Stage 6 Assessment Policy

This is an internal school document that contains general policies for the Preliminary and HSC course of the New Higher School Certificate and draws on Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) advice contained in the ACE Manual and other relevant documents available on their website.

Students must have completed the BOSTES “All My Own Work” course that is available online. Successful completion of each module must be sent through to the Academic Assistant before enrolment in to any Preliminary or HSC subject can be made.

Assessment Program

Assessment programmes for a Stage 6 course have the following features:

- Assessment is based on the syllabus objectives and outcomes and is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Tasks clearly relate to the outcomes being assessed and must cover all the outcomes with the exception of values and attitudes.
- A variety of assessment tasks and contexts will be provided so that all students are given the opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of outcomes in an authentic manner. Tasks chosen will also allow for a full range of student achievement.
- At TAS, we avoid over-assessing by recognising that a single task can often provide information about more than one outcome. It is likely that a typical course assessment schedule would contain 4 or 5 tasks for a 2 Unit subject including a Mid Course exam and End of Course exam (Trial HSC for Yr 12) and 3 for a 1 Unit subject.
- Assessment tasks will be sensitive to gender, disability, culture, background language, socio-economic status and geographical location.
- When designing a task, staff will make the requirements of the task as clear as possible in a language understandable by the students, which uses BOSTES terminology in a correct and consistent manner.
- Where a task is common to more than one class, the same staff member will issue the above information.
- Students should refer to the glossary of terms contained in this document and handed out with assessment schedules at the start of the Preliminary and HSC year.
- A marking scheme will be provided for each task. This may occur at the time that the task is given or as feedback when the marked task is returned.
- While values and attitudes are an integral part of learning, their attainment is not assessed for HSC assessment purposes. Staff may, however, wish to comment on this area in report comments.
Assessment Schedules and Notifications

Departments must produce assessment schedules prior to commencing teaching a Preliminary or HSC course.

These schedules must conform to the component and weighting requirements of the relevant syllabus.

Assessment is concerned with describing the student’s achievement at the end of the course and assessment schedules will be weighted to reflect this, although no individual task may comprise more than 40% of assessment.

Assessment schedules will specify:

- The nature of tasks
- The relative importance (weighting)
- The approximate week when they will be held
- The outcomes being assessed

At least two weeks prior to each task, students must receive written information of the exact date, duration, knowledge and skills outcomes being assessed and the criteria upon which they will be assessed. Tasks that have been worked on out of class must indicate any rules regarding submission (eg. "must be submitted during our timetabled lesson that day"). Marking scales should be supplied at the time of notification if at all possible. Students are able to receive these notifications in hard copy or via email.

It is the responsibility of students who are absent when task notices are issued to obtain the notice on return to school.

The Director of Studies monitors assessment tasks and no more than two in-class tasks may fall due on the same day. If a student has more than two in-class tasks set for a particular day they must immediately bring it to the attention of the Director of Studies who may move tasks to less congested weeks provided appropriate notice is given.

Students are entitled to feedback in the form of marks, grades, and/or comments. Where possible, students should be given the opportunity to check marking before results are recorded. If students feel there is grounds to appeal the marking of an assessment task then they must notify the teacher before the end of the lesson and must hand their task back to the teacher.

If, after the completion of a task, it is found that the task design or the conduct of the task was faulty in some major way, the Coordinator in consultation with the Director of Studies will recommend changes to the published assessment schedule for that course that may include a substitute task or exclude the task and re-weight other tasks. The Director of Studies must ratify these recommendations before the date of the next task in that course, and students must be issued with a revised schedule.

In all cases where a student does not meet the assessment requirements of the course, by failing to submit or attend a task without adequate reason, the Coordinator and advisor will be informed and, in most cases, a formal warning from the Director of Studies will be issued. The student’s advisor is required to contact a parent/guardian of the student and acquaint them with this breach of the student’s responsibilities.

Where a student undertakes a course provided by another school or institution, assessment will occur as per the policies of that institution. It is the responsibility of that student to ask for a copy of the relevant advice including their assessment policy and assessment schedules. Students studying at another school...
or institution will be assessed as part of the total enrolment for that class and not as part of the cohort at TAS. In the case of an appeal, students must follow the host school’s rules and procedures.

