



# MARCELLIN COLLEGE RANDWICK

## Assessment Policy.

Assessment is an essential part of schooling. It is the process of collecting information on student performance in relation to the objectives and outcomes of a course. Assessment procedures should always be consistent with and serve the College's aims and purposes as well as accommodate all mandatory requirements issued by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA)

The assessment marks and grades awarded are intended to reflect students' achievements at the end of the topic, course or year. Many measures and observations are to be made throughout the course. Measuring achievement at points during the course provides a better indication of student achievement than a single examination by catering for knowledge and skills that are better assessed in specific settings (eg research, fieldwork or practical skills).

The assessment marks and grades reflect knowledge and skills objectives only. The College does not include measures from the affective domain (values and attitudes) in assessment tasks. All assessment procedures aim to respect the individual, and enhance rather than diminish self-esteem and motivation.

Student assessment is reported to parents through regular reporting and aims to be clear, meaningful and sensitive to student's needs. The central purpose of assessment is to provide information on progress and to set direction for ongoing teaching and learning.

Marcellin College is committed to an assessment process which encourages a culture of learning in the Catholic tradition. We strive to achieve the following:

- Assessment procedures consistent with our Mission Statement and supportive of the pastoral care aims of enhancing and affirming each student's achievements.
- Assessment that encourages students to strive for excellence within their own potential.
- Parent involvement through clear communication of assessment procedures including assessment manuals, on-line grading policy, newsletter items, reports, parent teacher meetings, information evenings, phone calls, via College diary, telephone or letter.
- Each teacher assumes responsibility for the assessment procedures in their classes and their own professional development.
- Effective assessment practice is:
  - clearly linked to knowledge and skills outcomes
  - carefully planned – quality over quantity
  - on-going (informal tasks including HW and observations)
  - should not dominate the learning program
  - valid, reliable and fair
  - dynamic and varied
  - time efficient and manageable
  - open to appeal
  - standards referenced (current guidelines)

## **Internal Assessment – Director of Learning responsibilities:**

The Director of Learning is responsible for developing the assessment handbooks for students in all years. Each handbook contains rules and procedures for the relevant cohort as well as assessment schedules for all courses. As such, it provides advanced notification to students for all formal assessment tasks during the year. Assessment handbooks are issued to students early in the year and are made available to parents via the College's website.

## **Internal Assessment - KLA Coordinator's responsibilities**

Individual KLA Coordinators may issue additional information to students throughout the year to supplement the assessment handbook or to advise students of variations. However, the assessment schedule is strictly adhered to unless approval for a change is obtained from the Director of Learning.

In developing assessment schedules each year, the College sets tasks, specifies weightings for each task and gives students advanced notification of task requirements. The College also provides students with feedback, keeps records of performance and informs boys of their progress. KLA Coordinators and their staff develop assessment schedules for each subject in accordance with NESA guidelines. The KLA Coordinators assume responsibility for ensuring procedures conform to NESA requirements.

## **Developing an assessment program for each course involves:**

- checking the accuracy and currency of assessment including: assessment program for each course, giving the number and types of assessment tasks, components and task weightings and scheduling marking, recording and reporting student achievement in assessment tasks
- Identifying tasks to be used to measure student achievement in each course. NESA recommends 3-4 assessment tasks for Stage 4 and 5 courses (eg formal examinations, practical tests, and oral tests) are generally sufficient to assess the components of a course. For Stage 6 courses, NESA mandates 3-4 assessment tasks for 2 unit Board Developed courses. NESA also mandates the types of tasks eg formal examinations, practical tests, and oral tests
- Allocating weightings to task in accordance with current syllabus requirements and the relative importance of each task. Depending on the course NESA requires tasks weightings are set between a possible minimum of 10% and maximum of 40%.
- Being mindful of the demands tasks place on students and teachers when scheduling tasks. No more than 2 in class tasks per day are scheduled and assessment free periods are respected.
- Providing students with written advice about requirements for assessment in courses.
- Devising procedures for marking, recording and reporting on performance on tasks.
- Maintaining records of marks awarded for each task.
- To ensure all programs comply with SCS and NESA guidelines

Half-yearly and yearly exam/assessment blocks are timetabled into the school calendar for years 7-12. In the junior years only core subjects tend to be examined during these periods. However, in the senior years almost all courses tend to set formal exams as part of their assessment schedule. Where possible, Assessment free periods of one week occur prior to formal exam periods. From 2018 Stage 6 Preliminary Courses will only have one formal examination.

