



MELVILLE
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

MIDDLE SCHOOL
ASSESSMENT POLICY
Years 7 to 10



CONFIDENT

INNOVATIVE

SUCCESSFUL

An Independent Public School



ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

The following guidelines have been developed so that students, parents and teachers are aware of their responsibilities in the assessment process. The application of the Assessment Policy and guidelines may vary according to a specific Learning Area context. Each Learning Area may have a specific assessment policy that sits underneath these guidelines. Students and parents will be advised well in advance of any adjustments to school or learning area policy.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and lies at the heart of promoting student's learning. It can provide a framework within which educational objectives may be set and pupil progress charted and expressed. It forms the basis for planning the next educational steps in response to the student's needs.

Assessment assists teachers and schools in:

- Monitoring the progress of students and diagnosing learning difficulties
- Providing feedback to students on their progress towards achieving desired learning outcomes
- Provide feedback and data to assist in targeting learning programs to suit students needs
- Facilitate realistic targets to develop whole school and system planning, reporting, and accountability procedures

It is common practice to label assessment as being diagnostic, formative or summative according to the major purpose of the assessment.

Diagnostic assessment:

- is often undertaken at the beginning of a unit of study to assess the skills, abilities, interests, experiences, levels of achievement or difficulties of an individual student or a whole class
- can involve formal measurements (e.g. IQ/aptitude tests, fitness tests) that are used to establish a starting point, baseline or informal measurements (e.g. observation, discussions)
- informs programming and planning, and learning and teaching methods used, as well as assessment choices.

Formative assessment:

- is the practice of building a cumulative record of student achievement
- usually takes place during day to day learning experiences and involves ongoing, informal observations throughout the term, course, semester or unit of study
- is used to monitor students' ongoing progress and to provide immediate and meaningful feedback
- it assists teachers in modifying or extending their programs or adapting their learning and teaching methods
- Informal assessment for formative purposes involves:
 - systematically observing and monitoring students during in class learning and teaching experiences
 - interacting with students to gain a deeper knowledge of what they know, understand and can do
 - circulating the classroom and posing hinge questions, guiding investigations, motivating and quizzing students
 - providing opportunities for students to present or report upon their learning and teaching experiences
 - collecting, analysing, and providing feedback on in and out of class work samples (e.g. how their group work projects are progressing).

Summative assessment:

- assists teachers to make judgments about student achievement at certain relevant points in the learning process or unit of study (e.g. end of course, project, semester, unit, year)
- can be used formally to measure the level of achievement of learning outcomes (e.g. tests, labs, assignments, projects, presentations etc.)
- can also be used to judge programs, teaching and/or unit of study effectiveness (that is as a form of evaluation).
- Formal assessment for summative purposes involves:
 - the use of specific assessment strategies to determine the degree to which students have achieved the learning outcomes
 - assessment strategies including: essays, exams, reports, projects, presentations, performances, laboratories workshops, resource development, artwork, creative design tasks, quizzes and tests, journal writing, portfolio individual and/or collaborative tasks that usually attract a mark

Teachers are advised to combine both formative and summative assessment strategies throughout all units of work.



RESPONSIBILITIES

Melville SHS recognises the key roles assessment plays in the learning and teaching process. To articulate the importance of assessment in this process the school adopts key responsibilities for staff, students, parents and the school.

Staff Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the teaching staff to:

- Develop a teaching/learning program that adheres to the current School Curriculum and Standards Authority requirements and guidelines
- Provide students with a course outline and assessment schedule at the start of the course, on Connect
- Develop and use a variety of assessment tools that reflect good practice and meet students' individual needs
- Provide students with opportunities to reflect on their own progress
- Provide students with timely and constructive feedback and guidance
- Return assessed work in a timely fashion to students
- Ensure that assessment practices are fair, valid and reliable
- Maintain ongoing communication with both the student and parents about student achievement and progress and inform the parents in writing if student performance is of concern
- Maintain accurate records of student's work/grades as evidence for parents evening, reporting and moderation
- Participate in professional collaboration to ensure consistency of judgments between teachers
- Use data to analyse, study and display individual and class progress
- Use the DoE reporting templates to issue a report to parents at the end of each semester within school and system time-frames.

