



## **Lower School Assessment Policy**

This policy is provided to all lower secondary students at John Forrest Secondary College and applies to the assessment of all lower secondary courses. These courses will be delivered in accordance with School Curriculum and Standards Authority guidelines and will adhere to the Western Australian Curriculum.

### **1. Student responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the student to:

- maintain a good record of attendance, conduct and progress (a student who is absent from a class for five lessons or more in a Term is deemed to be 'at risk' of not achieving the best possible result);
- 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, prior to the assessment task due date;
- attempt all in-class assessment tasks on the scheduled date and submit all out-of-class assessment tasks by the due date; and

### **2. Teacher responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the teacher to:

- develop a teaching and learning program that appropriately delivers the current content of the Western Australian Curriculum as laid out by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority for the particular course;
- provide students with access to a course outline and an assessment outline (see Section 3 for details);
- ensure that all assessment tasks are fair, valid and reliable;
- provide students with timely assessment feedback and with guidance about how best to undertake future tasks;
- maintain accurate records of student achievement;
- meet College and external timelines for assessment and reporting; and
- inform students and parents of academic progress, as appropriate.

### **3. Information provided to students**

Before teaching starts, the teacher will provide access to the following documents on SEQTA:

- a course outline that shows:
  - all the content for the course in the sequence in which it will be taught;
  - the approximate time allocated to teach each section of content.
- an assessment outline for the course that includes:
  - the number of tasks to be assessed;
  - a general description of each assessment task;
  - the assessment type;
  - an indication of the content on which each task is based;
  - the approximate timing of each assessment task (i.e. the week the task will be conducted or the start and submission dates for an extended task);
  - the weighting for each assessment task.
  - the weighting for each course assessment type.

Note: students without internet access at home can request a hard copy of these documents from their teacher.

#### **4. Assessing student achievement**

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). The criteria against which the task will be marked will be provided with the task, except in cases where the marking key is an answer or solutions key which will be shared with students after the assessment task has been marked.

Most tasks are completed in class. Some courses may include tasks that are completed out of class (in which case, student achievement will be validated to ensure authenticity).

Some courses may include assessment tasks to be completed by a group of students. In such cases, teachers will use strategies to enable them to assess the performance of each individual in the group. Typically, this will be identified in the task (or task brief) provided to the students at the commencement of the task.

Where a student's disability, specific education needs or cultural beliefs will significantly affect their access to an assessment task, the teacher may adjust the task in consultation with the relevant head of learning area/teacher-in-charge responsible for the course. (See Section 9 for further information on students with a disability).

#### **5. Year 8, 9 and 10 semester examinations**

School examinations are included in the assessment outline for each semester of Year 8, 9 and 10 courses in English, Mathematics, Science and HASS. The weighting, i.e. proportion of the final mark, for these examinations varies between courses and is included in the assessment outline.

The following rules will apply to all lower school examinations:

- Other than quietly asking examination supervisors questions, students are prohibited from talking or making noise or otherwise disrupting examinations.
- Collusion between students will lead to cancellation of the practical and/or written examination marks for each of the students involved. This includes any talking between students once the examination has commenced.
- Possession of unauthorised materials or technologies during an examination will lead to cancellation of part or all of the student's examination mark(s). This includes mobile phones and smart watches. Note: All watches are prohibited in the examination room.
- Blatant disregard of examination room regulations and/or instructions will result in the removal of the student from the examination room.

Where health issues or personal circumstances prevent a student from completing one or more school examinations, the student must submit a medical certificate and/or explanation to the Deputy Principal. The College will determine whether the reason is acceptable (see Section 11 for details).

If the reason is acceptable to the College, an alternate date will be set or, where this is not possible, the student will not sit the examination. In this case, a predicted examination score will be allocated based on the student's performance in other assessments relative to that of the cohort and the performance of the cohort in the examination.

If the reason is not acceptable to the College, the student will be given a mark of zero

#### **6. Cheating, collusion and plagiarism**

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

All work in each individual assessment task must be the work of the student. Students are not permitted to submit for marking, i.e. as original, any work which:

- is prepared or substantively contributed to by another person (e.g. student, teacher, tutor or expert). Example: students cannot work on an individual task as a group and submit the same work.
- is copied or downloaded from the internet without acknowledging the source.
- paraphrases or summarises the work of others.

If a student is believed to have engaged in cheating, collusion or plagiarism, the teacher will refer the matter to the relevant Head of Learning Area responsible for the course. As part of this process, the student and the parent/guardian will be informed of the suspected inappropriate behaviour. The student will be provided with the right of reply.

