

Stage 6 Critical Student Information – Assessments

Assessments

The HSC mark, the final mark a student is awarded for each subject studied for their HSC, is a 50:50 combination of a student's examination mark and school-based assessment mark for each course.

At the conclusion of each subject's HSC assessment program, the school will submit a school-based assessment mark to NESA for each student. The mark will be based on student performance in the tasks in the school's assessment program. The assessment mark submitted is then adjusted (moderated) by NESA to produce the assessment mark that appears on individual student HSC results. The purpose of moderation is to place the assessment marks awarded by all schools in each course on the same scale. Course assessment marks are adjusted based on the performance of the students in the HSC examination.

The rank order of students as submitted by the school is not changed.

The school-based assessment mark submitted to NESA will be based on the student's performance on each of the formal internal assessment tasks scheduled for completion during the course. Each course has internal assessment tasks with varied weightings according to NESA requirements for the particular subject. Each assessment task will contribute towards the final school-based assessment mark, associated course rank and relative gap to the next student.

HSC assessment is designed to determine how well students have achieved the whole range of outcomes for any given course. This provides greater scope than is possible from a single examination. It allows for flexibility in the nature of the assessment task, and so tests a wider range of skills, such as oral, research and practical skills, than is possible from examinations alone. It gives students credit for what they have achieved throughout their courses in addition to their final examination.

Appeals against rankings

If students feel that there is an error within their assessment rankings, the Stage 6 Deputy Principal will conduct an investigation where they review the weighting, cumulative marks and types of assessment tasks inline with the NESA requirements outlined in document ACE 11013.

They will also check to see that there has been no clerical errors in the determination of the student ranking and inform the students of the results of the enquiry within 7 days of the appeal being made. However, provision has been made for subsequent appeals to NESA.

Please note that there is no provision for appeal against the marks awarded for individual assessment tasks. The reviews and appeals relate to the assessment process and are designed to correct any errors affecting the assessments for the entire school group.

Notification of Assessment Tasks

Students will receive a written notification of an assessment task at least **two weeks** prior to the due date of the task. Students will sign and date a register to acknowledge receipt of this assessment notification. If students are absent on the day an assessment task notification is handed out, they are responsible for obtaining a copy of it. No extra time will be given to a student for a task because they did not receive the notification in class. Teachers may upload copies of the task notification onto CANVAS to ensure all students can access copies throughout the assessment period.

Submission

It is the responsibility of students to ensure that they complete assessment tasks at the scheduled time and date or that they complete a serious attempt at assessment tasks and submit them at the designated time on or before the due date. Assessments may be required to be handed in, submitted via CANVAS or submitted digitally by a specified time. Notifications for each task will clearly outline the required means of submission.

When needing to be handed in, assessment tasks will be accepted by the course teacher during the class period for that subject on the due date. If the teacher is absent or unavailable, tasks must be handed to the Head Teacher responsible for the course.

Tasks must never be left on a desk or table for collection by the teacher or handed to a casual teacher. They must be collected by the teacher and students must sign to reflect that they have been handed in. Tasks submitted online will be date and time stamped to ensure processes are followed.

Assessment task submission and or completion takes priority over school events such as: excursions, sporting or school representation and VET work placements that fall outside of the defined work placement periods. It is the student's responsibility to bring to the attention of their class teacher any impending conflicts. This is clearly stated in the Additional Information section on every assessment task notification.

Tasks submitted after the due date without a successful Student Appeal Form will receive an automatic zero mark.

Late or Non Submission of tasks:

If a student fails to complete a task specified in the assessment program without a valid reason (e.g. illness) the student will be issued with a **zero mark**.

If tasks prepared at home are not submitted by the time stipulated on the notification they will be regarded as late unless a Student Appeal Form is submitted. Late submission will result in a **zero mark** being awarded for the task.

Students are expected to make a serious attempt at assessment tasks when submitting late or otherwise. Students will receive feedback about their response, however, the student would still have a zero mark recorded against their performance for the task.

Failure of technology on the due date will not be accepted as a valid reason for late submission.

Where there is no valid reason for not completing an assessment task, a warning letter will be issued indicating the nature of the work not completed and the future action required of the student to resolve the situation. It is important that students complete this task and resolve the warning letter to develop the skills required of the course.

