

ASSESSMENT POLICY

All students in Years 7 – 10 are enrolled in subjects developed for the Year 7 – 10 Curriculum which include year, semester and term units. All students in Years 11 and 12 are enrolled in a combination of School Curriculum and Standards Authority accredited courses, VET Certificates and Endorsed Programmes which are delivered in concurrent fashion over the whole year. Some students gain credit for the WACE by undertaking one of the VET programs through CareerLink or a specialist programme such as a School-Based Traineeship. Some Year 10 students are also enrolled in School Curriculum and Standards Authority or VET programmes in addition to the school units developed as part of the Year 7 – 10 Curriculum.

This policy covers the assessment of all school-based and School Curriculum and Standards Authority accredited courses. VET programs are undertaken at a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), or assessed by a teacher holding a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment in association with an RTO and subject to the appropriate Assessment Framework. Endorsed Programmes are assessed according to the applicable published guidelines.

Note: Items 1 – 12 apply to all students at Mater Dei College. Items 13 – 15 relate to Course of Study units and are based on School Curriculum and Standards Authority requirements.

1. The Purpose of Assessment:

- Ascertain the success of a teaching and learning program to guide subsequent teaching.
- Ascertain the success of students within the teaching and learning program to guide subsequent teaching and provide feedback to students.
- Provide information for grading and reporting.

Assessment is an essential and ongoing part of the teaching and learning process. In recognition of the important role of assessment in learning, the following criteria apply to assessment items.

Good assessment items should be demonstrably:

1. **Fair.** ie it will ensure that all students have a reasonable chance of success having engaged with the course with an appropriate amount of effort and preparation.
2. **Valid.** ie a task will assess what is intended to be measured, eg. If students are required to apply concepts then they will have assessment items that require them to do so.
3. **Explicit.** ie students are fully aware of what is required for success.
4. **Inclusive** ie students should not be hindered from success due to circumstances they cannot control.

5. **Educative** ie students should have the opportunity to learn as a result of completing an assessment task.

2. **Student Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the student to:

- complete all course requirements by the due date
- maintain an assessment file for each course studied and make it available when required
- maintain a good record of attendance, conduct and progress (a student who is absent from a class for five lessons or more per term is deemed to be 'at risk' of not achieving the best possible result for the unit)
- initiate contact with teachers concerning absence from class, missed in-class assessment tasks, requests for extension of the due date for out-of-class assessment tasks and other issues pertaining to assessment.

Consequently it is expected that students:

- approach instructions and tasks with a desire to learn.
- prepare adequately and thoroughly for all tasks given them.
- take responsibility for ensuring they understand all instructions.
- take responsibility to seek help with course material with which they are having difficulty.
- complete all tasks given, both formal assessment tasks and less formal tasks – they are all learning opportunities, and satisfy the completion requirement of each course.

3. **Teacher Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the teacher to:

- develop a teaching and learning program that meets the WACE syllabus requirements for the course
- provide students with a course unit outline and an assessment outline at the start of the course
- ensure that all assessment tasks are fair, valid and reliable
- provide students with timely assessment feedback and guidance
- maintain accurate records of student achievement
- meet school and external timelines for assessment and reporting
- inform students and parents of academic progress as appropriate.

4. **Information Provided to Students**

At the start of every course the teacher will provide a printed copy of the following to each student:

- the syllabus for the course/stage
- a course unit outline that includes the following information:
 - the content
 - the sequence in which the content will be taught
 - the approximate time to teach each section of the unit.

- an assessment outline that includes the following information:
 - the assessment types
 - the weighting for each assessment type
 - the weighting for each assessment task
 - a general description of each assessment task
 - a general indication of the content covered by each assessment task
 - an indication of the outcomes covered by each assessment task
 - the approximate timing of each assessment task (i.e. the week in which each assessment task is planned or the due dates for significant stages of each extended task).

Students can also access via the College website printed course documents (i.e. the syllabus, the college's course unit outline, the college's assessment outline) and the School Curriculum and Standards Authority grade descriptions for the stage of the course they are studying.

In each course unit a number of assessment tasks occur during the semester/year (including, in most cases end of semester exams – see Section 11 for details). Some tasks are completed in-class and others are completed out-of-class. Each task provides evidence of student achievement. The teacher uses the total weighted mark from all assessment tasks when assigning a grade at the completion of the course unit.

