

**ST COLUMBA'S
CATHOLIC COLLEGE**



ACT JUSTLY

Assessment Information Handbook

Year 12, 2020

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Rationale

Assessment is the broad name for the collection and evaluation of evidence of a student's learning. It is integral to teaching and learning, involving the gathering of valid and useful information and making judgements about student achievement for a variety of purposes.

In Stage 6, those purposes include:

- assisting student learning
- evaluating and improving teaching and learning programs
- providing evidence of student achievement and course completion in Year 11 and Year 12 courses
- providing data for the end of school credential (RoSA/HSC).

NESA mandates that all schools are required to develop an assessment program for each Year 11 and Year 12 course.

Assessment at St Columba's Catholic College is both formal and informal and uses three approaches of assessment for, as and of learning to enable teachers to gather evidence and make judgements about student achievement:

- Assessment FOR Learning: *involves teachers using evidence about students' knowledge, understanding and skills to inform their teaching. Sometimes referred to as 'formative assessment', it usually occurs throughout the teaching and learning process to clarify student learning and understanding.*
- Assessment AS Learning: *occurs when students are their own assessors. Students monitor their own learning, ask questions and use a range of strategies to decide what they know and can do, and how to use assessment information for new learning. Self and peer feedback is integral in this form of assessment*
- Assessment OF Learning: *assists teachers in using evidence of student learning to assess achievement against outcomes and standards. This approach to assessment is sometimes referred to as 'summative assessment'.*

At St Columba's Catholic College, a variety of assessment tools are used to measure student performance. The nature of tasks vary within and across courses. Each formal assessment task in a course is given a weighting based on syllabus requirements and is derived from syllabus course components. **One unit HSC courses have a maximum of three assessment tasks per year, whilst two unit HSC courses have a maximum of four assessment tasks per year.**

Effective formal assessment tasks are:-

- based on syllabus outcomes
- valid instruments for what they are designed to assess
- those which include criteria to clarify for students what aspects of learning are being assessed
- those which enable students to demonstrate their learning in a range of task types
- reliable, measure what the task intends to assess, and provide accurate information on each student's achievement

- free from bias and provide evidence that accurately represents a student's knowledge, understanding and skills
- those which enable students and teachers to use feedback effectively and reflect on the learning process
- inclusive of and accessible for all students
- part of an ongoing process where progress is monitored over time.

Assessment is **standards referenced**. Standards-referenced assessment refers to the process of collecting and interpreting information about students' learning. It uses syllabus outcomes as key reference points for decisions about students' progress and achievement. A standards-referenced approach to assessment and reporting means that the achievements of a student are assessed and reported against specified standards that are established for each course. These standards are reflected in the Bands for each course.

In the Higher School Certificate these standards are:

- the knowledge, skills and understanding expected to be learned by students as a result of studying the course – the Syllabus Standards
- the levels of achievement of the knowledge, skills and understanding (reported in six bands) – the Performance Standards.

Together, they specify what is to be learned and how well it is to be achieved.

A standards-referenced approach provides the means by which students know what they are expected to learn and the standards against which they will be assessed.

Why do we need to have an Assessment Policy?

The College Assessment Policy has been designed so that no student can be advantaged or disadvantaged by the school's system of assessment for the Higher School Certificate. Assessment at St Columba's Catholic College encourages progressive development of skills and knowledge while ensuring:

- consistency across subjects and courses
- fairness in marking and reporting
- coordination of the assessment program to ease the load on students

Internal school assessment plays an important role in assessing overall student achievement in an HSC course by:

- assessing student achievement of a wider range of syllabus outcomes than may be measured by the external examination
- assessing outcomes that are more easily assessed in settings other than the HSC exam e.g. Fieldwork
- providing multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their achievements
- providing different ways, other than approaches used in the HSC exam, for students to demonstrate their achievements

Central to our College Assessment Policy is **justice** and the dignity of each person through fair and transparent assessment practices.

Rights and Responsibilities of Learners in the assessment process

Every student at St Columba's Catholic College has the right to:

- fairness and equity in the assessment process
- at least two week's notice for any assessment task
- feedback on their assessment work within a two week (10 school day) timeframe
- be fully informed about the assessment program for each course/unit at the commencement of study
- not have more than 2 assessment tasks on one day
- appeal
- disability provisions if they have significant learning needs

Every student at St Columba's Catholic College has the responsibility to:

- keep a copy of every Assessment Task
- submit every Assessment Task on time (hand in)
- participate fully in all 'in class' assessment tasks
- co-operate with the process of assessment at our College and follow all procedures
- inform the College and relevant Leader of Learning if they are or to be absent on the day of an Assessment Task
- to be familiar with the information contained in this *Assessment Information Handbook*
- regularly attend school

What is the purpose of the Higher School Certificate Program of Study?

The purpose of the Higher School Certificate program of study is to:

- provide a curriculum structure that encourages students to complete secondary education
- foster the intellectual, social and moral development of students, in particular developing their:
 - knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes in the fields of study they choose
 - capacity to manage their own learning
 - desire to continue learning in formal or informal settings beyond school
 - capacity to work together with others
 - respect for the cultural diversity of Australian society
- provide a flexible structure within which students can prepare for
 - further education and training
 - employment
 - full and active participation as citizens
- provide formal assessment and certification of students' achievements
- provide a context within which schools also have the opportunity to foster students' physical and spiritual development.

Requirements of the Education Act

The requirements of the Education Act 1990 and as prescribed by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) in relation to the New South Wales Higher School Certificate.

The Education Act 1990 provides for the Higher School Certificate to be awarded by the NSW Education Standards Authority for students who have:

- gained a Record of School Achievement (or other qualification considered satisfactory by NESA)
- attended a government school (or accredited, registered non-government school)
- participated, to NESA's satisfaction, in courses of study which have been determined to be appropriate
- completed those courses to NESA's satisfaction
- undertaken the requisite examinations or other forms of assessment
- complied with any requirements prescribed by the regulations or any requirements imposed by the Minister of Education or NESA

NESA may refuse to grant a Higher School Certificate to a student whose attendance or application at school has been of such an unsatisfactory character that the award of the certificate would not, in the opinion of NESA, be justified.

Curriculum Requirements for the HSC

The Higher School Certificate (HSC) is a Certificate issued by the NSW Education Standards Authority.

To be eligible for the Higher School Certificate a student must:

- study a combination of courses, which meet the requirements of the HSC
- complete a Preliminary Course of study in an approved combination of subjects
- complete the requirements for each course
- have a satisfactory record of attendance and application in their studies
- sit for and make a genuine attempt at the HSC exam

In addition all students must complete:

Preliminary Year	HSC Year
At least 6 units of Board Developed Courses	At least 6 units of Board Developed Courses
At least 2 units of Board Developed English	At least 2 units of Board Developed English
At least 3 courses of 2 unit value (or greater)	At least 3 courses of 2 unit value (or greater)
and	and
At least 4 subjects	At least 4 subjects

Please note:

- a maximum of 6 units from Science can count towards the study pattern for the Preliminary HSC and 7 units of Science for the HSC course.
- in the Preliminary Year, the pattern of study must comprise a minimum of 12 units and in the HSC Year a minimum of 10 units.

