



## Senior Secondary School Assessment Policy 2021

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Purpose: Outlines the College's policy on assessing senior secondary students.

Implementers: Head of Academics

Scope: Senior Secondary Teaching Staff and Students

Owner: Christopher Phillips

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# Senior Secondary School Assessment Policy 2021

This policy is provided to all senior secondary students at Hope Christian College and is based on School Curriculum and Standards Authority (Authority) requirements.

All Year 11 and Year 12 students are enrolled in a combination of ATAR, General, Foundation, Preliminary and VET industry specific courses. Some students are also gaining credit for the WACE by undertaking one of the Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualifications which are available at the College. The VET qualifications are delivered and assessed in partnership with a registered training organisation (RTO).

This policy applies to the assessment of all WACE courses.

## 1. Student responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the student to:

- attempt all in-class assessment tasks on the scheduled date and submit all out-of-class assessment tasks by the due date
- maintain an assessment file for each pair of units studied which contains all completed written assessment tasks and to make this file available whenever required by the school (see Section 9 below for details)
- maintain a good record of attendance, conduct and progress (a student who is absent from a class for five lessons or more per term is deemed to be 'at risk' of not achieving the best possible result)
- initiate contact with teachers concerning absence from class, missed in-class assessment tasks, requests for extension of the due date for out-of-class assessment tasks and other issues pertaining to assessment.

## 2. Teacher responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the teacher to:

- develop a teaching and learning program that appropriately delivers the current Authority syllabus for the particular pair of units
- provide students with access to a course outline and an assessment outline (see Section 3 below for details)
- ensure that all assessment tasks are fair, valid and reliable
- provide students with timely assessment feedback and with guidance about how best to undertake future tasks
- maintain accurate records of student achievement
- meet college and external timelines for assessment and reporting
- inform students and parents of academic progress, as appropriate.

### 3. Information provided to students

The teacher will provide a printed copy of the following documents to each student:

- the Authority syllabus for the pair of units which includes the grade descriptions
- a course outline for the pair of units (or unit or semester) that shows:
  - the content from the syllabus in the sequence in which it will be taught
  - the approximate time allocated to teach each section of content from the syllabus
- an assessment outline for the pair of units that includes:
  - the number of tasks to be assessed
  - the approximate timing of each assessment task (i.e. the week in which each assessment task is planned or the start week and submissions week for each out-of-class extended task)
  - the weighting for each assessment task
  - the weighting for each assessment type, as specified in the assessment table of the syllabus
  - a general description of each assessment task
  - an indication of the content covered by each assessment task.

### 4. Assessing student achievement

At Hope Christian College all students are enrolled in a pair of units. In each pair of units, a number of assessment tasks occur during the year including end of semester exams in all ATAR courses and an Externally Set Task for Year 12 General and Foundation courses (see Sections 5 and 6 below for details).

Each task provides evidence of student achievement. The teacher uses the total weighted mark from all assessment tasks when assigning a grade at the completion of the pair of units.

The requirements for each assessment task will be clearly described in writing (i.e. what the student needs to do, often indicating the steps involved for extended tasks). Where appropriate, the criteria against which the task will be marked will be provided with the task.

Most tasks are completed in-class. Some courses may include tasks that are completed out-of-class (in which case, student achievement may be validated to ensure authenticity). **See section 7**

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

Where a student's disability, specific education needs or cultural beliefs will significantly affect their access to an assessment task the teacher may adjust the task in consultation with the relevant head of learning area/teacher-in-charge responsible for the course.

## 5. School examinations

School examinations are included in the assessment outline for the pair of units. The weighting (i.e. proportion of the final mark) for these school-based examinations varies between courses and can be determined from the assessment outline.

A written examination will be held in all ATAR courses and as stipulated in the assessment outline in Foundation and General courses at the end of Semester 1 and the end of Semester 2.

A practical/performance/oral exam will also be held in those courses with a practical, performance or oral ATAR examination.

