

Cessnock High School



PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT POLICY

What are the key underpinnings of this policy?

- All students will be treated fairly and equitably commensurate with their needs.
- Individual subjects (except VET courses) will administer a maximum of 6 assessment tasks during the preliminary course.
- Any exceptions to the procedures in this policy will remain at the discretion of the Principal.

How will this policy be distributed?

- A special meeting early in Term 1 will begin the new preliminary year.
- Subject teachers, working with their Head Teachers, will distribute and discuss individual subject preliminary assessment schedules as soon as possible after this meeting. Students will be informed about which outcomes will be assessed in each assessment task. Students will sign that they have received each of these schedules.

What will the preliminary assessment schedules look like?

- Teachers will develop and issue an assessment schedule for each subject. This schedule must include
 - Syllabus mandatory components and weightings
 - Information on each assessment task:
 - Number of tasks
 - Nature of each task
 - Value/weighting of each task
 - Approximate timing of each task
 - Details of outcomes assessed

How will preliminary assessment tasks be administered?

- Students will be given a minimum of (2) weeks written notice of an impending task, including examinations.
- The written notification will include the following information:
 - The title of the task
 - The weighting of the task
 - The date due
 - The outcomes being assessed
 - An outline of the assessment criteria (rubric)
 - Space for teacher comment and feedback (optional)
 - A marking scale
- Students will sign that they have received this written notification of each assessment task.
- No assessment task will fall due in the week immediately prior before examinations – the half yearly and the yearly examinations.
- Tasks may be scheduled on any school day, and must take priority over sporting commitments, family holidays, work commitments, or other personal arrangements. Students must notify their teacher of problems in meeting assessment task requirements at the earliest opportunity. This **must** be done through the appeal process.

- If the nature or timing of the task needs to be changed after it has been distributed to students, then the change must be negotiated with all students. An amended written notification will be distributed to all students.
- Students who enter the course after the commencement of preliminary assessments will need to complete the remaining tasks of the program with marks adjusted to total 50 for a 1 unit course and 100 for a 2 unit course.

What happens if a task is not completed?

- Students are to submit tasks by the date due, **whether completed or not**.
- Students who are using computers in the preparation of assessment tasks must work from printed drafts, and retain a hard copy of their most recent draft. In the event of computer, disk or printer failure, students are to submit the most recent printed draft (hand-written or printed) as evidence of their progress, and complete an appeal form (available from the Principal). Without evidence of such progress it is unlikely that the appeal will be upheld. Students are not to submit tasks on disk unless specified in the task.
- Tasks not submitted, or submitted late without a successful appeal, will be given **zero**. To avoid an ‘N’ determination for this subject, students must still complete the task.
- A student should notify his or her teacher as soon as it becomes obvious the student will be absent during a task. An appeal must then be lodged with the Principal. It is unlikely to be successful if insufficient notice given.
- If a student does not submit tasks amounting to 50% or more of the preliminary assessment marks, the Principal must certify that the course has not been satisfactorily studied – an ‘N’ determination.
- Examination rules **must** be followed in all formal examinations. Any breach of examination rules (these will be distributed with examination timetables) may result in zero being awarded for this examination.
- All examples of suspected plagiarism will be referred to the Principal.
- A non-serious attempt in an assessment task will incur a zero.
- Parents will be informed in writing if tasks are not submitted and /or if a zero is awarded. An official warning letter will be issued to parents indicating that the student is at risk of an “N” determination.

If a task cannot be completed on time, how can an appeal be made?

- In the case of illness or misadventure, students have the right of appeal. This process should take no longer than one week (7 days). In order for this to occur, appeals must be made on the day that you return to school. Appeals are to be made to the Principal (or the Deputy Principal Stage 5/6, if the Principal is unavailable) who will give the student an official appeal form. When completed, an appeals panel will be convened to hear the appeal. This panel will consist of the Principal, the class teacher and the Head Teacher supervising the subject concerned.
- Supporting evidence is required with appeals, e.g. a doctor’s certificate in case of illness; a note from a parent; a copy of a funeral notice.
- In the case of a successful appeal, students will need to either complete the task or sit for an alternative task (within two weeks). An estimate will only be given as a last resort, with the approval of the Principal.

What is an “N” Determination?

- The Board of Studies stipulates that a student will be considered to have satisfactorily completed the course if, in the principal’s view, there is sufficient evidence that the student has:
 - followed the course developed or endorsed by the Board; and
 - applied themselves with diligence and sustained effort to the set tasks and experiences provided in the course by the school; and
 - achieved some or all of the outcomes.
 - In considering the evidence available, completion of assessment tasks, classwork and homework tasks, work experience and work placement attendance, and class and general attendance will be considered.

How is assessment different for Vocational Education and Training (VET) Courses?

- VET courses require students to demonstrate competencies. Students have the opportunity to attempt to demonstrate the same competency on more than one occasion.
- In VET courses competency assessment is on-going, and may take place in most lessons. All assessment for competency must be completed by the commencement of the HSC examinations.
- There are special expectations for each VET course. These include protective and/or special clothing, OH & S competency, a kit, provision of materials, and payment for materials used.
- Any application for recognition of prior learning (RPL) must be discussed with the teacher to ensure that the correct procedures are followed.
- Any variation to work placement as organised by LHVOCED must be negotiated with the teacher, and will only be approved in extreme circumstances.
- The completion of work placement before the end of Term 3 in VET courses is essential, otherwise an “N” determination will be awarded.
- If a competency assessment is missed in a VET course, students must negotiate with their teacher, as soon as possible, an opportunity to complete this competency assessment.
- If the same competency assessment is missed a second time, an official appeal form must be obtained from the Principal and the formal process followed as described in the section on appeals on the previous page.
- The same requirements apply for VET courses as other courses. Tasks may be scheduled on any school day. They cannot be expected to take into consideration sporting commitments, family holidays, work commitments, or other personal arrangements. The responsibility for notification of problems in meeting competency assessment requirements lies with the student. This must be done at the earliest opportunity.

What feedback and reporting will take place?

- When a task is returned, oral and written feedback will be given to students on the achievement of course outcomes.
- After the half yearly and yearly examinations, students will be informed of their cumulative assessment rank.
- In October, the Board of Studies issues the Preliminary Record of Attainment. This record of individual student performance can be collected from your Year Advisor, Mrs Robson.

I Scanlon
Principal
February 6th 2006