

Sunset Coast College

Senior secondary school assessment policy

This sample policy for a hypothetical school demonstrates how the Council guidelines in the 2009 WACE Manual may be applied. Most schools already have an assessment policy that meets these guidelines and will need to make few if any modifications.

This policy is provided to all senior secondary students at Sunset Coast College and is based on Curriculum Council requirements.

All students are enrolled in a combination of Curriculum Council accredited courses and subjects. Some students may also be gaining credit for the WACE by undertaking one of the VET programs (Automotive or Hospitality), participating in Cadets WA – Emergency Services Cadets or completing the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

All students must also complete 20 hours of community service by the end of Year 12.

This policy covers the assessment of all Curriculum Council accredited courses and subjects. The VET programs are undertaken at and assessed by TAFEWA.

1 Student responsibilities

It is the student's responsibility to:

- complete all course or subject requirements by the due date
- maintain an assessment file for each course or subject studied and to make it available whenever required
- maintain a good record of attendance, conduct and progress (a student who is absent from a class for five lessons or more per term is deemed to be 'at risk' of not completing the course unit or subject requirements)
- initiate contact with teachers concerning absence from class, missed in-class assessment tasks, requests for extension of the due date for out-of-class assessment tasks and other issues pertaining to assessment.

2 Teacher responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the teacher to:

- develop a teaching/learning program that meets the syllabus requirements
- provide students with a course or subject outline and an assessment outline at the start of the course or subject
- ensure that assessments are fair, valid and reliable
- provide students with timely assessment feedback and guidance
- maintain accurate records of student achievement
- meet school and external timelines for assessment and reporting
- inform students and parents of academic progress as appropriate.

3 Information provided to students

At the start of every course or subject, the teacher will provide a printed copy of the following to each student:

- the syllabus
- a course unit or subject outline that includes at least the following information:
 - the content
 - the sequence in which the content will be taught and the approximate time to teach each section.
- an assessment outline that includes at least the following information:
 - the assessment types
 - the weighting for each assessment type
 - the weighting for each assessment task
 - a general description of each assessment task
 - a general indication of the content covered by each assessment task
 - an indication of the outcomes covered by each assessment task
 - the approximate timing of assessment tasks (i.e. the week in which each assessment task is planned or the due dates for significant stages of each extended task).

In each course unit or subject a number of assessment tasks occur during the semester/year (including, in most cases end of semester exams – see Section 11 for details). Some tasks are completed in-class and others are completed out-of-class. Each task provides evidence of student achievement, the combination of which the teacher uses to assign a grade at the completion of the course unit or subject.

During every course or subject, 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 or rated will also be provided.

4 Modification of the assessment outline

When a student's disability or specified learning disability does not allow them to complete a particular assessment task, the teacher may modify the task. This will normally occur in consultation with the head of learning area/teacher-in-charge. An individual education plan will be developed showing any modifications to the assessment outline for the course unit or subject.

When a student's cultural beliefs do not enable them to complete a particular assessment task, the teacher may modify this task in consultation with the head of learning area/teacher-in-charge. An individual education plan will be developed showing any modifications to the assessment outline for the course unit or subject.

When a student's personal circumstances limit his/her capacity to complete a particular assessment task, the teacher, in consultation with the student and others involved, may negotiate a variation to the submission date. The teacher will consider fairness for all students when making decisions about adjusting timelines for a particular student.

If circumstances change during the teaching of a course unit or subject that requires the teacher to make adjustments to scheduled assessment tasks then an updated copy of the assessment outline clearly indicating the changes will be provided to students.

5 Completion of a course unit or subject

A grade is assigned for each course unit or subject completed (i.e. if the student complete the college's structured education and assessment program within the given timeframe). Students are required to:

- submit all out-of-class assessment tasks for marking on the due date
- attempt all in-class assessment tasks on the scheduled date.

Note: If an assessment task cannot be submitted directly to the teacher it is to be submitted to the head of learning area/teacher- in-charge who will provide a 'Submission of assessment task' slip.

Unless there is a reason that is acceptable to the school (see Section 6 for details), failure to attend a scheduled in-class assessment task or submit on time an out-of-class assessment task may result in the student either:

- receiving a lower grade than expected at the end of the course unit or subject (if there is sufficient evidence from the assessment tasks completed to assign a grade) **or**
- receiving a 'U' (Unfinished) notation instead of a grade (if there is insufficient evidence to assign a grade).

Note: A 'U' notation will result in no record of this course unit or subject on the student's Statement of Results from the Curriculum Council and may affect their achievement of a Western Australian Certificate of Education.