In Year 11 ATAR written examinations are typically between 2 and 3 hours in duration.

In Year 12 ATAR all written examinations are between 2 and 3 hours in duration.

The examination timetable is issued to students at least two weeks prior to the start of the exam period.

If an examination contains an error or questions are based on content that is outside the syllabus or there is a breach of security the college will:

- remove the question containing the error or based on content outside the syllabus, **or**
- set a new examination if there is a breach of security that affects all students, **or**
- penalise the students involved if there is a breach of security limited to only them (i.e. a mark of zero).

Where health issues or personal circumstances prevent a student from completing one or more school examinations, as for all other assessment tasks, the college will determine whether the reason is acceptable (see Section 13 below for details) and if not acceptable the student will be given a mark of zero. If the reason is acceptable to the college an alternate 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.

## 6. Externally set task

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 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.

The EST is a 50 minute written assessment task developed by the Authority based on content from Unit 3. It is completed in class under standard test conditions.

Where a student does not complete the EST they will be required to complete the task at the first available opportunity (generally within two days of the student's return to school). If this is not until after the date that the Authority requires the college to submit the EST marks then the college will determine if the reason for non-completion is acceptable (see Section 13 below for details) 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 alternate 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.

## 7. Acknowledgement of own work

When marking an assessment task, the school must be confident that the work is the students own. A student is 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, expert)
- copied or downloaded from the internet without acknowledging the source
- paraphrased or summarises the work of others.

Any ideas or images of others which are used in the work submitted for an assessment task or a practical examination for an ATAR course examination must be attributed (i.e the original creator acknowledged). An idea, image or work of art can be appropriated (i.e another creator's ideas or images can be borrowed and used or re-worked in the creation of a new work, so that the original idea or image is re-contextualised and presented in a way that gives it new meaning, re-worked or borrowed).

For the ATAR practical examinations the name of the work, text and artist/creator/author must be included in the appropriate acknowledgement form (for Visual Arts, Design and Drama) and in the candidate's statement (for Dance, Drama, Materials Design and Technology, Media Production and Analysis and Visual Arts) available on the relevant course page of the Authority website at <http://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/syllabus-and-support-materials>.

## 8. Authentication of out-of-class assessment tasks

Teachers will ensure, to the best of their ability, that an out-of-class assessment is completed by the student. They will develop and use suitable strategies to authenticate that the student has completed an out-of-class assessment task without unfair assistance.

Commonly accepted practice that the teacher could use are the following:

- teacher monitoring of student progress (e.g student log book).
- administration of the task in class with open access to reference notes.
- validation of student achievement by an in-class assessment task under test conditions after the submission of an out-of-class task.
- completion of the task partially at home and partially at school.
- requiring a signed declaration stating that all unacknowledged work is the student's own.
- on submission, requiring the students to complete questions on the research process undertaken (this need not contribute to the mark on a task – it's purpose is to authenticate that the student carried out the research required for the task).
- checking originality using plagiarism checking software.

## 9. Cheating, collusion and plagiarism

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

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

- prepared or substantively contributed to by another person (e.g. student, teacher, tutor or expert)
- copied or downloaded 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 learning area/teacher-in-charge responsible for the course. As part of this process, the student and the parent/guardian will be informed of suspected inappropriate behaviour. The student will be provided with the right of reply.

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

- a mark of zero for the whole assessment task, **or**
- a mark of zero for the part of the assessment task where the teacher can identify that the work is not the student's own.
- The parent/guardian will be informed in writing of the decision made, the penalty and any further disciplinary action.

#### **10. Security of assessment tasks**

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

In the case where a teacher re-uses an assessment task from previous years they must ensure that this task does not advantage/disadvantage a particular group of students.

Teachers must ensure that any assessment task selected is appropriate for the current syllabus content.

