Assessment Policy
Revised February 2014
**Introduction**
The school assessment policy makes provision for just and equitable assessment of the students’ performance in accordance with the pursuit of learning and achieving individual potential as described in the vision statement.

**Rationale**
Assessment is the process of identifying, gathering, recording and interpreting information about student learning. The main purpose of assessment is to improve student learning and the quality of learning outcomes. Assessment should therefore be undertaken at:
- The commencement of a teaching/learning program (diagnostic);
- During the program (formative);
- At the end of the program (summative)

**Diagnostic** assessment is the process of discovering what students know and can do so that teachers can identify difficulties and target problems in the teaching learning process. Establishing individual prior knowledge and skills before commencing a teaching / learning program will identify where each student is on their learning continuum, i.e. the starting point for teacher and student in the teaching/learning program.

**Formative** assessment is the practice of building a cumulative profile for student achievement. This means informal and systematic observation of students as they engage with the course knowledge, skills and understandings during day-to-day class activities. Meaningful feedback should be provided to students as a means of indicating their success and areas for improvement. Establishing assessment criteria will assist in assessing particular outcomes achieved and providing meaningful feedback to students.

**Summative** assessment is the practice of making judgements about student achievement at certain relevant points in the learning program, such as at the conclusion of a topic, a program of study, a stage, a term, or a school year. Formal assessment activities such as tests, examinations, projects and assignments are generally used to make summative judgements. Such assessment tools may address a single outcome or a number of outcomes.

**Principles of Effective Assessment**
- Assessment is integral to teaching and learning. It should be based on the stage outcomes that specify what students should know, understand and be able to do at the end of a stage in a specific course of study.
- A variety of assessment strategies should be used and students should be given multiple opportunities, in varying contexts, to demonstrate, in an authentic manner what they know, understand and can do.
- Assessment strategies should be sensitive to gender, disability, culture, background language, socioeconomic status and geographical location.
- Values and attitudes are recognised as an integral part of learning. Assessment and reporting of them, however, should be distinct from the assessment and reporting of knowledge, understanding and skills.
• Reporting of student achievement has a number of purposes for a range of audiences, and it may take a variety of forms.
• The form of the report must relate to its intended purpose and audience.
• Each task will be designed to enable judgements to be made about student achievement in relation to more than one outcome.
• The weightings that are assigned to assessment tasks enable judgements about student performance across the full range of outcomes.

Aims
This policy aims to provide a means by which assessment procedures in all Key Learning Areas recognise the need for:

• assessment and reporting practices to be time efficient, and not detract from teaching and learning;
• acknowledgment of difference in terms of the development of individual children;
• concern to be shown for the total well-being of the student;
• the description and provision of standards so that parents can understand how their child is progressing;
• diagnosis of areas of strength and need, including those students who might need to be given additional support;
• parents to be involved in the educative process relative to monitoring student’s organizational skills related to preparation and completion to assessment tasks.

Implementation
The effective implementation of this school assessment policy is dependent upon the processes which are put into place in each of the Key Learning Areas. Therefore, working with faculty members in the spirit of professional collegiality and cooperation, it is the responsibility of the Coordinator of each KLA to ensure that:

• Assessment strategies are fully integrated into the teaching/learning program;
• Establish and publish an outline of an assessment program which consists of a variety of assessment tasks to ensure as broad as possible identification of the student’s ability level;
• Each KLA develops its own Faculty Assessment policy in the light of this document and that each member of the faculty has a copy of same;
• Outcomes being assessed are identified within each assessment task;
• Parents are provided with appropriate information as to the nature of assessment tasks and the calendar of due dates;
• Students are aware of the specific requirements of assessment tasks;
• Records of results awarded for assessment tasks are maintained and are secure;
• Procedures are in place for providing students with meaningful feedback of their performance for each assessment task;
• Procedures are in place to provide assessment of students who transfer into the school after the commencement of the school year;
• Procedures for informing parents and warning students when they are in danger of receiving an “N” determination are conveyed to members of staff;
- Procedures are in place for dealing with assessment tasks that are found to be faulty in design or administration;
- Published assessment schedule for all Stage 5 courses provided at the beginning of each year to all students.

**Design of Tasks**
- All tasks should be designed with a *tiered* structure with ‘must, should, could’ sections.
- Sections are to be structured and weighted as:
  - Part A: *Must* – 40%
  - Part B: *Should* – 40%
  - Part C: *Could* – 20%
- Language accessibility must be high in Part A, grading to more challenging in Part C.
- Modified grades will not be awarded. Nominated Learning Difficulties students who are only able to access Part A of the task will be awarded a maximum mark of 40% which will equate to a maximum grade of “D”. Similarly, a student who accesses all parts of the task and receives an overall mark of 40% will receive a “D” grade.
- Teachers may make modifications specific to students e.g. in an oral task, specific modifications may be made to time of speech or to allow delivery to teacher only. In these cases, this will limit the mark achievable in specific parts of the rubric.
- Generally students in a lower ability streamed classes or who have a task modified should receive a grade that reflects the standard of the task in relation to the mainstream task. Care must be taken to ensure students who receive significant support for a task are not receiving unrealistic grades, as this may provide parents with unrealistic understanding of their child’s progress and affect access to Life Skills programs.

**Procedures**
Students are to be issued with a schedule of tasks at the commencement of each year in each course via the Assessment Handbook published on the school’s website. This notice gives the tasks, the due date and its value as a proportion of the final mark (100%).

The due date must be firm and sanctions will apply to work handed in late. The sanctions are:

- 25% deduction  1 day late
- 50% deduction  2 days late

Example: If the due date is Monday 15 February and the work is handed in on 16 February, 25% deduction applies. After the third day the Assessment task will not attract a mark but must be still submitted in order to meet the requirement that all work “be completed”.