To be eligible for the HSC at St Columba's Catholic College, a student must also study at least 1 unit of Board Developed or Board Endorsed Religious Education i.e. Studies of Religion 2, Studies of Religion 1 or Religion: Catholic Studies (1 unit).

Assessment Guidelines and Procedures

1. Formal Assessment Tasks: Distribution of Assessment Task Notification Sheets, Assessment Schedules and the Assessment Calendar

Assessment for the HSC Course commences during Term 4 after the completion of the Preliminary Course. At the commencement of the HSC Course, students will be issued with an Assessment Handbook and Assessment Schedules for each course. These documents are published on the College website and on the Year Group's Google Classroom page. Due dates for each assessment task for each course are placed on the Assessment Calendar which is also published on the College website. It is mandated at St Columba's Catholic College that students in Stage 6 attend an Assessment Information evening where they will be required to sign a class list to indicate that they have received their Assessment Handbook and Assessment Schedules.

Formal Assessment Tasks are either 'hand-in' tasks or 'in-class' tasks. Students will **NOT** be required to complete **more than two assessment tasks** on any given day of the calendar year.

Students at St Columba's Catholic College will be provided with **at least TWO weeks notice** of an assessment task in an Assessment Task Notification Sheet. This notification sheet will be provided to all students in **HARD COPY** and must be signed for by each student. The Assessment Task will be placed on the class Google Classroom page on the same day it is distributed in hard copy to students.

The Assessment Task Notification Sheet provides the following information to students:

- the date for submission or completion of a task
- the syllabus outcomes being assessed in the task
- the weighting of the task in relation to the final assessment mark
- details of the task to be completed
- marking criteria for the task (not including examination/test tasks)

2. Changes to Assessment Schedules and the Assessment Calendar

The date of an assessment task may need to change from the original for various school circumstances. If assessment dates need to change, students will be provided with sufficient written notice of the change. All changes to assessment dates will be amended on the Assessment Calendar on the College website.

If the Assessment Task Notification Sheet has not yet been distributed to students, a new assessment schedule will be issued to students. This new schedule will be published on the College website and the Assessment Calendar will be amended. If the Assessment Task Notification Sheet has been distributed to students, the teacher will issue a 'Change of Date to Assessment' sheet to students indicating the new date and reason for change. This rescheduling is subject to the approval of both the relevant Leader of Learning and the Head of Learning. The Assessment Calendar will be amended.

Students will sign a class list to indicate they have received written documentation of any change to assessment.

3. Submitting Hand-in Assessment Tasks

In order to meet the requirements of the Higher School Certificate, NESA mandates each candidate to have completed **all assessment tasks**. Students **MUST submit ALL tasks**, irrespective of any penalty which may be

applied. Only in exceptional circumstances will the Principal, Assistant Principals, Head of Learning and Leader of Learning allow further consideration.

Students must follow this procedure when submitting assessment tasks:

- All hand-in tasks must be submitted by **9am on the due date** in **HARD COPY** directly to the subject teacher or relevant Leader of Learning in **Brauer Hall**.
- Tasks that are submitted after this time will require an Illness/Misadventure form and may result in a zero penalty for part or all of the assessment.
- Assessment tasks **MUST NOT** be submitted to Student Services or to the Main Office. Submission instructions are clearly identified on the Assessment Task Notification Sheet.
- Assessment tasks **CANNOT** be submitted on USB drives, or via Google Classroom or email, unless the class teacher provides direction of this in writing. Tasks submitted by electronic means which have not been received by the due date may be penalised with a zero penalty for part or all of the assessment.

In addition to any other set tasks and experiences in any HSC course, students must complete HSC assessment tasks that contribute **in excess of 50 percent of available marks** in courses where internal assessment marks are submitted.

4. In-class Assessment Tasks

'In-class' assessment tasks must be completed on the due date stipulated on the Assessment Task notification sheet. Tasks that are not completed at this time will require an Illness/Misadventure form and may result in a zero penalty for part or all of the assessment.

5. Technological Failure

Tasks not submitted on the due date owing to computer, device, printer, USB and Internet failure **WILL NOT** be acceptable for grounds of misadventure. **If a student fails to submit an assessment task on time claiming technological failure, a ZERO PENALTY will apply, unless they can provide sufficient evidence of draft work which must be submitted to the teacher on the due date.**

The backing up of all work is the responsibility of the student and the College does not accept responsibility for the lateness of completion of assessment tasks due to technological failure. Students should employ strategies to prevent the loss of work. These might include:

- backing up files regularly
- sending work to your email during the progress of the task
- printing off hard copies during the progress of the task
- saving work in Google Drive
- backing up devices regularly

The use of College facilities on the due date for the printing/finalising of assessment tasks is not permitted.

6. Return of Student Work

All student work is **returned to students within a two week timeframe (ten (10) school days)**. Returned student work will contain advice which indicates:

- the student's attainment in the task relative to the outcomes
- the student's relative position within the school group
- feedback which indicates to the student how they can improve

7. Absence due to Illness or Misadventure

Each assessment task must measure the student's actual performance, not potential performance. The assessment process will not compensate for factors such as extended illness, misadventure or domestic problems, which may have affected a student's performance throughout the course. Assessment marks must not be modified to take into account possible effects of illness or domestic situations.

Notwithstanding this provision, where a student fails to complete an assessment task through absence or is unable to present an assessment for inclusion in the assessment program, yet seeks a mark or grade for the task, the student should complete and submit an Illness/Misadventure form available in this Assessment Handbook or from Student Services.

Misadventure relates to an **unexpected** event that may impact on a student completing an assessment.

The submission of all documentation related to Illness/Misadventure appeals is entirely the responsibility of the student and the onus of proof sits with them.

Students wanting to make an Illness/Misadventure appeal must submit the appropriate form with all relevant documentation to the LOL within **2 days of their return to school**. After 2 days, a Zero Penalty and Warning Letter will be issued.

If the reason for absence is deemed **valid** by the relevant Leader of Learning and the Head of Learning and the appeal is upheld, then one of the following conditions will apply:

- The mark/grade awarded for the hand-in or in-class task will stand (depending on the nature of the task, the time lapsed and that the Leader of Learning is convinced that no advantage is gained by the student)
- An alternative/substitute task will be completed (this is the recommended option)
- An extension of time may be granted, **in exceptional circumstances** and only approved by the Head of Learning*. No requests for extension will be granted.

