

## **ASSESSMENT POLICY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This policy has been developed to ensure that students, parents/guardians and teachers are aware of their responsibilities in the assessment process. The policy has been developed in accordance with regulations set by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA).

All WACE assessments of Foundation, General and ATAR courses, as well as Endorsed courses and VET Units of Competency are covered by this policy.

### **Adaptive and Supportive Education in the Young Adult Learning Environment**

It is the task of the College to adequately work with, and for, students who experience difficulties with their learning. The College will adapt the curriculum and assessment practices where possible to allow all students the greatest possible access to learning opportunities.

The first step in this process is to identify students who may experience difficulties. In some cases, the previous school will provide this information to the College. Identified students will be supported by the Academic Support Teacher(s) in collaboration with the course teachers. Students can self-refer to the Manager of Student Studies for further support and advice.

### **1. OVERVIEW**

Assessment is the process of gathering information about students and their learning and making judgements on achievement, using the data gathered.

The purpose of assessment is to assist students, teachers and parents/carers to:

- monitor the progress of all students and identify issues impeding student progress;
- adjust programs to ensure all students have the opportunity to demonstrate the intended outcomes; and
- report on student achievement accurately.

Assessment procedures must therefore be valid, reliable and inclusive and specifically reflect the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA) Assessment Principles:

- Assessment should be an integral part of teaching and learning.
- Assessment should be educative.
- Assessment should be fair.
- Assessments should be designed to meet their specific purposes.
- Assessment should lead to informative reporting.
- Assessment should lead to school wide evaluation processes.

## 2. ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

Student guidelines have been set by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA) and adherence to these parameters is mandatory. At the beginning of each course the following **must** be provided to students:

- a course outline that includes information on the content, the sequence in which content will be taught and the approximate time to teach each section of the unit/course
- the Authority syllabus for the pair of units which includes the grade descriptions
- an assessment outline for the pair of units that includes:
  - the number of tasks to be assessed
  - a general description of each assessment task
  - the assessment type, as prescribed in the syllabus
  - an indication of the syllabus content on which each task is based
  - the approximate timing of each assessment task (i.e. the week the task will be conducted or the start and submission dates for an extended task)
  - the weighting for each assessment task
  - the weighting for each assessment type, as prescribed in the assessment table of the syllabus

## 3. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

The teaching and administrative staff at Mindarie Senior College will work towards developing a learning environment that supports the students and will:

- develop a teaching and learning program that marries the requirements of the current SCSA guidelines and the College ethos
- provide students with a “course outline and assessment outline” at the commencement of the course
- make the course outline and assessment outline available via Connect
- ensure that assessments are fair, valid and reliable;
- program sufficient and valid tasks for the basis of interim reporting
- ensure that assessments are marked and feedback provided within 1-2 weeks
- record marks on Reporting to Parents
- ensure their marks book is published via Connect for student and parent access
- be able to report progress towards a minimum of two Units of Competency by the end of Term 1 e.g. Certificate II/III
- ensure that a mark is recorded on Reporting to Parents/Connect before Interim Reports in Term 1
- provide a WACE course mark and grade at the end of each semester. Note that marks given by teachers and the school (including those on Connect) are provisional, subject to change and must be accepted by SCSA before being finalised
- provide appropriate feedback at the end of each semester for endorsed programs and certificate courses (if applicable)
- provide a SCSA mark, exam mark and grade as required, for each course at the end of the year
- ensure in all ATAR courses a significant majority (at least 75%) of student work and assessments will be supervised and completed in class, and used to validate learning that occurs both at school and elsewhere
- maintain accurate records of student achievement and assessment;

- inform students and parents/carers of academic progress as appropriate, including failing a course, failure to submit or complete a task on time
- in consultation with their Managers, teachers will be flexible in the assessment requirements with students on alternative/flexible programs and provide modified programs and take prior work into consideration, if the student transfers part of the way into the course or required a modified assessment program
- store assessment files for each student for review by SCSA or relevant RTO
- engage in school and SCSA moderation activities as applicable
- make assessment files available to students for revision purposes
- meet College and external timeframes for assessment and reporting
- inform students and parents/guardians of academic progress as appropriate
- record any missed assessments on SEQTA using the missed assessments pastoral care type.

#### **4. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the student's responsibility:

- to attend regularly, be punctual and actively participate in class activities
- to perform all assessment tasks by the agreed or negotiated due date. It is the student's responsibility to adhere to this date
- to be up-to-date with all course work including class work, assessments, tests and exams. Assessments are required by SCSA when moderation visits occur and for small group moderation purposes
- to initiate contact with teachers concerning absence from class, missed assessments, extension requests and other issues pertaining to assessments.

