

Assessment Policy & Procedures

INTRODUCTION

Assessment is defined as any instrument – task, test, prepared assignment, examination, essay – which is designed to measure a student's achievement of the knowledge, skills and outcomes in a subject/course as defined and required by the syllabus. Assessment is an essential component in education.

The Assessment Procedures and Practices of Mercedes College reflect the requirements of the School Curriculum and Standards Authority and covers the assessment of all School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA) approved and accredited courses. The VET programs are under the auspice of and assessed in line with Training Accreditation Council of Australia requirements.

1. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- to complete prescribed work in each subject/course by the due dates
- to complete all assessment tasks described in the Assessment Outline of the subjects/courses they are studying
- to maintain a folio of evidence for each subject/course studied and make it available whenever required
- to maintain a good record of attendance, conduct and progress
- to initiate contact with teachers concerning absence from class, missed assessments, requests for extensions and other issues

2. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

- to develop a teaching/learning program
- to provide students with a subject/course outline and assessment outline at the start of the subject/course
- to ensure that assessments are fair, valid and reliable
- to provide students with timely assessment feedback and guidance
- to maintain accurate records of student achievement and assessment
- to meet timelines for assessment and reporting
- to inform students and parents of matters relating to academic progress as appropriate

3. PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- To maintain communication with daughters about assessment programs and curriculum content in order to support the learning process
- To access SEQTA Engage to find out upcoming events, assessments, content, homework requirements and teacher feedback to assist in improvement
- To inform the relevant school personnel (teacher, Head of Learning Area, Head of Year, Deputy Principal, Principal) of any changes to circumstance, conditions or arrangements which may impact on the learning of a student and the outcomes of that learning
- To respond to advice about course selections, methods of study and application to targeted skill development as provided by teaching staff

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4. ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL AND MISSED ASSESSMENTS

- The College requires that all absences from school be accounted for by direct communication from parents via letter, medical certificate or telephone call. Documents such as certificates and notes may be scanned and emailed to Student Services or the teacher. These will be directed to the Head of Learning Area or Deputy Principal as required.
- If the teacher in his/her professional judgement is not satisfied that the circumstances which led to the student missing an assessment are satisfactory, the student will be penalised (see PENALTIES).
- The College will make no allowances for students who miss assessments due to appointments that could have been arranged outside of school hours.
- If a student misses assessments due to her involvement in school-related activities (such as interschool carnivals) she will be given an opportunity to complete the assessment as soon as practicable after the event.
- Where a student is absent from school due to a family holiday the penalties for missed assessments will apply.
- Oral Presentations/Practicals will be treated as Written assessments and the due date will be considered the first day that the presentations are due in class. If students are required to produce written evidence (notes, research, palm cards) on the first day and are unable to do so, a marks penalty will apply.
- Due to the nature of Oral assessments, not all students will be able to complete their assessment on the due date. If due to time restrictions, a student does not complete the assessment on the first day though in attendance, and is subsequently absent on any day when the remainder of the orals are being assessed, the same conditions outlined below will apply: medical certificate (Years 11-12) or parental note (Years 7-10).
- If a student knows she will be absent due to another co-curricular commitment, she must volunteer to complete her talk/presentation on the first day.
- Where a student is unable to attend school for a lengthy period due to injury or illness, the school will endeavour to provide support for her learning program.
 - If there is insufficient evidence for teachers to make a judgement for students who have had prolonged illness there will typically be more time to complete the set tasks before the end of the next semester. In these cases a U (Unfinished) grade may be awarded until such time as the student has satisfied the requirements of the assessment schedule.
- The penalty for non-submission or non-completion will be waived by the Deputy Principal of the year group on advice from the Head of Learning area, if a student provides a reason acceptable to the College. Acceptable reasons would include:
 - where sickness, injury or significant personal circumstances for a considerable part or all of the period of the 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 the instance of mental health having an impact on completion of assessments, including oral presentations, an official diagnosis with documentation from external professional clinicians are to be provided. Confidentiality will be maintained and advice given if there is a circumstance.