KLA Coordinators are responsible for the recording and storage of all marks for assessment tasks. These assessment marks are to be available in appropriate format to allow the Director of Learning to meet NESA requirements for submission and College requirements for academic reporting.

## **Internal Assessment - Staff responsibilities**

Assessment is both formal (assessment tasks in the handbook) and informal. All teachers are to follow the assessment programs developed by their department. In addition, teachers are to conduct a variety of ongoing assessments and informal tasks in order to motivate students, cater for individual needs and gather a richer picture of student learning. Special provisions for qualifying students need to be catered for and organised with the Special Needs support teachers. Examples of provisions may include: Braille or large print papers, use of a writer and/or reader, use of an interpreter, extension of test time, rest breaks, use of a personal computer, separate exam supervision, individual supervision, and permission to take medication.

The following applies to the formal assessment tasks outlined in the assessment schedules:

- Assessment is to be linked to the syllabus and at least 2 weeks' notice is given to students.
- Changes to the assessment schedules must be kept to a minimum.
- Changes must be approved by the KLA Coordinator and communicated to students in writing. Any changes to Year 11 or 12 assessment must be approved by the Director of Learning and the new advice to students must include:
  - (i) the components and weightings to be assessed
  - (ii) the date and general nature of the task
  - (iii) details of administrative arrangements associated with the task
- Marking guidelines should be given to students with the task.
- Common marking procedures are to be used when multiple classes undertake a common task to ensure validity in reporting.
- Tasks are to be returned to students with feedback in an appropriate time frame, usually within two weeks.
- Doctors' certificates are to be signed, dated and filed by the KLA Coordinators.
- KLA Coordinators have responsibility for procedures relating to the collection of tasks.
- An extension is not to be given unless the appropriate form has been lodged and signed by the KLA Coordinator before the task is due or carried out.
- If a formal assessment task fails to act as a discriminator, the KLA Coordinator may introduce an additional task. In all such cases the Director of Learning is to be notified and students are informed of the changes to task weightings.

## **Assessment feedback**

The College is committed to providing students with appropriate and prompt feedback on all assessment tasks. As a general rule, tasks are to be marked and returned to students with constructive feedback within two weeks of completion. As an absolute minimum, all students in year 7-10 are entitled to a mark or a written qualitative comment for each task completed. Teachers of years 11 and 12 are required to provide students with individual feedback about their performance in an assessment task at the time when they are returned to the students. This would generally include information on an individual's marks or grades, his rank, marking schemes and preferred responses, descriptive and directive comments. A student's mark, rank and cumulative rank are reported to students and their parents after major examinations.

Students are to discuss results (marks or grades) with their teachers at the time a task is returned. This would generally occur within one week of the task being returned to a student. In cases of

disputes, students should seek resolution with the appropriate KLA Coordinator before escalating the matter to the Director of Learning.

Staff are to provide KLA Coordinators with all assessment marks. KLA Coordinators are responsible for the recording and storage of all marks for assessment tasks.

