



MACQUARIE
ANGLICAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL



HSC, Preliminary & ROSA Assessment Handbook

Revised 2018

INTRODUCTION

Assessment is a vital part of each student's learning journey at Macquarie Anglican Grammar School. As teachers we value assessment that is designed to maximise and truly demonstrate our students' knowledge and understanding authentically. Our staff are passionate about knowing our students and understanding how they learn. School based and external assessments provide key data and analytics to our staff so that they can recognise the holistic growth of every student. We strive to ensure that our assessment processes and procedures are equitable, fair and are compliant with mandated NESA policies and procedures.

Rowan Garner

Director of Studies K-12

HSC Assessment

The New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA) requires that schools have in place a number of mandatory procedures as part of the Higher School Certificate, Preliminary and Record of Student Achievement (ROSA) assessment patterns. This handbook provides a detailed outline of NESA mandated course assessment requirements and how they apply to our students at Macquarie Anglican Grammar School.

Assessment Schedules

Certainty in assessment is important for our students. Each student will have access to an assessment schedule in student administration on CANVAS for each subject. The schedules show the nature of each assessment task, components, weighting, approximate timings and link to the course outcomes.

Syllabus Outcomes

Assessment for courses (HSC, Preliminary and ROSA) is based on a student's attainment of course outcomes, provided by NESA in the specific course syllabus. Students demonstrate their achievement of outcomes through a variety of assessment tasks set by teachers throughout courses. Some tasks will be formative and diagnostic, designed to develop knowledge and understanding in preparation for future formal assessment tasks. Other tasks will be listed in the assessment schedule and will be weighted to count directly to the internal assessment program for a course. Each course outcome will be assessed at least once during a course and an outcome can and may be assessed multiple times.

To guide students towards attainment of course mandated outcomes, teachers will give feedback to students using marking rubrics that are linked to course outcomes. It is expected that students know and understand the course outcomes and where to locate them on the NESA website:

http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus_hsc/

http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus_sc/

Why Assessment is Important

School assessment seeks to provide a single measure of achievement for each course students have studied. However, these assessment marks are based on:

- A wider range of course outcomes than measured by the external exam alone.
- A broader range of learning activities and not a final examination at a point in time.
- Multiple assessment methods e.g. practical, written, oral or workshop activities.

School assessment therefore allows students to give a more holistic indication of achievement according to the outcomes of a specific subject.

During the HSC examinations in rare cases of illness or misadventure, NESA may rely entirely on school based assessment grades. Therefore, if for no other reason, students should be in the practice of maximising their assessment marks as insurance against unplanned illness/misadventure. In addition, assessment marks are an important moderator in the determination of the Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR) for University entrance.

General Assessment Procedures

- Teachers will give notice (usually 2 weeks) of the completion of an assessment task.
- Course outcomes assessed will usually be provided to students on the task notification.
- Marking guidelines should be included with tasks when published
- Subject teachers will mark each assessment task and provide feedback. This will be in the form of a raw score, percentage or mark as well as written comments or other information based on the outcomes assessed. In Years 10 and 11 students will be awarded an A-E grade twice throughout courses, based on an accumulation of assessment activities and aligned with the course performance descriptors or common grade scale. In Year 12 students will receive feedback for each task and will be with their course rank only on their academic reports.
- Subject teachers will maintain a cumulative markbook of student assessment achievement in the school's learning administration system (currently Edumate).

- At the end of an assessment period (after which academic reports are generated) assessment marks will be added together according to the weightings prescribed by NESA.
- Throughout each course teachers will provide students with raw scores and the rank order for each task.
- Students will be provided with their final course rank on their HSC course report prior to the end of Term 3. Students should also check NESA Students Online website for their ranking. If there is cause for concern with course ranking, students are to email the Director of Studies requesting a review of their subject assessment.

Reviews and appeals in relation to individual assessment tasks

- If feedback is provided via CANVAS, students may appeal the result of an assessment task with the subject teacher within 3 weekdays after the task is returned. Students must email the subject teacher directly with the Director of Studies copied into the email.
- If the task is returned in hard copy form, students may only appeal a result at the time the task is returned. Once the task has left the room, a result query is not possible. A student may register their desire to appeal a result and arrange to meet outside of the classroom. In this event the teacher should retain the hard copy of the task.
- Students may only query the procedure for the determination of a mark, not the mark itself.
- If the subject teacher is not able to resolve an appeal with a student, the student may appeal to the Director of Studies. The Director of Studies will then review the process by which the mark was determined. Students should email the Director of Studies directly if they wish to appeal a task and they will then be asked to complete an appeal form. This must be completed within 5 days of the task being returned.

