



Byford Secondary College

SENIOR SCHOOL ASSESSMENT POLICY

This policy is provided to all senior secondary students at Byford Secondary College and is based on Department of Education (DoE) and School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA) requirements. All Year 11 and Year 12 students are enrolled in a combination of ATAR, General and/or Foundation. Some students are also gaining credit for the WACE by undertaking a Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualification and/or one or more of the endorsed programs available at the College. The VET qualifications are delivered and assessed in partnership with Registered Training Organisations (RTOs). The Senior School Assessment Policy applies to the assessment of all WACE courses, as well as VET qualifications and should be read in conjunction with the College's VET Policy.

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 College (see Section 9)
- 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 SCSA syllabus for the particular unit or pair of units
- provide students with access to a Course Outline and an Assessment Outline (see Section 3)
- ensure that all assessment tasks are fair, valid and reliable
- provide students with timely assessment feedback and guidance about how best to undertake future tasks
- maintain accurate and timely records of student achievement in Reporting to Parents and Connect
- meet College and external timelines for assessment and reporting
- inform students and parents of academic progress as appropriate

3. Information provided to students

Before teaching starts the teacher will provide on Connect/Compass the following documents:

- the SCSA syllabus for the pair of units which includes the grade descriptions
- a Course Outline for the pair of units 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.

Students are expected to download these documents from Connect/Compass on to their iPad.

4. Assessing student achievement

At Byford Secondary 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 (EST) for Year 12 General and Foundation courses (see Sections 5 and 6). A grade (A, B, C, D or E) is assigned for each pair of units completed. This grade reflects a standard of achievement as defined by the behaviours indicated in the Grade related Descriptors for the appropriate course.

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 unit (Year 11 General and Foundation courses) or pair of units (Year 11 ATAR courses and Year 12 courses).

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 will be validated to ensure authenticity). 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 Manager of Learning Area responsible for the course (see Section 11).

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 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 written examinations are typically 2.5 or 3 hours in duration. In Year 12 all written examinations are 3 hours duration with the exception of Mathematics or for courses with a practical, performance or oral examination which are 2.5 hours plus a separate practical, performance or oral examination.

The examination timetable is issued to students at least two weeks before 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. 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) 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 tasks

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 SCSA 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 SCSA requires the College to submit the EST marks, then the College will determine if the reason for non-completion is acceptable (see Section 13) 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. Disruption, cheating, collusion and plagiarism

Students must not act in a disruptive manner during invigilated assessment tasks. Invigilated assessment tasks are those completed under timed test or examination conditions which require separated seating and active supervision by the teacher. Disruption involves a student behaving in a manner that is distracting to the other members of the class during the assessment and includes communicating (verbal and non-verbal) with others, making attention-seeking noises or moving out of their allocated seat without permission. Students who act in a disruptive manner during invigilated assessment tasks will be removed from the classroom and penalties will be applied.

Students must not cheat, collude or plagiarise. *Cheating* is when a student engages in a dishonest act to gain an unfair advantage for themselves and/or others. *Collusion* is when a student submits work that is not their own for assessment. *Plagiarism* is when a student uses someone else's words or ideas without acknowledging that they have done so (i.e. the work is essentially copied).

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
- paraphrasing or summarising the work of others.

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

If it is found that a student has disrupted, 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 of the decision made, the penalty and any further disciplinary action.

8. Security of assessment tasks

Where there is more than one class studying the same pair of units at the College, all or most of the assessment tasks will be the same to ensure student marks are on the same scale. 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 and retained by the teacher until the task has been completed by all classes. In their own interests, students must not discuss the nature of the questions with students from the other classes until after all classes have completed the task. Discussion of the questions will be treated as collusion and the students will be penalised. 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.

9. 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 SCSA for moderation purposes.

To assist students, the College establishes an assessment file for each student for each course/program. The file holds all marked written assessment tasks. Students will have access to this file for revision purposes. The College retains the files until the marks have been accepted by SCSA. The written assessment tasks are available to students for collection after that time. All materials not collected by the end of the school year are securely disposed of by the College. All recorded evidence of performance for non-written assessment tasks is deleted / erased at the end of the school year. The college will not use the materials for any other purposes without the written permission of the student.

It is a requirement of Australian Skills Quality Authority that student VET work is stored for compliance purposes and RTO requirements vary. Student work may be physical or electronic; some RTOs require originals and the College will endeavor to keep an electronic copy wherever possible. Should students wish to have a copy of their work they must arrange this with the teacher prior to their departure from the College.

Any physical/printed VET work is stored in the student's individual physical/electronic files and managed under the direction of teachers while the student is currently enrolled and by the VET team once the student has left the College. Archives of electronic student VET work are stored on a hard drive accessible only by Byford Secondary College staff. Any physical work to be stored will be managed by the VET team in secure storerooms at the College. Student VET work will be stored for a period of up to 2 years before is it shredded and/or disposed of.

10. Modification of the Assessment Outlines

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 placed on Connect.

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 (see Section 11).

11. Commitment to access and equity principles

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 Learning Area Leader responsible for the course. These adjustments will be consistent with those described in SCSA's *Guidelines for disability adjustments for timed assessments*, which can be accessed from the SCSA 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.

Standards for RTOs state that access and equity policies and approaches are aimed at ensuring that VET is responsive to the individual needs of clients whose age, gender, cultural or ethnic background, disability, sexuality, language skills, literacy or numeracy level, unemployment, imprisonment or remote location may present a barrier to access, participation and the achievement of suitable outcomes. Where an individual's needs present a barrier to access participation and the achievement of suitable outcomes the teacher may make reasonable adjustments to support learners. This adjustment must be consistent with the requirements of training packages and VET accredited courses and enable each learner to meet the requirements for each unit of competency or module in which they are enrolled.