**Responsibilities of students**

Students in their Preliminary or HSC year are responsible for:

- Ensuring that they obtain and understand the school’s assessment policies.
- Attempting, or submitting, each assessment task on the due date to the best of their ability. Where the mark received for an assessment task is zero, the question of whether the attempt was a genuine one is a matter for the Coordinator’s professional judgement. If a student disagrees with this decision then they have the right to appeal (see Appeal Procedure below).
- Ensuring that any concerns they have about the marking or comments concerning assessment tasks are addressed during the lesson that the task is returned.
- Demonstrating through application and achievement, that they have met the requirements of each task and, ultimately, each course.
- Completing appropriate appeal procedures should they fail to meet task deadlines due to reasonable absence, illness or misadventure.
- Discuss any concerns with the Director of Studies in a timely manner.

**Appeal procedures**

- Students who fail to submit or attend a task on the advised date will receive a mark of zero for that task. The Coordinator will be notified of this failure to submit or attend by the class teacher. The class teacher will notify the advisor who will, in turn, speak to the student and notify their parent(s)/guardian(s).
- A student must complete an Appeals form immediately they become aware of a possible absence from a task. This is to be done prior to the task if at all possible and covers situations including approved absence from school and attendance at a conflicting school activity.
- The student may choose to appeal this mark if they consider that they have reasonable grounds for appeal. These may include illness, misadventure as defined in the ACE Manual, absence due to an approved school activity or exchange. Technological problems (including but not limited to saving, printing or hard drive issues) are not grounds for appeal.
- Appeals should be submitted on the school appeals form to the Director of Studies (DoS) within 48 hours of the task or the student’s return to school. The student and staff member concerned should complete the appeal before submitting it to the Director of Studies. If the Director of Studies grants the appeal, he/she may determine that an extension, an alternate date to submit the task (including before departing on an approved school activity), a substitute task or, if all of these options are not feasible, an estimate based on other completed assessment tasks is appropriate.
- Students have the right to appeal the decision of the Director of Studies to the School’s Appeal Committee. This committee includes the Director of Studies, the Coordinator and another member of the school’s executive. If one person holds two of these positions, another member of the school executive will be asked to join this committee.
- If the Appeals Committee grants the appeal, they may suggest an extension, or an alternate date for the task, or a substitute task. If all of these are not feasible, then the Committee may advise the teacher to assess the student in accordance with the school’s published policy on assessment of missed tasks.
- Students have the right to then appeal the decision of the Appeals Committee to the Headmaster. The decision of the Headmaster is final and any further appeal to the BOSTES can only be made if:
  - the weightings specified by the school in its assessment program do not adhere to the Board’s requirements;
  - the procedures used by the school do not conform with its stated assessment program;
  - there are computational or clerical errors.
Malpractice

- All students have completed “All My Own Work”, the on-line course mandated by the BOSTES, and thus have a clear understanding of what constitutes plagiarism. Examples of malpractice include plagiarism, taking notes into an exam, using a phone during an in-class task, copying from another student in an exam, submitting another student’s work (either fully or partially) as your own.
- Additional information can be found on the BOSTES website.
- Should a student be accused of malpractice in a task, the Coordinator will notify the Director of Studies and the student’s advisor. There is to be no further discussion with the student regarding the matter until their advisor and/or the Director of Pastoral Care is present. Parents are also to be notified of any allegation before the student is interviewed.
- The Director of Studies will interview the student with their parent, advisor and/or Director of Pastoral Care. Notes from this interview will be taken and kept on record.
- In cases where the malpractice is disputed, the students involved may appeal the decision to the Appeals Committee. If a student is found guilty of malpractice they may receive a mark of zero or partial marks in the identified part of the assessment task. The Appeals Committee will determine the extent to which a student’s mark is reduced.
- A formal letter written by the Director of Studies and sent to the parent of the student will outline the incident and the decision made by the Appeals committee.
- Students have the right to appeal any decision made by the Appeals Committee to the Headmaster. This appeal should be made in writing within a week of receiving the ruling from the Appeals Committee.

N Determination

The BOSTES allows an N to be determined in a course if the student has failed to meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Followed the course developed or endorsed by the BOSTES; 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 course outcomes

Should any student be in danger of an N determination, the school will give the student adequate notice to allow them to rectify the situation. At TAS, this takes the form of at least two warning letters and an interview with the student and parent(s) or guardian(s) with the student’s advisor and Director of Studies accompanying the second warning letter.