To meet the requirements of the Stage 6 course, student must make a genuine attempt at assessment tasks, which contribute to an excess of 50 percent of available marks in that course. Students who are absent from an assessment task or who fail to complete a task by the due date absence are ineligible for the award of a mark for that task.

Extensions may only be granted where there is a legitimate reason for absence approved by the Deputy Principal or Principal. This will only occur after following the appeals process.

Non Serious Attempts

NESA expects students to attempt all assessment tasks that are set. Students who do not make a serious attempt at assessments may not receive a mark for the assessment concerned and parents will be contacted for a meeting. Any student identified as making a non-serious attempt or a non-attempt will be asked to justify their response with the teacher and Head Teacher of the subject.

Non-serious attempts include frivolous or objectionable material. Students who provide answers to questions in a language other than English (unless specifically instructed to do so) will have zero marks awarded.

Non-attempts include those where only multiple-choice questions are attempted.

Invalid or Unreliable tasks

All assessment tasks go through a rigorous compliance check to ensure that the tasks are deemed valid and reliable before they are issued to students. However, in the chance that an assessment task does not comply with the information outlined in the assessment schedule for the course, the Stage 6 Deputy will work with the Head Teacher of the faculty to determine if an alternate task should be issued or if student marks will be modified. In extreme cases the task may be deemed invalid and may not count towards the final assessment mark.

Students will be informed of the decision at the outcome of the investigation and given ample opportunity to prepare or resubmit tasks.

Appeals for assessment tasks

Students absent (due to illness or approved leave such as work placement or other school business) from school on the day an assessment task, test or examination is due, must complete and submit a Student Appeal Form within **two days** after their return to school and **no longer than two weeks** after the initial due date of the task, test or examination. The Student Appeal Form may be lodged with either their Class Teacher or the Head Teacher of the faculty.

In exceptional circumstances (eg where undertaking a substitute task is not feasible or reasonable, or where the missed task is difficult to duplicate), the principal should authorise the use of an estimate based on other appropriate evidence.

If the student is absent due to illness, evidence of the illness on that date **must** be provided. When the student knows ahead of time that they will be absent for an assessment task they should advise the class teacher or Head Teacher prior to the date to complete the task at an agreed time. Where possible, this should be made at least two weeks before the assessment is due.

If the appeal is upheld, students will complete a similar task to the one set for the assessment they have missed. This task will still assess in the same mode, however, **the question will need to be adjusted to allow for student equity.**

“Technological” breakdown (e.g. computer or printer problems) will **NOT** be accepted as reasons for an appeal

If there is no valid reason for failing to complete an assessment task, a zero mark must be recorded for that task.

Malpractice

All work presented in assessment tasks and external examinations (including submitted works and practical examinations) must be a student's own or must be acknowledged appropriately. Malpractice, including plagiarism, could lead to students receiving zero marks and will jeopardise their Higher School Certificate results.

Malpractice includes (but is not restricted to) the following:

- copying someone else's work in part or in whole, and presenting it as their own
- using material directly from books, journals, CDs or the internet without reference to the source
- building on the ideas of another person without reference to the source
- buying, stealing or borrowing another person's work and presenting it as their own
- submitting work to which another person, such as a parent, coach or subject expert, has contributed substantially
- using words, ideas, designs or the workmanship of others in practical and performance tasks without appropriate acknowledgement
- paying someone to write or prepare material
- breaching school examination rules
- using non-approved aids during an assessment task
- contriving false explanations to explain work not handed in by the due date
- assisting another student to engage in malpractice

In the case of suspected plagiarism, students will be required to provide evidence that all unacknowledged work is entirely their own

Students are expected to conform to the highest standards of academic integrity and ethical scholarship. If a student is deemed to be guilty of malpractice, a zero mark may be awarded for the section of the task or for the whole task depending on the amount found to be plagiarised. This will be recorded on the NESA malpractice register on the NESA website. If the results of an assessment task are found to be invalid or unreliable for the entire cohort due to malpractice, then an alternative assessment task may be given.

Marking of Assessment Tasks

Assessment tasks should be marked and returned to students within a two week period. Meaningful feedback about what they have demonstrated and what they need to do in order to improve their performance needs to be given to students as well as their rank and mark for the task. In the cases where there is more than one class for the subject, the task should be marked by one teacher or double marked to maintain consistency of judgement. Teachers must keep copies of work samples from all assessments that reflect the distribution of grades for that task. Samples must be kept in the senior course folder.