12. Absence from class and/or missed work

12.1 General

If a student is absent from class, his/her ability to achieve their potential is diminished. Extended periods of absence usually result in lower levels of achievement. Absences may result in a student not fulfilling the requirements of a course and thus fail to achieve a satisfactory grade. This in turn may lead to failure to meet WACE achievement requirements. 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 13.2).

12.2 Planned Absence

Where an **approved absence** from a scheduled assessment is known of in advance, it is the responsibility of the parent/student to inform the teacher as soon as possible. The teacher will endeavor to make alternative arrangements for the completion of that assessment.

12.3 Extended Absence

Where a student is unable to attend school for a lengthy period due to illness or injury as supported by a **medical certificate**, the College will endeavor to provide support to the student's learning program. It is the responsibility of the student and parent/guardian to maintain regular contact with the College throughout the absence to enable this to occur. This communication with individual teachers and access to teaching programs can be maintained through **Connect/Compass**.

13. Missed Assessment

13.1 General

If you are absent for any period and do not complete any aspect of the prescribed work, your final result may be considerably reduced. You cannot receive credit for work not completed or class time not experienced.

Absences may result in you not satisfactorily meeting the requirements of the educational and assessment program and therefore being judged not to have completed it. Potential achievement will not be considered.

It is the student's responsibility to discuss assessments missed during absences and to negotiate satisfactory completion with the course teacher

13.2 Acceptable Reasons:

Acceptable reasons for an absence from scheduled assessments are:

- 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.
- approved College excursion or incursion is scheduled during an assessment.
- Other situations deemed appropriate by the College, in line with the College Attendance Policy.

In such cases the parent/guardian must:

- provide either a **medical certificate** or a **letter of explanation** to Student Services immediately upon the student's return to school.
- Advance notice of a planned absence should be provided to the classroom teacher by the parent or student via email or phone contact prior to the scheduled assessment date.

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 SCSA requirements for the course and to enable a grade to be assigned).

13.3 Unacceptable Reasons:

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 license test, attending a non-urgent appointment, family holidays).

13.4 Absence due to family holiday

While family time is very valuable, it is important to stress that taking children out of school for family holidays reduces the amount of time available for learning and is detrimental to their education.

Where a student will be absent from scheduled assessments due to a family holiday:

- In line with Department of Education guidelines parents are required to seek Principal authorisation at least two weeks prior to holiday departure
- The student must negotiate to complete and submit the assessment prior to holiday departure (if available) or email the assessment to the teacher by the due date
- Where the assessment is an invigilated task (conducted in class) the student must negotiate an alternate date within 5 school days prior to date of the scheduled assessment or within 5 school days on their return
- Where an assessment is unable to be undertaken or submitted by the due date the student may be allocated 0
- Decisions to accommodate alternate arrangements will be determined on an individual basis by the Course teacher, Student Services Manager and Associate Principal with oversight of that year group.

13.4 Late Assessment:

Where scheduled assessment task is not submitted/completed by the due date and the student **does not** provide a reason which is acceptable to the College:

- If possible, teachers will make their judgement on the evidence that is already available by the deadline
- the teacher will advise parents via a standardised email.
- If there is no evidence available a penalty of 10% per school day late up to 50%
- a mark of zero (if outstanding after two weeks).

Where an **in-class assessment** task is missed and the student **does not** provide a reason which is acceptable to the College:

- The student will be required to sit the assessment upon their return to school, or (in the case of an examination) at an appropriate time determined by the College and will be subject to the penalties listed above.

14. 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 relevant 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 pair of units into which they wish to transfer.

At Byford Secondary College the deadline for student transfers in Year 11 and Year 12 is Friday of Week Four in Term One as all courses are assessed as a pair of units. In Year 11, students can also transfer at the end of Semester One, where class numbers enable this to occur.

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.

15. 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 relevant Associate Principal 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 Learning Area Leader 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 Byford Secondary 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.

16. Reporting student achievement

The College reports student achievement at the end of Semester One and at the end of Semester Two. The report provides for each course:

- a comment by the teacher
- a grade¹ reflective of the behaviours described in the course grade related descriptors
- the percentage mark in the school-based examination (for ATAR courses)
- the percentage mark¹ (calculated from the weighted total mark).

1 The Semester One mark and grade are interim only as they are not finalised until the pair of units is completed at the end of the year.

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

17. Student progression from Year 11 to Year 12

The Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) is awarded to senior secondary school students who satisfy its requirements. It is a senior secondary certificate recognised nationally in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). Generally, students will complete two years of senior secondary study to achieve the WACE, although the School Curriculum and Standards Authority allows students to meet the WACE requirements over a lifetime. The WACE is recognised by universities, industry and other training providers. Achievement of a WACE signifies that a student has successfully met the breadth and depth standard, the achievement standard and the literacy and numeracy standard in their senior secondary schooling.

In the event that a Year 11 student is deemed at risk of not achieving the requirements to be awarded the WACE at

the end of Year 12 the following year, it is strongly recommended that the student either repeat Year 11, seek full-time training at another institution such as TAFE, or engage in full-time employment. As a general guide, a Year 11 student is deemed at risk if, by the end of Year 11, they have not achieved six or more C grades in WACE courses and/or are not on track to complete a Certificate II or higher qualification in the following 12 months.

18. 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 Manager of Learning Area 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 school 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 SCSA using an appeal form which is available from the relevant Associate Principal or the SCSA website. SCSA representatives will then independently investigate the claim and report to SCSA'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.