As a consequence of the above responsibilities, the following procedures have been implemented as College policy where students fail to submit tasks.

#### **5. PROCEDURES FOR ASSESSMENT TASKS**

Each teacher will ensure that all students are clearly and explicitly informed at the beginning of the year/semester about the procedure for calculating the results in their course area. Failure to submit assessment tasks by the set time will result in a lower mark being awarded, unless the student provides acceptable evidence. Where possible, advance notification of absence is required. Going on a holiday is not a valid reason for students to miss College. However, if this does occur, it is the student's responsibility to liaise with his or her teachers to request the study requirements for that period of absence from the College; however, it is not incumbent on the teachers to provide study material for vacation absences.

##### **a) Extensions**

A student may apply to the class teacher for an extension to the due date for a task. This must be applied to prior to the due date.

Extensions may be given at the discretion of a teacher, in consultation with the Manager of the Learning Area, in cases of valid reasons e.g. factors beyond the control of the student have resulted in the late submission of work.

If a student does not apply for, or receive an extension, then the same consequences will apply as those that apply for missed work, when there is no satisfactory explanation of an absence.

### **b) Late or Missed Assessments**

In cases where work is not submitted on time, teachers will make their judgements on the evidence that is already available by the deadline.

Students will complete all assessment tasks with appropriate penalty applied at the first opportunity upon their return to school.

Students who have been absent for in-class tests more than twice without a medical certificate will be required to produce a medical certificate for any subsequent similar absences throughout the year.

The College will accept the following conditions as acceptable evidence:

- sickness or injury supported by a certificate from a Medical Practitioner or a valid note from parents/carers.
- a major family upset – confirmed by a written statement from a responsible adult.
- transfers between schools.
- a situation that is deemed acceptable by the Manager of the appropriate Learning Area.

For practical assessments that cannot be replicated (i.e. Outdoor Ed Camps), a medical certificate is required. Where this is the situation, students who have been absent due to an acceptable reason, should negotiate with the class teacher for an alternative arrangement.

*An unacceptable reason could result in a mark of zero.*

### **c) Late Work Penalty**

If there is no evidence available, late work will be penalised by 10% off the raw score per College day (including Wednesday) to a maximum of 30% penalty of the raw mark awarded for that task.

After 7 days it is at the teacher's discretion to negotiate a plan for the completion of the work (i.e. Wednesdays, after school, break times) and deducting further marks which could result in a final mark of zero.

Certificate courses require students to submit 100% of the unit evidence by a set date and failure to do this may result in a student not achieving the assessed Unit of Competency and therefore not receiving the full qualification.

Work submitted excessively late, as determined by the Manager and the teacher, may not be marked. The Manager and teacher will consider SCSA deadlines, reporting deadlines and other matters when considering marking excessively late work.

## **6. CHEATING, COLLUSION AND PLAGIARISM**

If a student is believed to have engaged in inappropriate behaviour (such as cheating, plagiarism or collusion) the College will inform the student and parent/carer. The teacher, in consultation with the Manager of the Learning Area will investigate whether this behaviour has occurred and if it constitutes cheating, collusion or plagiarism. The student will be provided with the right of reply in this investigation. Where it is established beyond reasonable doubt that behaviour constituting cheating, collusion or plagiarism has occurred, the College will inform the student and the parent/carer of the result of the investigation and penalty.

If cheating, collusion or plagiarism is established, then students could be given a mark of zero for that assessment. This will clearly affect their progress in the course.

Those students who allow other students to access their work during a test or examination will be similarly penalised.

Students who submit work that is not their own, or has been copied from an unquoted source, will be asked to resubmit their own work which will attract a late penalty. Failure to do this will result in a zero score being awarded.

## **7. SECURITY OF ASSESSMENT TASKS**

Where there is more than one class studying the same pair of units at the College, all the assessment tasks will be the same to ensure student marks are on the same scale. In cases where there is more than one class, 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 and retained by the teacher until the task has been completed by all classes. 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 collusion and the students may be penalised.

Where the College uses the same assessment task or examination as other schools, the task/examination and the student responses will be retained by the teacher until the task/examination has been completed by all schools.

## **8. PROLONGED ABSENCE**

Where a student is unable to attend College for a lengthy period owing to injury or illness, the College may be approached to provide some support to the student's learning program.

## **9. CHANGING COURSES**

Where possible, recognition of comparable course achievement will be given and credit granted. Students who move to a lower stage in a course should be allowed to transfer credit on the work completed, with an appropriate marks adjustment made.

Course changes from ATAR to General are dependent on the capacity of the College to provide for the change and must have the agreement of the parent/carer. Course changes must be organised through the Associate Principal or nominated staff.