To ensure fairness to all students when using an assessment task which cannot be assumed to be unseen by students in a particular class at a school, teachers will typically:

- develop parallel assessment tasks for use by different classes.
- use common timing of the assessment task for different classes.
- collect and retain assessment tasks and all student responses to the task until all of the classes/schools have administered the task.
- modify assessment tasks before re-using them in future.
- not inform students of the source of any assessment task which is set externally and/or published.

#### **11. Retention and disposal of student work**

Students are responsible for retaining all of their marked written assessment tasks. The College will retain all non-written assessment tasks (typically as audio or video recordings or digital products). This material is required by the teacher when assigning grades at the completion of the pair of units and may be required by the Authority for moderation purposes.

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

#### **12. Modification of the assessment outline**

If circumstances change during the teaching of a pair of units, requiring the teacher to make adjustments to scheduled assessment tasks, then students will be notified and the modified assessment outline will be given to each student.

Where a disability, special education needs or cultural beliefs has resulted in the inability of a student to complete one or more assessment tasks the assessment outline will be adjusted and provided to the student and parent/guardian.

### 13. Students with a disability

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 relevant head of learning area/teacher-in-charge responsible for the course. These adjustments will be consistent with those described in the Authority's *Guidelines for disability adjustments for timed assessments*, which can be accessed from the Authority website. Adjustments, depending on the individual students' education 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 disability will be provided with alternative opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understandings.

### 14. Completion of a pair of units

A grade (A, B, C, D or E) is assigned for each pair of units completed.

Students are required to:

- attempt all in-class assessment tasks on the scheduled date
- submit all out-of-class assessment tasks on or before the due date.

If an assessment task cannot be submitted directly to the teacher it is to be submitted to the relevant head of learning area/teacher-in-charge.

Where health issues or other personal circumstances may prevent a student completing an in-class assessment task, the student (or the parent/guardian) must discuss the matter with the teacher at the earliest opportunity before the scheduled date. The college will determine whether the reason is acceptable (see Section 14 below for details).

Where the reason for not submitting an assessment task or attending a scheduled in-class assessment task is **acceptable** to the college (see Section 14 below for details) the student's assessment outline will, where possible, be adjusted and a grade assigned.

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

Where an out-of-class assessment task is submitted after the due date or is not submitted, and the student **does not** provide a reason, which is acceptable to the college (see Section 13 below for details), the following penalties apply:

- 5% reduction in the mark (if submitted one school day late), **or**
- 10% reduction in the mark (if submitted two school days late), **or**
- 15% reduction in the mark (if submitted three school days late), **or**
- A mark of zero if submitted later than 3 days or not submitted.

Where an in-class assessment task is missed and the student **does not** provide a reason which is acceptable to the college (see Section 13 below for details) the student will receive a mark of zero.

## 15. Acceptable reasons for non-completion or non-submission

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

- where sickness, injury or significant personal circumstances prevents a student attending on the day that an in-class assessment task (including school examinations and the externally set task) is scheduled
- where sickness, injury or significant personal circumstances for part or all of the period of an out-of-class assessment task prevents completion or submission by the due date.

In such cases the parent/guardian must:

- provide either a medical certificate or a letter of explanation immediately the student returns to school.

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

- negotiate an adjusted due date for an out-of-class assessment task or an adjusted date for an in-class assessment task (generally, within two days of the student's return), **or**
- decide on an alternate assessment task (if, in the opinion of the teacher, the assessment is no longer confidential), **or**
- not require the task to be completed and re-weight the student's marks for other tasks (if, in the opinion of the teacher, sufficient evidence exists in the other tasks completed to meet the Authority requirements for the course and to enable a grade to be assigned).

Events that can be rescheduled are not a valid reason for non-completion or non-submission of an assessment task (e.g. sitting a driver's licence test, preparation for the college ball, family holidays). In exceptional circumstances, the parent/guardian may negotiate with the Academic Head the development of an individual education plan. This plan will show how the missed lesson time will be compensated for and any adjustments to the assessment outline.

