Assessment is an essential part of schooling. 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 Board of Studies.

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 (e.g. 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. Assessment marks are not influenced by student conduct. 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 students 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 - KLA RESPONSIBILITY

The Curriculum Co-ordinator 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 delivered at the College. 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 school’s website.

Individual KLA Co-ordinators 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 Curriculum Co-ordinator.

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, keep records of performance and informs boys of their progress. KLA Co-ordinators and their staff develop assessment schedules for each subject in accordance with the Board of Studies guidelines. The KLA Co-ordinators assume responsibility for ensuring procedures conform to BOS requirements.

Developing an assessment program for each course involves:

- Identifying tasks to be used to measure student achievement in each course. The BOS recommends 3-5 assessment tasks (e.g. formal examinations, practical tests, and oral tests) are generally sufficient to assess the components of a course.
- Allocating weightings to task in accordance with syllabus requirements and the relative importance of each task. Task weightings are set between 10% and 40%.
- Being mindful of the demands tasks place on students and teachers when scheduling tasks. No more than 2 tasks per day are scheduled for students 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.

Half-yearly and yearly exams 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. Assessment free periods of one week occur prior to formal exam periods and two weeks prior to HSC Trials.
INTERNAL ASSESSMENT - STAFF

Assessment is both formal (assessment tasks in the handbook) and informal. All teachers are to follow the assessment programs developed courses by their department. In addition, teachers 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. 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 Co-ordinator and communicated to students in writing. Any changes to year 11 or 12 assessment must be approved by the Curriculum Co-ordinator 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 Co-ordinators.
- KLA Co-ordinators 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 Co-ordinator before the task is due or carried out.
- If a formal assessment task fails to act as a discriminator, the KLA Co-ordinator may introduce an additional task. In all such cases the Curriculum Coordinator 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 Co-ordinator before escalating the matter to the Curriculum Coordinator.

KLA Co-ordinators 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 Curriculum Co-ordinator to meet Board of Studies requirements for submission and College requirements for academic reporting.
SCHOOL CERTIFICATE 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 the Board is successful. The process of determining School Certificate grades requires teachers to:

- Administer assessment tasks that address the knowledge and skills objectives and outcomes of a syllabus;
- Observe and record assessment judgments (e.g., 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 Co-ordinators generally use the method below to determine the grades.

1. An assessment schedule is established consisting of a number of tasks covering the full range of objectives and outcomes.
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 are 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 is convinced a change better describes the boy's overall achievement in the course.

The following method is not recommended, however, if KLA coordinators choose to allocate grades as shown below they must advise the Curriculum Coordinator early in term one.

- An assessment schedule with task weightings is established as above
- Information on student performance in tasks is gathered. This may include marks, letters, symbols, or descriptive comments.
- Data on each student is gathered to provide an overall picture of achievement.
- Each student's overall picture is matched to the most appropriate Course Performance Descriptors. Grades are allocated.
- Student grades are reviewed by teachers and the KLA coordinator for anomalies. Changes to individual grades only occur if they can be justified.
HSC SCHOOL ASSESSMENT MARKS

The final HSC assessment mark may be achieved through simple addition or through statistical standardisation. Regardless of the method used, KLA Co-ordinators should ensure that the rank order and relative differences accurately reflect student achievement. The final assessment mark provided to the BOS 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 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 Headmaster or his representative will warn the student and advise the 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 Co-ordinator 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 Co-ordinator to address the student’s concerns and those of the teacher. The Headmaster 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 Curriculum Co-ordinator who acts on behalf of the Headmaster 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 School Certificate or Higher School Certificate should submit a written appeal, together with evidence, to the Headmaster. If the appeal is upheld, the Headmaster will send notification of the new grade(s) to the Office of the Board. 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, the Board 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 of a course requires evidence that the student has:

a) followed the course developed or endorsed by the Board.

b) applied themselves with diligence and sustained effort to the set tasks and experiences provided in the course by the College; and

c) achieved some or all of the course outcomes.

Where a candidate fails to complete an assessment task, a zero mark will be recorded for that task. Absences will be regarded seriously by the Headmaster who may determine that as a result of continual absence the course completion criteria may not have been met. In general, successful completion of School Certificate courses is a prerequisite for entry into the Preliminary Course. Similarly, completion of the Preliminary Course is a prerequisite for entry into the corresponding HSC Course. If a candidate fails to submit a task specified in the assessment schedule and the KLA Co-ordinator considers that student has a valid reason (e.g. illness or misadventure), the Curriculum Co-ordinator 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 (years 9-12) is at risk of not meeting the internal assessment requirements in a course, a warning letter is issued. The Headmaster:

• 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.