*Any student granted an extension will have a maximum of 5 days after the Assessment Task was originally due. The time length of the extension is determined by the Head of Learning in relation to each individual case. The additional time provided for any granted extension must fall within the time the task is due to be returned to all students.

- An estimate will be awarded, but **only in exceptional circumstances**, and only if authorised by the Principal and delegated to the Head of Learning. This will be calculated at the end of the course in consultation with the Head of Learning and will be based on the student's performance and rank in other Assessment Tasks in the course.

The following examples will be considered valid reason for the situations listed above:

- Illness or injury supported by:
 - **a Doctor's Certificate (this is mandatory)***
- Death/funeral of a member of the student's family
- Representing the College at a recognised event. (This will only be accepted if prior selection has been achieved and the student has evidence to support this)
- Other exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Principal or Head of Learning in consultation with the relevant Leader of Learning.

*** Backdated medical certificates are not accepted.** The doctor's certificate must reflect the specific dates that the student has missed the task, covering the period of absence. Students are required to see their medical practitioner on the day of their absence.

If the reason is deemed **invalid** by the relevant Leader of Learning and the Head of Learning and the appeal is rejected, then a **ZERO PENALTY** will be applied and a **WARNING LETTER** issued; however the task must still be completed.

Students and parents will be notified in writing of the outcome of each Illness/Misadventure appeal through a copy of the Illness/Misadventure form returned to the student's Homeroom Box.

Procedure for absence due to Illness or Misadventure

1. Student or parent contacts the College Office as soon as possible, who will inform the respective teacher and Leader of Learning that same day
2. Student completes the Illness/Misadventure form and submits the form with attached supporting documentation **to the relevant Leader of Learning** within **2 days** of returning to school. In the case of illness, a doctor's certificate is mandatory.
3. The Leader of Learning indicates their recommendation on the Illness/Misadventure form to the Head of Learning. Further consultation between Leader of Learning and Head of Learning occurs as necessary.
4. Students report to their subject teacher **on the first day of return to school** so alternative arrangements can be made regarding the completion of in-class tasks
5. For in-class tasks, students must be **prepared to sit the task on the day they have returned to school** with a Doctor's certificate
6. For hand-in tasks, students will submit the task **the next school day**

8. Absence during Formal Assessment Blocks

1. Student or parent contacts the College Office as soon as possible, who will inform the Head of Learning, the respective teachers and Leaders of Learning

2. Student completes the Illness/Misadventure form and submits the form with attached supporting documentation to the Head of Learning within 2 days of returning to school. If this is not complied with, a zero grade will be issued
3. Student will complete the missed examination **the next school day after the Doctor's Certificate period of illness expires**. The examination will be done in the next available time slot of the examination schedule as directed by the Head of Learning

9. Absence during VET Work Placement or Work Experience

For hand-in tasks, students must submit these on or before the due date. The method of submission can be negotiated with the student and the teacher or the Leader of Learning.

For in-class tasks, students must negotiate a new date with their class teacher **before** the Work Placement which must be approved by the Leader of Learning. This decision must be communicated to the student in writing.

10. Absence due to Leave Requests

Leave is not approved, unless it is an emergency or exceptional circumstances. If a parent is intending to take his/her child out of the College on leave, a **request must be made in writing to the Principal** at least two weeks before the planned departure. It is a legislative requirement that students attend school. Only the College Principal can grant an exemption from attendance as a result of exceptional circumstances. Consequently, parents are required to submit a leave request letter and form (obtained from Student Services or the College website) which provides the following details to the Principal:

- first and last day of leave
- reason for the request for leave

The Principal will notify the parent/s of the outcome of the leave request in a written response.

Students who go on planned leave without requesting leave from the Principal, will receive a ZERO PENALTY for any Assessment Task that is missed during their leave.

Students who go on leave will, be required to submit/complete any assessment task they will miss **BEFORE** their departure. This will be arranged with the class teacher, approved by the Leader of Learning and communicated to the Head of Learning. Communication of the new date for completion/submission of the Assessment Task will be provided to the student **in writing** via the 'Change of Date to Assessment' Sheet.

It is the full responsibility of the student to go to see the class teacher or Leader of Learning regarding arrangements for any missed Assessment Tasks due to leave.

As stated previously all tasks must be completed to fulfill course requirements.

11. 'N' Determinations

As part of the College's HSC Internal Assessment program, students must satisfy course requirements in at least 10 units of study to be eligible for the Award of the Higher School Certificate.

In following NESA requirements, the College Principal must have sufficient evidence that a student has satisfied the following course completion criteria:

- (a) followed the course developed or endorsed by NESA
- (b) applied themselves with diligence and sustained effort to the set tasks and experiences provided in the course by the school; and
- (c) achieved some or all of the course outcomes

Students who have not satisfactorily completed the requirements of the Preliminary Course will NOT be eligible for the award of the Higher School Certificate.

If a student does not complete assessment tasks totalling **50 percent or more of the final course assessment marks**, NESA requires the Principal to certify that the course has not been studied satisfactorily.

A student who has failed to submit/complete an Assessment Task will receive a **ZERO PENALTY and WARNING LETTER** if he/she:

- does not submit the Assessment Task by the due date, without valid illness/misadventure documentation submitted within 2 days
- claims the reason of not submitting the Assessment Task is due to technological failure, and is unable to submit any draft work on the date the task is due
- is absent for an Assessment Task, without valid illness/misadventure documentation submitted within 2 days
- is found to have engaged in malpractice, for all or part of a task
- does not make a serious attempt to complete an Assessment Task

If a student is awarded a ZERO PENALTY, parents will be informed in writing through the *Official Warning Letter*. This letter will provide details of the non-completion of the task and will also provide a new date for the submission/completion of the task. The ZERO PENALTY will apply to the calculation and rank for this task, and for that of the final HSC Assessment Mark. If a zero penalty is awarded the task must still be completed for feedback from the teacher and to fulfill course requirements

At St Columba's Catholic College, the following procedure will apply when warning letters are issued:

1. First Warning Letter (blue):

- a. The class teacher informs the Leader of Learning that the student is not meeting the requirements of the course
- b. The class teacher makes phone contact to the parent to inform them and discuss the issue
- c. The Leader of Learning generates the *Official Warning Letter* and gives to the Head of Learning for processing and mailing to parents
- d. Copies of the *Official Warning Letter* are provided to the class teacher, Leader of Learning, and for the Student File

2. Second Warning Letter (yellow):

The second warning letter is issued only if the student is still not meeting the requirements of the course based on the same task/s that were indicated in the first warning letter.