In such cases the parents/guardians must contact the College before 9.30am on the day the assessment task is due. On return to the College the student must immediately provide:

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Students in Year 7-10

A Parental/Guardian Letter of Explanation to Academic Services (which may be submitted through Student Services)

Students in Year 11-12

- A Medical Certificate (in the case of illness) OR
- A Parental/Guardian Letter of Explanation for significant personal circumstances (funeral, car accident) to Academic Services (which may be submitted through Students Services.)

All notifications will be scanned and stored on the Student Information Panel on SEQTA by the Administration Assistant of Academic Services.

Students Sickness While At School

If a student falls ill during the school day and is witnessed by a member of the Wellness Centre or Executive Council as being ill, and is taken home before an assessment is completed in class (ie, test or exam), a Letter of Explanation or Medical Certificate is not required.

4.1 Making up Missed Assessments

If a student is absent on the day of submission of an assessment, she must submit the assessment to the class teacher, on the first day of return to the school. A medical certificate (Year 11-12) or parental/guardian letter of explanation is to be presented (Year 7-10).

A student who attends school on the day a take home assessment is due, but who is absent from the lesson of the relevant course, must still submit the assessment on that day. It may be handed directly to the teacher or can be submitted to Academic Services, where it will be recorded as submitted on SEQTA and handed on to the teacher.

- Making up in-class assessments will normally be done in the classroom.
- Making up missed assessments must take priority over other school activities.
- In-class assessments will be undertaken on the day a student returns to school unless that student has been absent for a protracted period of time.
- Out-of-class assessments will be handed in on the day of return.
- Where a student has been absent for a protracted period of time for a reason acceptable to the College the teacher will:
 - Negotiate an adjusted due date for the 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-weigh the student's marks for the 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 tests.

5. EXTENSIONS

- Generally, it will not be possible for students to seek an extension of deadlines. In cases where work is not submitted on time, teachers will make their judgement on the evidence available at the deadline.
- Extensions may be given at the discretion of a teacher in cases of illness or significant circumstances which occur in the lead-up to the in-class or out-of class assessment. This

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decision may be made in consultation with the relevant Head of Learning Area and/or Head of Year in the first instance and then the Deputy Principal in charge of the year group if further discussion is required. These are to be noted on SEQTA in the Pastoral Care tab under 'Extensions Granted.'

6. PENALTIES

It is important that all students are completely conversant with the requirements of each subject they are studying.

Where a student has not handed in the required task on the agreed date and an extension has not been given, the following penalties apply:

- For take home assessments such as assignments or projects 10% of the total marks for that assessment will be deducted for each day that the work is late – up to three school days maximum from the return date (inclusive). e.g. for a score of 16/20, which is three days late, the student will receive a mark of 10
- No assessment work will be accepted for credit after the third day or after solutions have been discussed in class. A mark of zero will be recorded for that assessment.

Where a student is absent from an in-class assessment and the explanation for the absence from that assessment is unsatisfactory, a mark of zero will be awarded.

Students missing assessments due to family holidays are given no credit for this assessment.

7. TECHNOLOGICAL ISSUES

Failure or breakdown of technology is not a suitable excuse for the non-submission of work. Hand written copies, drafts, and emailed copies can be submitted as a last resort.

- If a student claims that their computer is faulty or inaccessible, they must produce their research notes/drafts or be penalised by as specified in PENALTIES.
- If a student claims that her printer is not functioning, she must print a copy at school either under instruction by a teacher during class or email the work at a time specified and noted by the teacher on SEQTA, or be penalised as specified in PENALTIES.
- If a student claims to have submitted an assessment by email, the teacher must sight the document with the time stamp on the student's mobile device (ie iPad) as proof of delivery.
- Students must ensure assessments are delivered before midnight on the date due to avoid penalty. Proof may also be provided as a printed copy sent by email and signed by a parent.

8. CHEATING, COLLUSION, PLAGIARISM

- Students shown to have cheated in assessed work or in examinations will receive zero marks for that assessment.
- Students found disclosing information in tests/assessments to absent students will receive penalties consistent with those who have cheated.
- Students submitting work for an assessment which is not their own or copying the ideas or words of another without acknowledging that they have done so, and then submitting it as their own will be penalised. At the discretion of the Head of Learning Area in consultation with the teacher, the student will receive zero for the entire assessment or for that part of the assessment where the copying or plagiarism occurred.
- Appropriate referencing/bibliography must be used.

