



Title:	Stage 5 Assessment Policy
Summary:	Policy and Procedures relating to Stage 5 assessment including illness/misadventure
Intended Audience:	Students
Author:	Director of Studies
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Stage 5 Assessment Policy

Background

This is an internal school document that contains general policies for Assessment in Stage 5 and draws on NESAs advice contained in the ACE Manual and The Assessment Resource Centre (NESAs website). Copies of the ACE manual can be obtained from the NESAs website.

Policy

All teachers of The Armidale School follow the procedures outlined below regarding the Assessment of Stage 5 NESAs courses in line with the NESAs expectations in the ACE manual. For non-NESAs Stage 5 elective courses, the procedures below are also followed without the specific reference to NESAs documentation. In these courses the decision of the Director of Studies, in consultation with the Coordinator, is final.

Procedures

Guidelines For An Assessment Program

- Assessment should be based on the syllabus objectives and outcomes and is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Tasks should clearly relate to the outcomes being assessed. It is suggested that each department use a collegial approach to task development where another member of the teaching team, not necessarily the Coordinator, checks each task for validity and reliability.
- A variety of assessment tasks and contexts should be provided so that students are given opportunities to demonstrate their achievement of outcomes in an authentic manner. Tasks chosen should also allow for a full range of student achievement where possible.
- Avoid over-assessing by recognising that a single task can often provide information about more than one outcome. **It is recommended that a typical course assessment schedule would contain 4-6 tasks per year.** It is expected that all of these tasks appear on the Assessment Calendar for each year group that is published at the start of Term 1 and that students are able to access a complete assessment schedule for each course. Any adjustments to these published documents must be discussed in the first instance with your Coordinator and then approved by the Director of Studies or Assistant Director of Studies. Students must always receive written notification with at least two weeks' notice. Teachers must supplement these formal assessment tasks with small formative tasks that give both students and staff an indication of how students are progressing with current work.
- A marking scheme should be created as a task is set. Teachers should anticipate the likely range of student responses and allocate marks, grades or comments to each section of the task.
- Assessment tasks should be sensitive to gender, disability, culture, background language, socioeconomic status and geographical location. Appropriate alterations are to be made in consultation with the Academic Support Coordinator for students on IPs.

- When designing a task, make the requirements of the task as clear as possible in a language understandable by the students. Staff should use NESAs terminology in a correct and consistent manner.
- Additional material from the NESAs website may be of assistance to teachers in planning assessment tasks.

Guidelines For Assessment Schedules and Notifications

Departments must produce assessment schedules for each Stage 5 course being studied by a cohort. These schedules must conform to the component and weighting requirements of the relevant syllabus. A proforma is available from the KLA Coordinator.

The school assessment calendar must be issued to students prior to the commencement of assessment and a copy given to the Academic Assistant at, or before, the time of issue.

The Record of School Achievement is concerned with describing the student's achievement at the end of the course and assessment schedules should be weighted to reflect this.

Assessment schedules must specify:

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

Assessment notifications must be received in writing at least two weeks prior and must include:

- The nature of the task
- The relative importance (weighting)
- The due date
- The syllabus components to be assessed
- In the case of a take home task:
 - word limit (where required)
 - information regarding ability to submit drafts (where required)
 - details of submission (including who is to be handed to, the time that it must be submitted by, the format of submission eg hardcopy or emailed document)
 - any recommendations regarding breaking down the task or partial submission requirements
 - other information as deemed necessary by the teacher
- In the case of a class task:
 - date, time and location of assessment
 - length of the task
 - equipment to bring
 - recommended preparation (eg past papers or practice questions)
 - other information as deemed necessary by the teacher

- Marking criteria (where possible)

Attendance records must record those students absent when assessment schedules or task notifications are issued and it is the joint responsibility of the teacher issuing this information and the student to ensure that all students absent at the time of issue receive a copy at the earliest possible time on return to that class. All new students who join the class during the year must also receive a copy of the assessment schedule. Assessment notifications may be emailed to the student rather than handed out in hard copy. It is expected that assessment notifications are also available through the course CANVAS page.

