

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING POLICY

YEAR 7 - 12



INTRODUCTION

The following guidelines have been developed so that students, parents/guardians and teachers are aware of their responsibilities in the assessment and reporting process. The application of the Assessment and Reporting Policy may vary according to a specific learning area context. Students and parents will be advised well in advance of any amendments. The outcomes which students may derive from their studies will be determined in a manner that is procedurally fair.

1. PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT

Assessment assists teachers and schools in:

- monitoring the progress of students and diagnosing learning difficulties;
- providing feedback to students;
- adjusting programs;
- developing subsequent learning programs;
- making judgements of student achievement in relation to expected standards;
- reporting student achievement to parents;
- whole-school and system planning, reporting and accountability procedures.

Assessment procedures must therefore be fair, valid, educative, explicit and reliable.

2. ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

Teachers at Ballajura Community College collect a range of information on students to make accurate and reliable judgements about their skills and understandings, these may include formal tests, assignments, practical work or anecdotal information. All assessments are carried out under specified conditions that are substantially the same for all students, ensuring the authentication of student work. Students with special needs are catered for in appropriate ways and in accordance with School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA) guidelines. Year 11 and 12 assessment has mandatory guidelines set by SCSA and for Years 7 – 10 by the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline (WACAO). A subject/course unit outline (including task deadlines) and assessment outline must be provided to all students (Years 7 – 12) at the start of the learning program. Assessment for students undertaking VET qualifications is governed by standards established by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) and the relevant Registered Training Organisation (RTO).

3. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the student's responsibility to:

- complete all subject/course/learning area requirements by the due date;
- maintain a folio of evidence for each subject/course/learning area studied and to make it available whenever required;
- maintain a good record of attendance, conduct and progress;
- initiate contact with teachers concerning absence from class, missed assessments, extension requests and other issues pertaining to assessment;
- complete any missed work that occurred as a result of their absence.

4. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the teaching staff to:

- develop a teaching/learning program that meets SCSA/WACAO/RTO requirements and guidelines;
- provide students with a subject/course outline and assessment outline at the start of the subject/course;
- provide students with assessment instructions
- ensure that assessments are fair, valid, educative, explicit and reliable;
- provide students with timely assessment feedback and guidance;
- maintain accurate records of student achievement and assessment in SEQTA;
- meet school and external timelines for assessment and reporting;
- participate in moderation processes at the College, with College networks and SCSA;
- inform students and parents of academic progress as appropriate;
- ensure all students have the opportunity to complete scheduled assessment tasks in class time;
- modify assessment tasks where students are known to have learning difficulty;
- where a student has missed an assessment, apply the most appropriate missed assessment protocol and enter a note in SEQTA marksbook under “private annotation”.

5. MISSED ASSESSMENT DUE TO ABSENCE FROM CLASS

General

Section 23 of the School Education Act 1999 requires that students attend school on the days on which it is open for instruction. The Department of Education has determined that a minimum of 90% attendance is considered regular attendance. Students with attendance below 90% are deemed ‘at risk’ and their ability to achieve to their potential can be limited. Frequent absence from school often results in lower levels of achievement or assessment requirements not being met. It is accepted that some students may not be able to achieve 100% attendance due to unforeseen circumstances such as illness or other reasonable causes. Absence from school needs to be supported by information and/or documentation from parents/guardians.

Scheduled assessments

Students must complete all assessments to ensure course requirements are met. Absence from a scheduled assessment must be explained by telephone call, letter, email or SEQTA message from parent/guardian or a medical certificate (for absences of three or more days duration or where a student is repeatedly absent for an assessment task). It is preferred that the College is notified in advance by the parent/guardian if a student knows they are going to be absent for a scheduled assessment. Parents/guardians will be notified if the student does not complete an assessment or if the student is deemed to be at risk of receiving a significantly lower grade than expected as a result of non-completion or non-submission of an assessment.

