



Junior (Yrs 7-10) Assessment Policy

April 2015

The following policy is to apply at both campuses of the School.

The Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES) has the power to award a student leaving the NSW education system after the end of Year 10 but before the end of the Higher School Certificate a credential called the Record of School Achievement (RoSA). The RoSA provides students, parents, and employers and the general community with information on students' achievement at the end of Stage 5 (Years 9/10).

Grades A – E will be awarded in all courses (except Mathematics) based on school-based assessment of students' achievement with reference to performance descriptors issued by BOSTES. Mathematics achievement for the RoSA (not necessarily individual assessments) will be indicated by one of the following grades: A10, A9, B8, B7, C6, C5, D4, D3, E2.

To be eligible for the RoSA students must comply with the entry requirements. These requirements include:

- The student's attendance, conduct and progress must be satisfactory.
- The student must study appropriate courses as approved by the Board.
- The student must complete the requirements of each course including any necessary oral, practical or project work.
- The student must have performed the tasks required as part of the Assessment program in each course.
- The student must sit for any examination set as part of the course.
- The student must complete Year 10

The Purpose of Assessments

Assessment is integral to the teaching-learning process and a vital tool in the construction of an effective learning environment. Assessment is the process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about students' learning. The key purposes of assessment are to:

- assist student learning
- evaluate and improve teaching and learning programs
- assess student achievement in each course and stage
- provide evidence of satisfactory achievement of outcomes in a course and stage.

Assessments measure performance in the whole course, but do not take into account interest, attitudes or conduct.

BOSTES Responsibilities

For each course, BOSTES has produced a Syllabus. A student may consult these documents by asking their teacher, the Deputy Principal, a head of campus or senior teacher or accessing the BOSTES website.

The School's Responsibilities

The school has to develop an Assessment Program for each course. This means the school should:

- Identify the student tasks and which outcomes they measure.
- Specify values to be applied to each of the tasks.
- Schedule the various tasks throughout the course.

Teachers should notify students, in writing of:

- The general nature of the task and specific information of what the task requires
- An indication of when tasks will occur (at least one weeks' notice to be given for a specific task).
- Details of the task.
- The weight value of each task in relation to the total weighted mark for the course.
- Marking criteria.

All summative assessments in Years 7 to 10 will be given a grade, determined using course performance descriptors from BOSTES in case of Years 9 and 10 and 'in-house' course performance descriptors for Years 7 and 8. A copy of the general grade descriptors is in Appendix A. Each assessment, or part thereof, will also be given a mark as per the following table (which the HoD can determine should or should not be given to students):

Grade	If max. is 100	If max. is 50	If max. is 20	If max. is 10
A	90 – 100	45 - 50	18 - 20	9,10
B	80 – 89	40 - 44	16 - 17	8
C	70 – 79	35 - 39	14 - 15	7
D	60 – 69	30 - 34	12 - 13	6
E	40 - 59	20 - 29	8 - 11	4,5

Each student should receive written feedback with the allocated grade(s) (and possibly marks) indicating how he or she could improve his or her performance and commending pleasing aspects of his or her performance.

Teachers may use informal observations and impromptu tasks to confirm that a student is being awarded appropriate grades and marks.

The Student's Responsibilities

- Each student will be expected to perform the tasks, which are part of the Assessment Program in each subject, to the best of their ability.
- Assessment Tasks are to be handed to the teacher personally at the beginning of the lesson. If submission to the teacher is not possible, the task should be handed in to student services and written record of the date and time of submission be kept in the staffroom.
- The school will not take responsibility for any task submitted by any other means.
- If a student is absent on the day an Assessment Task is due to be handed in, the assignment must still reach the school by the deadline unless express permission has been previously granted by the Head Teacher of the relevant faculty.
- In cases of illness or misadventure extension can only be granted by the Head Teacher of the relevant faculty following a student submitting a written request. Generally the Head Teacher will only allow extensions for school representation (for protracted periods of time, not single events), illness verified by a doctor's certificate or another relevant health professional and in extreme family circumstances.
- If a student wishes to sit an in class assessment or exam at another time they must submit a written request to the Head Teacher (in time for the request to be considered). The student should not assume that the request would be granted.
- In the case of oral components of assessment tasks, if a student is not ready to speak when he/she is randomly selected to do so, he/she will incur a 10% penalty on each occasion.
- If he/she is absent for any reason, it is the student's responsibility to ascertain whether an Assessment Task was notified during his or her absence.
- The one weeks' notice required counts from the date of issue of the notices.

