

ASSESSMENT POLICY

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MACKILLOP COLLEGE ASSESSMENT POLICY - STUDENT INFORMATION

RATIONALE:

Assessment is the broad name for the collection and evaluation of evidence of a student's learning. It is integral to teaching and learning and has multiple purposes. Assessment can enhance student engagement and motivation, particularly when it incorporates interaction with teachers, other students and a range of resources.

Assessment:

- *provides opportunities for teachers to gather evidence about student achievement in relation to outcomes;*
- *enables students to demonstrate what they know and can do;*
- *clarifies student understanding of concepts and promotes deeper understanding; and*
- *provides evidence that current understanding is a suitable basis for future learning.*

(NESA 2017)

Years 7-12 Assessment Policy:

- ensures accurate and fair marks and grades for assessment tasks, College reports, Record of School Achievement (ROSA) and the Higher School Certificate (HSC);
- ensures NSW Educations Standards Authority NESA;
- rules and guidelines are adhered to; and
- provides teachers, students and parents with feedback.

Throughout this document Years 7 to 10 are referenced as Stage 4 and Stage 5. Year 11 and 12 are referenced as Stage 6.

Types of Assessment

“Assessment for learning”, often referred to as “formative assessment”, usually occurs throughout the teaching and learning cycle. Teachers gather evidence about students’ knowledge, understanding and skills.

“Assessment as learning”, occurs when students are their own assessors. Students monitor their own learning, ask questions and use a range of strategies to decide what they know and can do, and how to use assessment information for new learning. Assessment as learning: encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning, requires students to ask questions about their learning, involves teachers and students creating learning goals to encourage growth and development, provides ways for students to use formal and informal feedback and self-assessment to help them understand the next steps in learning, encourages peer assessment, self-assessment and reflection.

“Assessment of learning”, often referred to as “summative assessment”, usually occurs at defined points during a unit, term or semester. The assessment tasks referred to throughout this document are usually Assessment of learning tasks. Teachers gather evidence of student learning to assess achievement against outcomes and standards.

Assessment of Learning (or summative assessment) is used primarily to rank or grade students. In Stages 4 and 5 (Years 7-10), teachers use Assessment of learning tasks along with Course Performance descriptors to allocate a common grade. In addition, Assessment for learning tasks are often used to assist teachers to make judgements about which grade a student is allocated.

In Stage 6 (Years 11-12), only Assessment of learning tasks are used to determine a course mark for each student. This course mark, together with the student’s HSC exam result, combine to produce the final HSC mark.

Course assessment tasks should give students opportunities for achievement which are not necessarily presented by a formal examination. Also, our assessment should not attempt to be an estimate of future HSC Exam performance or results, rather a measure of actual achievement in a variety of tasks.

PROCEDURES:

ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS

Each KLA designs an Assessment Program for each course which will help create a profile of the student according to published Board (NESA) Course Performance Descriptors.

In establishing an Assessment Program, it is important that:

- i. the nature of assessment tasks used are appropriate to the objectives being assessed and enable teachers to make accurate judgements; and
- ii. it will generally be necessary to use a number of different assessment tasks in order to ensure that student achievement in all the knowledge and skills objectives is assessed.

ASSESSMENT CALENDARS

Assessment Tasks are placed on the College assessment calendars then emailed to each student, published in the newsletter, uploaded to Moodle and the College website at the beginning of each term. These dates should be adhered to strictly, according to assessment notification, to allow students the ability to plan their time accurately. Please note that the calendars are 'live' documents subject to change.

ASSESSMENT TASKS

There are two types of assessment tasks:

Type 1 – 'IN-CLASS ASSESSMENT TASK' e.g. tests, exams, in-class essays, practical tasks, administered on a given date.

Type 2 – 'HAND IN TASKS' e.g. tasks prepared predominantly out of class and submitted on a due date e.g. essays, research projects, reports.

NUMBER OF TASKS

Stages 4 and 5 – a maximum of three assessment tasks in any one course with the exception of the Mathematics courses which have four assessment tasks.

Stage 6 – Preliminary courses a maximum of three and HSC courses a maximum of four tasks (from 2019). Formal written examination tasks that mimic the HSC examination are capped at one per course, with a maximum weighting of 30% for the Year 12 course.