## **Record of Student Achievement (RoSA) Grades**

Grading student achievement is the process of assigning a letter (A, B, C, D, E) to summarise the level of a student's achievement in a course. The grade should describe the boy's achievement at the end of each course in Stage 5. Teachers make the final judgement on the basis of all available evidence (assessment information) and with reference to the Course Performance Descriptors. The grade should provide the best overall description of a student's achievement. If the College wishes to assign an N (non-completion) for a student's efforts in a course, a Grade A to E is also still submitted in the event that the student's appeal to NESAs is successful. The process of determining RoSA grades requires teachers to:

- Administer assessment tasks that address the knowledge and skills objectives and outcomes of a syllabus;
- Observe and record assessment judgments (eg marks, grades, comments);
- Use assessment information to make a summative judgment of each student's overall level of achievement at the end of the course;
- Refer to the Course Performance Descriptors to award a grade that most appropriately describes a student's achievement.

KLA Coordinators generally use the method below to determine the grades.

1. An assessment schedule is established consists of a number of tasks covering the full range of objectives and outcomes in accordance with NESAs requirements.
2. Weightings are determined for each task based on importance and syllabus requirements.
3. Marks are awarded for all tasks and a total mark for each student is calculated.
4. The total marks are used to determine the order of merit in the course.
5. With reference to Course Performance Descriptors, grades awarded based on the order of merit and cut-off marks.
6. Student grades are reviewed by teachers and the KLA coordinator for anomalies. Changes to individual grades only occur if they can be justified.

All reasonable evidence is considered when finalising grades. Adjustments are only made if the KLA coordinator, based on this evidence, considers a change better describes the boy's overall achievement in the course.

## **HSC School Assessment Mark**

The final HSC assessment mark may be achieved through simple addition or through statistical standardisation. Regardless of the method used, KLA Coordinators should ensure that the rank order and relative differences accurately reflect student achievement. The final assessment mark provided to NESAs is to be kept confidential. For new students enrolling in the College after the start of a HSC course the final mark is based only on his ranks in the tasks he has completed. Estimates are used only after reasonable efforts are made to provide comparable alternative tasks for these students. Similarly, accelerants are required to complete all tasks or their equivalent though the timing of such tasks needs to be flexible. With the exception of Mathematics, the internal assessment mark is based on the HSC Course only.

For Mathematics courses:

- No more than 20% of the Mathematics assessment is based on the Preliminary course
- Mathematics Extension 1 can be based on the whole of the Mathematics Extension 1 course (Preliminary and HSC courses). These commence with other HSC assessments and not before (no earlier than Term 4 of Year 11)
- Up to 30% of General Mathematics assessment may be based on the Preliminary course

Students are encouraged to complete all the courses they undertake. Students at risk of not completing a course are issued with warning letters in the hope of addressing the problem(s). In such circumstances, the Principal or the Director of Learning will advise the student, and parent or guardian, as soon as possible.

## **Student Appeals – Grades, Marks and Rankings**

The procedure for a student appeal arising from an assessment task is as follows:

- The student is to speak to the teacher who assessed the task and seek resolution.
- If the student is not satisfied with the outcome, then the student is to make an appointment with the KLA Coordinator to discuss any concerns.
- If the student is still not satisfied, a joint meeting is to be arranged between the student, the teacher and the KLA Coordinator to address the student's concerns and those of the teacher. The Principal or a representative would normally attend such a meeting. The result of this meeting may be:
  - A mutually agreed mark, grade or ranking (original or revised).
  - An alternative task or part to be completed in place of the disputed task.
  - To seek resolution with the Director of Learning who acts on behalf of the Principal to make decisions regarding grades, marks and ranks issued by the College.
- Students wishing to appeal against a grade, mark or rank awarded to them by the College for the Higher School Certificate should submit a written appeal, together with evidence, to the Principal. If the appeal is upheld, the Principal will send notification of the new grade(s) to NESAs. In order to be successful in such appeals, students would need to substantiate that the grading awarded in the course(s) was inconsistent with the progressive reporting from the College. Since the appeal is directed to the progressive reporting by the College, NESAs will not revise individual tasks or test marks.

## Completion of Tasks – N Determination

The school expects each student to do their best in each assessment task and complete all courses undertaken. Satisfactory completion requires evidence that the student has followed the course developed or endorsed by the NESAs, applied themselves with diligence and sustained effort to the set tasks and experiences provided in the course by the College; and achieved some or all of the course outcomes.