Coordinators negotiate the timing of assessment tasks with the Assistant Director of Studies at the end of the previous year to ensure that the tasks across subject areas are suitably spaced. The Director of Studies will arbitrate in the case of disputes and 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, after the completion of a task, it is found that the task design was faulty in some major way, the Coordinator will recommend changes to the published assessment schedule for that course that may include a substitute task or exclude the task and reweight other tasks. The Director of Studies must ratify these recommendations before the date of the next task in that course. It is then the responsibility of the class teacher to ensure that students are given an updated assessment schedule for that subject.

Departments should maintain a register of student work samples, particularly if the task is to be used in subsequent years. These work samples will allow departments to evaluate the effectiveness of tasks in achieving their objectives and provide for consistent application of syllabus standards over a number of years by different teachers. As part of our obligations for grading with the Record of School Achievement (RoSA), departments are required to keep at least three work samples demonstrating the range of student achievement in each assessment for each course and forward these to the Director of Studies at the end of the school year.

Responsibilities of students

Students in Stage 5 are responsible for:

- Ensuring that they retain and understand the school's assessment policies.
- Ensure that they know when assessment tasks are approaching and have obtained a copy of the appropriate assessment notification at least two weeks prior. If students are absent from school when notifications are given out they should speak or email their teacher as soon as possible to get the necessary notification.
- Ensuring that, in Year 10, if they are absent from school on approved leave, because of illness or misadventure then an appeals form can be completed and submitted to the Director of Studies so that consideration may be given (see Appeal Procedures below). If a student is in Year 9 then they are to liaise directly with the teacher and/or Coordinator

to determine a way forward.

- Attempting or submitting each assessment task on the due date to the best of their ability and that it is their own work and referenced appropriately. Students must submit assessment tasks on the due date and by the time specified on the notification. In the case that a time is not specified it is expected that it will be handed to the teacher or Coordinator by 3:30pm.
- Ensuring that any concerns that they have about the marking or comments concerning assessment tasks are addressed on return of the task and before they remove the task from the classroom.
- Demonstrating through application and achievement that they have met the requirements of the course.
- Complete appropriate appeal procedures should they fail to meet task deadlines due to reasonable absence, illness or misadventure within 72 hours and submit to the Director of Studies.

Course Performance Descriptors and Awarding Final Grades for the Record of School Achievement

Grades of A to E need to be awarded in all NESAs courses (with the exception of Mathematics) studied for the Record of School Achievement and are based on school-based assessment of the knowledge and skills outcomes described in each course syllabus with reference to the course performance descriptors for that course. In Mathematics, grades have been further differentiated to nine levels as follows: A10, A9, B8, B7, C6, C5, D4, D3, E2.

The final grade awarded in any course is a summative judgement of each student's overall achievement **at the end of the course.**

The method to determine grades is:

- Establish an assessment program that consists of a number of assessment activities.
- Ensure that the assessment activities cover the full range of outcomes.
- Determine the weightings or relative importance of each activity.
- Award marks for each completed activity.
- Combine the marks awarded in each activity to obtain a total mark for each student (refer to standardising procedure below)
- On the basis of these marks, determine the order of merit for the group.
- Refer to the NESAs published course performance descriptors to relate the order of merit to grades awarded.
- Review the grade awarded to each student to make sure that no anomaly has occurred. The order of merit obtained by the summation of marks may require adjustment after consideration of students' achievement at or near each grade cut-off.

With the exception of small class sizes below 12, component marks must be standardised before weighting and adding to obtain a standardised weighted total for use in grading. Further, if comparison between classes is made on the basis of a single or set of common tasks, that these be standardised and that the mean and standard deviation of each class in the common task(s) be used to moderate other assessment tasks. Coordinators should consult the Director of Studies, or their delegate, if in doubt.

In small candidatures, a carefully constructed assessment programme will allow raw scores to be added without destroying the intended weightings. Linear mapping of the results of some tasks may be used to support this process. A teacher is to see the Director of Studies if unsure of this process.

Irrespective of the moderation method used, it is important that the determination of a grade be based on the student's achievements relative to the course performance descriptors and not on any pre-determined distribution of grades.

