



Lower Secondary Assessment Policy

(Year 7, 8 & 9)

Title of Policy/Procedure	Lower Secondary Assessment Policy (Year 7,8 & 9)
Endorsed by	Principal
Responsibility	Dean of Studies
Reviewed date	May 2017
Next review date	May 2018
To whom issued	College staff

Lower Secondary Assessment Policy (Year 7, 8 & 9)

This policy is made available to all Lower Secondary students at Lake Joondalup Baptist College and is based on School Curriculum and Standards Authority requirements. The School Curriculum Standards Authority website can be accessed at: www.scsa.wa.edu.au.

Rationale

The following policy applies to Year 7, 8 and 9 students at the College and conforms to the expectations of the Australian Curriculum, Curriculum Framework and the School Curriculum and Standards Authority.

Assessment assists teachers and schools in:

- monitoring the progress of students
- adjusting programs to ensure all students have the opportunity to achieve the intended outcomes
- developing subsequent learning programs
- reporting student achievement to parents
- whole-school and system planning, reporting and accountability procedures

Assessment procedures must therefore be fair, valid and reliable.

Assessment Procedures

1. Assessment quality and equity

For quality, and therefore equity, each assessment item should:

- clearly outline what it intends to assess in student accessible language
- only use specialist language or jargon as an aid to clarity and accuracy
- involve the reproduction of gender, socioeconomic, ethnic, ability or other cultural stereotypes, only after careful consideration of the necessity of doing so
- be presented clearly through appropriate choice of layout, cues, visual design, font and words, and state its requirements explicitly and directly
- be assessed using criteria developed from either the Australian Curriculum, Curriculum Framework progress maps, scales of achievement or syllabi and be declared in advance.

For equality, and therefore equity, each assessment task should:

- give clear and definite instructions
- be used under clear, definite and specific conditions that are substantially the same for all
- be used under conditions that do not present inappropriate barriers to equal participation by all
- involve the use of a range of background contexts in which assessment items can be presented
- include a range and balance of types of assessment instruments and modes of response, including visual and linguistic materials
- reflect the changing ICT environment in which students are learning
- offer a range and balance of conditions.

2. Student responsibilities

- Complete the prescribed work requirements by the due date.
- Complete all assessment items as described in the subject/course outline.
- Maintain a good record of attendance, conduct and progress.
- Initiate contact with teachers concerning absence from class, missed assessments, extension requests, clashes with excursions and other issues pertaining to assessment.

3. Staff responsibilities

- Develop a teaching and learning program that fulfils the current requirements of either the Australian Curriculum, Curriculum Framework and the School Curriculum and Standards Authority.
- Provide students with a copy of the College Assessment Policy and course outline, including an assessment plan showing details of assessment tasks and due dates, and where appropriate a copy of the latest version of the published course and assessment requirements within the first two weeks of the academic year (Week 2, Term 1).
- Ensure that any change to the assessment program is communicated to students in a timely manner – a two week warning prior to the change is deemed fair in this respect.
- Ensure that assessments are valid, educative, explicit, fair and comprehensive.
- Maintain accurate records of student achievement and assessment.
- Initiate contact with parents/guardians when a student fails an assessment or achieves at a level below the expected range in a timely manner to allow for appropriate intervention.
- Advise parents/guardians within three days of a student failing to submit an assessment.
- Meet school and external timeframes for assessment and reporting.

4. Tests and other scheduled in-class assessment tasks

- A student absent from a test may not be given a further opportunity to take the test, until a satisfactory explanation is received. The student must submit to the teacher administering the test, an explanation in writing from the parents or guardian as soon as possible after returning to school. This is in addition to a note explaining the student's absence. If the absence is for medical reasons, a doctor's certificate should be provided if so requested.
- If a student has a valid reason for missing a test, then that test or an alternative may be given as a specially scheduled assessment task, without penalty, at a later date.
- Students required to complete a test or in-class assessment task as a specially scheduled task will be required to do so after school. These sessions will be coordinated by the appropriate Head of Learning Area, The Secondary Curriculum Manager or the Dean of Studies.
- If a student is regularly absent on test days, the Head of Learning Area may ask the student to produce a detailed explanation substantiated by their parents/guardians and a medical certificate to substantiate their illness. In cases where there is no satisfactory explanation of an absence from a specially scheduled assessment task a mark of zero or an 'E' grade will be awarded.
- If a student has an excursion or known absence on the day that an assignment is due, they must make arrangements for the assignment to be submitted prior to the due date. Normal penalties will apply if students fail to submit an assignment on an excursion day.