Student Responsibilities

It is the student's responsibility to:

- Complete all assessment tasks described in the Course Outline by the due date
- Support the learning of others and behave in an appropriate manner
- Maintain a sample of work or folio of evidence if required by the Learning Area
- Initiate contact with teachers concerning absences from class, missed assessments, extension requests and other issues pertaining to assessment
- Ensure all work submitted is their own
- Complete tests and exams according to the conditions required by the school

Parent Responsibilities

It is the parent's responsibility to:

- Inform the school of any disability/learning difficulty with appropriate evidence
- Sign and return relevant assessment forms received at the beginning of each year from their child's teachers.
- Notify teachers of any concerns or issues affecting their child's learning

School Responsibilities

It is the schools responsibility to:

- Ensure teachers have adequate opportunities to become familiar with State and National Assessment Standards
- Ensure school assessment standards conform to State and National Standards and there is a developing understanding of these within the school
- Ensure there is a coherent school policy for gathering, recording, retaining, reviewing and using of evidence.

REPORTING AND FEEDBACK TO PARENTS AND STUDENTS

Reporting to parents

Melville SHS reports student achievement at the end of Semester One and Two. The reports show achievement against set criteria or standards. Each report provides a comment, grade for the unit (A-E) and a mark in the semester exam where applicable.

Students in Years 7 will receive an Interim Report in week 7 of Term One to indicate progress in their chosen course. All reports are followed by a parent teacher night where parents can discuss their child's progress and view work samples and portfolios.

Throughout the course of the year parents will be notified of their child's progress. This information will be provided to parents through one of the following methods:

- A note in the school diary
- A letter of commendation
- A letter of communication
- A letter of concern
- A telephone call or email
- Via CONNECT/ email

Students and parents will be informed when it is identified that there is a risk of:

- Non completion of the course work
- Students not achieving their potential
- When a grade of "D" or less is likely in formal reports

Reporting Categories for Year 7 to 10 will be as follows:

A	Excellent Achievement	This indicates a student has significantly exceeded the standards expected of a typical student in this year group or pathway.
B	High Achievement	This indicates a student has exceeded the standards expected of a typical student in this year group or pathway.
C	Satisfactory Achievement	This indicates a student has achieved the standards expected of a typical student in this year group or pathway.
D	Limited Achievement	This indicates a student has made some progress, though not met, the standards expected of a typical student in this year group or pathway.
E	Inadequate Achievement	This indicates a student is showing significant cause for concern as they have made little progress towards achieving the standards expected of a typical student in this year group or pathway.
U	Unable to Assess	This indicates a student cannot be graded for a number of reasons including late enrolment in the class or genuine illness over an extended period of time.

Feedback to students:

Students will be given meaningful feedback as soon as practicable after the completion of the assessment task (both formal and informal tasks).

Feedback will:

- Focus on the task and what was expected from the task
- Provide meaningful information to students about their work
- Provide information about how the student can improve
- Correct misunderstandings
- Reinforce what the student has done well
- Be specific, respectful, timely and constructive

ASSESSMENT OUTLINES/SCHEDULES

After certain assessment tasks students will have the opportunity to resubmit after feedback has been provided.

For each course the teacher will publish an Assessment Outline and Schedule of assessment tasks, this will be posted onto CONNECT in the Library. The assessment outline will indicate:

Content covered throughout the term

- All assessment tasks that will take place throughout the year
- The syllabus outcomes each task is intended to measure
- When each task will occur
- The weighting of each task towards the students final grade

CHANGING A COURSE

Generally, it is not possible to change courses after the first two weeks of a course commencing, as to do so would place a student at risk of not completing requirements. The school will only consider changes in exceptional circumstances. All changes must be made using the appropriate proforma and must have parental approval. All changes must be negotiated through the Deputy Principal. Course changes are dependent on the ability of the school to provide for the change.

Parents need to appreciate that students cannot be transferred to a higher pathway or stream simply because the parent believes that they can achieve at this level. Students need to prove their ability to qualify for a position in a class.

Any student who changes courses after the commencement of the program must catch up on any work missed in the new course selected.

Where a student changes school during a school year, credit for the completion of work in the same course will be given when the student and/or previous school supplies appropriate evidence.

SCHOOL RULES REGARDING ASSESSMENT

Missed assessment work due to absence from class

General

If a student is absent from class, their ability to achieve to their potential is diminished. Extended absence frequently results in lower levels of achievement, or unit assessment requirements not being met.

Scheduled assessment tasks

Absence from a specially scheduled assessment task (including tests and examinations) must be explained by one of the following:

- medical certificate
- telephone call or letter from parent.

Satisfactory explanation of the absence may enable the student to complete that assessment task, or a similar task, and gain credit. Wherever possible, advance notification of absence is required. If a student is absent on the due date for submission of an assessment item, it is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements for submission.

Prolonged absence

Where a student is unable to attend school for a lengthy period due to injury or illness, the school will endeavour to provide support to the student's learning program.