If it is demonstrated that a student has cheated, colluded or plagiarised, one of the following penalties will apply:

- a mark of zero for the whole assessment task, or
- a mark of zero for the part of the assessment task where the teacher can identify that the work is not the student's own.

The student and parent/guardian will be informed in writing of the decision made, the penalty and any further disciplinary action.

## **7. Security of assessment tasks**

Where there is more than one class studying the same course at the College, all the assessment tasks will be the same to ensure student marks are on the same scale. In cases where there is more than one class, 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 and retained by the teacher until the task has been completed by all classes. 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 collusion and the students will be penalised.

Where the College works with other schools and uses the same assessment task or examination, the task/examination and the student responses will be retained by the teacher until the task/examination has been completed by all schools.

## **8. Modification of the assessment outline**

If circumstances change during the teaching of a course, requiring the teacher to make adjustments to scheduled assessment tasks, then students will be informed via the College Learning Management System or via email.

Where a disability, special education needs or cultural beliefs have resulted in the inability of a student to complete one or more assessment tasks, the assessment outline will be modified and provided to the student and parent/guardian.

## **9. Students with a disability**

Students with a diagnosed disability will, where their disability, impairment or medical condition will significantly affect their access to a particular assessment task, have written and/or practical assessment tasks (including school examinations) adjusted by the teacher in consultation with the relevant head of learning area/teacher-in-charge responsible for the course. These adjustments will be consistent with those described in the Authority's *Guidelines for disability adjustments for timed assessments*, which can be accessed from the Authority website ([www.scsa.wa.edu.au](http://www.scsa.wa.edu.au)). Adjustments, depending on the individual student's education needs, can include special equipment, modified papers, provision of a scribe, or additional time to complete the task.

If mental health concerns are impacting a student's engagement with the assessment schedule, a formal diagnosis and/or proven ongoing therapeutic relationship with a qualified mental health practitioner will be required to make adjustments. Appropriate adjustments will

be determined by the Deputy Principal, in consultation with the student, parent/guardian, teachers and mental health practitioner.

## 10. Completion of a course

Where health issues or other personal circumstances may prevent a student completing an in-class assessment task, the student or the parent/guardian must discuss the matter with the teacher at the earliest opportunity before the scheduled date. The College will determine whether the reason is acceptable (see Section 11 for details).

Where the reason for not submitting an assessment task or attending a scheduled in-class assessment task **is acceptable** to the College (see Section 11 for details), the student's assessment outline will, where possible, be adjusted and a grade assigned.

If a student does not submit an out-of-class assessment task or attend a scheduled in-class assessment task without providing an acceptable reason, the teacher will advise the student and the parent/guardian/carer of the possible impact of the penalty on the student's grade.

Where a student is absent for an in-class assessment or an out-of-class assessment task is submitted after the due date, or is not submitted, and the student **does not** provide a reason which is acceptable to the College (see Section 11 for details), the following penalties apply:

- 10% reduction in the mark per day late, or
- 40% reduction in the mark, if submitted more than four days late

Note: Weekend days are included in the penalty calculation and will count as one day.

Where an assessment task is not submitted the student will receive a mark of zero.

## 11. Acceptable reasons for non-completion or non-submission of an assessment

The penalty for non-completion or non-submission of an assessment task will be waived if the student provides a reason which is acceptable to the College. For example:

- where sickness, injury or significant personal circumstances prevents a student attending on the day that an in-class assessment task (including semester examinations) is scheduled
- where sickness, injury or significant personal circumstances for part or all of the period of an out-of-class assessment task prevents completion or submission by the due date.

In such cases, the parent/guardian must:

- contact the College by 8:30 am on the day of the in-class assessment task or due date for submission of an out-of-class assessment and
- provide evidence immediately following the student's return to school.

Where the student provides a reason, which **is acceptable** to the College for the non-completion or non-submission of an assessment task, the teacher will:

- 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), **or**
- not require the task to be completed and re-weight the student's marks for other tasks in that assessment type (provided, in the opinion of the teacher, sufficient evidence exists in the other tasks completed to meet the requirements for the course and to enable a grade to be assigned).

Events that can be rescheduled are not a valid reason for non-completion or non-submission of an assessment task (e.g. family holidays or celebratory events).

Where a catastrophic event (e.g. a pandemic) affects delivery of the teaching program, the completion or submission of one or more assessment tasks and/or completion of examinations, students will be advised by the College of adjustments to the task requirements and/or the assessment outline.

## **12. Reporting**

The College will provide on Interim Report during Term 1 and a formal report at the end of each semester.