Each assessment task should:

- be based on syllabus outcomes;
- be a valid instrument for what they are designed to assess;
- include criteria to clarify for students what aspects of learning are being assessed;
- enable students to demonstrate their learning in a range of task types;
- be reliable, measure what the task intends to assess, and provide accurate information on each student's achievement;
- be free from bias and provide evidence that accurately represents a student's knowledge, understanding and skills;
- enable students and teachers to use feedback effectively and reflect on the learning process;
- be inclusive of and accessible for all students;

- be part of an ongoing process where progress is monitored over time;
- allow for a good performance to maintain or improve a student's ranking in the group, while not allocating such importance to one task that recovery from a poor performance is not possible; and
- allow for realistic estimation of performance (i.e. a Z score) in a missed task, based on performance in other tasks attempted, including summative and formative tasks. Estimates (Z scores) should only be used in exceptional circumstances.

ASSESSMENT TASK NOTIFICATIONS

Students are notified, in writing, a minimum of two weeks prior to the task about the nature, due date, time of task, the weighting of the task and the outcomes to be assessed.

SUBMISSION OF ASSESSMENT TASKS

- All tasks MUST be submitted or completed on the DUE DATE and in the format as outlined on the assessment task notification;
- Stage 6 hand-in tasks are due **before the bell for PC** on the DUE DATE;
- Stage 6 students MUST be issued with an ASSESSMENT TASK RECEIPT for hand-in tasks. Make sure you put your receipt in a safe place;
- Stage 6 students are to use their NESAs student number NOT their names on all tasks;
- Stage 4 and 5 submission details will be outlined on the assessment task notification. Failure to follow instructions may result in penalties being imposed. (See penalties below). Note unless it is specifically stated on the assessment task notification no tasks are to be submitted by email;
- If there are exceptional circumstances to the task not being submitted or completed on the due date a student must complete the appropriate forms to avoid penalties.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF AN ASSESSMENT TASK

Stage 6 Only

All students MUST sign for their assessment task notification when issued to avoid any dispute. Each notification document should be kept in a safe place to prove receipt of the task if required. In the case of large cohorts some task notifications may also be emailed to students, in addition to the hard copy distribution.

The following circumstances and scenarios WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED exceptional circumstances:

- **Absence or failure to submit due to family holidays**

STAGE 6 students will be penalised and are strongly discouraged from taking holidays during the school term. Students will not be granted extensions or substitute tasks due to absences related to 'Explained Unjustified Leave' for holidays. (See MacKillop College Attendance Policy).

STAGE 4 and 5 students are strongly discouraged from taking holidays during Exam and Assessment Periods (see School diary, College calendar and Term Assessment calendars). In the event of this being unavoidable the student is responsible for applying for "Request for change of due date" (see below) at least two weeks prior to being absent. Any HAND-IN task due for submission must be submitted prior to the absence. At the discretion of the Assistant Principal, Curriculum or Leader of Curriculum (or delegate), in consultation with the relevant Leader of Learning and class teacher, an In-class tasks may be completed upon a student's return, or, an alternative task or estimate may be given. Failure to follow the 'Request for Change of Due Date' procedure may result in a zero being given.

- Absence or failure to submit a task due to non-school events**
 Stage 6 students WILL NOT be granted extensions or substitute tasks due to absences related to non-school events such as attending a concert of any type.

Stage 4 and 5 students will be required to follow the Request for Change of Due Date (see below) process.
- Late submission due to transport or traffic – Stage 6**
 Students may be penalised for failing to submit a task on time, arriving late or missing an in-class task or exam due to transport issues. Students are encouraged to allow extra time for travel on the day a task is due and the two days prior. For exceptional circumstances the ‘Missed task due to misadventure or illness’ procedure must be followed (see below). Late school buses are an exception to this rule.
- Technical errors**
 Failure of electronic equipment for example devices and printers, will NOT be accepted as a reason for failure to submit an Assessment Task. Students are strongly advised to print material on a progressive basis, and retain all rough work relating to a task, so these may be submitted if a failure of equipment occurs. Students should also keep back-up copies of all work in progress in different storage locations/devices which can be produced as evidence of work in the event of a technical failure. Students are also strongly advised to aim to complete and print tasks well before the due date, so any problems which may occur can be overcome on time.
- Printing guidelines**
 Students are not permitted to email or ask any staff member of MacKillop College to print an Assessment Task. Printing facilities are available in the College library.
- Other non-school related activities**
 Stage 6 students are strongly discouraged from applying for Leave from school, or extensions or Misadventure from Assessment Tasks of any nature for activities which are not considered school business, or a school pathway.