For any late out-of-class assessment task, where the student **does not** provide a reason which is acceptable to the college, the following penalties apply:

Course units and TEE subjects	Common Assessment Framework (CAF) subjects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10% reduction in the mark (if submitted one school day late) or • 50% reduction in the mark (if submitted two school days late) or • a mark of zero (if submitted more than two school days late or not submitted) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the task will be marked and the outcomes will be rated as S (Satisfactory) or ND (Not Demonstrated) if the task is submitted up to one week late • the outcomes will be rated as ND (Not Demonstrated) if the task is submitted more than a week late or is not submitted

Note: Where a student is likely to experience difficulty meeting a deadline they must discuss the matter with the teacher at the earliest opportunity before the due date.

For any missed in-class assessment task where the student **does not** provide a reason which is acceptable to the college, the following penalties apply:

Course units and TEE subjects	Common Assessment Framework (CAF) subjects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a mark of zero 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the outcomes will be rated as ND (Not Demonstrated)

If a student **does not** submit an assessment task or attend a scheduled in-class assessment task, the teacher will contact the parent/guardian to discuss the risk of the student not completing the course unit/subject and to negotiate a solution.

6 Acceptable reasons for non-submission or non-completion

The penalty for non-submission or non-completion will be waived if the student provides a reason acceptable to the college. For example:

- where sickness, injury or significant personal circumstances for part or all of the period of an out-of-class assessment task prevents completion and submission.
- where sickness, injury or significant personal circumstances prevents a student attending on the day that an in-class assessment task is scheduled.

In such cases the parent/guardian must:

- contact the college before 9.30am on the day **and**
- provide either a medical certificate or a letter of explanation immediately the student returns.

Where the student provides a reason acceptable to the college for the non-submission or non-completion of an assessment task the teacher will:

Course units and TEE subjects	Common Assessment Framework (CAF) subjects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • negotiate an adjusted due date for an out-of-class assessment task or an adjusted date for an in-class assessment task (generally, within two days of the student's return), or • re-weight the student's marks for other tasks (if there is sufficient evidence to assign a grade), or • decide on an alternate assessment task if, in the opinion of the teacher, the assessment is no longer confidential, or • statistically estimate the student's mark for the assessment task on the basis of their marks in similar tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • negotiate an adjusted due date for an out-of-class assessment task or an adjusted date for an in-class assessment task (generally, within two days of the student's return), or • decide on an alternate assessment task if, in the opinion of the teacher, the assessment is no longer confidential

Events that can be rescheduled are not a valid reason for non-completion or non-submission of an assessment task (e.g. sitting a driver's licence test, preparation for the school ball).

Family holidays during the term are not considered a valid reason for non-completion or non-submission of an assessment task. In exceptional circumstances, the parent/guardian may negotiate with the Year 11 or 12 Year Coordinator the development of an individual education plan. This plan will show how the missed lesson time will be compensated for and any modifications to the assessment outlines for each course unit or subject.

7 Changes of course units or subjects

When a student commences a course unit or subject late they are at risk of being disadvantageded compared to others in the class. An application to transfer is made through the Deputy Principal. A meeting may be held with the parent/guardian to discuss student progress and the requirements necessary for the student to be assigned a grade in the new course unit or subject.

The deadlines for changes are:

- Friday of Week 4 of Term 1 for all Semester 1 units and all subjects
- Friday of Week 2 of Term 3 for all Semester 2 units.

When a student transfers to a different unit in the same course, or a unit in a similar course or a similar subject, the marks from any assessment tasks that assess the syllabus will be used. These marks may need to be statistically adjusted to ensure that they are on the same scale as the marks for all students in the new class.

Where additional work and/or assessment tasks are necessary, the teacher will develop an individual education plan showing the extra work to be completed and the modifications to the assessment outline. The plan will be discussed with the parent/guardian and provided to the student.

8 Transfer from another school

It is the responsibility of any student who transfers into a class from the same course or subject at another school, to provide the college with the details of all completed assessment tasks. The Deputy Principal, will contact the previous school to determine:

- the part of the syllabus that has been completed
- the assessment tasks which have been completed
- the marks/ratings awarded for these tasks.

The head of learning area/teacher- in-charge will:

- 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 Sunset Coast College.
- determine the additional work, if any, to be completed
- 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 individual education plan showing the extra work to be completed and the modifications to the assessment outline. The plan will be discussed with the parent/guardian and provided to the student.

9 Cheating, collusion and plagiarism

All work in each individual assessment task must be the work of the student. Students are not permitted to submit for marking/rating, 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 referencing or footnotes.

Students must not cheat (i.e. engage in a dishonest act to gain an unfair advantage).