It is advisable that Due Dates not be set on Fridays.
Distribution of Grades & Marks
Assessment Task Rubrics and Student Report Grades are to be based on the following scale. Studies Coordinators may map class/course marks to the scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Mark Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outstanding</td>
<td>100 – 85%</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>84 – 70%</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound</td>
<td>69 – 50%</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>49 – 31%</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>30 – 0%</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Late and Non-Completion of Assessment Tasks

- **Extensions:**
  - If a student requires an extension of time to complete a task they are required to complete a Request for Extension form two days prior to the task due date. The Request for Extension form is available in the appendix of the Assessment Handbook on the school’s website.

  - A response to the student’s extension request is required on the day the form is submitted, in order to enable the student time to complete the task should the response be “no”.

- **Absence:**
  - The parent/guardian is required to ring the school if a child is absent for an assessment task.
  - Students away on the day of the task are required to complete a ‘Non-completion of Assessment’ form and return it the following day, signed by a parent, to the relevant studies coordinator. The ‘Non-completion of Assessment’ form is available in the appendix of the Assessment Handbook on the school’s website.
  - Students are required to submit or complete the task immediately on their return to school.

- **Late / Non-Completion:**

  Where students fail to submit an assessment task by the due date:

  - Studies Coordinators are to check with the Student Coordinator and Learning Support Coordinator prior to issuing a ‘Notice to Parent - Non-completion of Assessment’ form to ensure there are no extenuating circumstances.
  - The Studies Coordinator or teacher may choose contact the parent immediately to afford the opportunity to complete the task with minimal penalty. Methods of communication could include email, phone or school generated text.
  - The studies coordinator will then decide whether the reason for lateness is valid, and whether an extension of time is warranted or late penalties
apply. i.e. 1 day late - 25% deduction, 2 days late - 50% deduction, 3 days late – 100% deduction.
- The studies coordinator will issue a “Notice to Parent - Non-Completion of Assessment Task” form.
- Students are required to complete the task regardless of the sanction.
- Non-completion of assessment tasks are to be recorded in “First Class” by the Studies Coordinator.
- Students found to consistently failing to complete assessment tasks will face further sanctions and may fail to meet the requirements of their courses of study and the RoSA.

General Guidelines:

Where parents request an extension of time for an “Assessment Task”, there are reasons which require little deliberation, e.g. illness, accident, misadventure.

Other requests for reasons which are vague or for which written support is less convincing will require careful thought from the faculty.

Computer malfunction is not usually acceptable as a reason for extension. Students are reminded of the need to back up their work.

In order to assist students to complete Assessment Tasks to a satisfactory standard clear directions must be given along with offers of help and frequent reminders of the due date.

Teachers should inform students that it is much better to get the work in on time even if it is incomplete.

- The procedure for students who transfer into the school after the commencement of the year is to either contact the previous school or ascertain where the student fits within the school cohort using a variety of assessment techniques and testing procedures.
- If a student is seen to be in danger of receiving an “N” determination, the parents need to be informed in writing as soon as possible and the student given support and encouragement to comply with the course requirements.
- If an assessment task is found to be faulty in design or administration, the faculty in consultation with the Assistant Principal – Curriculum should make a decision as to whether the task be counted or part thereof.

Appeals Process
Should a student feel he/she has grounds for appeal the process is as follows:

- Discuss the issue with the class teacher
- If the issue is not resolved proceed to discuss the issue with the Studies Coordinator who may also refer it to the Assistant Principal - Curriculum for a satisfactory conclusion.
**Malpractice** *(including cheating, copying, plagiarizing, etc)*

If a student is found to have obtained an unfair advantage due to malpractice during an exam or assessment task, the matter will be referred to the relevant Studies Coordinator.

In Stage 4 the matter will be addressed by the Studies Coordinator who will decide the appropriate penalty.

In Stage 5 the matter will be considered by the Studies Coordinator and the Assistant Principal (Dean of Studies) who will together meet with the student. Possible outcomes may include loss of marks, zero result, and/or parent interview.

Faculties are encouraged to emphasise the issue of plagiarism during Stage 4 and 5.

**Resources**

An appropriate allocation from the school budget will be made in order to ensure that this policy can be implemented effectively.

This budget will be determined by the Principal after a process of consultation with the middle Management Team.

**Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Middle Management Team in consultation with Key Learning Area Staff.
Assessment Guidelines

RATIONALE

The following guidelines have been designed to assist in the planning and preparation of assessment tasks - though many of the procedures may also be useful in designing formative tasks (see below). It is envisioned that an inclusion of the following guidelines will negate confusion and assist students in their understanding of the various requirements of different tasks.

COMMON FEATURES

All assessment task notices should (as a minimum requirement) include the following:
- School crest
- Subject [and or topic]
- Weighting
- Due date
- Outcomes – listed by syllabus number
- Task instructions
- Assessment criteria and/or Marking Rubric
- Lateness penalties.

OTHER.

While not always required, the following need also to be taken into account when preparing assessment tasks:
- Check timing of task to avoid clashes (this may be dealt with in the organization of an assessment schedule).
- Written notification (minimum of 2 weeks)
- Glossary of words used in questions
- Scaffolds
- Need for bibliography
- Note on plagiarism
- Life Skills version (or alternative paper/task).

NOTE:

Assessment tasks – those tasks specifically designed to be completed by all students in a particular course/year and to play a major part in the overall assessment program.

Formative tasks – all other tasks set by individual teachers and may play a part in the reporting process.