

Assessment Policy: Secondary



Section	Curriculum
Number	2
Version	2
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Approved	Executive
Date	November 2020
Review	July 2021

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This policy should be read in conjunction with: [School Attendance Policy](#); [School Curriculum and Standards Authority: WACE Manual 2020](#); [Secondary Student Handbook](#).

1. INTRODUCTION

This document provides guidelines to enable teachers, students, and parents, to understand their responsibilities in the assessment process. It should be noted that the principles of validity, reliability and fairness contained in this document, whilst in the majority of cases are directed to Years 11 and 12, are also applied to assessment of students in Years 6-10.

In the case of Year 11 and 12 courses, teachers should read this document along with the relevant School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA) syllabus documents and the WACE Manual. Each Head of Department has a copy of this material. Up to date information is available on the [SCSA website](#).

The aim of this document is to ensure a fair and consistent approach to assessment across all learning areas in the Secondary school. The teacher, in collaboration with the Head of Department, is required to exercise professional judgement in determining the fairest and most appropriate way to administer these assessment guidelines in individual cases.

The [WACE Manual](#) provides detail and guidance in the development and administration of a student assessment policy. This policy document has been developed using the underlying principles identified in the WACE Manual and reflects the principles identified in the Australian

Curriculum; the [Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline](#) (the *Outline*); [policy and policy standards for teaching, assessing and reporting](#); SCSA [assessment principles](#); and the [senior secondary SCSA guidelines](#).

The assessment section of the WACE Manual provides teachers with guidance and strategies to deal with issues such as assessment of group or collaborative work, authentication of out-of-class work, cheating and plagiarism, assessment security, and achieving comparability. In addition, there are guidelines for teachers and departments for planning assessment.

2. OVERVIEW

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. Assessments provide reliable indications of students' knowledge, understandings, and skills, based on a range of types and sources of evidence.

Teachers deliberately construct assessments - in accordance with the *Outline*; SCSA assessment principles; and the senior secondary SCSA guidelines - that are educative, fair, and designed to meet a specific purpose, in order to:

- Ensure that assessments enable all students to demonstrate their knowledge, understandings, and skills, in relation to the achievement standards.
- Monitor, assess, and make valid and reliable judgements about individual student achievement, in relation to achievement standards.
- Provide feedback that supports students to make progress in their learning.
- Form the basis of reporting on student achievement to students and parents.
- Inform student learning goals, self-reflection, course counselling, and pathway planning.
- Inform adjustments to teachers' planning and teaching.

Students are encouraged and empowered to be active owners of their own learning by reflecting on assessments, setting targets for improvement, asking for help and persisting when faced with challenges.

Assessments in Years 11 and 12 follow the mandatory guidelines set by the SCSA. Assessments in Years 6-10 follow similar models to Year 11 and 12 equivalents, and also the guidelines set by the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline.

3. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The student is responsible for timely and honest *communication* with their teachers, and for engaging in *negotiation* with their teachers for reasonable changes to assessment completion.

It is the student's responsibility to:

- Approach all assessments with motivation, discipline, and a desire to do their best.
- Complete all in-class assessments on the scheduled date.
- Upload all out-of-class assessments through *Turnitin* and ensure submission by the due date.
- In the instance of a missed or late assessment, to provide the teacher with an acceptable reason for missed or late submission of assessments, and to negotiate assessment completion with the teacher.
- Communicate difficulty meeting assessment deadlines, or request extension of the due date for out-of-class assessments, at the earliest opportunity, and before the due date.
- Reflect on assessments and set targets for improvement.
- Retain all assessments as a folio of learning and achievement, and in case of moderation.

4. MISSED AND LATE SUBMISSION OF ASSESSMENTS

Assessments form the basis of the completion of a subject/course, and the assigning of a grade (A, B, C, D, E) for a unit, pair of units, or subject/course.

Students who miss an in-class assessment will be required to complete the assessment on their return to school, in negotiation with their teacher.

Where an out-of-class assessment is submitted after the due date, or not submitted, or where a student misses an in-class assessment, and the student does not provide a reason which is acceptable to the School, the following penalties apply.

