2014 Senior Secondary School Assessment Policy

NORTH ALBANY SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

The Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) is awarded to senior secondary school students who satisfy certain requirements. The Certificate is recognised nationally in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). It is recognised by universities, industry, GSIT (Great Southern Institute Technology) and other training providers. Generally, students complete two years of senior secondary study to achieve the WACE, although the School Curriculum and Standards Authority’s provisions enable students to meet the WACE requirements over a lifetime.

Achievement of a WACE signifies the student has successfully met the breadth and depth standard, the achievement standard and English language competence requirements in their senior secondary schooling.

This Assessment Policy is provided to all senior secondary students at North Albany SHS and is based on School Curriculum and Standards Authority requirements. All students are enrolled in a combination of School Curriculum and Standards Authority accredited Courses and subjects. Some students may also be gaining credit for the WACE by undertaking one or more VET (Vocational Education and Training) Endorsed Programs.

This policy covers the assessment of all School Curriculum and Standards Authority accredited courses. VET programs are undertaken at and assessed by GSIT.

1. Student responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the student to:

- complete all course requirements by the due dates.
- Keep all assessments for each course or certificate studied and to make it available whenever requested,
- 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 completing the Course unit requirements),
- 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.

2. Teacher responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the teacher to:

- develop a teaching/learning program that meets the syllabus requirements
- provide students with a Course and Assessment Outline at the start of the Course and to any student who joins the Course at a later date.
- ensure that assessments 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.
• inform students of the requirement to keep all work and assessments in case it is required for checking by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority.

3. Parent responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the parent/caregiver to:

• assist the student to select Courses that reflect the student's career aspirations, ability and personal goals.
• assist the student to develop independent learning skills and accept the primary responsibility for their learning. To encourage an ‘adult learner’s’ attitude and approach to their educational life.
• assist the student at home by establishing a suitable learning environment for them to complete homework, assignments and study.
• communicate with the school as concerns / issues arise.

4. Information provided to students

The teacher will provide a copy of the following to each student:

• the syllabus of the Course /Unit/s
• a Course unit outline that includes at least the following information:
  o the content
  o the sequence in which the content will be taught and the approximate time to teach each section.
• an assessment outline that includes at least the following information where relevant:
  o the assessment types
  o the weighting for each assessment type
  o the weighting for each assessment task
  o a general description of each assessment task
  o a general indication of the content covered by each assessment task
  o an indication of the outcomes covered by each assessment task
  o the approximate timing of assessment tasks (i.e. the week in which each assessment task is planned or the due dates for significant stages of each extended task).

In each Course unit a number of assessment tasks occur during the semester/year (including, in most cases end of Semester exams – see Section 13 for details). Some tasks are completed in-class and others are completed out-of-class. Each task provides evidence of student achievement, the combination of which the teacher uses to assign 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). Where appropriate, the criteria against which the task will be marked or rated will also be provided.

5. Modification of the assessment outline

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

When a student's cultural beliefs do not enable them to complete a particular assessment task, the teacher may modify this task in consultation with the Head of Learning Area/Curriculum Leader. An individual education plan will be developed showing any modifications to the assessment outline for the Course unit or subject.

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 that requires the teacher to make adjustments to scheduled assessment tasks then students will be advised of this.
6. Completion of a Course unit or subject – (Assessment)

A grade (A,B,C,D or E) is assigned for each Course unit completed (i.e. if the student completes the school’s structured education and assessment program within the given timeframe). Grades are assigned using the total weighted mark for all assessment tasks. The assessment outline provided to all student for each Course unit shows the weighting of each assessment task.

Students are required to:

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

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 the reason for non-completion / submission is not acceptable to the school, see Section 7),
- receiving a ‘U’ (Unfinished) notation instead of a grade (if the reason for non-completion / submission is acceptable and the student can complete other work in the future to allow North Albany Senior High School to convert the ‘U’ notation to a grade).

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

Unless there is a reason that is acceptable to the school (see Section 7 for details), failure to attend a scheduled in-class assessment task or submit on time an out-of-class assessment task may result in the student receiving a lower grade or a zero. Each Learning Area has its own Assessment Policy and Procedures. Students are to refer to individual Learning Area Assessment Policies for details regarding penalties.

Note: Where a student is likely to experience difficulty meeting a deadline they must discuss the matter with the teacher at the earliest opportunity before the due date.

If a student does not submit an in-class assessment task or attend a scheduled in-class assessment task, the teacher will contact the parent/guardian.

7. Acceptable reasons for non-submission or non-completion of Assessment

The penalty for non-submission or non-completion will be waived if the student provides a reason acceptable to the school. 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 school on the day and
- provide either a medical certificate or a letter of explanation immediately the student returns.

Where the student provides a reason acceptable to the school 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 there is sufficient evidence to assign a grade), 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 or against similar scoring students, or
• submit a notation of U (Unfinished). If, due to accepted and explained absence insufficient evidence is available to make a professional judgement of the grade, there may be opportunity to assign a grade after more time is provided to complete further assessment tasks (typically during the next Semester). Please contact the Head of Learning Area for more information.