Non-submission of evidence of achievement

General

A course overview and assessment schedule, including timelines for submission of assessment tasks, will be provided to each student at the start of the course. Due dates will be clearly outlined and implemented. Where adjustment to a deadline is necessary, it will be made in close consultation with students and publicised. It is a teacher's responsibility to manage the assessment outline. It is a student's responsibility to provide evidence of achievement by the published due dates.

Non-completion and/or late submission of assessment requirements

Students will be provided with an opportunity to present evidence supporting their reason for not completing an assessment task or not submitting an assessment task by the due date. The teacher/school will decide whether or not the reason for non-completion or late submission is acceptable and apply an appropriate strategy.

Strategies for non-completion or late submission or work are as follows:

- Maintain ongoing communication with parents
- Provide opportunities for the student to complete set work such as recess and lunchtimes
- Monitor students' progress on the assessment prior to submission and discuss skills and strategies to finish the work on time
- Review whether the student requires extra support prior to assessment due date
- Modify the assessment or provide alternative questions or assessments in advance
- Refer problems to appropriate members of school staff to intervene

If a student has been provided with the opportunity to complete the assessment requirements for a course unit but does not use this opportunity for reasons that are not acceptable to the school a consequent marks reduction could apply. This is a last resort and teachers where possible should develop strategies to gather evidence in advance such as class work or drafts so that students can be marked based on their knowledge of the outcomes.

If a student does not have the opportunity to complete the assessment requirements for a course unit or subject and the reasons for non-completion are acceptable to the school (e.g. prolonged illness, serious personal circumstances, etc) then the following assessment strategies may apply:

- providing an alternative assessment task
- extension of time
- estimating performance based on previous performance

Parents/guardians will be notified if the student is deemed to be at risk of receiving a significantly lower grade than expected as a result of non-completion or late submission of work.

Extensions

Generally, it will not be possible for students to seek an extension of deadlines. Application for an extension must be in advance of the due date and should be submitted in writing, before the due date of submission, and signed by a parent/guardian. Extensions may be given at the discretion of a teacher in cases of illness or significant personal problems. If a student does not apply for and receive an extension, the consequences will be the same as for missed work without an acceptable explanation of their absence.

Cheating, collusion and plagiarism

Students shown to have cheated or been involved with collusion or plagiarism in assessed work or in examinations will not have that work accepted as valid evidence of achievement.

a) Cheating will result in the student not receiving a mark for that task and the student will be required to complete the task or similar task again.

b) Collusion is when a student submits evidence that is not his or her own work for assessment. This evidence will not be accepted and parents will be informed. The student will be deemed not to have attempted the task. When required the student must show authenticity of their work by submitting notes, references, drafts etc, to establish if collusion has occurred. Both students will be required to resubmit work for assessment.

c) Plagiarism is when a student uses someone else's words or ideas without acknowledging that they have done so (work is essentially copied). This evidence will not be accepted. The student will be deemed not to have attempted the task. The student must show authenticity of their work by submitting notes, references used and drafts, including draft versions of computer generated work to establish that plagiarism has not occurred. Teachers will consider effective strategies to minimise plagiarism when designing tasks set for assessment. Teachers may choose to have students complete the assignment in class to avoid further breaches of the above.

Additional opportunity to complete a task

The student may be provided with an additional opportunity to complete a task if:

- the student has attempted other assessment tasks but requires an additional opportunity to demonstrate achievement of an outcome
- the school agrees that it is feasible and desirable to provide an additional opportunity, so that a student may improve their grade or mark

Examinations

In an endeavour to prepare students for the rigor of senior schooling students at Melville SHS will be introduced to examinations and test conditions from Year 7.

All Year 7 & 9 students will in addition to the School Report receive a Department of Education Report on the results of the Western Australian Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (NAPLAN). This test is given to all Year 7 & 9 students throughout Australia.

Regulations

When attending examinations, students must adhere to the regulations for that examination. Details of regulations will be issued with the student's examination timetable. Infringement of regulations will result in an appropriate penalty.

Attendance

Students must attend scheduled examinations. In exceptional circumstances, alternative arrangements may be negotiated through the principal and/or School Curriculum and Standards Authority before the examination date. If a student is ill on the day of an examination, the Deputy Principal should be advised by telephone and a medical certificate provided on return to school. Participating in family holidays will not be accepted as an exceptional circumstance.

Students requiring special consideration

The school will ensure that students with special educational needs are catered for in an appropriate way and in accordance with School Curriculum and Standards Authority guidelines.