5. Examinations

- Students who are absent for valid reasons during examinations must, if possible, sit their missed examination/s at an alternative time or times. These times will be within the examination period, as close as possible to the original time slot, and must be determined in conjunction with the Dean of Studies or the Secondary Curriculum Manager.
- Where missed examinations are not sat, then the examination paper should be completed later, in the student's own time, as an educational exercise and will not be used for assessment purposes.
- Where students do not sit an examination paper, a mark or grade may be estimated based on the student's previous performance.
- The Dean of Studies should be notified if a student is unable to attend an examination. A verbal notification such as a phone call or an informal notification such as an email or a text, must be supported, as soon as is practical, by a formal letter addressed to the Dean of Studies, explaining the absence. A medical certificate must be provided to support a claim of illness.

6. Assignments or reports

- All assignments must be submitted by the due date. If an assignment is not submitted without an adequate explanation, then it will not be given a mark or grade until a satisfactory explanation is received. It is a student's responsibility to make every effort to submit assignments even if he or she is not at the College. If this is not possible, a written explanation must be provided, signed by a Parent/Guardian.
- Absence from school on the day or during the lesson when an assignment is due should not necessarily affect the submission of the assignment. If an assignment is due on the day of a College excursion, for instance, it should be submitted the day before or on the morning of the excursion, prior to the student leaving the College.
- Students who submit an assignment or report late without a satisfactory explanation will receive a penalty which will be decided by the classroom teacher in consultation with the relevant Head of Learning Area.

7. Academic Reporting Year 7 to Year 10

The *National Education Agreement 2009* (NEA) requires the provision to parents, guardians and carers by all schools of plain language reports twice a year that:

- a. are readily understandable to those responsible for the student and give an accurate and objective assessment of the student's progress and achievement;
- b. include an assessment of the student's achievement against any available standards; and
- c. include, for subjects studied, an assessment of the student's achievement:
 - i. reported as A, B, C, D and E (or an equivalent five-point scale), clearly defined against specific learning standards; and
 - ii. relative to the performance of the student's peer group.

In Western Australia, student achievement in the learning areas taught is reported on a five-point scale from Year 7 to Year 10.

Letter grade	Achievement descriptor 1
A Excellent	The student demonstrates excellent achievement of what is expected for this year level.
B High	The student demonstrates high achievement of what is expected for this year level.
C Satisfactory	The student demonstrates satisfactory achievement of what is expected for this year level.
D Limited	The student demonstrates limited achievement of what is expected for this year level.
E Very low	The student demonstrates very low achievement of what is expected for this year level.

At Lake Joondalup Baptist College Academic Reports are issued three times a year:

- Interim Reports are issued online at the end of Term 1 and contain an overview of how students are progressing generally and are useful in that they draw attention to any early issues which may arise during the academic year.
- A full Academic Report is issued at the end of Semester 1 and then again at the end of Semester 2. The report contains a subject comment, relevant grades and marks, a grade distribution graph and summary of Learning Attributes.