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 and Heads of Learning Areas the development of an individual education plan. The school reserves the right to make the decision as to whether or not an individual education plan will be implemented. This plan will show how the missed lesson time will be compensated for and any modifications to the assessment outlines for each Course unit or subject.

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 / Teacher-in-Charge of any modifications to the task requirements and/or the assessment outline, including the due date. Where the event has an impact on the examinations, students will be informed of changes by the Deputy Principal as soon as possible.

8. Vocational Education and Training assessment

North Albany SHS delivers VET in partnership with an external Registered Training Organisation (RTO) such as the Great Southern Institute of Technology (GSIT formerly TAFE).

In competency-based assessment, a student’s performance is judged against a prescribed standard, not against the performance of other students. A student is judged as either competent or not yet competent against the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQFT) standard. The judgement is made on the basis of evidence which can be provided in a variety of forms. The RTO provides guidance on achievement of competencies and ultimately determines students’ competency ratings. All elements of competency must be achieved to demonstrate the achievement of a unit of competency.

Students are to refer to subject and course outlines distributed by teachers and/or TAFE lecturers at the beginning of the year for more detail.

Reporting achievement

The School Curriculum and Standards Authority recognises the achievement of units of competency and qualifications listed on the National Training Information Service (NTIS) website. All successfully completed units of competency/qualifications are recorded on the student’s statement of results. Students can only be accredited once with a unit of competency.

9. Changes of Course units or subjects

When a student commences a Course unit or subject late they are at risk of being disadvantaged compared to others in the class. An application to transfer is made through the Deputy Principal. A meeting may be held with the parent/caregiver to discuss student progress and the requirements necessary for the student to be assigned a grade in the new Course unit. The school reserves the right to approve or not approve changes.

The deadlines for changes are:

• Friday of Week 6 of Term 1 for all Semester 1 Courses
• Friday of Week 10 of Term 2 for all Semester 2 Courses

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 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 negotiate a plan with the student showing the extra work to be completed and the modifications to the assessment outline.

10. Transfers:

10.1 From another school in WA

It is the responsibility of the student who transfers to North Albany SHS from elsewhere in WA to provide North Albany SHS with evidence of all completed assessment tasks. The Head of Learning Area will contact the previous school to determine, if necessary,

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

The Head of Learning Area will:

- determine how the marks from assessment tasks at the previous school will be used
- 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 negotiate a plan with the student showing the extra work to be completed and the modifications to the assessment outline.

10.2 Transfer from Interstate and Overseas

The Deputy Principal will contact the School Curriculum and Standards Authority to determine the transfer of any credit from subjects studied at the previous school. The student will be advised by the Deputy Principal of the details of any credit transfer.

11. Cheating, collusion and plagiarism

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

- 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.

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

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. As part of this process, the student will be provided with the right of reply.

Note: Where a student permits others to copy their work they will also be penalised.

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

- a mark of zero for the whole assessment task,
- 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/caregiver 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 task 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. 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 North Albany SHS uses the same assessment task or exam as other schools, the task and the student responses will be retained by the teacher until the task has been completed by all schools.

13. Examinations

A written examination will be held in all Stage 2 or 3 Courses in June - Semester 1 and November - Semester 2. In some Courses, a practical / performance / oral exam may also be held.

Examinations may be held in Stage 1 Courses where considered appropriate by the Head of Learning Area. This will be included in the assessment outline for the course / unit.

Examinations are typically 2 or 2.5 hours in Year 11 and up to 3 hours in Year 12. The examination timetable and a copy of the examination rules will be issued to students 1 ½ - 2 weeks before the commencement of the exam period.

14. Reporting achievement

North Albany Senior High School formally reports on student achievement at the end of Semester 1 and at the end of Semester 2. A progress report is provided at the end of term one. The formal report provides a comment by the teacher for each Course unit or subject and the following information:

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

At the end of the year, students will be provided with a 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.

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

All 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 to that result from the School Curriculum and Standards Authority’s review of the student results submitted by North Albany Senior High School.

For all Year 12 students in Stage 2 and 3 course units, a statistically adjusted school mark is reported by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority on the student's Statement of Results. Details of the marks adjustment process the School Curriculum and Standards Authority uses to adjust the marks submitted by North Albany SHS are available on the Council website at www.curriculum.wa.edu.au/internet/Senior_School/WACE_Examinations/Your_Marks

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

15. Reviewing marks and grades

When a student considers that there is an issue about 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 a marking or grading issue cannot be resolved through discussion with the teacher, then the student or parent/guardian should approach the relevant Head of Learning Area.
The student or parent/guardian can request, in writing, that North Albany SHS conducts 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 school’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 (Senior School), 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 and a copy to the Principal.

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

16. **Definitions**

The following definitions apply:

- Courses of Study- Courses that are defined as 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A, 2B, 3A and 3B etc
- Vocational Education and Training – Certificate courses