- A zero mark will be recorded when a candidate fails to complete an assessment task
- absences will be regarded seriously by the Principal who may determine that due to continual absence the course completion criteria may not have been met
- Successful completion of Stage 5 courses is a prerequisite for entry into the Preliminary Course.
- completion of the Preliminary Course is a prerequisite for the corresponding HSC Course
- if a candidate fails to submit a task specified in the assessment schedule and the KLA Coordinator considers that student has a valid reason (eg illness or misadventure), the Director of Learning may authorise the use of an alternative task or an estimate based on appropriate evidence

If it appears that a student in stage 5-6 is at risk of not meeting the internal assessment requirements in a course, a warning letter is issued. The Principal:

- advises the student in writing, in time for the problem to be corrected, specifying details of action required by the student and alerting the student to the possible consequences of an N determination;
- advises the parent or guardian in writing when the student is under 18;
- requests from the student and/or parent a written acknowledgement of the warning;
- issues follow-up warning letters if the student remains at risk;
- Retains copies of warning notices and other relevant documentation.

If a Stage 5 student receives an N determination in a mandatory curriculum requirement course, they will not be eligible for a RoSA. Students who leave school before finishing Year 10 are not eligible for a RoSA. If students leave after Year 10 and still don't meet RoSA requirements they will be issued with a Transcript of Study. The Transcript of Study contains the same information as the RoSA for courses satisfactorily completed.

If a Stage 6 student receives an N determination in a mandatory curriculum requirement course, they won't be eligible for the Higher School Certificate. If they leave school, they will receive a RoSA that will list:

- completed courses and the awarded grade or mark
- courses a student has participated in but did not complete before leaving school
- Date the student left school.

For the award of a HSC, NESAs requires each candidate to have satisfactorily completed assessment tasks contributing in excess of 50% of the available marks. If a Stage 6 student is given an N determination in a course, the Principal advises the student of the determination, its consequences and the student's right to a College review and subsequent appeal to NESAs. The College will calculate an assessment mark using the marks for those tasks submitted and a zero for each task not submitted. The information is made available in the case of an appeal to NESAs. A student who does not comply with the assessment requirements in a course will have neither an assessment mark nor an examination mark awarded for that course. In the case of Extension courses, students who fail to meet the assessment requirements for the co-requisite 2 unit course will not receive a result in either course.

## Review of N Determination

The procedures for the College review of an N determination will follow those laid down for other College reviews of assessments as follows:

- Students will be notified of the College's intention to issue an N determination by the date listed in the relevant *Events Timetable*.
- A student seeking a review of an N determination must apply to the Principal by the date listed in the relevant *Events Timetable*.
- If the College upholds the appeal, the College advises NESAs.
- If the appeal is declined, the student is informed may appeal to NESAs. In such cases, the student is informed of dates and procedures for lodging such an appeal. NESAs will advise the student and the Principal of the outcome of any appeal as soon as possible.

## **Late submission of tasks**

It is the student's responsibility to follow procedures for submitting tasks. A penalty applies for late submission - students will lose 20% of the mark normally awarded for every calendar day late (for example, the loss of 80% of the mark awarded if a student submits work 4 days late). In order to satisfy course requirements all assessment tasks must still be completed by students regardless of the circumstances. Students can apply for an extension of time using the appropriate form in the Assessment Handbook.

## **Unacceptable behaviour before or during a task**

Any form of dishonesty in completing an assessment task, such as cheating, assisting someone to cheat or plagiarising will result in a zero mark being recorded for the task. If a teacher is certain that students have cheated but is unaware of the students who are involved, then the whole class will be required to complete another task which is similar in nature to the one where cheating has occurred. Both tasks will then be marked and the average recorded as the final assessment mark for that task. Parents will be informed in writing if their son receives zero for an assessment task.