- a. The class teacher informs the Leader of Learning that the student has still not shown that they are meeting the requirements of the course

- b. The Leader of Learning makes phone contact to the parent to inform them and discuss the issue
- c. The Leader of Learning generates the *Official Warning Letter* and gives to the Head of Learning for processing and mailing to parents
- d. Copies of the *Official Warning Letter* are provided to the class teacher, Leader of Learning, and for the Student File

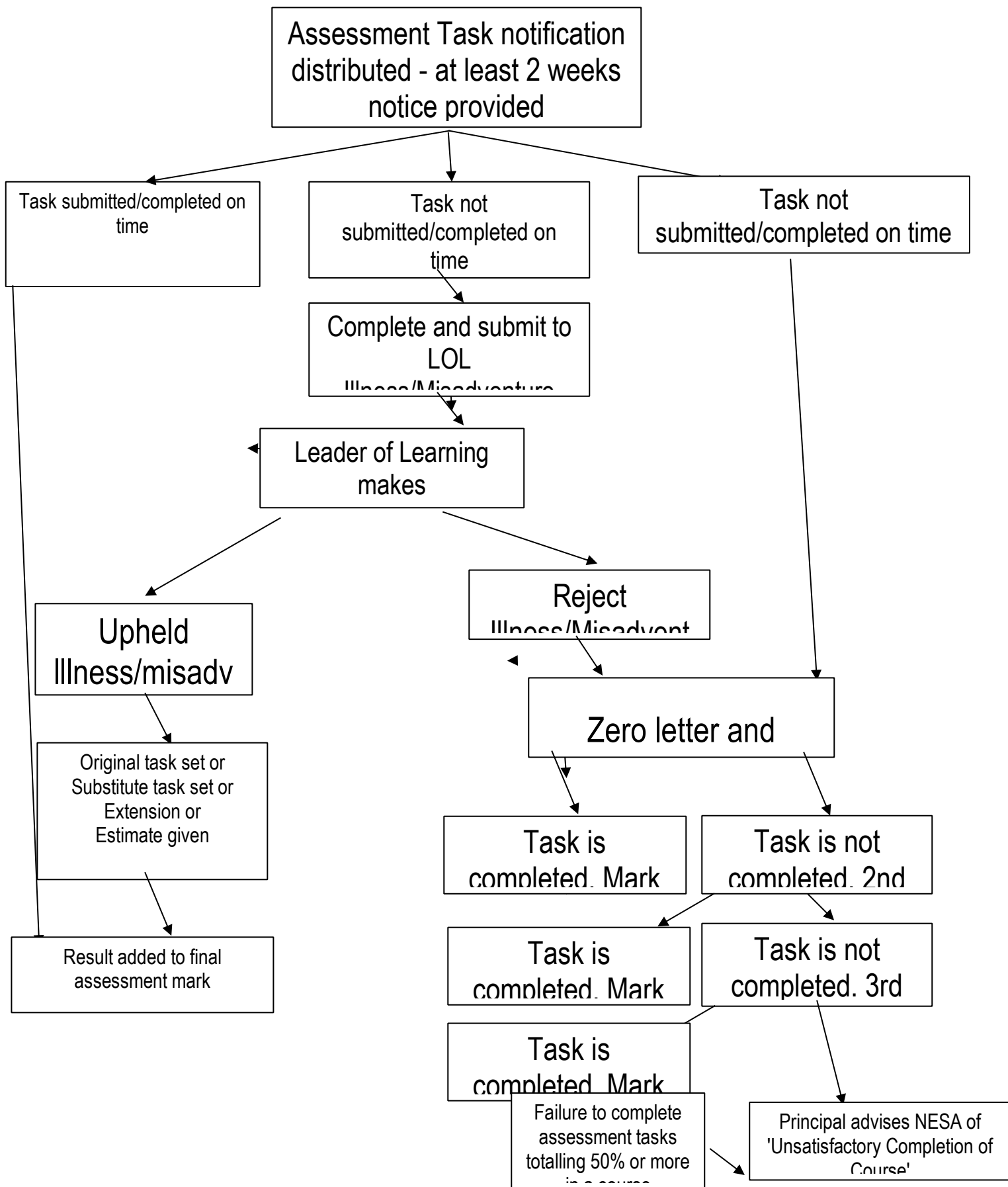
3. Third Warning Letter (red):

The third warning letter is issued if the student is still not meeting the requirements of the course based on the same task/s that were indicated in the second warning letter.

- a. The class teacher informs the Leader of Learning that the student has still not shown that they are meeting the requirements of the course
- b. The Leader of Learning generates the *Official Warning Letter* and gives to the Head of Learning for processing and mailing to parents
- c. The Head of Learning makes phone contact to the parent to discuss the issue and inform them that an interview will be taking place, to be organised by the Principal's PA
- d. The Head of Learning informs the Principal's PA to organise an interview with the Principal, the Head of Learning, the relevant Leader of Learning and the parent/s and student
- e. Copies of the *Official Warning Letter* are provided to the class teacher, Leader of Learning, and for the Student File

The Principal, as the delegate for the NESAs, will make the final determination about whether a student has not met the requirements of a course and as a result, will be issued with an 'N' Determination if the student fails to respond to requirements outlined in the Third Warning letter. The date due for all tasks is three weeks from the date the Warning letter is posted (this is to allow for Postal services).

Flowchart for 'N' Determination Process



12. Student Appeals

A student has the right to appeal if they feel that:

- they have been disadvantaged in any way by the organisation and administration of an assessment task.
- the mark they received for an individual task does not reflect their work in relation to the marking criteria or there has been an error in the calculation of a mark
- their final rank in Year 12 is not reflective of their results in assessment tasks throughout the year.

Appeals can be considered at any time after the assessment task has been issued to the students for completion and up to seven (7) days after the task is returned to the student. Appeals will not be accepted after that time.

In the case where a mark is queried by a student the following process is applied:

- Students should attempt to resolve any perceived problems arising from the marks awarded for an assessment task with their class teacher

If this is still unresolved for the student, the student will follow the process below. This same process is applied for any other forms of appeal.

1. An Appeal Form is completed by the student and given to the Head of Learning with any supporting documentation attached.
2. A College Assessment Appeal Committee consisting of the Head of Learning, Assistant Principals, the relevant Leader of Learning and Leader of Mission – Year 12 will meet to consider the appeal and determine an outcome.
3. The Head of Learning will notify in writing the student and their parents, the College Principal, the Assistant Principals, the class teacher and the Leader of Learning regarding the outcome of the appeal and will keep records of the outcome of the appeal.

If the student is dissatisfied with the determination of the College Assessment Appeal Committee, they may make a written request for a review to the College Principal.

Year 12 HSC Course Rankings

After the last HSC examination, Year 12 students may view their ranking for each subject as notified on the Assessment Rank Order Notice on Students Online or request a copy from the school. The assessment rankings are those provided by NESA from the information supplied by the school. Should this ranking differ significantly from expectations, the student may seek a review of that course by the school.