Where a catastrophic event (e.g. a pandemic) affects delivery of the teaching program, the completion or submission of one or more assessment tasks and/or completion of the College examination timetable, students will be advised by the College of all necessary adjustments. Commonly accepted practice advised by SCSA is the following:

- Based on the completed assessment tasks, the teacher or HOLA makes a professional judgement of the performance of the students affected by the event.
- Where additional assessment tasks are required to enable professional judgement to be made, the assessment outline is modified for the students affected by the event.
- The school informs the students affected by the event, and their parents/guardians/carers, of the changes to how their achievement will be determined, including any additional assessment tasks.

## 16. Transfer between courses and/or units

Should a student commence a pair of units late they will be at risk of being disadvantaged compared to others in the class. An application to transfer between types of courses or between courses is made through the Principal. A meeting may be held with the parent/guardian to discuss student progress and the requirements necessary for the student to be assigned a grade in the pair of units into which they wish to transfer.



At Hope Christian College, the deadline for student transfers/course (unit) changes in Semester 1 of Year 11 and Year 12 is Friday of Week 4 in Term 1.

The deadline for student transfers/course (unit) changes in Semester 2 for Year 11 is Thursday of Week 4 in Term 3.

In Year 11, students can also transfer at the end of Semester 1, where class numbers enable this to occur. Students studying a Foundation course can transfer to a General course after the OLN results are received from the Authority.

When a student transfers to a different course within the same subject (e.g. from English ATAR Year 11 to English General Year 11) or to a similar course (e.g. Human Biology ATAR Year 11 to Integrated Science General Year 11), the marks from completed assessment tasks will be used, where they are appropriate, for the unit into which the student is transferring. These marks may be statistically adjusted to ensure that they are on the same scale as the marks for all students in the new class.

Where additional work and/or assessment tasks are necessary to enable a grade to be assigned, the teacher will develop an individual education plan showing the work to be completed and/or an adjusted assessment outline. The plan and/or the adjusted assessment outline will be discussed with the parent/guardian and provided to the student.

## **17. Transfer from another school**

It is the responsibility of any student who transfers into a class from the same course at another school, to provide the College with evidence of all completed assessment tasks. The Academic Head will contact the previous school to confirm:

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

The head of learning area/teacher-in-charge responsible for the course will:

- determine how the marks from assessment tasks at the previous school will be used  
[Note: Where necessary these marks will be statistically adjusted to ensure that they are on the same scale as those at Hope Christian College.]
- determine the additional work, if any, to be completed
- determine the additional assessment tasks, if any, to be completed to enable a grade to be assigned.

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

## **18. Reporting student achievement**

The college reports student achievement at the end of Semester 1 and at the end of Semester 2. The report provides for each course:

- a comment by the teacher
- a grade

At the end of the year, students will be provided with a Hope Christian College statement of results, which lists the school mark and grade for each pair of units. These are the results which will be submitted to the Authority.

All final grades are subject to approval by the Authority at the end of the year. The student (and parent/guardian) will be notified of any changes that result from the Authority's review of the student results submitted by the college.

## **19. Reviewing marks and grades**

If a student considers that there is an issue about the delivery of the course, 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 an assessment issue cannot be resolved through discussion with the teacher then the student (or the parent/guardian) should approach the relevant head of learning area/teacher-in-charge responsible for the course.

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

- the assessment outline does not meet the syllabus requirements
- the assessment procedures used do not conform with the College's senior secondary assessment policy
- procedural errors have occurred in the determination of the course mark and/or grade
- computational errors have occurred in the determination of the course mark.

The Principal, or a nominated representative, will conduct the review. The reviewer will meet with the student and the teacher independently and prepare a written report. This report will be provided to the student and their parent/guardian.

If this review does not resolve the matter, the student (or parent/guardian) may appeal to the School Curriculum and Standards Authority. Authority representatives will then independently investigate the claim and report to the Authority's student appeal committee.

If the committee upholds a student appeal the College will make any required adjustments to the student's mark and/or grade and where required the mark and/or grade of other students and re-issue reports and/or the statement of achievement as necessary.