N- Determinations

The Assessment Certification and Examination (ACE) website states that to meet the course completion criteria, principals must have sufficient evidence that a student has:

- followed the course developed or endorsed by NESAs; and
- applied themselves with diligence and sustained effort to the set tasks and experiences provided in the course by the school; and
- achieved some or all of the course outcomes.

As stated in the ACE website, students are also expected to make a genuine attempt at assessment tasks which total up to **more than 50 per cent** of available marks. Completion of tasks adding up to a total of exactly 50 per cent is not sufficient. In some cases, this will mean that the student will not meet the pattern of study requirements and may be ineligible for the award of the Higher School Certificate in that year.

In **Extension** courses, students who do not comply with the minimum assessment requirements for any co-requisite course will not receive a result **in either course**.

In the case of competency based courses, it is a matter for the Principal to determine whether the attempts made by the student to complete the course are genuine. While NESAs do not determine minimum attendance requirements, Principals may determine that, as a result of absence, the course completion criteria have not been met.

If at any time it appears that a student is at risk of receiving an 'N' determination (non-completion of course requirements) in any course, the school will:

1. advise students of the tasks or actions to be undertaken in time for the problem to be corrected and alert them to the possible consequences of an 'N' determination;
2. advise the parent or guardian in writing
3. request from the student/parent/guardian a written acknowledgement of the warning;
4. issue at least one follow-up warning letter if the first letter is not effective; and
5. retain copies of all relevant documents.

All written warnings are issued as soon as possible and regularly where required.

Students may appeal against the N determination by submitting a Student Appeal Form and by submitting it to the Principal for consideration. The Principal will then consider the appeal and review the documentation before making a decision. If the Principal declines the appeal, then students are advised that they can request that NESAs review the appeal and will make the final decision.

Submission of Projects, Major Works and Performances

The development and selection of student projects, major works, exhibitions and performances **must satisfy health and safety requirements**. They must:

- be undertaken within the operating guidelines and directives of education authorities and/or schools

- recognise and reflect relevant state and national legislation, regulations and standards including those relating to workplace health and safety (WHS), animal welfare, dangerous goods, hazardous substances and weapons
- take account of the needs of students, teachers, markers and others, including the general public.

Any HSC project that might be considered dangerous to health or safety may not be marked.

Prohibited weapons, replicas and related articles

Student projects, major works, bodies of work, exhibitions and performances should not produce, display or use prohibited weapons, replicas, or related articles. Plastic toys and other objects that would not be mistaken for real weapons are permissible. Students using such toys to represent a weapon in a performance must advise the markers before they begin their performance.

Examples of prohibited weapons, replicas and related articles include, but are not limited to, firearms, knives, cross-bows, archery bows and arrows, catapults, kung fu sticks or nunchaku, batons, spear guns, handcuffs and self-defence sprays.

For many students, their performance or submitted works present an opportunity to explore an issue of personal interest and to express ideas and opinions. While it is understood some performances and submitted works challenge established views, the principal will ensure that work submitted for the examination does not cause offence. HSC Markers should not be confronted by works and performances that the general community would find offensive. Supervisors of Marking will report any examination responses that contain frivolous or gratuitously objectionable material to NESAs.

VET

VET courses are competency based. The Board and the Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB) require that for each student a competency-based approach to assessment be used and that a record be held, by the Registered Training Organisation (RTO), of the competencies achieved by students.

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 based on performance. A student is judged as either competent or not yet competent. This judgment is made based on evidence, which may be in a variety of forms.

Minimum Standards Testing

Students must demonstrate a minimum standard of literacy and numeracy to be eligible for the award of the Higher School Certificate. Students must demonstrate the minimum standard in reading, writing and numeracy.

The HSC minimum standard is set at the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) Level 3. ACSF Level 3 describes the functional literacy and numeracy skills required for life after school, for work and further education.

For students undertaking a 'pathways' HSC, the NESAs minimum standard online tests can be sat at any time during the five-year accumulation period in order for students to gain eligibility for the HSC.

Students who leave school and have not met HSC eligibility requirements will receive a Record of School Achievement (RoSA), or a Transcript of Study.