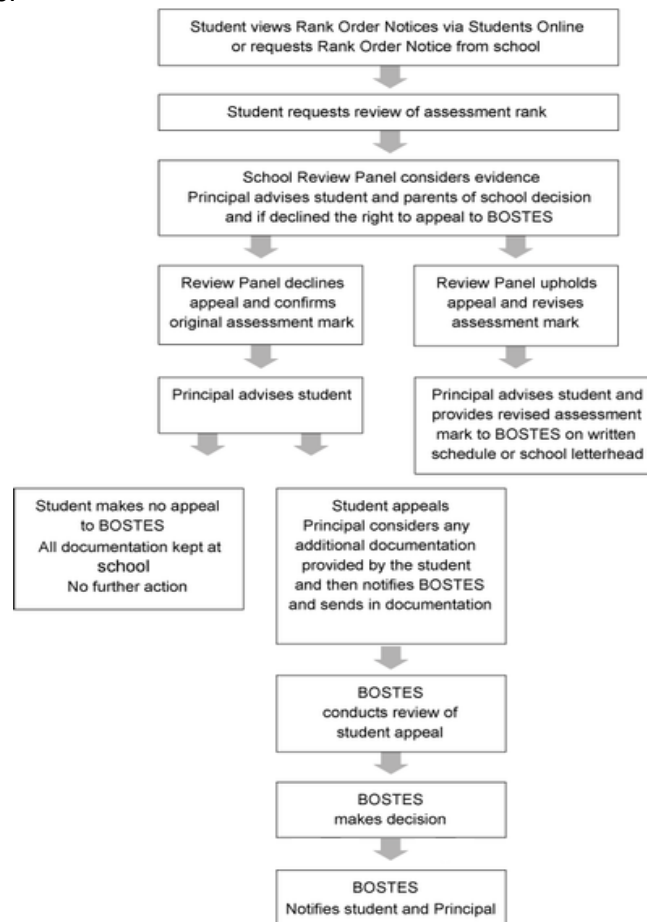
A student may appeal if:

- the weightings and components in the school assessment program do not conform with those in the Stage 6 Syllabus Document: or
- the procedures used by the school for determining the final assessment mark do not conform to the stated assessment program. In particular, weightings used for the various assessment tasks should be consistent with those specified in the assessment program; or
- there have been computational or other clerical errors in the determination of the assessment mark.

The request for such a review must be lodged with the Principal in writing. This review does **NOT** provide for a review of marks awarded by the teacher for individual assessment tasks.

The review will be carried out by the **School Review Panel** which consists of the Principal, Assistant Principals, Head of Learning and relevant Leader of Learning of the subject concerned.

Following the review, all students requesting a review of their rank will be provided with the school's decision and the reasons for that decision. Students may subsequently appeal to NESA if not satisfied with the decision of the College Assessment Appeal Committee. HSC Assessment Rank appeals are due to NESA five (5) days after the HSC Examination Period ends.



13. Cheating, Malpractice and Academic Misconduct

All work submitted that is part of an Assessment Task must be completed solely by the student (or in the case of Group Work, strictly according to the class teacher's directions). Unless stated otherwise, each student will be required to submit his or her own separate assessment task.

Malpractice is any activity that allows students to gain an unfair advantage over other students and is taken very seriously by the College and by NESA. It includes, but is not limited to:

- copying someone else's work in part or in whole, and presenting it as their own
- using material directly from books, journals, CDs or the internet without reference to the source
- building on the ideas of another person without reference to the source
- buying, stealing or borrowing another person's work and presenting it as their own
- submitting work to which another person, such as a parent, coach or subject expert, has contributed substantially
- using words, ideas, designs or the workmanship of others in practical and performance tasks without appropriate acknowledgement

- paying someone to write or prepare material
- breaching school examination rules
- using non-approved aids during an assessment task
- contriving false explanations to explain work not handed in by the due date
- assisting another student to engage in malpractice

If serious doubt arises regarding the authenticity and originality of work submitted by the class teacher, or there is evidence of plagiarism, cheating or misconduct, he/she must inform the Leader of Learning immediately. The Leader of Learning will inform the Head of Learning and an investigation, including the interviewing of students involved, will take place. This may involve students being requested to present evidence that proves that the work is their own.

Students who are deemed, by the Head of Learning and the relevant Leader of Learning, to have cheated in any assessable task or who have assisted another student to cheat, will:

- be awarded a **ZERO PENALTY for that task OR components of the task as is deemed appropriate by the Head of Learning and the Principal***
- be issued with a **WARNING LETTER**
- be required to re-submit the task
- be entered onto the NESA Malpractice Register
- be placed on the College's formal Malpractice Register

NESA treats cheating very seriously. It investigates allegations of cheating and penalises students caught cheating in HSC written examinations and in projects or practical works.

Information contained in the ***HSC Assessment and Submitted Works: Advice to Parents*** indicates that detected cheating in HSC written examinations, projects or practical works will face the following serious consequences:

- reduced marks for all or part of the examination,
- zero penalty for part or all of the assessment,
- an interview with a 'malpractice' panel at NESA,
- loss of one or more courses towards the HSC award,
- damage to the student's ability to apply for entry to TAFE or university courses or scholarships.

All students found to have engaged in any form of malpractice will be entered onto **the NESA Malpractice Register**. This will be made known to the student and their parents/caregivers in writing and by phone contact made by the Leader of Learning.

The NESA Malpractice Register is used by NESA to identify and understand how malpractice occurs in Higher School Certificate assessment tasks and is an important part of building prevention strategies, and retaining confidence in the HSC. The data is published by NESA but does not identify students or schools in the data.

The key data included in the register is:

- the course involved
- the type of offence
- the nature of the assessment task
- the penalty applied.

*** Specific examples and penalties for cheating, malpractice and academic misconduct:**

- (a) Cheating in examinations - ZERO PENALTY for part or all of the examination.
- (b) Mobile phone or non-approved electronic device on person in formal examination or in-class assessment task – ZERO PENALTY for part or all of the assessment.
- (c) Another student in the cohort willingly assisted in cheating, copying, or plagiarism (including electronic data available via the internet or work from private tutors) - ZERO PENALTY for part or all of the assessment.
- (d) The passing on of an assessment task or components of tasks from one student to another through digital form (eg. email) or in hard copy – ZERO PENALTY for part or all of the assessment.
- (e) Completing or preparing for Assessment Tasks during other normal lessons, (other than official Study Periods) on the due date - ZERO PENALTY for part or all of the assessment.
- (f) Truanting from a lesson, in part or whole, in order to prepare for a task to be sat, or to complete a task due to be handed up later that day - ZERO PENALTY for part or all of the assessment.

14. HSC: All My Own Work

The HSC: All My Own Work program is designed to help Higher School Certificate students to follow the principles and practices of good scholarship. Before commencing the Preliminary HSC Course, NESA requires that all students must demonstrate satisfactory completion of HSC: All My Own Work. Students must follow the advice, rules and conventions regarding sources, quotations, plagiarism, etc. as set out in the set modules, which were undertaken at the completion of Year 10.