## **Illness, misadventure – Absence on the day of a task**

The School Assessment cannot compensate for factors such as extended illness, misadventure or domestic problems that may have affected a student's performance throughout the course. It is the student's responsibility to fulfil all requirements specified in the assessment schedule, including those tasks given during the student's absence.

However, a student who is absent from the school for a particular task, or who is adversely affected during the performance of a particular task, or who is unable to present an assignment for inclusion in the assessment, will not necessarily receive a "zero" mark for that task. Marks based on a substitute task, or in exceptional circumstances an estimate based on other evidence, will be accepted where the School considers the student has a valid reason, eg, illness, for not completing that task. Documentary evidence (eg, a doctor's certificate) must be provided by the student, in support of an illness/misadventure form and submitted to the College on the first day of the student's return to school.

If a student is absent without adequate cause, in the judgment of the School, a mark of "zero" will be recorded.

Where a student is absent on the day that research work is due to be submitted (Hand-in task) as a HSC Assessment Task, arrangements should be made for the material to be delivered to the College as early as possible that day, but no later than 10.00 am. Delivery of research material in the afternoon by a student who has not attended classes that day would be deemed as unacceptable by the College and will incur a one day's late penalty.

If it is not possible to submit an assessment task on the set date due to illness or misadventure, students should submit an electronic copy of the task to the relevant KLA coordinator. The student will then submit the hard copy task, along with an Illness Misadventure form and accompanying documentation on the FIRST day back at school. All documentation should be presented to the

relevant KLA Coordinator before the first period and then forwarded to the Director of Learning for a determination.

In the case of an absence due to an emergency or misadventure, the same process is to be followed and the same documentation completed. (Illness misadventure form.)

Students absent on the day of an in-class assessment task or examination are to follow the same process on their return to school. Consideration for appeal may only be considered if the student returns to school with a completed Illness Misadventure form along with relevant documentation.

Students who fail to follow this process will not be eligible for an appeal on the grounds of Illness misadventure and a mark of Zero will be awarded.

In the case of Illness misadventure, students may be asked to complete the task on the date of their return or they may be given a substitute task. In extraordinary circumstances other evidence may be used to generate an estimate for this task.

## **Special consideration & the process for Illness misadventure**

Where accident, illness or misadventure prevents a task being completed on time, or where a student believes his performance has been affected by an illness or misadventure that has occurred immediately before or during an assessment task an application for consideration on the above grounds should be submitted on the First day of the student's return, written on the "illness misadventure form". These forms are available from the College website or the Director of Learning or the student's Year Coordinator. It is mandatory to present a doctor's certificate if illness is to be the grounds for Special Consideration.

Where the absence is approved on the grounds of illness, misadventure or accident exist, then the following provisions will apply:

- An 'alternate due date' may be granted. Students should always be prepared to complete the task on the first day back at school. An alternative date may include:
  - A designated make-up date in an examination block.
  - Following the student's last examination
  - After school on a Wednesday afternoon
  - On a Thursday afternoon during the allocated sport time
- A 'Substitute Task' may be given. The determination of a like task or alternative task will be made by the KLA coordinator in the interests of equity and fairness for all students
- Provisions' may be granted to a student. Depending on the nature and extent of the illness or misadventure these special provisions may include rest breaks, use of a writer, and use of a reader, use of a computer or the granting extra time. The Director of Learning will liaise with the Diverse Learning team before provisions are authorised. NESA procedures will be used as a guide in the granting of special provisions.

In the event that none of the above are appropriate responses then an estimated mark may be awarded, but this will only be used in exceptional circumstances. For example, where the completion of a substitute task is not feasible, is unreasonable, or where the missed task is difficult to duplicate.

## **Attendance in class prior to an assessment task: (Year 11/12)**

If a student is unable to attend classes prior to a HSC Assessment Task or a Preliminary Assessment Task (11, 12), then it will be presumed that the student would not do well enough to perform to the best of their ability in the Assessment Task. The student should, therefore, obtain a doctor's certificate for that day, and contact the Director of Learning to obtain an 'illness/misadventure' form. This applies equally to scheduled Extension 1 and Extension 2 classes, even though they are often conducted outside normal class times.