REQUEST FOR CHANGE OF DUE DATE (formerly extension application)

Where a student feels they will be unable to submit a HAND-IN task on time due to extenuating circumstances, or they are aware of a clash of events which will prevent them completing an IN-CLASS task they may request a ‘Change of Due Date’.

This application must be made on the REQUEST FOR CHANGE OF DATE form which can be found on the College Moodle page or Stage 6 students may collect the form from the office. Forms must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the due date (except in the case of funerals etc). Students will then be required to meet with:

STAGE 4 and 5 Assistant Principal, Curriculum (or delegate) or STAGE 6 Leader of Curriculum (or delegate).

Once a decision has been determined the student, parents, class teacher and Leader of Learning will be emailed a copy of the request outcome and a hard copy filed. Failure to follow the ‘Request for Change of Due Date’ procedure may result in a zero being given. (Ensure you have read the Submission of Tasks section above for further information on “Change of Due Dates”).

ABSENCE – DUE TO UNPLANNED ILLNESS OR MISADVENTURE ON THE DUE DATE

Where a task is missed due to illness, accident and/or misadventure:

- Stage 6 students - the school must be notified by 8.45am on the morning of the task. HI tasks must be submitted before the bell for PC on the due date;
- The Leader of Learning will be informed immediately upon returning to school. Students are to follow the procedure below by NO later than the bell for PC.
- STAGE 6 students – Provide the Leader of Curriculum (or delegate) with a Doctor's certificate immediately upon their return and expect to complete the task immediately. If the Leader of Curriculum (or delegate) is not available, you must hand it in to the office;
- STAGE 4 and 5 – On the day students return to school they MUST report to PC then move to the Student Services room and expect to complete the task or exam immediately. If a student misses an exam one day and has another in-class task or exam the following day they are to sit the exam on the scheduled day and complete the missed task on the following day after consultation with the Assistant Principal, Curriculum (or delegate).

Notes:

1. Applications for REQUEST A CHANGE OF DUE DATE should NOT be made verbally, nor should they be made directly to the class teacher. Class teachers will advise students of the procedure for requesting a change of date.
2. Failure to follow the above procedure may result in the loss of marks.
3. Where a task is missed for valid reasons and the correct procedure has been followed, then the following provisions may apply:
 - an extension of time may be granted;
 - a new time and date and/or 'substitute task' endorsed by the Leader of Learning and class teacher may be given;
 - In Stage 4 and 5 an 'Estimate' may be given, but this will only be used in exceptional circumstances. For example, where the completion of a substitute task is not feasible, is unreasonable, or where the missed task is difficult to duplicate; and
 - a "Z" score based on marks gained in previous assessment tasks may be calculated by the Leader of Learning. A "Z" score would only be used under exceptional circumstances. As a general rule, every effort will be made to have a student complete the original, or a substitute, assessment task.
 - It is a NESAs requirement that all set assessment tasks must be attempted to complete the course requirements.

If an estimate is granted to a student it is expected that the student will complete the task so that feedback can be provided to the student.

The final decision as to which of the above alternatives will be applied will be made by the Assistant Principal, Curriculum or the Leader of Curriculum in consultation with the Leader of Learning and the class teacher.

ABSENCES TWO DAYS PRIOR TO ASSESSMENT TASKS - STAGE 6 ONLY

For STAGE 6 students, absence from the College, including partial absence from PC or lessons in the TWO DAYS prior to an assessment task (or one day if due on a Tuesday), must be explained by a Doctor's Certificate or appropriate documentation, unless the absence is due to attendance at a school organised or approved activity. The doctor's certificate MUST be presented to the Leader of Curriculum (or delegate) immediately on return to the College after the absence.