## **Addendum: Information for Year 10 VET students**

This information applies to Year 10 students undertaking Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses available through the College or other registered training organisations (RTOs) and outlines the requirements of the Australian Skills Quality Authority's (ASQA) *Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015*.

The points below should be considered in addition to the information provided in the document above.

### **2. Teacher responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the teacher to:

- develop a teaching and learning program that appropriately delivers the current VET Training Package for the particular course;

### **3. Information provided to students**

Before teaching starts, the teacher will provide access to the following documents on SEQTA:

- the qualification and units of competency for VET courses.
- an assessment outline for the course that includes:
  - All VET tasks have equal weighting and each must be completed to the prescribed standard in the training package.
  - All VET assessment types have equal weighting and each must be completed to the prescribed standard in the training package.

### **4. Assessing student achievement**

#### ***VET Courses***

Each VET course task provides evidence of student knowledge or skill achievement in competency-based training. The teacher will assess the evidence against the assessment criteria and indicate if the student has achieved competency or not yet achieved competency. If a task does not yet meet competency, students have the opportunity to resubmit any assessment item twice, provided the initial assessment was completed prior to the due date. Each task must be completed to the prescribed standard in the training package. Any task or unit which is not deemed competent will result in the qualification not being achieved.

In VET courses, teachers in consultation with the RTO, will apply reasonable adjustment to ensure maximum participation of learners with disability in teaching, learning and assessment activities. To ensure the participation of all learners, RTOs need to:

- make sure that course activities are sufficiently flexible
- provide additional support to learners where necessary
- where a learner cannot participate, offer a reasonable substitute activity within the context of the overall course.

Reasonable adjustment must retain the integrity of the assessment and cannot conflict with the principles of assessment: fairness, flexibility, validity and reliability.

### **6. Cheating, collusion and plagiarism**

#### ***VET Courses***

In VET courses, failing to complete a task or unit of competency will result in failure to achieve the qualification. If a student is believed to have engaged in cheating, collusion or plagiarism, the student may be offered the opportunity to complete an alternative task under test conditions. If this behaviour is repeated, then the student's work will be deemed not competent and the qualification will not be achieved. Please refer to the RTO Student Handbook for information regarding the appeals process.

## **8. Modification of the assessment outline**

### ***VET Courses***

In VET courses, failing to complete a task or unit of competency will result in failure to achieve the qualification. Reasonable adjustment must retain the integrity of the assessment and cannot conflict with the principles of assessment: fairness, flexibility, validity and reliability.

## **10. Completion of a course**

### ***VET Courses***

In VET courses, every unit of competency in a qualification must be achieved (Competent) for the grade equivalence to be accredited towards WACE. Each unit of competency is assessed as follows:

- CO - Competent (work has been completed and meets the required standard)
- OT - On Track (student is progressing towards the timely completion of work)
- IP - In Progress (work has commenced)
- SU - Submitted (work has been forwarded to the teacher for assessment)
- AR - At Risk (work has not been completed to the required standard by the set deadline)
- NS - Not Started (work is yet to be allocated by the teacher)
- NYC - Not Yet Competent (work is yet to be completed to the required standard)

Qualifications are assessed as Achieved or Not Achieved. All units of competency must be Competent for the qualification to be Achieved.

## **12. Reporting**

### ***VET Courses***

For VET courses, the report provides:

- a comment by the teacher;
- a list of units of competency achievement; and
- if the qualification has been achieved.

All qualifications are subject to approval by the RTO and any auditing processes by ASQA or the Training Accreditation Council of WA (TAC). Students will be notified of any changes from the review of the students' evidence submitted by the College.

## **13. Retention and disposal of student work**

### ***VET Courses***

In VET courses, student work must be saved on the College H drive as well as on a personal digital device. Teachers will access work via the H drive and SEQTA submissions or an RTO portal. Student evidence is uploaded to RTO at regular intervals and retained by the RTO for auditing processes for a minimum of 12 months following completion. If any evidence is lost before assessment, the student will need to reproduce the work.

## **14. Transfer between courses and/or units**

### ***VET Courses***

In VET courses, regardless of the date of enrolment, all units of competency must be completed to the prescribed standard in the training package for the qualification to be Achieved.

## **15. Reviewing marks and grades**

### ***VET Courses***

For VET courses, the Student Handbook provided by each RTO states the process for appeals and complaints. If an issue cannot be resolved through discussion with the teacher, then the student or the parent/guardian should approach the relevant head of learning area/teacher-in-charge responsible for the course. If an issue cannot be resolved at the College, the matter will be referred to the RTO.