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9. EXAMINATIONS

- Semester 1 examinations for Years 10 to 12 are usually held during the first three weeks of June. No Semester One examinations are held for Years 7, 8 & 9 although normal test arrangements do apply.
- Final Examinations for Year 12 students (trial ATAR exams) are held in the second week of the October break and the first two days of Term 4.
- Final Examinations for Year 11 students are usually held in the last two weeks of November.
- Final Examinations for Years 9 and 10 are usually held within the last week of the school year, depending on the date gazetted by the College as the last day for students. Years 7 and 8 students do not have examinations.

Years 9 – 12 students who are absent from examinations (including Oral or Practical Examinations) should contact the College on the morning of the examination to report their absence. Year 9 and 10 will need verification by email or written note of the absence from parents/guardians confirming sickness or misadventure preventing attendance to the exam. Year 11 and 12 will require a medical certificate or completion of a form confirming unforeseen circumstances preventing attendance to the exam.

When a student misses an examination for reasons other than sickness or misadventure, one of the following will apply:

- the student will be given their final grade based on their class work to date
- the student will be given their final grade using an examination mark of zero
- the student will sit a make-up examination at a later date

Each case will be treated on its merits at the discretion of the Head of Learning Area and in consultation with the Deputy Principal in charge of the year group.

Students missing exams due to family holidays are given no credit for this assessment.

Parents may request permission for their daughter to miss an examination on compassionate grounds (for example, sick or dying relatives overseas or interstate), or because of permanent interstate or overseas relocation, or College, State or National representation, etc.

- In these circumstances:
 - No student, regardless of circumstances, will be given permission to sit examinations early at any time.
 - A letter outlining the student's absence is to be addressed to the Deputy Principal in charge of the year group at least four weeks prior to the intended departure day. This letter needs to give reasons for the absence or the unforeseen circumstances related to the absence.

9.1 Special Examination Arrangements

Mercedes College undertakes to ensure that students with special needs - for example a recognised disability, medical condition or learning difficulty - are catered for in an appropriate way and in accordance with Curriculum Council guidelines. Students whose special needs may disadvantage them in demonstrating their knowledge and skills may require special considerations when undertaking timed assessments. Special examination arrangements may include (but are not limited to) any of the following:

- Extra reading time
- Extra working time
- Extra non-working time
- Use of lap tops or PCs
- Use of a scribe

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- Special supervision

The Head of Inclusive Education with the Deputy Principal in charge of the year group must approve special examination arrangements prior to any special examination arrangements being implemented. Any student who may have special needs, who is not presently approved for any special examination arrangements, should discuss their needs with the Head of Inclusive Education and, if required, the Deputy Principal in charge of the year group, or the College Psychologist.

10. CHANGING SUBJECTS

When a student commences a course unit after the scheduled start date, they are at risk of being disadvantaged compared to others in the class. An application to transfer is made through the Deputy Principal or Director of Teaching in charge of course changes. Change of Course Application Forms are available through Student Services and on SEQTA.

- Generally, the deadline for changes are specified by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority for Year 11 and 12 – these dates will be published through Sorelle and SEQTA.

Where a student changes a subject/course in Years 11 or 12, she will be given every opportunity to complete assessments missed. Recognition of comparable achievement will also be given when the subjects involved are related (e.g. Biological Sciences/Human Biological Sciences, English Courses/Literature Course, and between the various Mathematics Courses and the various English courses.)

- Students in Years 8, 9 and 10 will only be given permission to change elective subjects on the advice of teachers and parents and only if the assessment program and course structures are unaffected.

11. 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 in charge of the year group 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 appropriate documentation will be forwarded to the Head of Learning Area.

The Head of Learning Area will then determine:

- How the marks from assessment tasks at the previous school will be used
- Any additional work, if any, to be completed
- The additional assessment tasks, if any, to be completed to enable a grade to be assigned

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Mercedes College Principal

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