

Senior Secondary Assessment Policy

This Policy is provided to all Senior Secondary students at Cape Naturaliste College and is based on School Curriculum and Standards Authority requirements (SCSA).

All students are enrolled in a combination of School Curriculum and Standards Authority accredited courses. Some students are also gaining credit for the WACE by undertaking one of the VET programs.

This Policy covers the assessment of all School Curriculum and Standards Authority accredited courses.

1 Student responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the student to:

- complete all course requirements by the due date
- maintain an assessment file for each course studied and to make it available whenever required
- maintain a good record of attendance, conduct and progress (a student who is absent from a class for five lessons or more per term is deemed to be 'at risk' of not achieving the best possible result for the unit)
- 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 meets the WACE syllabus requirements for the course
- provide students with a course unit outline and an assessment outline at the start of the course
- ensure that all assessment tasks are fair, valid and reliable
- provide students with timely assessment feedback and guidance
- maintain accurate records of student achievement
- meet school and external timelines for assessment and reporting
- inform students and parents of academic progress as appropriate.

3 Information provided to students

At the start of every course the teacher will provide a copy of the following to each student:

- the syllabus for the course/stage
- a course unit outline that includes the following information:
 - the content
 - the sequence in which the content will be taught
 - the approximate time to teach each section of the unit.
- an assessment outline that includes the following information:
 - the assessment types
 - the weighting for each assessment type
 - the weighting for each assessment task
 - a general description of each assessment task
 - a general indication of the content covered by each assessment task
 - an indication of the outcomes covered by each assessment task
 - the approximate timing of each assessment task (i.e. the week in which each assessment task is planned or the due dates for significant stages of each extended task).

Students can also access from the College printed course documents (i.e. the syllabus, the College's Course Unit outline, the College's Assessment outline) and the School Curriculum and Standards Authority grade descriptions for the stage of the course they are studying.

In each course unit a number of assessment tasks occur during the Semester/year (including, in most cases end of semester exams – see Section 11 for details). Wherever possible tasks are completed in-class, however, in some cases they will be completed out-of-class. 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 course unit.

During every course, 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). Wherever appropriate, the criteria against which the task will be marked will also be provided.

4 Modification of the assessment outline

When a student's disability or specified learning disability does not allow them to complete a particular assessment task, the teacher may modify the task in consultation with the Head of Learning Area/teacher-in-charge. An individual education plan will be developed showing any modifications to the assessment outline for the course unit. The SCSA Guidelines for Disability Adjustments for Timed Assessments will be used to guide decision making where appropriate.

When a student's cultural beliefs do not enable them to complete a particular assessment task, the teacher may modify this task in consultation with the Head of Department. An individual education plan will be developed showing any modifications to the assessment outline for the course unit.

When a student's personal circumstances limit his/her capacity to complete a particular assessment task, the teacher, in consultation with the student and others involved, may negotiate a variation to the submission date. The teacher will consider fairness for all students when making decisions about adjusting timelines for a particular student.

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

5 Marks and grades

A grade (A, B, C, D or E) is assigned for each course unit. Grades are assigned using the total weighted mark for all assessment tasks and grade descriptors. The assessment outline, provided to all students for each course unit (and available on the College's intranet) shows the weighting of each assessment task.

Failure to attend a scheduled in-class assessment task or submit on time an out-of-class assessment task may result in the student either:

- receiving a lower grade than expected at the end of the course unit (if the reason for non-completion/submission is not acceptable to the school, see Section 6 for details), or
- receiving a 'U' (Unfinished) notation instead of a grade (if the reason for non-completion/submission is acceptable to the College and the student can complete other work in the future to allow the College to convert the 'U' notation to a grade).

In-Class Assessments

Students are required to attempt all in-class assessment tasks on the scheduled date.

When a student misses an in-class assessment task, they need to provide a note from their parents explaining a valid reason for their absence and complete the assessment as soon as possible. Where a student has a reason for not attending the scheduled in-class assessment task they must discuss the matter with the teacher at the earliest opportunity.

Out of Class Assessments

Most assessment tasks will be completed in class. However, if an out-of-class assessment task is submitted after the due date, where the student does not provide a reason which is acceptable to the College, the following penalties apply:

- 10% reduction in the mark received (if submitted one school day late), or
- 50% reduction in the mark received (if submitted two school days late), or
- a mark of zero (if submitted more than two school days late or not submitted).

If an assessment task cannot be submitted directly to the teacher it is to be submitted to the Head of Department who will provide a written confirmation of the submission. Where a student has a reason for not being able to meet the scheduled due date for the out-of-class assessment task they must discuss the matter with the teacher at the earliest opportunity.

If a student does not submit an assessment task or attend a scheduled in-class assessment task, the teacher will contact the parent/guardian to discuss the impact on the student's result for the course unit.

6 Acceptable reasons for non-submission or non-completion

The penalty for non-submission or non-completion will be waived if the student provides a reason which is acceptable to the College.