- **In Senior School:**
 - 10% reduction in mark (if submitted one school day late), or
 - 20% reduction in mark per day, including weekend days, thereafter (for up to 5 days), or
 - A mark of zero (if submitted more than one week late or not submitted).
- **In Middle School:**
 - 5% reduction in mark per day, including weekend days, until the work is submitted.

5. CHEATING, COLLUSION AND PLAGIARISM IN ASSESSMENT

Assessments need to provide genuine, worthwhile information about students' learning. To do this, the work must be the student's own. Students must not engage in cheating, collusion, or plagiarism.

Cheating is acting deceitfully or dishonestly in an assessment in order to gain an advantage. This includes copying, or attempting to copy, from others in a test; communicating answers with another student in a test; using unauthorised materials and technologies.

Students must comply with the instructions, rules, and parameters of each assessment.

Collusion is a cooperative form of cheating that occurs when more than one student contributes to a piece of work that is submitted as the work of an individual, in an attempt to deceive the teacher.

A student must not copy the work of other students or allow their own work to be copied and submitted under the name of someone else. Individual assessment work should be entirely the work of the student submitting that work. Students must not discuss the nature of the questions of an in-class assessment task with students from the other classes until after all classes have completed the task; discussion of questions will be treated as collusion.

Plagiarism is copying or re-using the words, content, or work of others without acknowledging the source. It also includes re-using work the student has submitted for other assessments in the past.

All work submitted for assessment must be the work of the student. Where a student has used sources to support their work, these need to be quoted directly in quotation marks, or paraphrased into their own words and referenced accurately using [APA style](#).

Students are not permitted to submit for marking, as original, any work which contains:

- Identical or similar material to the work of another person (e.g. another student, a parent, a tutor).
- Identical, or similar material to a published work unless the source is acknowledged in APA referencing or footnotes.

6. PROCESSES AND PENALTIES

If a student is believed to have engaged in cheating, collusion, or plagiarism, the following process will be followed.

- The teacher will meet with the student to query and discuss the work and may ask for evidence to support that the work is the student's own.
- **Where a student admits to, or is found to have, cheated, colluded, or plagiarised, they will be awarded a mark of zero for the assessment, or for the relevant part of the assessment, depending on circumstances.** The teacher will communicate the circumstances and penalty applied, with the Head of Department.
- Where a student denies responsibility, and it is clear that the student has cheated, colluded, or plagiarised, the matter will be referred to the Head of Department and, if

necessary, the Head of School. Penalties will be dependent on circumstances.

- The teacher will inform the parent/carer of the incident of cheating, collusion, or plagiarism, the process followed, and the penalty applied.

7. TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

The teacher is responsible for:

- Engaging in fair and reasonable ways with students about assessments.
- Providing meaningful feedback to students to help them progress their learning.
- Communicating openly, respectfully, and honestly with parents about student progress and achievement, in a timely fashion.

In conjunction with the relevant Head of Department, teaching staff will:

- Develop a curriculum and assessment program that meets Western Australian curriculum and SCSA requirements.
- Review curriculum programs and assessment outlines regularly.
- Provide students with access to the syllabus, course outline and assessment schedule for the subject/course, on the first day of the subject/course.
- Ensure that assessments are fair.
- Check that students have uploaded their work to *Turnitin* for out-of-class assessments and check the authenticity of student work.
- Engage in assessment practices including moderation, cross-marking, and external marking to ensure fairness, consistency, and comparability of marks and grades across subjects/courses and teachers.
- Provide students with feedback that affirms success and provides strategies or targets to progress student learning.
- Return assessment marks and feedback to students in a timely manner. Work will be returned within three weeks (Middle School) or two weeks (Senior School) after submission of an assessment.
- Ensure that a minimum of 50% of assessment feedback is available on SEQTA.
- Contact the parent/carer if a student does not submit an assessment or attend a scheduled in-class assessment without a reason which is acceptable to the School.
- Inform the parent/carer if a student fails an assessment or receives an anomalous assessment result.

Where the student provides a reason acceptable to the School for the non-submission or non-completion of an assessment, the teacher will do one of the following, depending on the individual circumstances, and in discussion with the Head of Department.

