



# HSC Assessment

## Policy

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### Version History

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1.0		New Illawarra Christian School policy
2.0	July 2018	Changes to refine expression, add details for reporting and update references to NESA
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Illawarra Christian School: Mission In Christ's service to partner with parents in providing a quality Christian Education founded on the Word of God.

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

This policy is based on guidelines provided by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). It is important that students and their parents read this document carefully to ensure that they are familiar with the operation of the assessment system and can obtain the maximum benefit in their preparations for the HSC.

Teachers will submit an assessment mark to NESA for each of the courses, based on tasks outlined in each subject's assessment program. Only these designated assessment tasks contribute to a student's HSC assessment mark. NESA will moderate the school's final assessment mark for each student in each subject against the performance of the class in the actual HSC examination in that subject. This moderated assessment mark, not the school mark, is the final mark that will be awarded. A student's final mark, but not his/her rank order, may be altered by this moderation process.

The moderated assessment mark and the HSC examination mark each contributes 50% to the student's final HSC score.

## **2 CHRISTIAN RATIONALE**

The purpose of assessment is to help students develop their God-given talents and abilities so that they can approach their full potential, imaging God more fully over time and advancing the kingdom of God in all endeavours, thus bringing glory to our Creator.

Assessment must keep in mind that God has given students different gifts and abilities that should be developed and not squandered (1 Corinthians 3:10-15). Assessment should be honest and truthful (Ephesians 4:15), acknowledging both strengths and weaknesses. It should also recognise that each student is made in God's image (Genesis 1:26a) and is special to God (Matthew 18:5), and that God has a plan and purpose for each one (Jeremiah 29:11). The God who made us has gifted each student, and therefore there is nothing to boast about (1 Corinthians 4:7).

Assessment should recognise effort (Matthew 25:14-30), be personalised, and be based on a caring relationship where the teacher genuinely knows the student and seeks to encourage development of the gifts God has given the student (Ephesians 4:29; 1 Thessalonians 5:11), following the model of Christ in his relationship with his disciples.

Feedback should emphasise strengths and weaknesses and ways to improve, rather than comparisons between students. Teachers should encourage students to employ self-assessment methods where appropriate (Galatians 6:4).

## **3 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT**

This document outlines the policy and procedures of the school assessment of students in doing the HSC; and its obligations to school authorities for assessment.

#### **4 PURPOSE FOR ASSESSMENT**

Assessment is intended to provide an indication of each student's attainment - knowledge, skills and understanding - over a wider range of syllabus objectives than is measured by the HSC examination alone. It allows due weight to be given during a course to student achievement which, although evident to the class teacher, may not be adequately assessed in an external examination alone.

In addition, assessment provides valuable information for individual students as to the suitability of subjects chosen, the effectiveness of study and preparation, areas of giftedness, and pointers to possible career/ministry directions.

For teachers, it assists in evaluation of programs and teaching strategies, and it highlights the particular needs of individuals and classes.

#### **5 SATISFACTORY COMPLETION OF A COURSE**

Students must satisfactorily complete a course to be eligible for the HSC in that course. To satisfactorily complete a course, students must have:

- (a) followed the course provided
- (b) applied themselves with diligence and sustained effort to the set tasks and experiences provided in the course by the school
- (c) achieved some or all of the course outcomes
- (d) made a genuine attempt at and submitted assessment tasks which contribute in excess of 50% of the available marks. (Exactly 50% is not sufficient.)

Unexplained absences are regarded seriously. Students whose attendance is called into question will be required to prove to the principal's satisfaction, following a review of their performance, that they are meeting the above course completion criteria.

If a student does not satisfactorily complete a course, that course cannot be counted towards the ten units required to qualify for the HSC.

If it appears a student is at risk of being given an 'N' (Non-completion) determination in any course, he/she will be warned and the parents advised in writing in time for the problem to be corrected.

In exceptional circumstances, the principal may permit a student who has received an 'N' determination in a Preliminary course, on the grounds of lack of application, to proceed to the HSC course, provisionally, while concurrently satisfying any outstanding Preliminary course requirements.

#### **6 ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES**

##### **6.1 Commencement and Conclusion of HSC Assessment**

Assessment for the HSC course will not commence until after the completion of the Preliminary course and will normally, but not always, conclude with the trial HSC examination.

## **6.2 The Types of Tasks**

Tasks vary in nature according to the requirements of the subject concerned, but they may consist of instruments such as written assignments, in-class presentations, class tests, essays, projects, fieldwork, major works and examinations.

## **7 INFORMATION PROVIDED TO STUDENTS**

For each HSC subject, students will be provided with:

- (a) the NESA components and their weightings
- (b) the general nature of each assessment task
- (c) a general schedule of when assessment tasks are planned to take place and at least two weeks' notice of the precise timing of each assessment task
- (d) the weight/value of each task in relation to the total mark for the course
- (e) clear feedback on their performance, indicating the outcomes they have or have not attained.

Teachers are required to assess a student's actual performance, not potential performance. Assessment marks cannot be modified to take into account possible effects of illness or domestic situations.

## **8 ASSESSMENT TASKS**

### **8.1 The Total Number and Value of Tasks**

Formal assessment will be conducted through the completion of three or four tasks for each course, including examinations. Assessment schedules will reflect the mandatory course components and weightings, and will include any mandatory task types. Assessment items conducted on separate days are considered to be separate assessment tasks.

### **8.2 Completion and Submission of Tasks**

Teachers will advise students of any special requirements for the submission of assessment tasks, and due dates may be adjusted provided that two weeks' notice is given or there is consensus between the teacher and the students concerned. Students will receive at least two weeks' notice of the exact date and nature of each task.