Authorised Absence

If a student has an authorised absence on a day when an assessment is scheduled for completion or submission, it is the student’s responsibility to make alternate arrangements before the due date, where possible. Authorised absences include incursion, excursion, in-school appointment, illness, attendance at a cultural or religious event, an unavoidable medical appointment, withdrawal or suspension.

Where non-completion and/or non-submission of an assessment is due to an authorised absence the teacher will apply one of the following strategies, ensuring that the student and class is not unfairly favoured or disadvantaged:

- extension of time – determined by the teacher;
- rescheduling of in-class assessment - the student will be required to complete the assessment as soon as possible after return to school;

- provision of an alternative assessment task;
- provision of a remotely accessible assessment – where the principles of assessment can be accommodated;
- estimation of performance - based on previous performance and class performance for that assessment – not applicable to VET qualifications and Endorsed Programs;
- exemption from sitting that assessment - not applicable to VET qualifications and Endorsed Programs.

Teachers must record the strategy applied against the assessment in the marksbook and notify parents/guardians.

Unauthorised Absence

If non-completion and/or non-submission of an assessment is due to an unauthorised absence, the student will be required to complete the assessment upon return to school or as required by the classroom teacher, where the student and class is not unfairly favoured or disadvantaged. Unexplained absences, vacations, truancy and other unacceptable reasons are deemed unauthorised absences and penalties will be applied.

Penalties for non-completion and/or non-submission of an assessment without an acceptable reason include:

- a scaled reduction of the mark at 10% per day if completed/submitted within two days;
- a maximum mark of 50% if more than two days after the completion/submission date;
- a mark of zero if more than five days passed completion/submission date or not completed/submitted.

Where re-scheduling the completion and/or submission of an assessment task may result in unfair favour or disadvantage, for example, after a term break, the student will receive a mark of zero.

A loss of Good Standing may also be applied as a result of the unauthorised absence (see Good Standing Policy).

Any consequence applied for non-completion and/or late submission of an assessment will be applied by the teacher in consultation with the Head of Department and communicated to parents/guardians.

VET qualifications and Endorsed Programs

For VET qualifications the student must complete/submit all assessments in line with the RTO's training and assessment schedule. As VET assessment is competency based, estimation, exemption and scaled reductions are not applicable to assessments that are not completed/submitted as per the schedule.

All components of an Endorsed Program must be completed in line with the College's course and assessment outline. Endorsed Programs are assessed as Achieved or Not Achieved and as such, estimation, exemption and scaled reductions are not applicable to assessments that are not completed/submitted as per the outline.

Extensions

Generally, it will not be possible for students to seek an extension of deadlines for assessment submission. Submission of an application for an extension does not guarantee its acceptance. Extensions may be given at the discretion of a teacher in cases of illness or other reasonable cause. If a student does not apply for and receive an extension, the penalties will be the same as for non-completion or non-submission of an assessment without an acceptable explanation of their absence.

An application for an extension must be:

- submitted in writing;
- submitted before the assessment's due date;
- accompanied by supporting documentation (e.g. medical certificate) where relevant;
- signed by a parent/guardian.

Prolonged absence

Where a student is unable to attend school for a lengthy period due to injury or illness, the school will provide support for the student's learning and assessment program.

Absence due to family holiday

In line with Department of Education guidelines, the Principal does not authorise holidays during school time due to implications on student learning. Where parents choose to do this, teachers may provide support where possible. Where a student will be absent from scheduled assessments due to family holiday, the student must negotiate to complete and submit the assessment prior to holiday departure or email the assessment to the teacher by the due date.

Absence due to state or national representation

Where a student has been selected to represent the state or the nation in an event, the parent may request authorisation from the Principal. This must occur in person or in writing prior to the event where a modified schedule may be considered depending on the circumstances and duration.

Regular or frequent absence from assessments

Where a student repeatedly misses assessments, the College will arrange a meeting to discuss the reasons behind this and determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised and if any supports are required.

Late enrolments

Where a student enrolls late in the College or the class, the classroom teacher, in consultation with the Head of Department will make a judgement as to the impact of the missed work in determining a final mark/grade for the student.