- Negotiate an adjusted due date for an out-of-class assessment, or an adjusted date for an in-class assessment (generally, within two days of the student's return).
- Re-weight the student's marks for other tasks (if, in the opinion of the teacher, sufficient evidence exists in the other tasks completed to enable a grade to be assigned).
- Decide on an alternate assessment task (if, in the opinion of the teacher, the original assessment is no longer valid).
- Estimate the student's mark for the assessment on the basis of their marks in similar tasks.

Teachers may request to collect assessments for moderation or parent/carer interview purposes. Any such work will be returned to students as soon as is practically possible.

8. ASSESSING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

In each unit, pair of units or subject/course, a number of assessment tasks occur during the semester/year. Some tasks are completed in class and others are completed out-of-class, in which case student achievement may be validated to ensure authenticity. Each task provides

evidence of student achievement. The teacher uses the total weighted mark from all assessments when assigning a grade at the completion of the unit, pair of units or subject/course.

The requirements for each assessment task will be clearly described in writing (i.e. what the student needs to do, often indicating the steps involved for extended tasks). Where appropriate, the criteria against which the task will be marked will also be provided.

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 and students will receive individual marks for the group assessment. Typically, this will be identified in the task (or task brief) provided to the students at the commencement of the task.

9. STUDENTS WITH DIVERSE LEARNING NEEDS

Assessment procedures take account of the diverse needs of students.

Students with diagnosed learning disabilities may have curriculum and assessments modified as part of an Individual Education Plan (IEP). This will be in negotiation with the teacher, Head of Learning Diversity and Inclusion, and the student's family.

For Year 11 and 12 students on an ATAR pathway, assessment modifications will be consistent with those provided by the SCSA. For WACE examination candidates, special provisions, depending on the individual students' needs, can include special equipment, provision of a scribe, or additional rest or working time.

10. SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS

Specified subjects in Year 10 have examinations in order to prepare students for their senior years of schooling.

All ATAR subjects in Years 11 and 12 will involve a written examination in Semesters 1 and 2. In practical Year 11 and 12 courses a practical examination will also be held.

The examination timetable, and a copy of the examination rules, will be issued to students at least four weeks before the commencement of the examination period. The week prior to an examination is an assessment-free week for students to allow for revision.

All examinations are carried out in line with the School's examination regulations. The weighting (i.e. proportion of the final mark) for school-based examinations varies between courses and can be determined from the assessment outline for the course/subject.

Students should sit examinations, except in exceptional circumstances. Where health issues or personal circumstances prevent a student from completing one or more school examinations, as for all assessment tasks, the School will determine whether the reason is acceptable. See [Section 14](#) for a guide to acceptable reasons for missing an assessment, including an examination.

Students who miss an examination with an acceptable reason will be given the opportunity to sit the examination for feedback, but not for a mark. When a doctor's certificate or other evidence of an acceptable reason is produced, the student will be given an estimated grade for the examination based on previous results. If the student's reason for missing an examination is not deemed acceptable, the student will be given a mark of zero.

11. EXTERNALLY SET TASKS

All students enrolled in a Year 12 General course are required to complete an Externally Set Task (EST) for that course: a 50-minute written assessment task developed by SCSA based on content from Unit 3, completed in class under standard test conditions. The EST is included in the assessment outline for the pair of units and has a weighting of 15% of the final mark for the pair of units.

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 School to submit the EST marks, then the School will determine if the reason for non-completion is acceptable and, if not acceptable, the student will be allocated a mark of zero. If the reason is acceptable to the School the

teacher will estimate the student's mark, on the basis of their marks in similar tasks.

12. SECURITY OF ASSESSMENT TASKS

Where there is more than one class in a course or subject, appropriate measures will be put in place to ensure the security and validity of assessments, and that no student is unfairly advantaged.

Students must not discuss the nature of the questions with students from the other classes until after all classes have completed the task ([See discussion of collusion in Section 5](#)).

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

13. MODIFICATION OF THE ASSESSMENT OUTLINE

If circumstances change during the teaching of a subject/course that requires the teacher to make adjustments to scheduled assessment tasks, then the modified assessment outline will be provided to students (this includes electronically).

Where student needs or circumstances result 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/carer.