15. Invalid or unreliable Assessment Tasks

If an internal assessment task is deemed to be invalid or unreliable by the Principal, he or she has the discretion to direct that an alternative assessment task be implemented. Depending on the task and the outcomes being assessed, a revised Assessment Schedule may need to be issued which indicates new weightings for remaining Assessment Tasks in the assessment program for the course.

Where a task is invalidated and a change is required for the assessment program, students and parents will be communicated of this in writing. **Students will receive teacher feedback** on any work that has been submitted on a task that has needed to be invalidated.

16. Disability Provisions

Disability provisions in the HSC are practical arrangements designed to help students who couldn't otherwise make a fair attempt to show what they know in an exam room. The provisions granted are solely determined by how the student's exam performance is affected. Schools are responsible for determining and approving disability provisions for all school-based assessment tasks. NESA determines disability provisions for the Higher School Certificate examinations. Any HSC student with a disability recognised in the Commonwealth Disability Standards for Education 2005 can apply for disability provisions. Disability provisions apply only where the disability needs a practical arrangement to reduce disadvantage in an exam situation. Disability provisions also apply to temporary and emergency-related disabilities such as where a student breaks their writing arm a week before an examination.

Students who believe they are eligible for Disability Provisions must contact Mrs Melissa Moran, Leader of Learning Learning Support for information about the process of application. Applications are submitted to NESA who make a determination as to whether to grant Disability Provisions to a particular student or not. A right of appeal to NESA is available to those students whose applications are unsuccessful.

17. Assessment in Vocational Education and Training (VET) Courses

Vocational courses are two-year courses that deliver **dual qualifications** for the Higher School Certificate (HSC) and for industry through the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), and have dual assessment systems for these qualifications. This includes standards-referenced assessment (HSC) and competency-based assessment (AQF) dependent on the VET course studied.

Board Developed Industry Framework VET Courses

Framework Courses have been developed jointly by industry and NESA.

For these courses, completing the **HSC Examination is OPTIONAL**. Students will have an opportunity after the Trial HSC Examination to nominate if they DO NOT want to sit for the HSC Examination. All students, however, are required to do the standard referenced assessment tasks up until the time they finally nominate. This is in order to provide an HSC estimate mark which is sent to NESA that will only be used in case of illness or misadventure at the time of the external HSC examination. **Students requiring an ATAR must sit the examination in these courses remembering that only one Category B course counts towards the calculation of the ATAR.**

Competency Based Assessment (Criterion Referenced)

VET courses are assessed against competency standards. The purpose of assessment is to judge competence on the basis of performance against the performance criteria set out under each element of competency. NESA and the Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB) require that a competency-based approach to assessment be used and that a record be held by the Registered Training Authority of the competencies achieved. Each school in the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta is part of the Registered Training Authority (RTO).

Competency based assessment is based on the requirements of the workplace. Competence incorporates all aspects of work performance, including problem solving and the capacity to apply skills and knowledge in both familiar and new situations. Assessment of competence involves the assessment of skills and knowledge combined.

It is not necessary, nor is it necessarily desirable, for individual performance criteria to be demonstrated separately for assessment purposes. Rather, assessors should adopt an integrated or holistic approach to assessment. This means that a number of elements of competency or even several units of competency are assessed together. This method of assessment is encouraged in line with the concept of competence as the integration of a wide range of skills, knowledge and attitudes and is emphasised in the Training Packages that support the Framework courses.

Students in VET courses must assume that they are being constantly assessed in both formal and informal contexts. VET subjects are assessed on a continuous basis.

To be deemed competent for any unit of competency, students must show that they have reached the appropriate industry standard for each element of that competency. Therefore VET teachers are required to continually gather evidence about a student's performance for every element of a competency before they can deem the student to be competent for any particular unit of competency.

Evidence will be gathered on a number of occasions and in a variety of ways and may include:

- assignments
- portfolios of evidence
- practical tasks
- observation
- questioning
- workplace performance
- written tasks
- oral presentations

In competency based assessments students are either **competent** or **not yet competent**. Students in need of further training can ask to be re-assessed but such re-assessment must consider deadlines for internal and external reporting.

Achievement of all the required competencies in a VET course will result in a student being awarded either an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate or a Statement of Attainment (SOA) towards a certificate for those cases where the course does not cover all the competencies for a particular certificate. To achieve an AQF VET Certificate, a student must be assessed as competent according to the requirements set out in the Training Package. A Statement of Attainment will also be issued to students who have not achieved all of the required competencies in their course.

The AQF credential that a student achieves will be recognised across Australia by further education and training institutions.

Work Placement

Work placement allows students to apply the theory and practical skills learnt in class. Some competencies may be assessed in the workplace. The following points are important in relation to Work Placement:

- Students undertaking VET Industry Curriculum Framework courses should note that work placement is a **COMPULSORY** component of their course. The number of required hours for work placement depends on the course, but generally thirty five (35) hours each year is a NESA mandatory requirement for most VET courses.
- Failure to complete the work placement component of a VET course will result in the student jeopardising their ability to meet the requirements of the course
- Generally, all students in VET courses will complete their work placement during the same week. Specific weeks are reserved on the College calendar for this purpose.
- Refer to Point 8 in this Handbook for procedures regarding assessments due during Work Placement. Please note that being on Work Placement is not an excuse for getting a task submitted on time and may result in an assessment penalty.
- Absences from work placement **MUST** be reported to the employer, VET LOL **and** to the College. In the case of illness, a medical certificate must be produced upon returning to school and any hours lost in the workplace will need to be made up at another time.

4. HSC Reporting

In the Higher School Certificate there are two types of reporting:

Formative Reporting

Feedback to students can be either verbal or written. This feedback constitutes 'formative reporting'.

This type of reporting is usually attached to assessment tasks. It can, for example, be in the form of the task criteria given to students. Students will receive an indication of their performance for individual assessment tasks through a mark and will also be given a rank of their achievement in relation to other students in the course cohort. A student, upon receiving their mark, would refer to the task criteria related to that mark to gain an understanding of the standard they are achieving at the moment.

The feedback relates to 'what the student can do' and 'what the student needs to work on in order to improve'. The purpose of the feedback is to assist the student improve their achievement of the outcomes and therefore their HSC performance.

Summative Reporting

This occurs at the end of a course or at specified times during a course, for example after a set of examinations.

This method of reporting indicates the level of a student's achievement at a particular point in time. A school report, for example, is a summative report. When students receive HSC results from NESA this is also a summative report.

School Progress Reports

Semester Reports are issued during the HSC Course. On these reports, students will receive an indication of their performance for individual assessment tasks by receiving a record of their ranking for each assessment task.

Semester One reports will be distributed during Week 10, Term 1, and Semester Two reports will be distributed during Week 10, Term 3.