In all cases where a student is unable to perform a task it is his/her duty to inform the Head of Faculty before the due date (except in the case of last minute emergencies). Circumstances which might prevent the carrying out of the task when attended (e.g. an injured writing hand) will be handled as special cases, but in all cases candidates must be prepared to attend at the correct time. Students who have been suspended from lessons may be returned to class if an Assessment Task has been scheduled. This is at the discretion of the Principal and/or Head of Campus and should be arranged by the student. Students suspended from school may apply to the Principal, for permission to attend an assessment. The student will receive zero if they miss the task.

Malpractice:

Malpractice is any activity undertaken by a student that allows them to gain an unfair advantage over others. It includes, but is not limited to:

- copying someone else's work (plagiarism) in part or in whole, and presenting it as their own
- using material directly from books, journals, CDs or the internet without reference to the source
- building on the ideas of another person without reference to the source
- buying, stealing or borrowing another person's work and presenting it as their own
- submitting work to which another person such as a parent, coach or subject expert has contributed substantially
- using words, ideas, designs or the workmanship of others in practical and performance tasks without appropriate acknowledgement
- paying someone to write or prepare material
- breaching school examination standards and supervisor instructions
- using non-approved aides during an assessment task
- contriving false explanations to explain work not handed in by the due date
- assisting another student to engage in malpractice, including communicating test items to other students.

Cases of suspected malpractice should be reported by staff or concerned students to the Head of Faculty, a head of campus or the Deputy Principal. At least two of these people will meet to determine any further investigation to take place, possibly including interviews with relevant students and reports from teachers. If malpractice is deemed to have occurred, a penalty may be imposed which could include loss of marks, a zero mark being recorded for that task or the task being deemed as not attempted.

Conduct During Assessment Tasks

Students are subject to the normal standards of the School as they apply to examinations and completion of assignments and homework. Contravening these standards may result in cancellation of the task and ultimate disqualification from being considered to have completed the course. Appendix B states the usual rules applying to test and examination situations.

Students who do not comply with these rules or who cheat in any way may render themselves ineligible for a Record of School Achievement. In cases of premeditated cheating, e.g. use of "crib" notes, possession of formulae, copying, etc., students may receive zero for that task/test. In case of breach of rules, other than the above (premeditated cheating), e.g. talking, borrowing equipment, etc., at least 10% of the total possible mark may be deducted from the mark that the student attains. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all pages being submitted for an assessment task are stapled together, whether that task be an assignment, class test or an examination. If the supervisors of an examination ask students to submit their transcripts in separate sections each must be stapled. If any pages are submitted unattached and are subsequently lost, it will be deemed that the student has not submitted those pages and will hence not receive any credit for the content of those pages. If a student does not make a serious attempt at an Assessment Task/test he or she may receive a 'N' award in the course concerned.

Appeals

In the event of a query about an assessment mark or other feedback on performance, the following procedure should be followed:

- Consult class teacher. This will probably result in any misunderstanding being dispelled or any error in calculation corrected.
- If the student is not satisfied with the result of the direct approach to the teacher, he/she should make an informal appeal to the relevant Head of Department or senior teacher
- If still dissatisfied the student should make a formal appeal, in writing, to the head of campus.

The written appeal should outline the grounds for the appeal. The appeal will be considered by at least two of: the faculty head, a head of campus, a senior teacher, the Deputy Principal, the Principal

The following will be considered by the committee which will decide any steps to be taken:

- Appeals against decisions made by the class teacher (which are not resolved in discussions between the student and class teacher or head teacher)
- Any situations of possible malpractice.
- Applications for extension or illness/misadventure consideration where the head of faculty considers the situation requires further input.

Where possible, all reviews will be resolved within the school. NOTE: There is no provision for appeals to BOSTES against the marks and grades awarded for individual assessment tasks. An appeal to BOSTES may be based on the adequacy of the school review process and that the conduct of the review was proper in all aspects. BOSTES will not itself, revise assessment marks or grades. Further details about the process of appeal are available from the Deputy Principal or Senior Teacher and are outlined in the BOSTES information.

Missed Assessments

Students failing to submit an assessment will be awarded zero unless, in the case of illness, a doctor's certificate is submitted. If a certificate is not submitted, but the student's circumstances are exceptional he/she may, at the discretion of the faculty head, sit the test or examination at a later date or be given a substitute task or submit the task at a later date.

N-awards

Where students fail to submit/sit for an assessment task in Years 9 and 10 (unless special permission for this is granted by the faculty head) or are showing little or no sign of applying themselves to the program devised by the teacher or he/she is not meeting any of the course outcomes, the teacher will complete the N-Determination form letter and inform the Deputy Principal. The warning(s) are designed to allow students to rectify areas of concern in time for Board requirements to be met. Two warning letters will be sent before a student may be deemed by the school to receive an N-Determination. An appeal process exists, as set up by BOSTES. Students may speak to the Deputy Principal or Senior Teacher if they wish to find out details of this process.

