



# Assessment Policy & Procedures

## Policy

## Rationale

### 1. Purposes of Assessment

*Assessment is the process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about students' learning. The purpose of assessment is to provide information on student achievement and progress and set the direction for ongoing teaching and learning. [Principles for Assessment and Reporting in NSW Government Schools, 1996 p 1]*

Teachers assess students' work in order to:

- support student learning
- monitor student learning
- diagnose student learning needs
  - establish areas of strength and build on these
  - diagnose areas of need/weakness and develop strategies with students to move forward
- inform student reporting processes

Assessment aids teachers by enabling them to:

- evaluate the effectiveness of teaching/learning programs
- maintain accountability

### 2. Effective assessment practice

'Best practice' assessment involves a thoughtful approach to linking learning in the classroom with the scope and nature of the testing/ assessment practice. Teachers need to have a clear idea of the outcomes they wish to achieve from a particular task. The purposes of the assessment task needs to be explicit and clearly communicated to students.

To gather meaningful information on student learning it is desirable that:

- a broad range of assessment strategies is employed, to cater for different learning styles and to motivate learning
- achievement is measured at various points during a course i.e. assessment is genuinely progressive

- adequate prior learning (essential skills and concepts) has occurred before the task is given
- the processes of assessment are positive for students.

*The manner in which assessment is carried out and the way results are communicated to students are significant factors in the effectiveness of the process*

### 3. Strategies for Assessment

Assessment should cover the full range of student learning outcomes. This will require evidence gathered using a wide range of strategies based on clear and specific criteria. For example: observation, portfolios, performance assessment (essays, orals, models, projects, reports, notes, videos), tests, self and peer assessment. (Refer to DET Assessment and Reporting Support Document.)

Assessment must:

- have clear direct links to course outcomes
- be integral to teaching and learning
- be balanced and varied
- be valid i.e. measures the outcomes the teacher intends to measure
- be reliable
- be fair
- engage the learner
- include explicit instructions to students
- consider accommodations for students with learning support plans

### 4. Planning Assessment

Assessment is most effective when school practices are consistent, reliable and fair, in each subject; across classes in the same subject; across different subjects within the same faculty; and across the various faculties of the school.

To this end it is significant that the **Head Teacher** develops consistent faculty assessment practices for each subject in consultation with the teachers of the subjects, which takes into consideration:

- the need for fair and consistent assessment against outcomes and comparison of students undertaking the subject across the cohort;
- the timetabling of tasks in terms of demands on students and teachers at various times of the year;
- the timeframe for the marking and return of work to students, providing consideration of/for both teacher workload and the value of rapid feedback for students' learning;
- the clear identification of the learning outcomes which are being assessed;
- that assessment tasks relate to classroom learning and current syllabuses; and
- the value and weighting within a semester or whole year period.

Assessment procedures **must** be published and distributed to students at the commencement of the course. *In addition these procedures together with course overviews will be published at the commencement of each school year on the school website.*

The **Classroom Teacher** is the key to ensuring assessment is fair and reliable. Their role includes:

- clear communication of the expectations and/or guidelines for the task, as well as providing an appropriate indication of the value (weighting) in the overall scheme;
- ensuring that the skills and/or knowledge requisite for success in the task have been adequately addressed prior to the assessment;
- providing written information, either as handouts, on the *board* or on the classroom notice board on homework tasks;
- monitoring the timeframe for tests and assessment deadlines carefully so realistic timing occurs and alterations in dates due only happen in exceptional circumstances. Ensure that all students are given adequate/reasonable notice where deadlines need to be changed e.g. one week.

## 5. Effectiveness of Assessment

It is the role of the **Head Teacher** to:

- ensure that faculty procedures policy allows for the fair assessment and comparison of students undertaking the subject across the cohort.

It is the role of the **Classroom Teacher** to:

- ensure that written comments are positive and provide explicit ideas to assist students to understand how they can improve their performance
- provide adequate opportunities to review the assessment task with students;
- ensure that, after an assessment task is returned to the students, model solutions to tests and assignments are provided to students/posted on *Moodle*;

# Common School Communication of Assessment

## Overview of Course Topics and Assessment tasks

Each faculty will provide to students each semester:

- a course overview; and
- assessment task schedule outline including the proposed time of assessments (eg Week 10 Term 1)

### Junior Assessment (Years 7-9)

At the **beginning of each year/ semester** students will be provided with a course outline sheet outlining the topics of the course, outcomes to be assessed and assessment task schedules.

### Senior Assessment (Years 10-12)

Senior students will be issued an **assessment policy information booklet at the commencement of the course**, which gives a description of each task and the weighting

## Common Tasks

- Years 7-9 a **minimum of 50% common tasks**
- Year 10-12 common tasks as per BOSTES Year 10 ROSA, Preliminary and HSC Assessment Policy

## Written Notification of Assessment Tasks

- Years 7-9 a **minimum of one week's** notice
- Year 10-12 a **minimum of 2 week's** notice

## Hand In Tasks (all years)

### Completion of tasks

Teachers are to record the receipt of the tasks on a class roll/ folder designated for the purpose by the faculty, as the student's submit them. This record will ensure that no confusion will occur re 'lost' tasks.

## Requests for Extension: Years 7-9

Requests for extensions will be considered by the **Head Teacher** with the submission of a written request and a valid reason at least one day prior to the due date. Consideration will be given to students who suffer illness/ misadventure at the time of the task on provision of appropriate supporting evidence.

- Realistic deadlines need to be set, maintained and communicated to students.
- Extensions need to be considered within the context of genuine student welfare needs.
- The circumstances appropriate to the granting of extensions need to be clearly stated and the granting of same applied consistently to all students by the Head Teacher.

**Requests for Extension: Years 10-12** must be consistent with the BOSTES Year 10 ROSA, Preliminary and HSC Assessment Policies

### **Failure to submit a task on the set date (all years)**

1. Staff will contact the parent *within two days of* the due date in cases of non submission of work
2. A letter of concern outlining details of the task, nature of task and date due should be sent to parents from Sentral in cases of work still outstanding one week after the due date
3. Head Teachers are expected to contact parents if work is still outstanding after a further week or if there has been no response to the Letter of Concern
4. **Students in Years 7-9** will be penalised with a zero for lack of submission of a task if the task **has not been** handed in by the day the class tasks are returned to the students. In the event of a zero, students will still be required to submit the task to meet course outcomes.
5. **Students in Years 10-12** will be treated consistent with the BOSTES Year 10 ROSA, Preliminary and HSC Assessment Policies. A BOSTES N Award warning letter will be issued to students who have failed to complete the tasks in response to the Letter of Concern.

*Ratified by School Council December 2014*