Appeals against assessment rankings

- Following the notification of final assessment rankings in a course (or courses), if a student believes that their ranking is incorrect, they may request that a review of their ranking be undertaken. The procedures for such a review will be as follows:
 - o The review will be carried out at the end of the examination period.
 - o The review will ascertain whether or not the NESA guidelines and the school's published assessment policy, program, components and relative weightings have been followed. The correctness of mathematical calculations will also be reviewed.
 - o The review process will not concern itself in any way with the marks awarded for an individual assessment task.

- Appeals must be made in writing to the Director of Studies, who will convene an appeals committee made up of the Director of Studies, the subject teacher, the Deputy Headmaster - Senior School and/or the Headmaster.
- If the review process confirms that the assessment process has been satisfactorily undertaken, then the assessment mark and ranking will remain. If errors are discovered, appropriate steps will be taken to rectify the situation.
- Should the student not be satisfied with the ruling of the appeals committee, they may further appeal to NESA.

Assessment Administrative Procedures

To ensure that assessment is fair and equitable students should be aware of the following procedures:

Late Submission of Assessment Tasks

Tasks submitted late will be accepted and feedback given, but 10% of marks will be deducted for each day the task is late, up until 5 days late when zero marks will be awarded to that student for that item. The classroom teacher will notify parents using the 'N' award warning letter developed by NESA whenever a zero mark is awarded. Students who receive 2-3 letters will be considered likely candidates for an 'N' determination (see below for further details).

Illness and misadventure

- a) If a student is absent due to illness on the day of an in-class assessment or examination; on the day an assessment item (assignment) is due; or on the day prior to a due assessment or an in-class assessment:
 - The student or parent should call Reception to explain why the student is absent.
 - On their first day back at school the student needs to complete an illness/misadventure form.
 - The student will need to provide a medical certificate which should clearly state if the student was/is unfit to do the task on the day and the dates when the medical certificate will apply.

- b) In the case of misadventure, an account of the circumstances and their impact on the student's ability to complete the task should be provided by at least one independent witness e.g. police officer, minister, etc. Names and phone numbers should be included.
 - Immediately upon return to school (on their first day back) the student should complete an illness/misadventure form and make an appointment to see the Director of Studies or (if not available) the Deputy Headmaster - Senior School.

- The illness/misadventure form should be returned to school the following day signed by parents with the evidence (statements etc) attached.
- c) If the illness/misadventure occurs prior to the task then the form must detail how this has hampered the student's preparation. Wherever possible, special provisions will be granted rather than special consideration after the event.
- In both cases, the form must be submitted on the first school day following the illness/misadventure, even if this is before the scheduled submission date. The medical certificate should state that the student was unfit to work or study, and must give the dates between which this applies. In all situations, the Director of Studies in consultation with the Deputy Headmaster - Senior School will determine the outcome.

Valid grounds for illness/misadventure

If a student misses an assessment task and there are found to be valid grounds for illness/misadventure (after forms complete), the Director of Studies in consultation with the Deputy Headmaster Senior School will approve one of the following:

- The assessment to be rescheduled to within 3 school days of the student's return to school.
- The use of a substitute task.
- An estimate for the task (in exceptional cases only, approved by the Headmaster).

Note: Estimates cannot be built on estimates. If evidence for an estimate is not available, the student must sit an alternate task.

Zero marks may be awarded if:

- A student does not complete an illness/misadventure form.
- A claim based on illness is not supported by an appropriate medical certificate.
- Insufficient evidence is provided in support of an application based on misadventure.
- This is determined to be appropriate by the Director of Studies in conference with the Deputy Headmaster - Senior School.
- In exceptional circumstances where the completion of a substitute task is not feasible nor reasonable, or where the task is difficult to duplicate with equity, the Headmaster may authorise the use of an estimate based on appropriate evidence.