6. CHANGING A SUBJECT/COURSE (ALL SUBJECTS/COURSES FOR YEAR 11 & 12/ VOCATIONAL AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUBJECTS FOR YEAR 9 & 10)

Generally, it is not possible to change subjects/courses after the first month, as to do so would place a student at risk of not completing requirements. The school will only consider changes in exceptional circumstances. All changes must have parental approval and changes must be negotiated through the principal or their nominated representative. Where a student changes school during a school year, credit for the completion of work in the same subject/course will be given when the student and/or previous school supplies appropriate evidence (Year 11 & 12).

7. SCHEDULED ASSESSMENT PROTOCOLS

It is a requirement of the College that students follow test conditions when sitting a scheduled in-class assessment. Mobile phones and electronic devices are to be stored in the students' bag and placed at the front/rear of the classroom, as directed by the classroom teacher. Students are expected to remain silent and not to leave the classroom during the assessment. Only clear water filled bottles and items specified by the classroom teacher will be allowed during the assessment. The classroom teacher will inform students when additional or alternate requirements apply, particularly in subject areas that include practical components.

8. CHEATING, COLLUSION AND PLAGIARISM

All work in each individual assessment task must be the work of the student. Students must not cheat (i.e. engage in a dishonest act to gain an unfair advantage). Students are not permitted to submit for marking, as original, any work which:

- is prepared or substantively contributed to by another person (e.g. student, teacher, tutor or expert);
- is copied or downloaded from the internet, including Artificial Intelligence Applications generated responses from the internet, without acknowledging the source;
- paraphrases or summarises the work of others.

If a student is believed to have engaged in cheating, collusion or plagiarism, the teacher will refer the matter to the relevant Head of Department/Teacher-in-Charge responsible for the course. As part of this process, the student and the parent/guardian will be informed of the suspected inappropriate behaviour. The student will be provided with the right of reply.

If it is demonstrated 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 the part of the assessment task where the teacher can identify that the work is not the student's own.

The student and parent/guardian will be informed in writing of the decision made, the penalty and any further disciplinary action.

9. STATE AND NATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)

Students in Year 7 and 9 are required to sit NAPLAN tests in Reading, Writing, Numeracy and Language Conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation.) These assessments are held nationwide and take place every year. All students who participate in the NAPLAN tests will receive an individual report of their results.

Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessments (OLNA)

As an essential requirement of Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) achievement, all students are required to achieve a minimum standard of literacy and numeracy. This standard can be met by achieving Band 8 or above in NAPLAN Reading, Writing and Numeracy tests in Year 9, or through successful completion of the Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessments (OLNA). Students in years 9 – 12 have the opportunity to participate in these tests until they are successful in all three assessments. Year 9 and 10 students have one attempt whereas years 11 and 12 students have two attempts per year. Parents will be informed of their child's progress in the OLNA as soon as practicable once the College receives the results.

Externally Set Task (EST)

The EST is a written assessment task which is developed by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority and is designed to be completed within 50 minutes. It is included in the assessment schedule of the Year 12 General and Foundation syllabuses as a separate assessment with a weighting of 15% for the pair of units. All students that are enrolled in a General Year 12 and/or Foundation Year 12 Course are required to complete the EST. If a student is enrolled in more than one general and/or foundation course, they will be required to undertake an EST for each course. The school will administer the ESTs during Weeks 3, 4 and 5 in Term 2 under scheduled assessment protocols (see section 7). Students undertaking a Music course will not be required to have audio files. Students undertaking Mathematics Essentials are permitted to take in one page of notes.

10. EXAMINATIONS

Regulations

When attending examinations, students must adhere to the regulations for that examination. Details of regulations will be issued with the examination timetable. Infringement of regulations will result in an appropriate penalty.

Attendance (Year 11 and 12)

Students must attend scheduled examinations. In exceptional circumstances, alternative arrangements may be negotiated through the principal and/or delegate (Year 11 and 12) before the examination date. Participating in family holidays may not be accepted as an exceptional circumstance.

