabus will, wherever possible, be used. These marks may need to be statistically adjusted to ensure that they are on the same scale as the marks for all students in the new class.

Where additional work and/or assessment tasks are necessary, the teacher will develop a plan showing the work to be completed and the modifications to the assessment outline. The plan will be provided to the student and, if necessary, discussed with the parent/guardian. The school must be able to justify the grade assigned to the student. To do this, the school is required to include the student on the ranked list of students for the pair of units, or unit, into which they are transferring. The process must be completed prior to the deadline published in the WACE Activities Schedule.

### **13 Transfer from another school**

It is the responsibility of any student who transfers into a class from the same course at another school, to provide the School with the details of all completed assessment tasks. The Deputy Principal – Curriculum will contact the previous school to determine:

- The part of the syllabus that has been completed
- The assessment tasks which have been completed
- The marks awarded for these tasks.

The Head of Department will:

- Determine how the marks from assessment tasks at the previous school will be used
- Determine the additional work, if any, to be completed
- Determine the additional assessment tasks, if any, to be completed to enable a grade to be assigned.

Where additional work and/or assessment tasks are necessary, the teacher will develop a plan showing the work to be completed and the modifications to the assessment outline. The plan will be provided to the student and, if necessary, discussed with the parent/guardian.

### **14 Reporting student achievement**

The School reports student achievement at the end of Semester 1 and at the end of Semester 2. These reports provide for each course;

- A comment by the teacher
- A grade
- The examination mark, where an examination was conducted
- The unit percentage mark.

At the end of the year a statement of results is provided which lists the grades for each pair of units and the school mark, which will be submitted to SCSA. Successful completion of VET qualifications and Endorsed programmes will also be listed on the statement.

All final grades are subject to SCSA approval at the end of the year. The student and parents will be notified of any changes that result from SCSA review of the student results submitted by the School.

#### **Assigning grades where there are multiple classes in a course**

To achieve a common scale across multiple classes, teachers will typically make use of:

- a common course outline
- a common assessment outline (i.e. common assessment tasks with the same weightings)
- a common marking key for each assessment task
- marking strategies to ensure comparability (e.g. one teacher marking a particular section of the assessment task from all classes; one teacher marking a complete assessment task from all classes; one teacher marking a complete assessment task from another teacher's class; double marking the assessment task, or part of the task, for all students or for a selection of students, then discussing comparability, reviewing marks and making adjustments where required)
- Pre-established cut-offs should not be used as the standard of the assessment tasks and the standard of marking may vary from year to year and teacher to teacher. Pre-established cut-offs can, however, be a notional point at which to start reviewing student work against the grade descriptions.

#### **Reporting students at risk of not achieving a 'C' grade**

Where a student is identified as possibly not achieving a 'C' grade for a pair of units (or unit) the parent(s) will be notified either by phone, email or a letter of concern. This notification will be issued at least three weeks before semester examinations in order to give the student the opportunity to redeem themselves.

## **15 Security of assessment tasks**

Where there is more than one class studying the same unit 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.

## **16 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 (or pair of units) and may be required by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority for moderation purposes.

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 the school; however, classroom teachers can supervise student access to their file for revision purposes.

The School retains the files until the marks have been accepted by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority. The written assessment tasks and/or folios are available to students for collection after the marks have been accepted. All materials not collected by the students by the end of the school year will be securely disposed of. All non-written assessment tasks will be erased at the end of the school year.

## **17 Reviewing marks and grades**

If a student considers that there is an issue about the delivery of the course, the marking of an assessment task or about the grade assigned for a course unit (or pair of units) 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 School Curriculum and Standards Authority requirements
- 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.

If this review does not resolve the issue, the student (or parent/guardian) may appeal to the School Curriculum and Standards Authority using an appeal form which is available from the Deputy Principal – Curriculum. Council representatives will then independently investigate the situation and report to the Council's appeal panel. If the panel upholds a student appeal the School will make any required adjustments to the student's marks and/or grades and re-issue reports as necessary.

## **18 Moratoriums**

- No assessment items are to be set or to have a last date for submission which falls seven (7) days prior to the start of the examination period.
- General course units can have assignments due and assessments scheduled in the seven (7) days prior to Years 11 and 12 examinations. However, if a student in one of these subjects is also studying ATAR course units they may negotiate an extension with their teacher.

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