During every course, the requirements for each assessment task will be clearly described in writing (i.e. what the student needs to do, often indicating the steps involved for extended tasks). Wherever appropriate, the criteria against which the task will be marked will also be provided.

5. **Modification of the Assessment Outline**

When a student's disability or specified learning disability does not allow them to complete a particular assessment task, the teacher may modify the task in consultation with the Head of Learning Support. An individual education plan will be developed showing any modifications to the assessment outline for the course unit.

When a student's personal circumstances limit his/her capacity to complete a particular assessment task, the teacher, in consultation with the student and others involved, may negotiate a variation to the submission date. The teacher will consider fairness for all students when making decisions about adjusting timelines for a particular student.

If circumstances change during the teaching of a course unit requiring the teacher to make adjustments to scheduled assessment tasks then an updated copy of the assessment outline will be provided to students clearly indicating the changes.

6. **Marks and Grades**

A grade (A, B, C, D or E) is assigned for each course unit. Grades are assigned using the total weighted mark for all assessment tasks. The assessment outline, provided to all

students for each course unit (and available through the college's website) shows the weighting of each assessment task.

Students are required to:

- submit all out-of-class assessment tasks for marking on or before the due date
- attempt all in-class assessment tasks on the scheduled date.

Note: If an assessment task cannot be submitted directly to the teacher it is to be submitted to the Head of Learning Area who will pass it on to the teacher.

Failure to attend a scheduled in-class assessment task or submit on time an out-of-class assessment task may result in the student either:

- receiving a lower grade than expected at the end of the course unit (if a result is not included for grading it contributes zero marks to the total), **or**
- receiving a 'U' (Unfinished) notation instead of a grade (only possible if the reason for non-completion/submission is acceptable to the College and the student can validly complete work in the future to allow the College to convert the 'U' notation to a grade*). ** the 'U' notation only applies to certain SCSA-approved courses, registered certificate courses and special cases determined by the head of Learning Area in conjunction with the Deputy Principal – Learning.*

For any out-of-class assessment task submitted after the due date, where the student **does not** provide a reason which is acceptable to the College, the following policy applies:

7. Late Assessment Policy

The policy concerning late assessment is guided by the following primary principles:

- All tasks are learning opportunities
- Student application to tasks is driven, primarily, from a desire to learn
- Timely information is required by teachers to fulfil the 3 purposes of assessment.

To achieve this the following actions will apply.

- 7.01 If an assessment piece is submitted late, without prior arrangement, it will not be marked for inclusion in grading and reporting.
- 7.02 The assessment item must still be completed to satisfy the completion requirement of courses and the monitoring of courses and student learning, and submitted as soon as possible. Failure to submit will result in with-holding of final marks.
- 7.03 If a student requires an extension this may be granted if; the extension is requested 3 days or more prior to the due date and; the student presents a valid reason for needing an extension. Any problem with meeting submission dates should be brought to the attention of the class teacher as early as possible.

- 7.04 Students missing tests will be required to sit the test, including practical assessments, at the next available time. Time to prepare may be allowed under the following circumstances following consultation with the head of department:
- Extended period of illness
 - Time spent on College based extra-curricular activities or College purposes
- 7.05 Classroom teachers do not have the authority to vary these actions.

If a student wishes to appeal the application of the late assessment policy, application may be made to the Deputy Principal - Learning requesting a review. The reviewer will meet with the student and the teacher independently, as well as others as required, and prepare a written report including a decision about the allocated mark. A copy of this report will be provided to the student, the teacher and the parent/guardian.

8. **Acceptable Reasons for Non-submission or Non-completion**

The penalty for non-submission or non-completion will be waived if the student provides a reason which is acceptable to the college. For example:

- where sickness, injury or significant personal circumstances for part or all of the period of an out-of-class assessment task prevents completion and submission.
- where sickness, injury or significant personal circumstances prevents a student attending on the day that an in-class assessment task is scheduled.

In such cases the parent/guardian must:

- contact the college before 9.30am on the day **and**
- provide either a medical certificate or a letter of explanation immediately the student returns.