HSC Credentials and Results

The following documentation will be sent to students upon completion of the HSC:

- A Higher School Certificate Testamur which shows that a student is eligible for the Higher School Certificate.
- A Higher School Certificate Record of Achievement which includes students' Year 12 HSC results, Year 11 grades and if applicable, Year 10 grades. This provides formal recognition of students' senior secondary school achievements.
- The Year 12 HSC results page includes the student's list of HSC subjects and the results gained for each subject. For each subject studied, students will receive the assessment mark, examination mark, final HSC mark and the Performance Band achieved.

- A Life Skills Profile of Student Achievement (only for those students who have studied Life Skills courses) provides details of the specific Life Skills syllabus outcomes achieved.

Students who successfully complete all requirements of an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) VET Qualification will receive a Certificate and an accompanying Transcript of Competencies Achieved. Students who achieve partial completion of an AQF VET qualification will receive a Statement of Attainment which lists all units of competency achieved towards the qualification.

HSC Mark Calculation

The HSC mark is a 50:50 combination of a student's examination mark and school-based assessment mark for each course.

Performance Bands

The Performance Bands describe the levels of student achievement **at the end of the HSC year**. They are based on HSC course outcomes. A set of bands is available for every Board Developed Course.

A student's HSC mark for each course will fall within one of six performance bands, where the highest achievement is Band 6 (90–100 marks) and where the minimum standard expected is 50 marks. A performance band of E1–E4 (E4 is the highest band) is shown for Extension courses. Each performance band is aligned to what a student at that level of performance typically knows, understands and can do.



**ST COLUMBA'S
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Illness / Misadventure Form

Student's Name: _____

Homeroom: _____

Course: _____

Class Teacher: _____

Assessment Task Date: _____

Type of Task (*tick one*) ☐ Examination
☐ In class task
☐ Hand in task

Outline the circumstances of your illness/misadventure.

.....
.....

Do you have a **Doctor's Certificate** to support your case? If YES, attach it to the back of this form.

Do you have any other documentary evidence to support your case? YES / NO (circle one)

If YES, list below the nature of the evidence and attach it to the back of this form.

.....

Declaration

I/We declare that the above information is a true and accurate account of the circumstances surrounding the non-completion on/by the due date of the assessment task stated.

Student's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent's Signature: _____

Date: _____

LOL RECOMMENDATION:

College Use Only

Appeal: Upheld / Rejected

Head of Learning Signature: _____

A copy of this form has been placed in the student's Homeroom Box

A copy of this form has been given to the classroom teacher and the Leader of Learning



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**OFFICIAL WARNING LETTER
Non-Completion of a Higher School Certificate Course**

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Date:

I am writing to advise that your son/daughter _____ is in

danger of not meeting the Course Completion Criteria for the Higher School Certificate course

(course name)

The NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) requires schools to issue students with official warnings in order to give them the opportunity to redeem themselves. Please regard this letter as the _____ (eg 1st, 2nd) **official warning** we have issued concerning this course requirement in _____.
(course name)

A minimum of two course-specific warnings must be issued prior to a final non-completion of course determination being made for a course.

Course Completion Criteria

The satisfactory completion of a course requires principals to have sufficient evidence that the student has:

- a) **followed** the course developed or endorsed by NESA; and
- b) **applied** themselves with diligence and sustained effort to the set tasks and experiences provided in the course by the school; and
- c) **achieved** some or all of the course outcomes.

Where it is determined that a student has not met the Course Completion Criteria, they place themselves at risk of receiving a determination of non-completion of course requirements. This will mean that the course will not be listed on the student's Record of Achievement and may affect the student's eligibility for the Higher School Certificate. In Year 12, students must make a genuine attempt at assessment tasks that contribute in excess of 50% of available marks. Completion of tasks worth exactly 50% is not sufficient; tasks worth in excess of 50% must be completed.

To date, _____ has not satisfactorily met _____ of the Course Completion Criteria.
(student name) indicate a), b) or c)

The table overleaf lists those tasks, requirements or outcomes not yet completed or achieved, and/or for which a genuine attempt has not been made. In order for _____ to satisfy Course Completion Criteria, the tasks, _____
(student name)

requirements or outcomes listed overleaf need to be satisfactorily completed and/or achieved.

Please discuss this matter with _____ and contact the
(student name)
college if further information or clarification is needed.

Yours sincerely,

Leader of Learning

Head of Learning

☐ Phone contact home has occurred.

To satisfy the Course Completion Criteria, the following tasks, requirements or outcomes need to be satisfactorily completed by _____.
(student name)

Task Name(s) / Course Requirement(s) / Course Outcome(s)	Percentage weighting (if applicable)	Original due date	Action required by student	Revised date to be completed by (if applicable)



Please detach this section and return to the college

Requirements for the satisfactory completion of a Higher School Certificate Course

- I have received the letter dated _____ indicating that _____
(student name)
is in danger of not having satisfactorily
completed _____.
- I am aware that this course may not appear on his/her Higher School Certificate Record of Achievement.
(course name)
- I am also aware that the determination of non-completion of course requirements may make him/her ineligible for the award of the Higher School Certificate.

Parent/Guardian's signature: _____ Date: _____

Student's signature: _____ Date: _____



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Notification of Zero Penalty for a Assessment Task Higher School Certificate Course

Date: _____

Dear _____

_____ has failed to submit or complete an assessment task by the due date and has not provided an adequate reason, as outlined in the Year 12 Assessment Information Handbook. Under the College Assessment policy, a zero penalty must be awarded.

Course: _____

Assessment Task: _____

Due date: _____

Weighting: _____

An Appeal against this determination may be presented to the Head of Learning on the *Student Appeal Form for School-based Assessment*.

Yours sincerely,

Leader of Learning

Head of Learning

----- ✂ -----
Please detach this section and return to the Head of Learning within 5 working days.

I have received the letter dated _____ indicating that _____
has failed to submit/complete an assessment task and has been awarded a zero penalty.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Parent / Carer

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Student



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Student Appeal Form for School-based Assessment

Student's Name: _____

Homeroom: _____

Course: _____

Class Teacher: _____

Assessment Task Date: _____

Type of Task (tick one) ☐ Examination
☐ In class task
☐ Hand in task

Outline the circumstances of your appeal.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

(attach any additional notes to the back of this form if you run out of space here)

Do you have **supporting documentation** to support your case? If YES, attach it to the back of this form.

Declaration

I/We declare that the above information is a true and accurate account of the circumstances surrounding the appeal.

Student's Signature: _____ Parent's Signature: _____ Date: _____

College Use Only

Appeal: Upheld / Rejected

Head of Learning Signature: _____

- ☒ Students / parents have been notified of the outcome of the appeal in writing
- ☒ A copy of this notification has been given to the relevant Leader of Learning, classroom teacher and Student Services

6. Common Questions on Assessment

Will the HSC examination test all HSC course outcomes?