A student who is given an ‘N’ determination in a mandatory course in Stage 5 (year 9 or 10) will not be eligible for a School Certificate in that year. A Record of Achievement Part A listing the course(s) in which an ‘N’ determination has been awarded and grades in any courses that have been satisfactorily completed will be issued to the student. The student remains eligible to sit for the School Certificate Test(s) and receive a Record of Achievement Part B. However, the document(s) will carry the statement Not Eligible for the School Certificate.

Note: eligibility for a SC Test result is independent of satisfactory completion of the course.

For the award of a HSC, the Board of Studies requires each candidate to have satisfactorily completed assessment tasks contributing in excess of 50% of the available marks. If a Stage 6 (year 11 or 12) student is given an ‘N’ determination in a course, the Headmaster advises the student of the determination, its consequences and the student’s right to a College review and subsequent appeal to the Board. 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 the Board. 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 corequisite 2 unit course will not receive a result in either course.
STUDENTS MISSING ASSESSMENT TASKS

If a student fails to complete an assessment task (without a valid reason) then the classroom teacher will report it to the relevant KLA Co-ordinator. The KLA Co-ordinator will then send a letter home to the parents/guardians. Year 11 and 12 students who fail to complete assessment tasks will be interviewed by the Headmaster or his representative and a parent/guardian may be required to attend. Students may be suspended for failing to complete assessment tasks.

If a student is in danger of failing to submit assessment tasks which approach the 50% mark then he will be warned in writing of the consequences. Students who fail to complete assessment tasks amounting to in excess of 50% of the total assessment marks will receive notification of an ‘N’ determination for that course, the consequences and their right to appeal.

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 (SC, Preliminary or HSC).
- A student seeking a review of an ‘N’ determination must apply to the Headmaster by the date listed in the relevant Events Timetable.
- If the College upholds the appeal, the College advises the Board of Studies.
- If the appeal is declined, the student is informed may appeal to the Board. In such cases, the student is informed of dates and procedures for lodging such an appeal. The Board will advise the student and the Headmaster of the outcome of any appeal as soon as possible.

LATE SUBMISSIONS OF TASKS

It is the student’s responsibility follow procedures for submitting tasks. A penalty applies for late submission - students will lose 20% of the mark normally awarded for every day late (for example, the loss of 80% of the mark awarded if a student submits work 4 days late). In this context, “day” means calendar day. 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 (using other people’s work without acknowledgement) 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 OR MISADVENTURE

Students may lodge an illness/misadventure appeal if they believe that circumstances occurring immediately prior to or during an assessment task diminished their performance. The right to submit an illness/misadventure appeal and the responsibility for doing so rests with the student, except where it is impossible for the student to do so, such as in cases of severe illness.

If the student is absent on the date an assessment task is due to be handed in and is absent for one or two days after that date, then he is expected to present the set task immediately upon return to the College to his teacher accompanied with a Doctor’s Certificate. If the student is absent on the due date and has been absent for more than two days prior he may either present the set task immediately upon return to the College (to his teacher), or he seeks an extension (on the appropriate form). Extensions in such cases will be at the discretion of the appropriate KLA Co-ordinator.

If a student is absent when his class is due to complete an Assessment task in class time, the onus is on the student to:

- Telephone the Year Co-ordinator and indicate that a task has been missed and,
- Report to the relevant teacher and KLA Co-ordinator with a Doctor’s Certificate on the first day he returns to the College.
- The KLA Co-ordinator will then decide whether the student does the same task, an alternate task or receives an estimate.

Invalid reasons for absence will result in a mark of zero awarded to the student. If illness is the reason for non-attendance on an assessment day then a Doctor’s Certificate must be submitted to the teacher concerned on the first day of the student’s return to the College. The student must then take it to the appropriate teacher and KLA Co-ordinator.

In case of emergency or misadventure, a letter of explanation must be written and then signed by an appropriate person (police officer, emergency worker or parent/guardian). The letter is then presented to the teacher concerned and then to the appropriate KLA Co-ordinator. All such letters must then be forwarded to the Curriculum Co-ordinator.

If a student is absent when a task is given out then the onus is on the student to check with the teacher on what work has been missed and if any Assessment tasks or relevant information was given out on the day(s) he was absent. It is not the responsibility of the teacher to chase up any student who is absent. If a student suffers ‘prolonged absence’ through no fault of his own then the College will follow the appropriate measures that are recommended by the Board of Studies to determine the status of the student in reference to the assessment tasks, which have been missed.

Vacations taken outside normal College holidays will not be accepted as a valid reason for absence or not handing in an assessment task, unless the leave has been approved by the Headmaster. In these circumstances special arrangements must be made by the student with the subject teacher and the appropriate KLA Co-ordinator prior to the leave being taken.