A warning letter will be issued as soon as serious concerns become apparent that have not been addressed by normal academic counselling processes. It is assumed that the normal process of school detentions (where appropriate), notifying the student’s advisor, House Master (HoM) and Coordinator for counselling/intervention would have occurred before a letter would be issued. The exception to this may be a missed task of significant weight.

Warning letters are only issued by the Director of Studies using details supplied by the class teacher with the support of the Coordinator. The student’s advisor will contact the parents of the child by phone to notify them that the letter is being sent home and what support the child can receive in meeting the actions required. Students must be given adequate time to complete the tasks, taking into account the time it takes for the parents to receive the warning letter by post.

BOSTES Register of Malpractice
The Board of Studies has decided to implement a *Register of Malpractice in HSC Assessment Tasks*. Implementation will begin in Term 4 with the 2014 HSC cohort.

The decision to create this new measure was initiated by an Independent Commission Against Corruption investigation, which required the Board to develop a new register for incidents of malpractice by students undertaking HSC school assessment tasks.

The Register is similar to the existing report on malpractice in HSC examinations and will help inform strategies for schools, school sectors and the Board on how malpractice can be prevented or addressed.

The Register will apply to 2014 HSC students and will collect information on courses where malpractice has occurred, types of offence and the nature of any penalties applied. The Board will publish annually aggregated data in a similar way to the programs which identify breaches of examination rules, applications for disability provisions and illness/misadventure appeals. Individual schools will not be identified.

At TAS, the Director of Studies will notify the Headmaster when a case of reportable malpractice occurs and either the Director of Studies or the Headmaster will complete the necessary reporting.

**Awarding Grades, Marks and Rank Orders in the HSC course**

- Grades of A to E need to be awarded *for each outcome* that appears on a semester report in all courses studied for the Preliminary or HSC component of the New Higher School Certificate. These grades are based on school-based assessment of the knowledge and skills outcomes described in each assessment schedule.
- A grade of ‘N’ may be awarded on a school report card where an outcome has not been achieved through absence, incomplete work or poor effort. This would normally be accompanied by a formal ‘N’ warning letter from the school.
- The mark and rank order awarded in any course is a summative judgement of each student’s overall achievement at that stage of the course. The mark should conform to BOSTES guidelines and would normally range between 50 and 100. The class average and number of students in the course will also be supplied on reports.
- VET subjects do not provide marks until the Trial HSC exam has been sat. This result informs the school’s decision when supplying the BOSTES with an estimated exam mark. In the case where a student has appealed the Trial HSC exam, the mark from the Mid-Course exam will be used to make this decision. This estimated exam mark is only used if a student successfully appeals the HSC exam.
- The determination of a mark is based on the student’s achievements relative to the outcomes and assessment schedule and not on any pre-determined distribution of grades. Marks awarded should attempt to reflect the bands published to date for the HSC.
- The mark used on the Trial HSC Report reflects the student’s performance in the Trial exams only and is not a summative mark for the course. Similarly, that rank order is based on the Trial HSC exam only and may be different from the final rank order submitted to the BOSTES.
- Students may be informed of their final rank order only in the HSC course. The mark supplied by the school to the BOSTES must not be released by the school.
- Accelerants in a course are to be assessed and entered with the cohort of that course.
- Students in courses where there are more than one class taught at TAS are to be assessed and reported as one cohort.
- Students who transfer into a course from another course or school before 30th June of that year will be assessed with the cohort using the school’s missed task policy provided they have sat the majority of tasks (over 50%) and achieved the outcomes of that course. Otherwise, the Director of Studies should be consulted and the student’s previous school may be asked to assist in assessing the student.
At the conclusion of the HSC course, the school will supply the BOSTES with a mark for each course that the student has successfully completed. This mark is based solely on the published assessment program for each course studied by the student. Students are not given these marks as they will be moderated by BOSTES based on the HSC exam performance of the TAS cohort.

From these marks, the BOSTES establishes a rank order for each TAS candidature and this is communicated to students via Schools Online (BOSTES website) after their last HSC exam.

If a student feels that any of their ranks are incorrect they may appeal, in the first instance, to the school and then to the BOSTES following the procedure outlined in the BOSTES document Instructions to Candidates.

Reviewed November 2015

Seonia Wark

Director of Studies
• Students who transfer into a course from another course or school before 30 June of that year
w
•