

## **Muirfield High School**

### **Junior Assessment Policy and Procedures**

The Assessment Policy should be read in conjunction with the NSW Department of Education *Curriculum Policy Standards (2016)* which outlines specific requirements and policy standards and relevant syllabus material.

### **Aims and Purpose of Assessment**

Assessment is the process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about student's learning in relation to the objectives and outcomes of a course. The central purpose of assessment is to provide information on student achievement and progress and set direction for ongoing teaching and learning.

The assessment program incorporates the principles of *assessment for learning*, *assessment of learning* and *assessment as learning*.

- *Assessment for learning* involves teachers using evidence about students' achievement to inform future teaching.
- *Assessment of learning* is an assessment of what the student has learnt and usually occurs at key points in a unit, term or semester and may be used to rank or grade students.
- *Assessment as learning* occurs when students monitor their own learning, ask questions and use a range of strategies to decide what they know and can do, and how to use assessment for new learning. Assessment as learning encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning.

### **Principles of Effective and Informative Assessment and Reporting**

- The assessment strategies used by the teacher need to be directly linked to syllabus outcomes. These describe the standards against which the student is assessed and reported.
- Assessment should draw on a wide range of evidence and appropriate to kind of learning or outcomes being assessed. Teachers use a variety of assessment strategies that give students multiple opportunities in varying contexts to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do in relation to syllabus outcomes.
- Assessment strategies need to be valid and fair.
- Assessment should be manageable, efficient and convenient. Assessment can be incorporated into usual classroom activities. For example, teachers can assess achievement informally as students complete work using a range of strategies including student self-assessment and peer assessment.
- Assessment values teacher judgement through cooperative programming and discussion of student work samples and achievements within and between schools. In awarding grades for achievement of outcomes or for overall course performance, teacher may use an on-balance judgement that does not focus on a single piece of work. Teachers may weigh up assessment information collected from both formal activities and informal observations that have built up over time and in different situations. Formal and informal evidence that is collected routinely and recorded systematically is part of teachers' ongoing classroom assessment practice.

### **Communication to Students and Parents**

Each course assessment program will comprise a scope and sequence chart that will indicate the following:

1. each of the outcomes to be reported on in semester report
2. how each outcome is to be assessed
3. how the overall semester/year grade and rank order will be assessed

This information is to be issued to students at the beginning of the year by faculties.

Given the wide variety of assessment strategies, provision of written notification for individual tasks will depend on the nature of the task. Similarly, while provision of explicit criteria supports student achievement, provision of explicit marking criteria is dependent on the nature of individual tasks. These will be decided at faculty level.

### **Absence, Illness and Misadventure, Lateness**

The teacher in consultation with the Head Teacher and following the guidelines below will make decisions about these matters.

All students are expected to make a serious attempt at all assessment tasks.

If students are absent when an in-class task is due, on the FIRST day of return to school, students MUST see the relevant Head Teacher(s), who will decide on one of the options: student to complete the task; student to complete an alternate task; or student awarded an estimated mark. This decision will take into consideration nature of the task; prior application and attendance of the student; and length of absence. In cases where an estimate is awarded, the Head Teacher, in consultation with the classroom teacher, will exercise their professional judgement, using all available evidence of achievement.

A note from the parent/caregiver is required to explain the student's absence from an assessment task. This is required on the student's first day back at school. A penalty of 10% of the full marks possible per day will be consistently applied for the submission of late hand-in formal assessment tasks without a reasonable excuse. A weekend will be treated as one day. After 5 days, the student will receive zero.

Students who are absent through truancy for a test, or absent on the day an assignment is due through truancy will receive a zero for that task.

Students who are absent on the due date of an assessment task for school representation or other school business need to negotiate an alternate due date prior to their absence.

Should students be absent due to extended leave, for example family holidays, students need to consult with the Head Teacher prior to absence. The Head Teacher, in consultation with the class teacher, will decide on one of the following options: submission prior to departure; submission via electronic means; completion an alternate task; awarding an estimate or awarding zero for a task. This decision will take into consideration nature of the task; prior application and attendance of the student; and length of absence.

If something serious or unexpected happens when students are working on an assignment that prevents them from completing the task by the due date, they should go to the Head Teacher and ask for an extension as soon as possible. In the event of the confirmation of illness or misadventure the teacher and the student are to negotiate an alternative completion date.

Computer issues and technical problems are **NOT** valid grounds for an extension. You are expected to follow responsible practices when using technologies, including ensuring that your equipment is reliable and that you have extra copies saved on USB. Students are recommended to keep a copy of their assignment work in hard copy form, on a storage device, on a hard drive and email a copy of the task to their school account. This will ensure technological problems such as computer malfunction; power surge; loss of work; no printer ink; will not result in a loss of some or all of the marks.

### **Disability Provisions**

*From Muirfield High School Learning Support Procedures:*

- Adjustments are provided by class room teachers to support the individual needs of the student within lessons and units of work. Teachers should consider the concept of “universal design”, i.e. ways in which a whole task can be improved so that all students can understand what is required and all students have the opportunity and ability to demonstrate their level of achievement, rather than individual different tasks for each student.
- Adjustments to assessments are modified by teachers when required to enable students to demonstrate required outcomes.
- Teachers provide opportunities for students to use their strengths, preferred learning styles and interests within the curriculum areas.

Students who require accommodations to enable them to demonstrate outcomes may be granted disability provisions in tests. Provisions may include coloured paper, large-print papers, use of a reader and/or writer, extra time or rest breaks. Students in all years who require the provision of a Reader and/or Writer are identified following teacher or parent referral. Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 are assisted by SLSOs. Students in Years 10, 11 and 12 assisted by selected students in the year below. In order to accommodate more students, consideration is being given to use carefully selected Year 8 students to assist students in Year 9. Test provisions are coordinated by the LaST.