The assessment profile will be adjusted, for a student entering late into a course, so as to not disadvantage the student, however the student may be required to complete missed work as required.

Where a student enters the College during the year, credit for the completion of work in the same course will be based upon the student and/or previous school supplying appropriate evidence.

## 10. EXTERNALLY SET TASKS (EST)

All students enrolled in a Year 12 General or Foundation course are required to complete an externally set task (EST) for that course. The EST is a 50-minute written assessment task developed by SCSA based on content from Unit 3. It is completed in class under standard test conditions.

The EST is included in the assessment outline for the pair of units. This assessment task has a weighting of 15% of the final mark for the pair of units.

Where a student does not complete the EST they will be required to complete the task at the first available opportunity (generally within 2 days of the student's return to school). If this is not until after the date that SCSA requires to school to submit the EST marks, then the school will determine if the reason for non-completion is acceptable, and if not acceptable the student will be allocated a mark of zero. If the reason is acceptable to the College, the teacher will decide on an alternative assessment task (if, in the opinion of the teacher, the task is no longer confidential), OR not require the task to be completed and re-weight the student's marks for other tasks.

## 11. EXAMINATIONS

### a) Regulations

- All WACE ATAR courses will be examined in Semester 1 and 2.
- When attending examinations, students must adhere to the regulations that pertain to that examination which align to SCSA requirements for ATAR examinations at the end of Year 12
- Regulations will be issued with the examination timetable
- Infringement will result in an appropriate penalty, as outlined in the WACE Manual and may also affect student's Good Standing.

### b) Sickness and Misadventure (Illness and other reasons)

- Students should attend scheduled examinations or they may receive a mark of zero.
- In exceptional circumstances special alternative arrangements may be made through the Principal or their delegate.
- If the reason is acceptable to the College, an alternative date will be set, or where this is not possible, the student will not sit the examination and their marks for other tasks will be re-weighted.
- If students fail to attend an examination through sickness, a medical certificate may be required for missed examination(s) at the discretion of the Learning Area Manager.
- Please note that for any non-valid reason for absence – including a family holiday, students will be awarded a mark of zero for the examination.
- External WACE examinations do not allow for re-sitting and in the case of sickness or misadventure, students must apply to SCSA for Sickness and Misadventure consideration. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer and student to submit this form to SCSA.

### **c) Students with Special Needs**

The College will ensure that students with special needs are catered for in an appropriate way and in accordance with SCSA guidelines.

- Students with a diagnosed disability will, (where their disability, impairment or medical condition will significantly affect their access to a particular assessment task) have written and/or practical assessment tasks (including school examinations) adjusted by the teacher, in consultation with the Academic Support Teacher/Learning Area manager.
- These adjustments will be consistent with those described in the SCSA Guidelines for Disability Adjustments for Timed Assessments. Adjustments, depending on the individual students' needs, can include special equipment, provision of a scribe, or additional time to complete the task.
- Students who are unable to complete an assessment task because of their special educational needs, will be provided with alternative opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understandings.
- For WACE examination candidates a formal application will be made by the parent/carer and student, in partnership with the College, early in the year in which the student intends to sit the examination. This needs to be based on adjustments made their secondary schooling or a recent diagnosis.

## **12. REPORTING AND PARENT/CARER COMMUNICATION**

Students will be kept informed of their progress throughout their enrolment in a course. Teachers will assess completed tasks, and relay assessment information to the student promptly. Parents/carers and Mentor Teachers will be regularly informed about a student's progress. Both students and parents/carers will be informed when it is identified that there is a risk of the student not completing a course and/or failure.

## **13. ASSESSMENT REVIEW AND APPEAL PROCESSES**

If a student considers that there is an issue about the delivery of the course, or the marking of one or more assessment tasks, or the grade assigned for a pair of units they should, in the first instance discuss the issue with the teacher. If the issue cannot be resolved through discussion with the teacher, then the student (or parent/carer) should discuss the issue with the relevant Learning Area Manager.

At the end of the year, students are provided with the mark and the grade submitted to SCSA. A student may appeal these marks and grades to determine the following:

- The College's assessment outline conforms with syllabus requirements
- The College assessment policy conforms with the SCSA guidelines
- The College assessment procedures conform to its own assessment policy
- There are any procedural or computational errors in the determination of the school mark and/or grade

On receipt of a written request for a review from a student or their parent/carer the College will conduct a review. If the College assessment review does not resolve the student's concerns, the student may appeal to SCSA against the College assessment. This must be lodged, with the College written review, by the closing date in each year, to SCSA. The closing date is published in the SCSA Year 12 Information Handbook, available on the SCSA website.