No assessment tasks will be due in the week prior to the Year 12 half-yearly examination nor in the two-week period prior to the Year 12 trial examination. No assessment tasks will be due in the week following each Year 12 examination period.

Where possible, tasks will be set which are completed in class. Where this is not possible, the work must be submitted directly to the teacher (not left on the teacher's desk) or as directed in the assessment notification.

### **8.3 Invalid or Unreliable Task Results**

In exceptional circumstances, a completed task determined by the teacher to be invalid or unreliable (e.g. through failure to discriminate or occurrence of unforeseen disadvantage) may be re-weighted and supplemented with an additional task, be repeated, or be otherwise compensated for by the teacher in consultation with the head teacher/coordinator. Where an acceptable validity cannot be achieved, that task's results may be disregarded.

Assessment tasks should discriminate between students. A student's rank in the class and the relative difference between assessment marks is an important factor in the final submission of marks to NESAs.

### **8.4 Return of Tasks**

Students will be informed of their results in each task and should pursue any queries as to the quality of their work with their teachers. Any queries relating to the marks awarded (e.g. if something appears to have been overlooked or marks incorrectly added) must be made at the time the marked work is returned.

### **8.5 Word Count/Time Length**

Assessment tasks that exceed the word count by more than 10% will lose 10% of their final mark. Presentations or speeches that are longer than the given timeframe by 10% will also be penalised by 10% of their final mark.

Tasks in excess of 20% more of the word count or timeframe will also not be marked beyond that point.

### **8.6 Rank Order and Final Assessment Mark**

Students may be informed of their cumulative rank order in each class upon request, but not their final school assessment mark. The final assessment mark will be based on the marks assigned to each assessment task according to its weighting.

### **8.7 Reporting**

Apart from direct feedback from class teachers, students will receive half-yearly and yearly reports. These will indicate overall achievement in each subject, recent examination results and evaluative comments from teachers as to the student's fulfilment of the outcomes of the courses. They will also provide encouragement and recommendations for further development. In addition, individual interviews are scheduled with students and parents. These may be sought at any time, in addition to the special nights set aside for the purpose.

In the HSC, marks for each subject are generally awarded in the 50–100% range unless a student has failed to meet the minimum standards of the course. Accordingly, Year 12

examination and assessment marks at Illawarra Christian School are also generally reported in the 50–100% range.

The Assessment Standard is a scaled mark based on the cumulative total of HSC assessment tasks to date. The Examination Standard is a scaled mark based on the achievement of the student in the recent examination.

## **9 NON-COMPLETION OF AN ASSESSMENT TASK**

Students are expected to perform assessment tasks on their scheduled dates. If a student is adversely affected during the task, or if he/she fails to submit an assessment task and has a valid reason, the following considerations may be given.

### **9.1 Illness**

If a student is absent from a task due to illness, he/she will be required to provide a medical certificate. Failure to do so will result in a zero mark being recorded. Students who provide a medical certificate will be required to do the task or a substitute task at a later date. Where this is impractical, the principal will approve the awarding of an estimate mark.

When an in-class assessment task (including examinations) has been completed but a student believes he/she has underperformed as a result of illness during the task, a medical certificate must be obtained on the day of the task. If the result of the task is notably below the student's normal achievement level, a substitute task may be arranged at the teacher's discretion or marks adjusted to reflect the student's achievement in a comparable task. This provision applies to illness during the task only. It does not apply to loss of preparation time prior to the task.

### **9.2 Misadventure**

If a student is absent due to misadventure, every effort should be made to advise the school on the day, and an appeal should be made in writing, outlining the reasons for the student being unable to attend. The principal will consider such appeals.

### **9.3 Late Submission and Extensions**

Assessment tasks must be submitted on the date due and at the commencement of the first learning session of the relevant subject on that day unless an alternative arrangement has been made by the teacher. Extensions will only be granted under exceptional circumstances of misadventure or documented illness immediately before or on the day. Unless an extension has been granted, work submitted after the due date will lose marks at the rate of 50% per day. After two days zero marks will be allocated for the task.

Where there is no valid reason for the non-completion of an assessment task, a zero mark will be recorded for the task, and parents will be advised in writing. A signed acknowledgment will be required.

## **9.4 Malpractice**

A student may not take another person's work, alter it and present it as entirely his/her own. It is essential to acknowledge the source of any quotes, concepts or images appropriately, so there is no confusion as to the identity of the original author. A zero mark will be awarded for plagiarism, and parents will be informed in writing. The task is required to be re-submitted to an appropriate standard.

Stage 6 examinations will be conducted according to HSC examination regulations. Students found to be in breach of these regulations will be awarded a zero mark, and parents will be informed in writing.

All forms of formal assessment malpractice will be registered with NESAs in accordance with current regulations.

## **10 SPECIAL PROVISIONS**

Special provisions may be made available for students with a disability, where such provisions are likely to be approved for the HSC examination. This option should be discussed with the coordinator responsible for examinations and with special education staff. Applications will be made for Special Provisions for the HSC examination for students who request them and whose needs fit within the parameters set by NESAs.

## **11 REVIEW OF ASSESSMENTS**

### **11.1 School Review**

A school review will establish whether:

- (a) the weightings used by the school were those specified by NESAs
- (b) the marks awarded were consistent with the school's assessment policy
- (c) a computational or clerical error has occurred.

### **11.2 NESAs Review**

A student dissatisfied with the school's review may appeal to NESAs, but only on the grounds that:

- (a) the school review was inadequate for determining 1-3 above
- (b) the conduct of the review was not proper in all respects.

NESAs will not revise assessment marks or order of merit but may request that the school amend its procedures and conduct a further review. No appeal is possible after the release of HSC results.