8. Cheating, collusion and plagiarism

- **Cheating** is where a student has engaged in a dishonest act to increase their mark. This typically occurs in tests and examinations.
- **Collusion** is when a student submits work that is not their own for assessment. A student who actively assists another student with an assignment by allowing that student to copy his or her work is also considered to be colluding and therefore in breach of the College Lower Secondary Assessment Policy. The same penalty will be applied to both parties. Students participating in group assignments are required to complete their section of the assessment as per the requirements of the task unless otherwise requested to do so by the class teacher.
- **Plagiarism** is when a student uses someone else's words or ideas without acknowledging that they have done so. In this case work is essentially copied.
- Students shown to have cheated, colluded or plagiarised in assessed work or in examinations will receive a mark of zero or an 'E' grade.
- Students who receive a mark of 0 or an E grade due to plagiarism, collusion or cheating will still be required to re-submit a completed assessment that demonstrates evidence of their own work despite receiving a failing grade, in order to demonstrate progress towards the appropriate learning outcomes.
- The College requires that the teacher is able to verify that a student's work is in fact his or her own. The teacher may refuse to use some work as evidence for assessment if he or she is not completely satisfied that it is the student's work. It is therefore recommended that a high proportion of work on tasks, especially final drafts or copies, be completed at school under teacher supervision. A note from a parent is not sufficient evidence that the work is the student's.

9. Moderation

In cases where there is more than one class group of students undertaking a course, Heads of Learning Area must ensure that cross marking of assessment tasks is occurring to ensure internal compatibility. It is an expectation that the nature and the timing of assessment tasks be consistent.

10. Students with disabilities or specific learning difficulties

In consultation with the Dean of Studies and the Learning Enhancement Centre, Heads of Learning Area may modify assessment and examination requirements in accordance with the School Curriculum and Standards Authority guidelines and/or in accordance with the directives on a stipulated Individual Education Plan or Curriculum Adjustment Plan, to enable a student with a permanent or temporary disability, or a student with specific learning difficulties to demonstrate achievement of course objectives.

11. Holidays during term

It is detrimental to a student's academic progress to miss school for any reason. Parents/Guardians are asked to organise holidays during term breaks and holiday periods only. Parents/Guardians choosing to take students on holiday during scheduled school term time should be aware that the student will be disadvantaged and his or her grade may be adversely affected.

Parents/Guardians should be aware that there is a legal obligation under Section 23 of the School Education Act 1999 that requires a child to attend school on all designated contact days. It is incorrect for Parents/Guardians to believe that they may allow a child to stay home from school without a reasonable cause, such as sickness.

The Law states: Under Western Australian law (School Education Act 1999), Parents/Guardians must send their children to school unless:

- they are too unwell
- they have an infectious disease
- the Principal is provided with a genuine and acceptable reason

If the Dean of Studies is notified in writing of any holiday arrangements at least three weeks prior to the holiday, it may be possible, on compassionate grounds, by negotiation with the Heads of Learning Area and the student's teachers, to arrange alternate times for submission of take home assessments. The final decision regarding the setting of an alternate time for assessments rests with the respective Head of Learning Area. In the event of any dispute regarding these matters the issue will be referred to the Dean of Studies.

12. Leave of absence during the school term

Parents/Guardians must write to, or email the Head of House or the Dean of Studies three weeks in advance to request permission for their child to be absent from school for any reason other than immediate misadventure, injury, illness or a scheduled medical appointment. This includes leave of absence for extenuating family circumstances or if he or she is representing the state or nation at a sporting event.

13. Students with special needs

The key principle underpinning aspects of this assessment policy is that all students with special needs will be able to undertake assessments without disadvantage. The school uses the broad guidelines provided by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority to accommodate these students. It is absolutely essential that the student or parent informs the Dean of Studies and the Secondary Curriculum Manager of any special needs before the commencement of the year. It is imperative that this notification occurs either on enrolment or as soon as the student or family are aware of the special need.

The broad provisions which apply are typically:

- **Short term needs** – students with short term absences or injury will be provided with alternate opportunities to undertake tasks. In some cases where performances are involved and where an injury prevents the student from undertaking the tasks, alternate arrangements will be made.
- **Longer term needs** – it is important for the parent to contact the school to discuss the particular needs of their child. Case management processes need to be put in place. The School Curriculum and Standards Authority needs to identify and review such processes before allowing any compensatory measures which would apply to the WACE assessment. For example, arrangements such as extra time to complete timed assessments, breaks during timed assessments, special examination materials (e.g. Braille materials, scribes, use of a computer or recorded responses are recognised arrangements for specified conditions). The school will discuss the processes with the parent and student and advise of appropriate arrangements.