Where the student provides a reason which is acceptable to the college for the non-submission or non-completion of an assessment task the teacher will:

- negotiate an adjusted due date for an out-of-class assessment task or an adjusted date for an in-class assessment task (generally, within two days of the student's return), **or**
- re-weight the student's marks for other tasks (if, in the opinion of the teacher, sufficient evidence exists in the other tasks completed to enable a grade to be assigned), **or**
- decide on an alternate assessment task if, in the opinion of the teacher, the assessment is no longer confidential, **or**
- statistically estimate the student's mark for the assessment task on the basis of their marks in similar tasks.

Events that can be rescheduled are not a valid reason for non-completion or non-submission of an assessment task (e.g. sitting a driver's licence test, preparation for the school ball).

Family holidays during the term are not considered a valid reason for non-completion or non-submission of an assessment task. In exceptional circumstances, the parent/guardian may negotiate with the Year 11 or 12 Year Coordinator the development of an individual education plan. This plan will show how the missed lesson

time will be compensated for and any modifications to the assessment outlines for each course unit.

Where a catastrophic event (e.g. a pandemic) affects delivery of the teaching program and/or the submission/completion of one or more assessment tasks, students will be advised by the Head of Learning Area of any modifications to the task requirements and/or the assessment outline, including the due date. Where the event has an impact on the college's examinations, students will be informed of changes by the Deputy Principal as soon as possible.

9. **Transfer Between Courses/Units**

When a student commences a course unit late they are at risk of being disadvantaged compared to others in the class. An application to transfer between courses or units is made through the Deputy Principal. A meeting may be held with the parent/guardian to discuss student progress and the requirements necessary for the student to be assigned a grade in the course unit into which they wish to transfer.

The deadlines for course/unit changes are:

- Friday of Week 2 of Term 1 for Year 8 – 10 Semester 1 subjects (apply through the Year Coordinator)
- Friday of Week 4 of Term 1 for Year-long subjects (including Year 11 and 12 Course of Study Units)
- Friday of Week 2 of Term 3 for all Year 8 – 10 Semester 2 subjects (apply through the Year Coordinator)

When a student transfers to a different unit in the same course, or a unit in a similar course, the marks from any assessment tasks that assess the syllabus will wherever possible be used. These marks may need to be statistically adjusted to ensure that they are on the same scale as the marks for all students in the new class.

Where additional work and/or assessment tasks are necessary, the teacher will develop an individual education plan showing the work to be completed and the modifications to the assessment outline. The plan will be discussed with the parent/guardian and provided to the student.

10. **Transfer From Another School**

It is the responsibility of any student who transfers into a class from the same course at another school, to provide the college with the details of all completed assessment tasks.

The Deputy Principal, will contact the previous school to determine:

- the part of the syllabus that has been completed
- the assessment tasks which have been completed
- the marks awarded for these tasks.

The Head of Learning Area will:

- determine how the marks from assessment tasks at the previous school will be used
Note: Where necessary these marks will be statistically adjusted to ensure that they

are on the same scale as those at Mater Dei College

- determine the additional work, if any, to be completed
- determine the additional assessment tasks, if any, to be completed to enable a grade to be assigned.

Where additional work and/or assessment tasks are necessary, the teacher will develop an individual education plan showing the work to be completed and the modifications to the assessment outline. The plan will be discussed with the parent/guardian and provided to the student.

11. Cheating, Collusion and Plagiarism

Students must not cheat (i.e. engage in a dishonest act to gain an unfair advantage).

All work in each individual assessment task must be the work of the student. Students are not permitted to submit for marking, as original, any work which contains:

- identical or similar material to the work of another person (e.g. another student, a parent, a tutor)
- identical or similar material to a published work unless the source is acknowledged in referencing or footnotes.

Note: Where a student permits others to copy their work they will also be penalised. If a student is believed to have engaged in cheating, collusion or plagiarism, the teacher will refer the matter to the head of learning area/teacher-in-charge. As part of this process, the student will be provided with the right of reply.

If it is demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt that a student has cheated, colluded or plagiarised one of the following penalties will apply:

- a mark of zero for the whole assessment task, **or**
- a mark of zero for part of the assessment where the teacher can identify the part of the assessment task that has been copied or plagiarised. The parent/guardian will be informed of the penalty and any further disciplinary action.