Special Consideration

- Special consideration may be given to a student who has attempted a task while suffering from an outbreak of a long-term medical condition or an illness that would have a significant impact on their performance at the time they attempted an examination or in-class task. They may also apply if they have been immediately affected by a misadventure.
- To apply, students will need to provide evidence and an outline of the misadventure and/or illness as well as how it affected their performance. A medical certificate is required for all Year 10 - 12 students seeking medically based consideration.
- Students cannot apply for special consideration for long-term medical conditions or misadventures. Instead, it is suggested that they consider any suitable special provisions for which they may be eligible. Student should email the Director of Studies and or the ILC coordinator if they wish to seek special provisions.
- All applications for special consideration must be made within 3 days of the due date of the task.

Special Provisions

- Special provisions may be granted for internal assessment tasks according to the guidelines detailed:
- To be granted special provisions for internal HSC assessment tasks a student must have lodged an application with NESAs.
- While awaiting final BOSTES approval the need for special provisions will be assessed by the ILC Coordinator. After the application is formally approved, special provisions will be provided according to NESAs decision letter.
- Students from any year group who believe that they are entitled to special provisions must contact the ILC Coordinator to determine whether they are eligible.
- The student is responsible for ensuring that special provisions are provided for individual assessment tasks. The student must see the relevant subject teacher who will contact the ILC a minimum of 3 days before a task. If this does not happen, special provisions may not be provided for that task.
- Students who have been offered special provisions and then decide not to use them cannot then apply for special consideration based on the same issue or illness.
- The Director of Studies in conjunction with the ILC Coordinator will organise special provisions for all examinations.

Extensions of Time

- Requests for extension of time will not be granted unless made a minimum of 5 school days prior to the due date. Students must show suitable reasons (usually medical in nature) to justify an extension of time. Students should not assume that a request will be approved. Requests for an extension of time must be made using an illness/misadventure form and submitted to the Director of Studies.
- Only state level representation or higher will be approved for students to seek an alternate date to attempt an assessment task. Principal's approved leave from school does not provide approval for an extension or an alternate date for an assessment task.

Non Serious Attempts

- NESA requires that students must make a genuine attempt at assessment tasks that together contribute more than 50% towards their internal HSC assessment in order to achieve an HSC.
- Where a student submits an assessment item that is deemed by the classroom teacher and Director of Studies to be a non-serious attempt: the Director of Studies will be consulted, zero marks will be awarded and the student may be required to re-attempt the item. The second attempt will be graded but it will not contribute to the student's assessment marks.

Malpractice or Cheating

- Students are required to complete assessment tasks themselves to demonstrate their own understanding. Students who copy or have others complete their work, take days off school to complete items, miss classes (fractional truancy) to complete or prepare for items, or gain other such unfair advantage may be deemed to have cheated or engaged in malpractice.
- In such cases the teacher will inform the Director of Studies and provide evidence identifying the malpractice. Malpractice typically results in zero marks being granted for that item. The student will also have malpractice recorded with NESA via the *Register of Malpractice in HSC Assessment*.

Plagiarism

- Plagiarism is the use of another person's ideas or written material (including information from books, encyclopedias, magazines, CD-ROMs, the internet and other electronic storage devices) as one's own original work. Any form of plagiarism is entirely unacceptable in school assessment tasks. Plagiarism will likely lead to students receiving zero marks and will impact HSC results.

- Students found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to the same treatment as outlined for malpractice described immediately above.
- It is important to avoid any kind of malpractice as it may cause students to become ineligible for the HSC. For example, malpractice in HSC assessment tasks may invalidate entry to the HSC course in that subject. This could result in the student having insufficient units for the granting of an HSC.
- NESA provides information about avoiding plagiarism, bibliographies, referencing and many other useful topics through the All My Own Work Modules: <https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/hsc/hsc-all-my-own-work>

Non-completion of a course ('N' determination)

- Students may receive an 'N' determination in a course if they do not meet the following requirements:
 - a) Follow the course developed or endorsed by NESA.
 - b) Apply themselves with diligence and sustained effort to the set tasks and experiences provided in the course by the school.
 - c) Achieve some or all of the outcomes of the course.
- The Headmaster alone may make such a determination and will only consider this option when clearly documented evidence exists.
- As described above, this typically occurs after a student has failed to respond appropriately to a minimum of 2 N warning letters issued in relation to failure to submit satisfactory assessment tasks. Students and parents will be notified as soon as a pattern of non-performance or failure to meet course requirements or non-completion of course requirements emerges. The purpose of this early notification is to allow students to remedy the situation.
- If the Headmaster determines that a student has not completed a course satisfactorily, they will have an 'N' printed beside the course on their Record of Achievement and it may mean that they do not receive their HSC.