The examination will test a sample of the course outcomes in any one year. Values and attitudes outcomes will not be included in the examination.

Will internal assessment count as part of the HSC result?

The internal assessment and the external examination will carry equal weighting in the determination of the student's HSC result. Each component will be worth 50%.

What is to be the method for determining the moderated assessment mark?

For each course the internal assessment mark that is submitted by the school will be moderated by using the performance of the school course group in the examinations. The moderated assessment and the examination mark will be averaged to provide a composite mark.

What is an 'N' determination?

Students who gain a HSC mark that places them in Band 1, and henceforth below the minimum standard expected, may be still deemed to have met the criteria for completion of the course. Students who, receive an 'N' determination, after the appropriate processes have been followed, are considered to have unsatisfactory completion of the course.

Are all subjects in the HSC of an equivalent standard?

A standards-based approach is about establishing meaningful standards in particular subjects not about equating standards across them.

All courses in the HSC will be rigorous in terms of the standard of knowledge, skills and understanding expected of the students undertaking them.

The process of setting standards for each HSC course has involved:

- an evaluation of the content and outcomes of existing courses
- an analysis of the standards of performance that students are currently demonstrating through HSC examinations. This involved experienced HSC markers analysing student responses to questions in recent HSC examinations including written answers, major works, projects and performances.

The use of information about current standards of performance has meant that the learning outcomes and content for each of the HSC courses are set at an appropriate standard.

For each HSC course an internal assessment program is prepared.

The HSC teachers will provide an assessment mark to NESA and give clear feedback to students on their achievement of outcomes and relative positions within the school group.

It is suggested that in the college assessment program teachers will:

- focus their assessment tasks on syllabus outcomes
- use a range of task types
- assist students to know and understand the outcomes to be assessed

- develop marking schemes for assessment tasks using words from the outcomes and, mapped against, the draft performance bands.
- provide feedback to students on 'what a student knows and can do' and 'what a student needs to work on'.

What other assessment materials will be available to schools?

Specimen examination papers are available on the Board of Studies Teaching & Educational Standards Website.

- Examination reports including marking schemes for each course.
- Samples of students' examination responses at the cut-off marks between performance bands.
- The performance bands.

Will it matter if teachers' judgements about standards differ from school to school when determining the internal assessment mark?

No, this will not disadvantage any student. Moderation of school assessments by the Board of Studies, using the examinations are in place. This will ensure comparability of assessment marks from each school by matching those assessment marks to the performance of each school group on the common external exam. Over time it is expected that judgements of student achievement across the state will converge as teachers develop a clear understanding of the standards.

Do the performance scales apply to HSC courses?

The performance scales are primarily a tool for reporting student achievement at the end of the HSC course. The scales are based on the HSC outcomes. However, they can have a useful place in supporting teaching and learning throughout Years 11 and 12. They can be used to provide:

- goals for the development of student learning
- a common language for providing feedback to students, and
- a means for helping students chart their progress.

They become more relevant the further into the HSC course students have progressed.

When deciding on satisfactory completion of an HSC course, what does achievement of some or all of the outcomes mean?

Board of Studies course completion criteria have not changed. Satisfactory completion of HSC courses will continue to include the requirement that some or all of the course outcomes have been achieved. This means that a teacher makes an on balance decision that there has been at least some achievement by the student of what students are expected to learn in the course. Teachers have been making this decision for many years of the Higher School Certificate.

How can the internal assessment mark most accurately reflect the standard achieved by an individual student by the end of the course if their performance varies during the course?

Internal assessment measures overall performance in all the components of the course. The performance of some students during the course of the HSC assessment program might significantly alter from the first assessment task to the last. Changes in performance can vary for a variety of reasons including which outcomes are the focus outlined in the assessment task.

In assessing student achievement against standards, the final assessment mark is more likely to reflect the standards achieved when:

- The weight of individual tasks is not less than 10 per cent nor more than 40 per cent so that no one task counts too little or too much

- Tasks towards the end of the assessment program have higher weight values so that the later performances count more
- Outcomes and components are assessed by more than one task so that there is more than one opportunity to demonstrate achievement of the outcomes.

It is important that the weightings allocated to each task in the college's assessment program be adhered to.

7. A Glossary of Key Words

Syllabus outcomes, objectives, performance bands and examination questions have key words that state what students are expected to be able to do. A glossary of key words has been developed to help provide a common language and consistent meaning in the Higher School Certificate documents. This Glossary is common across all courses and subjects.

Using the glossary will help teachers and students understand what is expected in responses to examinations and assessment tasks.

Account	Account for: state reasons for, report on. Give an account of: narrate a series of events or transactions
Analyse	Identify components and the relationship between them; draw out and relate implications
Apply	Use, utilise, employ in a particular situation
Appreciate	Make a judgement about the value of
Assess	Make a judgement of value, quality, outcomes, results or size
Calculate	Ascertain/determine from given facts, figures or information
Clarify	Make clear or plain
Classify	Arrange or include in classes/categories
Compare	Show how things are similar or different
Construct	Make; build; put together items or arguments
Contrast	Show how things are different or opposite
Critically analyse/evaluate	Add a degree or level or accuracy depth, knowledge and understanding, logic, questioning, reflection and quality to (analysis/evaluate)
Deduce	Draw conclusions
Define	State meaning and identify essential qualities
Demonstrate	Show by example
Describe	Provide characteristics and features
Discuss	Identify issues and provide points for an/or against Recognise or note/indicate as being distinct or different from; to note differences between
Distinguish	
Evaluate	Make a judgement based on criteria; determine the value of
Examine	Inquire into Relate cause and effect; make the relationships between things evident; provide why and/or how
Explain	
Extract	Choose relevant and/or appropriate details
Extrapolate	Infer from what is known
Identify	Recognise and name
Interpret	Draw meaning from
Investigate	Plan, inquire into and draw conclusions about
Justify	Support an argument or conclusion
Outline	Sketch in general terms; indicate the main features of
Predict	Suggest what may happen based on available information Put forward (for example a point of view, idea, argument, suggestion) for consideration or action
Propose	
Recall	Present remembered ideas, facts or experiences
Recommend	Provide reasons in favour
Recount	Retell a series of events
Summarise	Express, concisely, the relevant details
Synthesise	Putting together various elements to make a whole

Other Important Terms

The list of terms below are other commonly used terms in the HSC Examinations that you should be familiar with.

Maths and Science Courses

Prove
Show
Derive
Find
Graph
Tabulate
Solve
Complete
Interpolate
Extrapolate

TAS Courses

Provide examples (two)
Provide a range of examples (more than two)

General

What
How (how much), (process, by what means)
Why
To what extent
In what ways
Prioritise
Realise
Articulate
Explore
Critique
Suggest
Develop
Simplify
Determine
Support
Impact of
Importance of
Significance of
With reference to