Students who are absent on the day of, or the day before, a task is due for completion or submission must present a doctor's certificate to indicate the reasons for the absence. Students should not take time off from school in order to gain an unfair advantage of time to complete the task or revision for the task.

## **Leave during an assessment block or scheduled task**

Vacations or recreational leave taken outside normal College holidays will NOT be accepted as a valid reason for an absence or for the failure to hand in an assessment task. While leave may be approved during this time, it is expected that a student will receive a mark of "zero" for all tasks missed during this time.

It is the student's responsibility to complete all assessment tasks before leave is taken. (Where appropriate.)

## Assessments in VET Courses

VET courses are competency-based. No internal assessment mark is required for these courses. NESAs and the NSW Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB) require that a competency-based approach to assessment is used and that a record is held by the Registered Training Organisation (RTO) of the competencies achieved by each student.

In a competency-based course, assessment of competencies is criterion referenced. Thus a student's performance is judged against a prescribed standard, not against the performance of other students. The purpose of assessment is to judge competence on the basis of performance. A student is judged as either competent or not yet competent. The judgement is made on the basis of evidence which can be in a variety of forms.

Assessment for courses in the frameworks must meet training package requirements. The assessment must be conducted by a qualified assessor under the auspices of an RTO. Students are assessed as competent or not yet competent against the performance criteria set out for the elements of competency within each unit of competency. RTOs must keep a record of achievement of competence. This is to take the form of a competency record book (student log).

It should be noted that:

- all performance criteria need to be met to demonstrate the achievement of an Element of Competency;
- all Elements of Competency must be achieved in order to demonstrate the achievement of a Unit of Competency.

If a student is judged to be not yet competent against the performance criteria, the student will have available to him two additional opportunities in which to achieve competent status. Should a student fail to demonstrate competence on the three available opportunities further opportunities may be requested through appeal.

Any student who has been unable to meet the performance criteria may request an appeal and review of the judgement. The student should apply the following procedure:

- Speak to the teacher who assessed his work.
- If he is not satisfied with the discussion with the teacher, then make an appointment to speak to the KLA Coordinator or the VET Coordinator.
- The Coordinator will discuss his concerns with him.
- A joint meeting will be arranged between the student, the teacher and the KLA Coordinator or the VET Coordinator so that his concerns and those of the teacher can be addressed.

The result of this meeting may be:

- A revised assessment by the teacher.
- A new assessment task for part of the disputed task.
- A full assessment task to be completed in place of the disputed task.

If the College's policy and procedures for dealing with a complaint made by a student or parent concerning a vocational HSC course is unable to achieve a resolution, Sydney Catholic Schools as RTO must be contacted to assist in bringing about a final resolution.

The College is required to submit to NESAs via Schools Online both the Units of Competency each student in each course intends to study in a year (referred to as competencies entered) and the

Units of Competency each student in each course achieves. This information will form the basis of the AQF VET Certificate or Statement of Attainment to be issued to the student.

Some HSC subjects have an optional written examination. Students must nominate at the time of entry whether they will attempt the examination. The written examination is independent of the competency-based assessment undertaken during the course and has no relevance to a student's eligibility to receive AQF qualifications. The mark achieved by the student in the examination is shown on the Record of Achievement and is used as the sole basis for determining the contribution of the course to the student's ATAR.

The College must provide an estimated examination mark for all students entered for any of the optional VET examinations. This mark is to be an estimate of likely performance in the HSC examination and will reflect each student's achievement of tasks similar to the HSC examination, such as a trial HSC. The mark must be submitted at the same time as the College's assessment marks for other HSC courses. It will be used only in the case of a successful illness/misadventure appeal.

Further information about assessment requirements is contained in the syllabus for each curriculum framework.