Teachers should also inform parents, via the appropriate form letter, if:

- Year 7 and 8 assessment tasks are not completed by the due date, or
- For Years 7 to 10 any non-assessment tasks are not being satisfactorily completed or tasks are being submitted late or there is concern that the student is exhibiting a poor attitude towards his or her studies.

Late Assessment

Assessment Tasks due on a particular day should be submitted to the teacher at the beginning of the appropriate lesson. Class teachers are not permitted to give extensions of time beyond the due date. Students will be penalised at the rate of 10% (i.e. generally 1 grade) of the total possible mark for every day the task is late. Weekends will count as three days and be penalised 30%. Computers may be used to word process assignments but computer breakdown (of either hardware or software) is not a valid reason for an extension of time. Students should keep a backup of their work and it is recommended that a printout be done at frequent intervals to avoid problems caused by computer failure. If what has been printed is submitted (perhaps with handwritten additions) on or by the due date, it will be marked as the final piece of work. No further submissions will be allowed.

Grades and Marks on Reports and for the Record of School Achievement

Final grade/mark allocation for each reporting period and/or RoSA grade will be decided upon by the head of the faculty in consultation with the course teacher. This will be based on the grades/marks received in assessments, according to the assessment schedule.

The grade appearing on end of year reports will reflect the student's performance over the whole year or course to date, not just the second semester performance. Grades appearing on Year 10 final reports will be the same as the grade submitted to the Board of Studies for the RoSA in that course (except for Mathematics where report grades of A+, B+, C+, D+ will correspond to RoSA grades of A10, B8, C6 and D4 respectively)

The choice of a particular grade is made because it relates to the best overall description of the student's achievements. To ensure consistency in awarding School Certificate grades the following process will be followed:

Step 1:

Each teacher assesses the students in the class using tasks in the assessment schedule, grading and marking according to the course performance descriptors.

Step 2:

At the end of the course the teacher relates the assessment information for each student to the Course Performance Descriptors and determines a grade for each student in the class.

Step 3:

Teachers with a class in that course at the School then meet to compare the achievements of a sample of students at each grade. They may compare typical work produced by the students in each class or their achievements on common tasks. One method of sampling is to compare those students at the top of each grade and the bottom of each grade to determine whether the grades awarded in each class are consistent. Adjustments can be made to the grading patterns of each class, if necessary, in order to ensure comparability.

Students with special needs

The requirements of students with special needs will be met by the provision of appropriate assistance and may require deviation from this policy as it applies to the majority of students. Our support teacher, in consultation with subject teachers, Head of Department, Deputy Principal and Head of Campus, will help identify such students and determine appropriate variations to assessment schedules, tasks and reporting mechanisms.

APPENDIX A: The Common Grade Scale

The Common Grade Scale describes performance at each of five grade levels.

A	The student has an extensive knowledge and understanding of the content and can readily apply this knowledge. In addition, the student has achieved a very high level of competence in the processes and skills and can apply these skills to new situations.
B	The student has a thorough knowledge and understanding of the content and a high level of competence in the processes and skills. In addition, the student is able to apply this knowledge and these skills to most situations.
C	The student has a sound knowledge and understanding of the main areas of content and has achieved an adequate level of competence in the processes and skills.
D	The student has a basic knowledge and understanding of the content and has achieved a limited level of competence in the processes and skills.
E	The student has an elementary knowledge and understanding in few areas of the content and has achieved very limited competence in some of the processes and skills.

APPENDIX B: Examination and Test Protocols

Examination and Test Protocols:

You should:

- Follow the supervisors' instructions at all times;
- Behave in a polite and courteous manner towards the supervisors and other students;
- Make a serious attempt at answering all the questions in the test;
- Place any watch on top of your desk where it can be seen by the supervisor;
- Write in Blue or Black pen except when otherwise advised.

In the case of formal examinations you should:

- Arrive at school at least 15 minutes before their first examination is to start and line up outside their examination room five minutes before the start of each examination.
- Go to the toilet before an examination. Normally students will not be allowed to leave the examination room.

You should not:

- Take a mobile phone into the test room;
- Eat in the test room except as approved by a supervisor. Water is permitted through a clear bottle only;
- Speak to any person other than a supervisor during a test, raising your hand first and waiting until they address you;
- Behave in any way likely to disturb the work of any other student or upset the conduct of a test. A student is not permitted to communicate in any manner with other students during an examination. He/she may not speak to, signal to, gaze at, make facial expressions or generally attempt to distract other candidates. Failure to obey this rule may result in the resitting of a paper outside school hours, the cancellation of the student's paper or an appropriate penalty a decided by the Assessment Committee.
- Take into the test room any books, notes, paper or any equipment other than the equipment allowed;
- Take any electronic device such as an organiser, dictionary or computerised watch into the test room unless approved by BOSTES;
- Deface examination or test papers;
- Remove any test material from the test room.