14. ACCEPTABLE REASONS FOR NON-SUBMISSION OR NON-COMPLETION

The penalty for non-submission or non-completion of an assessment will be waived if the student provides a reason acceptable to the School.

Acceptable reasons include sickness, injury, or significant personal circumstances that prevent completion and submission by the due date or on the scheduled date. Parents/carers must communicate the reason for the student's absence or non-completion to the School and teacher.

Reasons that are not acceptable to the School include events that can be rescheduled and family holidays during term time.

Parents/carers should communicate exceptional or unavoidable circumstances, such as illness, family bereavement or state or national representation, with the Head of School. In some circumstances it may be appropriate to negotiate with the Head of School the development of an IEP, which will show how the missed lesson time will be compensated for and any modifications to the assessment outlines for each course unit or subject.

Where a catastrophic event (e.g. a pandemic) affects the delivery of the teaching program, the completion or submission of one or more assessment tasks and/or completion of the School examination timetable, students will be advised by the teacher or Head of Department of modifications to the task requirements and/or the assessment outline, including the due date.

15. TRANSFERS BETWEEN SUBJECTS/COURSES

Should a student commence a subject/course late, they are at risk of being disadvantaged compared to others in the subject/course. An application to transfer is made through the Head of School. A meeting may be held with the parent/carer to discuss student progress and the requirements necessary for the student to be assigned a grade in the new subject/course.

The deadlines for changes are:

- Friday of Week 6 of Term 1 for all Semester 1 units and all subjects.
- Friday of Week 3 of Term 3 for all Semester 2 units.
- In Year 11, students can also transfer at the end of Semester 1, where class numbers enable this to occur. Year 12s cannot change courses after the SCSA deadline for enrolments.

All Year 11 and 12 courses are assessed as a pair of units and students would be unlikely to be able to complete the structured educational plan or complete sufficient assessment tasks

to allow a grade to be assigned for the unit to which they are transferring.

Where additional work and/or assessment tasks are necessary to enable a grade to be assigned, the teacher will develop a plan of the work to be completed by the student. The plan will be discussed with the parent/carer and provided to the student.

16. TRANSFER FROM ANOTHER SCHOOL

It is the responsibility of any student who transfers into a class from the same subject or course at another school, to provide St Mark's with the details of all completed assessment tasks. Where relevant, the Head of School will contact the previous school to determine:

- a. The part of the syllabus that has been taught.
- b. The assessment tasks which have been completed.
- c. The marks awarded for these tasks.

The Head of Department responsible for the course will:

- a. 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 St Mark's.*
- b. Determine the additional work, if any, to be completed.
- c. 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 IEP showing the extra work to be completed and the modifications to the assessment outline. The plan will be discussed with the parent/carer and provided to the student.

17. REPORTING

Reporting is carried out at the end of Semester 1 for Years 6-12 and Semester 2 for Years 6 to 11. Year 12 students will receive a Statement of Results at the end of the year.

Teachers continuously report on student achievement and progress via SEQTA, through regular assessment results updates, online teacher feedback, and student self-reflections, as well as through the work and feedback each student takes home, and any additional communication from teachers.

The report provides a summary of the ongoing feedback on learning, as well as a summary of each student's participation in the broader life of the School. The Pastoral Care comment provides an overview of your child's holistic progress, contribution to the Pastoral Care Group, and personal and social development.

All grades for Years 6-10 are reported in alignment with the achievement standards described in the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline. Semester 1 grades are indicative, showing an indication of a student's achievement against the standards. In Years 6-10 a subject/course average is provided to show a student's achievements in comparison to that of other students.

All grades in Years 11 and 12 are reported in alignment with the grade descriptors for each course as determined by SCSA. All Year 11 and 12 courses are studied concurrently, and Semester 1 grades are indicative. The Semester 2 grade is reported to the SCSA for both units studied that year.

Vocational and Education Training (VET) courses are reported against each Certificate's Units of Competency. The time taken to complete Units of Competency will depend on the duration of the course.

If a student is studying a modified curriculum, and that curriculum is developed outside of the achievement standards for the identified year, students will be provided with a modified report that outlines their progress against identified objectives.