### **Year 10 Record of School Achievement (RoSA)**

At the end of Year 10 students who have met the eligibility requirements for the Record of School Achievement (RoSA) will receive a grade for their courses. Teachers will make the final judgement of the grade deserved on the basis of available assessment information and with reference to the course performance descriptors and other material produced by NESAs to support the consistent awarding of grades. As this grade is for the external credential, students need to be fully aware of and follow the procedures regarding due dates, absence, illness and misadventure. Should students wish to appeal a decision of Head Teacher, students should speak with their Deputy Principal within two days of receiving the decision from the Head Teacher.

## Eligibility for a RoSA

To be eligible for a RoSA, students must have:

- Completed the mandatory curriculum requirements for Years 7 to 10.
- Attended a government school, an accredited non-government school or a recognised school outside NSW.
- Completed courses of study that satisfy Education Standards' curriculum and assessment requirements for the RoSA.
- Complied with the requirements from the Education Act.

*(<https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/act/1990/8/part8/div2/sec94>)*

## School attendance

NESA do not set minimum attendance for the satisfactory completion of a course. However, a principal may determine that, due to absence, course completion criteria may not be met.

To receive a RoSA, students must attend school until the final day of Year 10.

They must also complete the following mandatory Years 7-10 curriculum requirements.

- **English:** By the end of Year 10, 400 hours need to be completed.
- **Mathematics:** By the end of Year 10, 400 hours need to be completed.
- **Science:** By the end of Year 10, 400 hours need to be completed.
- **Human Society and its Environment:** By the end of Year 10, 400 hours need to be completed. This must include 100 hours each of History and Geography in each Stage.
- **Languages Other than English:** 100 hours to be completed in one language over one continuous 12-month period between Years 7–10 but preferably in Years 7–8.
- **Technological and Applied Studies:** Technology (mandatory) Years 7–8 syllabus to be studied for 200 hours.
- **Creative Arts:** Two hundred hours to be completed, consisting of 100-hour mandatory courses in each of Visual Arts and Music.
- **Personal Development, Health and Physical Education:** Mandatory 300-hour course to be completed. This integrated course is to be studied in each of Years 7–10.

## 'N' determinations

If students do not complete a course's requirements they will receive an 'N' determination.

Students are warned, via a letter, if it looks like they might receive an 'N' determination. This aims to give the student time to complete the course requirements and rectify the problem.

If a student receives an 'N' determination in a mandatory curriculum requirement course, they will not be eligible for the RoSA. If they leave school, they will receive a Transcript of Study that will list the mandatory course(s) that received an 'N' determination.

If a student is given an 'N' determination in a non-mandatory course, the course will not appear on their RoSA or Transcript of Study.

## Malpractice

Student malpractice in assessment tasks and examinations is a serious offence. Students who commit malpractice will be awarded zero for the task, and risk an 'N' determination for their course.

Malpractice consists of the following, but not limited to:

Unauthorised access to task or marking criteria	Unauthorised access to examination	Unauthorised use of electronic device	Possession or use of unauthorised notes
Plagiarism & aiding plagiarism	Frivolous attempt	Collusion	Unacknowledged assistance
Offensive content	Making a false claim	Possession or use of unauthorised notes	Distributing or sharing the content of examinations and in-class tasks during exclusion periods

Plagiarism is considered malpractice.

Plagiarism is the use of the work of others without acknowledgement. Some guidelines to consider are:

- Copying someone else's entire work and submitting it as your own is plagiarism.
- Copying passages of someone else's work and submitting it as your own is plagiarism.
- Copying someone else's work and substituting some words or sentences is plagiarism.
- The copying of paragraphs or sentences from someone else's work is permitted, as long as it is appropriately acknowledged by footnoting or quotation marks.
- The copying of someone else's ideas, including paraphrasing, is allowed, as long as it is acknowledged.

## General performance descriptors

The general performance descriptors describe performance at each of five grade levels.

<b>A</b>	The student has an extensive knowledge and understanding of the content and can readily apply this knowledge. In addition, the student has achieved a very high level of competence in the processes and skills and can apply these skills to new situations.
<b>B</b>	The student has a thorough knowledge and understanding of the content and a high level of competence in the processes and skills. In addition, the student is able to apply this knowledge and these skills to most situations.
<b>C</b>	The student has a sound knowledge and understanding of the main areas of content and has achieved an adequate level of competence in the processes and skills.
<b>D</b>	The student has a basic knowledge and understanding of the content and has achieved a limited level of competence in the processes and skills.
<b>E</b>	The student has an elementary knowledge and understanding in few areas of the content and has achieved very limited competence in some of the processes and skills.

### **Stage 5 grading**

Schools are responsible for awarding each student a grade (A, B, C, D, or E) to summarise the student's achievement in any 100 hour or 200 hour course completed in Stage 5. In Mathematics, grades have been further differentiated to nine levels (A10, A9, B8, B7, C6, C5, D4, D3 and E2). The grade awarded is reported on the student's Record of School Achievement.

Teachers use these Stage 5 course performance descriptors to determine Stage 5 grades. The descriptors have been developed from the NESA general performance descriptors, and provide a more complete description of typical performance in this course at each grade level.

### **Applying the course performance descriptors**

Teachers use their professional judgement in applying the course performance descriptors. It is not intended that the course performance descriptors represent a checklist, or provide a comprehensive description of student performance at each grade level. The descriptor that provides the best overall description of the student's achievement will determine the grade awarded.

Teachers interpret the course performance descriptors in terms of standards that can be achieved by students within the bounds of the course.

The samples of student work that are provided on the Assessment Resource Centre website clarify the standards described in the course performance descriptors. They illustrate the quality of work typically produced by students who receive each grade.