For example:

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

In such cases the parent/guardian must:

- contact the College before 9.30am on the day and
- provide either a medical certificate, other proof of illness or a letter of explanation immediately the student returns.

Where the student provides a reason which is acceptable to the College for the non-submission or non-completion 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
- re-weight the student's marks for other tasks (if, in the opinion of the teacher, sufficient evidence exists in the other tasks completed to enable a grade to be assigned), or
- decide on an alternate assessment task if, in the opinion of the teacher, the assessment is no longer confidential, or
- statistically estimate the student's mark for the assessment task on the basis of their marks in similar tasks.

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 during the term are not considered a valid reason for non-completion or non-submission of an assessment task. In exceptional circumstances, the parent/guardian may negotiate with the Associate Principal the development of an individual education plan. This plan will show how the missed lesson time will be compensated for and any modifications to the assessment outlines for each course unit.

Where a catastrophic event (e.g. a pandemic) affects delivery of the teaching program and/or the submission/completion of one or more assessment tasks, students will be advised by the Head of Learning Area/teacher-in-charge of any modifications to the task requirements and/or the assessment outline, including the due date. Where the event has an impact on the College's examinations, students will be informed of changes by the Associate Principal as soon as possible.

7 Transfer between courses/units

When a student commences a course unit late they are at risk of being disadvantaged compared to others in the class. An application to transfer between courses or units is made through the Associate 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 course unit into which they wish to transfer.

Any request for transfer between courses / units will be considered on individual circumstances and within the deadlines set by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority for transfer and enrolment in units.

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

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

8 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 the details of all completed assessment tasks. The Associate Principal, will contact the previous school to determine:

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

The Head of Learning Area/teacher-in-charge 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 Cape Naturaliste 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 the modifications to the assessment outline. The plan will be discussed with the parent/guardian and provided to the student.

9 Cheating, Collusion and Plagiarism

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

- identical or similar material to the work of another person (e.g. another student, a parent, a tutor)
- identical, or similar material to a published work unless the source is acknowledged in referencing or footnotes. Students must not cheat (i.e. engage in a dishonest act to gain an unfair advantage).

Note: Where a student permits others to copy their work they will also be penalised.

If a student is believed to have engaged in cheating, collusion or plagiarism, the teacher will refer the matter to the Head of Learning Area/teacher-in-charge. As part of this process, 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 part of the assessment where the teacher can identify the part of the assessment task that has been copied or plagiarised.

The parent/guardian will be informed of the penalty and any further disciplinary action.

10 Security of Assessment Tasks

Where there is more than one class in a course unit, most or all of the assessment tasks will be the same. In such cases, to ensure that no students are unfairly advantaged, the question papers used for in-class assessment tasks will be collected at the end of the lesson. In their own interests, students must not discuss the nature of the questions with students from the other classes until after all classes have completed the task.

Discussion of the questions will be treated as cheating and the students will be penalised.

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

11 Examinations

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

Examinations may be scheduled for General courses in those courses where considered appropriate by the Head of Learning Area/teacher-in-charge. This will be included in the assessment outline for the unit/s.

Examinations are typically 2.5 hours to 3 hours in Year 11 and 12. The examination timetable and a copy of the examination rules will be issued to students approximately 3 weeks before the commencement of the exam period.

12 Reporting Achievement

Cape Naturaliste College reports student achievement at the end of Semester 1 and at the end of Semester 2. The report provides a comment by the teacher for each course unit and the following information:

- a grade for the unit
- a mark for the unit (the weighted total mark for all assessment tasks in the unit, including the school exam/s)
- a mark in the Semester exam.

At the end of the year, students will be provided with a Cape Naturaliste College statement which lists the grade for each course unit, and where required, the school mark, which was submitted to the School Curriculum and Standards Authority.

All grades on Semester 1 and 2 reports are subject to School Curriculum and Standards Authority approval at the end of the year.

The parent/guardian will be notified of any changes that result from the School Curriculum and Standards Authority's review of the student results submitted by Cape Naturaliste College.

For all Year 12 students, for each ATAR course unit, a statistically adjusted school mark is reported by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority on the student's Statement of Results. Details of the process the Council uses to adjust the marks submitted by the College are available on the Council website at www.curriculum.wa.edu.au/Senior_Secondary/Exam_Information/Your_Marks/

Information about calculating the TER (ATAR) for university entry is available on the TISC website at www.tisc.edu.au

13 Reviewing marks and grades

If a student considers that there is an issue about the delivery of the course, the marking of an assessment task or about the grade assigned for a course unit 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 parent/guardian should approach the appropriate Head of Department.

The student or 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 for the course unit does not meet School Curriculum and Standards Authority requirements
- the assessment procedures used in the class do not conform with the College's Assessment Policy
- procedural errors have occurred in the determination of the mark and/or grade
- computational errors have occurred in the determination of the mark and/or grade.

The 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 parent/guardian.

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