11. STUDENTS REQUIRING SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

The school will ensure that students with special educational needs are catered for in an appropriate way and in accordance with SCSA/NAPLAN/OLNA guidelines.

12. GRADING

Student achievement will be assessed according to the requirements as directed through the:

- WACAO (Years 7 – 10);
- WACE Manual (Years 11 -12); and/or
- documented industry specific standards for the VET course (Years 10 -12).

This implies that grade cut-offs are not pre-determined. Teachers, under the guidance of their Head of Department/Teacher in Charge, will incorporate the following process in determining student grades:

- During the assessment process, teachers may apply a statistical adjustment to student marks where an assessment, upon reflection, has been deemed too easy or too difficult. This adjustment is referred to as standardisation and will take place under consideration from the Head of Department.
- At the end of the learning cycle, the teacher will rank all students (where the subject is taught across multiple classes, the marks will be merged onto one ranking sheet).
- The teacher will identify indicative 'grading cut-points' that align with historical judgements, previous performance of the students, validity and effectiveness of the assessment tools used during the learning cycle.
- The teacher will analyse the student work, with reference to the judging standards/grade related descriptors of the students close to either side of the cut points to determine the actual 'cut point'.

Note: in programs where the work requirements are modified, e.g., ACCESS, LINKS and ACE, there may be considerable differences in cut-points compared to mainstream classes, due to the design of assessments

For example, at the end of one reporting cycle, the cut-point for a "C" grade in year 12 ATAR English may be equated to a final mark of 47% based on all the assessments that were carried out over the year in relation to the grade related descriptors, whereas the cut point for a "C" grade in year 12 Human Biology may be equated to a final mark of 52%. This may differ again in another reporting cycle.

Students at Risk

Provision is made in the WACAO where, after considering the best interests of a student's development and self-esteem and in consultation with parents, the A-E grades may be replaced with an alternative reporting format.

13. REPORTING

Students will be kept informed of their progress throughout their course. Teachers will assess completed tasks and provide prompt assessment feedback to the student. Parents will be regularly informed about a student's progress. Students and parents/guardians will be informed when it is identified that there is a risk of the student not:

- achieving their potential
- completing the subject/course requirements and receiving a D or an E grade (Year 11 and 12)
- making satisfactory progress toward the completion of VET qualifications
- meeting WACE requirements (Year 11 & 12).

Student achievement is reported to SCSA. SCSA statistically moderates the school assessment based on the school performance in the external examination. The moderated school assessment appears on the student's record of achievement. For VET qualifications, student achievement is reported to the relevant RTO for validation.

14. RETENTION AND DISPOSAL OF STUDENT'S WORK

Students are responsible for retaining all their marked written assessment tasks. To assist students, the College will establish an assessment file for each student for each course/program. The file holds all the student's marked written assessment tasks. The College will retain all non-written assessment tasks (typically as audio or video recordings or digital products). All assessment material is required by the teacher when assigning grades at the completion of the pair of units. The Authority may request access to these assessment files for moderation purposes so students must retain their files until the College's grades are approved by the Authority, at the conclusion of student appeals at the end of Term 4.

Students will have access to the assessment file for revision purposes during class time and for home study in the week prior to the Semester 1 and Semester 2 examination periods. The files will be available to students for collection at the end of the school year. All materials not collected by the end of the year are securely disposed of by the College.

The College will not use the materials for any other purposes without the written permission of the student.

Retention and disposal of students' VET work

The RTO must retain evidence that contains enough details to demonstrate the judgement made by your assessors of how the student's performance meets the required standards, and your assessment tools. Each assessment tool should require an assessor to provide feedback to the student, both where competency has been demonstrated and where further evidence is required.

The RTO must securely retain—and produce in full if required—all completed student assessment items for each student for a period of six months from the date on which the judgement of competence for the student was made. The RTO must also retain sufficient data to be able to reissue AQF certification documentation for a period of 30 years. The College must comply with the RTO's requirements.