12. Security of Assessment Tasks

Where there is more than one class in a course unit, most or all of the assessment tasks will be the same. In such cases, to ensure that no students are unfairly advantaged, the question papers used for in-class assessment tasks will be collected at the end of the lesson. In their own interests, students must not discuss the nature of the questions with students from the other classes until after all classes have completed the task. Discussion of the questions will be treated as cheating and the students will be penalised.

Where Mater Dei College uses the same assessment task or exam as other schools, the task/paper and the student responses will be retained by the teacher until the task has been completed by all schools.

13. Reporting Achievement *

Mater Dei College reports student achievement at the end of Semester 1 and at the end of Semester 2. The report provides a comment by the teacher for each course unit and the following information:

- a grade for the unit¹
- a mark for the unit¹ if applicable (the weighted total mark for all assessment tasks in the unit, including the school exam/s)
- a mark in the Semester Examination if applicable.

¹ Semester 1 Course of Study units will not have the mark and grade finalised until after the Semester 2 exam (as this exam covers both units). In this case, an estimated mark and grade are reported at the end of Semester 1.

At the end of Year 12, students will be provided with a Mater Dei College statement which lists the grade for each course unit, and where required, the school mark, which was submitted to the School Curriculum and Standards Authority.

All Course of Study grades on Semester 1 and 2 reports are subject to School Curriculum and Standards Authority approval at the end of the year.

The parent/guardian will be notified of any changes that result from the School Curriculum and Standards Authority's review of the student results submitted by Mater Dei College.

For all Year 12 students, for each ATAR course unit, a statistically adjusted school mark is reported by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority on the student's Statement of Results. Details of the process the SCSA uses to adjust the marks submitted by the College are available on the SCSA website at http://www.scsa.wa.edu.au/internet/Senior_Secondary/WACE_Examinations/Your_Marks.

Information about calculating the ATAR for university entry is available on the TISC website at www.tisc.edu.au.

14. Examinations *

A written examination will be held in all ATAR courses at the end of Semester 1 and the end of Semester 2. In those courses with a practical/performance/oral component, a practical/performance/oral exam will also be held. Examinations may be scheduled for in those General courses where considered appropriate by the Head of Learning Area. This will be included in the assessment outline for the unit/s.

Examinations are typically 2 or 2.5 hours in Year 11 and 2.5 or 3 hours in Year 12. The examination timetable and a copy of the examination rules will be issued to students 2 weeks before the commencement of the exam period.

If a student is unable to complete an examination at the scheduled time, application may be made to the Deputy Principal for an alternative time. If accepted, the student must complete a Special Examination Arrangement Declaration form accepting the provisions covering cheating, collusion and plagiarism and security of assessment tasks above.

15. Reviewing Marks and Grades for Course of Study Units

If a student considers that there is an issue about the delivery of a Course of Study unit,

the marking of an assessment task or about the grade assigned for a course unit they should, in the first instance, discuss the issue with the teacher.

If an assessment issue cannot be resolved through discussion with the teacher then the student or parent/guardian should approach the Head of Learning Area.

The student or parent/guardian can request, in writing, that the college conduct a formal assessment review, if they consider that the student has been disadvantaged by any of the following:

- the assessment outline for the course unit does not meet School Curriculum and Standards Authority requirements
- the assessment procedures used in the class do not conform with the College's assessment policy
- procedural errors have occurred in the determination of the mark and/or grade
- computational errors have occurred in the determination of the mark and/or grade.

The Deputy Principal, or a nominated representative, will conduct the review. The reviewer will meet with the student and the teacher independently and prepare a written report. This report will be provided to the student and parent/guardian.

If this review does not resolve the matter, the student (or parent/guardian) may appeal to the School Curriculum and Standards Authority using an appeal form which is available from the Deputy Principal. SCSA representatives will then independently investigate the situation and report to the SCSA appeal panel. If the panel upholds a student appeal the College will make any required adjustments to the student's marks and/or grades and re-issue reports as necessary.

*Note: reference to ATAR and General courses includes courses previously known as Stage 2 or 3 and Stage 1 respectively.

Reviewed 11 December, 2013
Minor edits 29 March, 2014
Minor edits 24 September, 2014