It is also important that departments keep copies of work samples of students particularly at grade junctions to support their decisions. Should the NESAs question a particular distribution of grades in a course, the Director of Studies will ask to see these samples. At the end of each school year the Coordinator must place these work samples on the server in a location determined by the Director of Studies.

After the initial allocation of grades has been made in a course, it is essential that the Coordinator review the process and be satisfied that there are no anomalies apparent. Final grades should be submitted to the Academic Assistant on or before the date published in the school's deadlines and in alphabetic order.

Accelerants in a Stage 5 course are to be graded and entered with the cohort of that course.

Students who transfer into a course from another course or school should be graded on the appropriate 100 or 200 hour course provided they have achieved the majority of tasks (over 50%) and outcomes of the course. Otherwise, the Director of Studies should be consulted and the student's previous school may be asked to assist. Students who complete a 100 hour course in any KLA other than English, Maths, or Science should be assessed and a grade awarded in accordance with the overall subject descriptors of that course. This grade should be kept in department records until that cohort completes Year 10 and should be submitted to the academic secretary if the student is still at school. This will occur with students who enter the school at the start of Year 10 or who change course at the end of Year 9 or leave for another school at the end of Year 9.

Elective courses are reported on as per NESAs requirements (A to E grades) but do not appear on a student's Record of School Achievement.

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 student may choose to appeal this mark if they consider that they have reasonable grounds for appeal.

Reasonable grounds may include illness and misadventure as defined in the ACE Manual, absence due to an approved school activity, suspension or exchange provided that the time lost does not prevent the student from completion of the course requirements.

For the purposes of Stage 5 Assessment grounds for appeal include

- Illness or injury – that is, illness or physical injuries suffered directly by the student which allegedly affected the student's performance in the task (eg influenza, an asthma attack, a broken hand)
- Misadventure – that is, any other event beyond the student's control which allegedly affected the student's performance in the task (eg death of a friend or family member, involvement in a traffic accident, isolation caused by a flood.
- Absence due to an approved school activity, suspension or approved leave (eg exchange)

The rules for the HSC are more limited and students and parents/guardians should note that the process is deliberately more lenient in Stage 5.

Students in Year 10 are required to complete an appeals form immediately they become aware of a problem prior to departure (in the case of a sporting commitment or medical appointment) or within 48 hours of returning to school (in the case of illness on the day of submission). An appeal form is to be completed by a Year 10 student if an extension on a due date is being requested due to a length illness or absence from school in the preparation period. This must be done as soon as is practicable.

Students in Year 9 are able to directly discuss any issues with the teacher, not completing paper work, and the teacher is able to adjust the requirements as needed. Students in Year 9 are able to discuss any issues regarding assessment with the Director of Studies (within 72 hours) if they feel that the decisions made by the teacher is unreasonable.

Students must plan their work schedule adequately considering other known commitments. If their work is stored on a computer, adequate backup must be made. No allowance will be given for hardware or software problems. It is advisable to store a copy of work in progress at regular intervals on another device (eg hard-drive, USB, a storage facility on the web, sent to a different email address etc).

If a student knows they will be away when a task is to be sat or submitted they are required to speak with the teacher beforehand to determine an alternative time to sit or submit the task. A Year 10 student must complete an appeals form whereas a Year 9 student is able to speak directly with the teacher to determine what is required. It is usual that the task is submitted or sat before the scheduled date if at all possible.

An Appeals Form can be found on the school website or from Reception. Appeals should be submitted on an Appeals form to the Director of Studies within 48 hours of the task or the Year 10 student's return to school. The student and staff member concerned should complete the appeal before submitting it to the Director of Studies. The student is responsible for this process

and should not leave the form with a staff member to fill out at a later date.

If the Director of Studies grants the appeal, they may suggest an extension, an alternate date for the task, or a substitute task. If all of these are not feasible, then the Director of Studies may advise the teacher to assess the student in accordance with the school's published policy on assessment of missed tasks.

Students appealing because of illness are required to submit a medical certificate for assessments tasks in Yr 10. In most cases this will be a Doctor's Certificate stating that the child has been unwell for a specified period of time. In the case of a long standing condition where the student is under the care of a medical practitioner or counsellor but that flares up at a particular point in time then documentation from the TAS Medical Centre/ School Counsellor is sufficient. Students in Yr 9 are not expected to obtain supporting evidence for absence due to illness and should speak directly with their class teacher.