All Year 11 and 12 grades reported are subject to SCSA approval at the end of the year. The student (and parent/carer) will be notified of any changes to that result from SCSA's review of the

student results submitted by St Mark's. Information about calculating the ATAR for university entry is available on the TISC website at www.tisc.edu.au.

The report provides the following information:

	Semester 1	Semester 2
Year 11 – 12 Course units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i An indicative grade for the unit* ii A mark* (based on the weighted combination of the marks for all assessment tasks in the unit, including the Semester 1 exam, if applicable). iii The mark in the Semester 1 exam if applicable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i A grade for the unit ii A mark (based on the weighted combination of the marks for all assessment tasks in the unit or in both units is as applicable dependent on a student's enrolment, including the Semester 2 exam, if applicable). iii The mark in the Semester 2 exam, if applicable.
Year 6 - 10 subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i A grade for the subject. ii A mark (based on the weighted combination of the marks for the assessment tasks completed in Semester 1, including the Semester 1 exam where applicable). iii The mark in the Semester 1 exam where applicable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i A grade for the subject. ii A mark (based on the weighted combination of the marks for the assessment tasks completed in the semester or the year as is appropriate, including the Semester 2 exam where applicable). iii The mark in the Semester 2 exam where applicable.

* All Year 11 and 12 courses are delivered concurrently; therefore, the mark and grade for the Semester 1 unit will not be finalised until after the Semester 2 examination (which covers both units). In this case, an indicative mark and grade are reported at the end of Semester 1.

At the end of Semester 2 all Year 11 and 12 students will receive a Statement of Results detailing the marks and grades that will be sent to SCSA.

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

For all Year 12 students, a statistically adjusted School mark is reported by SCSA on the student's Western Australian Statement of Student Achievement (WASSA). Details of the process that the Authority uses to adjust the marks submitted by the School are available on the [SCSA Student Information Portal](#) on the [School Curriculum and Standards Authority website](#).

Information about calculating the ATAR for university entry is available on the [TISC website](#).

18. REVIEWING MARKS AND GRADES

If a student considers that there is an issue about the marking of an assessment they should, in the first instance, discuss the issue with the teacher, seeking to understand the mark they have been awarded, and how to improve.

If an assessment issue cannot be resolved through discussion with the teacher, then the student (or parent/carer) can make a request to the Head of Department for the work to be re-marked. If the request is accepted, there is no guarantee that the new mark will be higher than the initial mark awarded.

If a student considers that there is an issue about the delivery of a course or subject, or the grade assigned for a unit, pair of units or subject/course they should, in the first instance, discuss the issue with the teacher. If the issue cannot be resolved through discussion with the teacher then the student (or parent/carer) should approach the Head of Department of the course or subject. The student (or parent/carer) can request, in writing, that St Mark's conducts a formal assessment review if they consider that the student has been disadvantaged by any of the following:

- a. The assessment outline for the unit, pair of units or subject does not meet SCSA requirements.

- b. The assessment procedures used in the class do not conform with the School's assessment policy.
- c. Procedural errors have occurred in the determination of the mark/s and/or grade/s.
- d. Computational errors have occurred in the determination of the mark/s and/or grade/s.

The Principal, or a nominated representative, will conduct the review. The reviewer will meet with the student and the teacher independently and prepare a written report. This report will be provided to the student (and parent/carer).

If this review does not resolve the matter, the student (or parent/carer) may appeal to SCSA (for Year 11 and 12 courses only) using an appeal form that is available from the Head of Senior School. Authority representatives will then independently investigate the situation and report to the Authority's student appeal committee. If the committee upholds a student appeal, St Mark's will make any required adjustments to the student's marks and/or grades and re-issue reports, as necessary.

Version Management

Version	Date	Changes Made	Author of Changes
1	June 2018	Registration document	AP (PC)
2	June 2020	Review and Update	HoSS, Principal
3	November 2020	Review and Update	HoMS, HoSS, HoTL, Principal
4	Feb 2021	Minor grammar/formatting adjustments.	EA

Authorised By:	Executive
Effective Date:	June 2020
Last Amendment Date:	November 2020
Review Date:	July 2021
Policy Custodian: (Contact for queries about this policy)	Head Senior School, Principal