If a student is believed to have engaged in cheating, collusion or plagiarism, the teacher will refer the matter to the head of learning area/teacher- in-charge. As part of this process, the student will be provided with the right of reply.

Note: Where a student permits others to copy their work they will also be penalised.

If it is demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt that a student has cheated, colluded or plagiarised, the following penalties will apply:

Course units and TEE subjects	Common Assessment Framework (CAF) subjects
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• a mark of zero for the whole assessment task, or• a mark of zero for part of the assessment where the teacher can identify the part of the assessment task that has been copied or plagiarised	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the outcomes will be rated as ND (Not Demonstrated)

Note: The parent/guardian will be informed of the penalty and any further disciplinary action.

10 Security of assessment tasks

Where there is more than one class in a course unit or subject most or all of the assessment task will be the same. In such cases, to ensure that no students are unfairly advantaged, the question papers used for in-class assessment tasks will be collected at the end of the lesson. In their own interests, students must not discuss the nature of the questions with students from the other classes until after all classes have completed the task.

Discussion of the questions will be treated as cheating and the students will be penalised.

Where Sunset Coast College 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.

11 Examinations

A written examination will be held in all Stage 2 or 3 courses and TEE subjects at the end of Semester 1 and the end of Semester 2. In some courses and subjects a practical exam will also be held.

Examinations may be held in Stage 1 courses and CAF subjects where considered appropriate by the head of learning area/teacher- in-charge.

Examinations are typically 2 or 2.5 hours in Year 11 and 2.5 or 3 hours in Year 12. The examination timetable and a copy of the examination rules will be issued to students 3 weeks before the commencement of the exam period.

12 Reporting achievement

Sunset Coast College reports student achievement at the end of Semester 1 and at the end of Semester 2. The report provides a comment by the teacher for each course unit or subject and the following information:

	Semester 1	Semester 2
Course units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a grade for the unit ¹ a mark ¹ (based on the weighted combination of the marks for all assessment tasks in the unit, including the Semester 1 exam) the mark in the Semester 1 exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a grade for the unit a mark (based on the weighted combination of the marks for all assessment tasks in the unit, including the Semester 2 exam) the mark in the Semester 2 exam
TEE subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an estimated grade for the subject a mark (based on the weighted combination of the marks for the assessment tasks completed in Semester 1, including the Semester 1 exam) the mark in the Semester 1 exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a grade for the subject a mark (based on the weighted combination of the marks for all assessment tasks completed during the year, including the Semester 1 and 2 exams) the mark in the Semester 2 exam
CAF subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an estimated grade (based on the ratings achieved on the assessment tasks completed in Semester 1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a grade (based on the ratings achieved on all assessment tasks completed during the year)

¹ In some Semester 1 course units, the mark and grade will not be finalised until after the Semester 2 exam (as this exam covers both units). In this case, an estimated mark and grade are reported at the end of Semester 1.

All grades reported are subject to Curriculum Council approval at the end of the year.

The parent/guardian will be notified of any changes to that result from the Curriculum Council's review of the student results submitted by Sunset Coast College.

For all Stage 2 and 3 course units and Year 12 TEE subjects, a statistically adjusted school mark is reported by the Curriculum Council on the student's Statement of Results. Details of the marks adjustment process are available on the Council website at www.curriculum.wa.edu.au/Senior_Secondary/Exam_Information/Your_Marks/.

Information about calculating the TEA and TER for university entry is available on the TISC website at www.tisc.edu.au.

13 Reviewing marks and grades

When a student considers that there is an issue about the marking of an assessment task or about the grade assigned for a course unit or subject they should, in the first instance, discuss the issue with the teacher.

If a marking or grading issue cannot be resolved through discussion with the teacher then the student or parent/guardian should approach the head of learning area/teacher-in-charge of the course or subject.

The student or parent/guardian can request, in writing, that Sunset Coast College conducts a formal assessment review, if they consider that the student has been disadvantaged by any of the following:

- the assessment outline for the course unit or subject does not meet Curriculum Council requirements
- the assessment procedures used in the class do not conform with the college's assessment policy
- procedural errors have occurred in the determination of the mark and/or grade
- computational errors have occurred in the determination of the mark and/or grade.

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/guardian.

If this review does not resolve the matter, the student (or parent/guardian) may appeal to the Curriculum Council using appeal form is available from the Deputy Principal. Council representatives will then independently investigate the situation and report to the Council's appeal panel. If the panel upholds a student appeal, Sunset Coast College will make any required adjustments to the student's marks and/or grades and re-issue reports as necessary.