Malpractice

Dishonest behavior carried out for the purpose of gaining unfair advantage in the assessment process constitutes malpractice, or cheating. Malpractice in any form, 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, is unacceptable.

In the event that a teacher thinks a student may be guilty of malpractice in a task, the Coordinator and Director of Studies should be advised immediately along with the student's advisor. In most cases, the Coordinator will rule on the matter and can award a mark of zero for the whole task or the section affected. In cases where the malpractice is disputed, the student may appeal the decision to the Director of Studies for further consideration. The student should be awarded an appropriate grade or mark for their work until the appeal is heard. It is imperative that this process is done discreetly and that no discussion or allegation is made without the student's advisor present. The student's advisor will contact the student's parents/guardian to inform them of the incident.

'N' Determination

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 must be informed. In some cases a formal warning will be issued by the Director of Studies to the student. If not, the student's advisor will be asked to contact parents and acquaint them with this breach of the student's responsibilities. (See information regarding N-Determinations).

The NESA allows for the school to issue an 'N' Determination in place of an A to E grade in a course if the student has failed to meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Followed the course developed by the Board
- Applied themselves with diligence and sustained effort to the set tasks and

experiences provided in the course by the school

- Achieved some or all of the course outcomes.

Should any student be in danger of an 'N' determination, the school must give the student adequate notice to allow them to rectify the situation. At TAS, this takes the form of two warning letters and an interview with the student and parent(s).

The school is required to advise the student of the tasks or actions to be undertaken in time for the problem to be corrected and alert the student to the possible consequences of an "N" determination. A warning letter should 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 notification and referral to advisor, Housemaster and Coordinator for counselling would have occurred before a letter would be issued. The exception to this may be a missed task of significant weight.

The process:

- The teacher discusses the issue with their Coordinator who then speaks with the Director of Studies.
- The Coordinator oversees the completion of the necessary paperwork. Warning letters are only issued to the student in person by the Director of Studies using details supplied by the class teacher with the support of the Coordinator.
- Request from the student/parent/guardian a written acknowledgement of the warning;
- Issue at least one follow-up warning letter if the first letter is not effective. For subsequent warnings parents are required to speak directly with the Director of Studies; and
- Retain copies of all relevant documents.

A student who is given an 'N' determination in a Stage 5 mandatory course will not be eligible for a Record of School Achievement. Transcripts of Study will list the mandatory course(s) in which an 'N' determination has been awarded in Stage 5. The document will carry the statement 'Not Eligible for the Record of School Achievement'.

A student who is given an 'N' determination in an additional course in Stage 5 and/or in a Stage 6 Preliminary course retains eligibility for the Record of School Achievement provided that all other requirements are met.

Assessment Records

Any result used in determining a student's final grade should be kept on a central marks register in each department.

If this is a computer record, it should be backed on in a separate location and the backup should be consistent with the current record, ie kept up to date.

Hard copies of marks in teachers' files or markbooks are considered suitable backup.

Records of all tasks, and the outcomes that they assess, must be kept by the department along with work samples. These work samples are to be copied to the Director of Studies at the end of the school year.

The method used for determining grades and any statistical calculations used should be kept by the department.

Information concerning the method used for ensuring comparability between classes doing the same course should also be kept in school files.

Marks or grades from individual assessment tasks should be added to the department's central register immediately after each task to avoid loss.

Department Assessment Records

Records should include should include:

- Details of the assessment tasks to be used for each course including the assessment schedule
- Copies of the advice given to students about each task and the marking scales used
- Work samples for each task
- Procedures for recording and processing results and for obtaining final grades
- Procedures for ensuring comparability between classes doing the same course
- Mechanisms for implementing the school's policy for administration of the RoSA Grading system as outlined above.
- The areas for assessment in a particular course should be matched with planned assessment strategies on a grid to check that all areas are being covered. If there is more than one teacher of Year 10 in a course, they should negotiate a shared responsibility for the tasks of the Coordinator depending on their individual strengths. The Director of Studies should be asked to assist in all areas of concern and another Coordinator can be asked to mentor if this is required.