Failure to follow this procedure will result in the student incurring a penalty. The same penalties will be incurred for partial absence, or late arrival, on the TWO DAYS prior (note – this includes lateness to school). If a student is unable to attend classes prior to an assessment task, then it will be presumed that the student would not be well enough to perform to the best of their ability in the assessment task if attempted that day. The student should, therefore, obtain a doctor's certificate on that day, and present it to the Leader of Curriculum (or delegate) as soon as possible.

PENALTIES FOR UNEXPLAINED ABSENCES OR FAILURE TO SUBMIT A TASK

Stages 4-6 deductions:
1 day late – 30% of total possible mark*
2 days late – 50%
3 days late – 70%
4 days late – 90%
5 days late – 100%

*Example – if a task is out of /100 = 30 marks lost

These penalties include weekend days. For example, if a task is due on a Friday and submitted Monday 70% of the total possible mark will be lost. In the event of a late e-submission, for example the task is submitted on a Saturday the penalty will be 30% if the task was due Friday.

After five days all students will receive zero and parents will be notified.

As a course requirement, students will still be expected to complete the task regardless of the penalty incurred.

Failure to submit in Stage 6 will result in a Warning Letter regarding the risk of an 'N' award being sent home.

MALPRACTICE (INCLUDING CHEATING and PLAGARISM)

Students deemed to have cheated during an exam will receive zero marks for that exam. Parents or guardians will be contacted and an interview with the Leader of Learning and the Assistant Principal, Curriculum or Leader of Curriculum may be arranged.

It is a requirement of NESAs for incidents of malpractice in any HSC Assessment Task to be reported to NESAs on the "Register of Malpractice in HSC Assessment Tasks". The Assistant Principal, Curriculum will be responsible for reporting any such incidents.

If a student's attempt at a particular task scores zero, it is a matter for the class teacher's professional judgement, in consultation with the Leader of Learning or Leader of Curriculum whether the attempt is a genuine one or if it is to be considered a non-completion.

WHAT DOES MACKILLOP DO TO ASSIST STUDENTS AVOID MAPRACTICE?

(See plagiarism section in the Preliminary and HSC Assessment Handbooks)

All students in Year 10 are enrolled in the AMOW course (All My Own Work) which is developed by NESAs. The course is designed to cover such topic areas as 'Correct referencing procedures, acknowledging sources and more. This course is compulsory for all students wishing to be awarded the HSC at the end of Year 12, and MUST be completed prior to students commencing the Preliminary Course. The course will assist in giving students the necessary skills required to avoid the potential of malpractice in tasks. This course will be completed throughout Year 10 at times to be advised.

FEEDBACK

Assessment tasks are returned to students within a suitable timeframe. Two weeks is the general rule. Students must be given written and verbal feedback on their achievement in assessment tasks. The feedback may take the form of marks, grades, comments, interviews or a combination of these.

MARKING AND RECORDING OF MARKS

All assessment tasks are marked according to clear marking criteria, as outlined on the assessment task notification, in a fair and impartial manner. All marks for assessment tasks are recorded on the ACCELERUS program.

ALLOCATION OF COMMON GRADES YEARS 7-10

Grades for the College Report and Record of School Achievement are allocated using the student assessment profile and the Course Performance Descriptors as prescribed by NESAs. A description of each grade is recorded on the report when grades are allocated.

YEARS 10-12 UNSATISFACTORY COMPLETION OF A COURSE – RESULTING IN AN “N” AWARD (non-completion of course requirements) ON THE RECORD OF ACHIEVEMENT (ROSA)

The NESAs have delegated the Principal the authority to determine if students seeking the award of Record of School Achievement at the College have satisfactorily completed each NESAs Developed and/or NESAs Endorsed Course in which they are enrolled in accordance with the requirements issued by NESAs.

If at any time it appears that a student is at risk of receiving an 'N' Award (non-completion of course requirements) in any course, the Assistant Principal, Curriculum, in consultation with the Leader of Learning and class teacher, will warn the student as soon as possible and advise the parent/guardian in writing. The written notification will be given in time for the problem to be corrected and will provide advice as to the possible consequences of an 'N' determination in a course on the Record of School Achievement.

The Assistant Principal, Curriculum in consultation with the subject teacher will:

- advise the student in writing (Letter 1) of the task(s) or actions, and the due dates, to be undertaken in time for the problem to be corrected;
- advise the parent or guardian in writing;
- request from the parent a written acknowledgement of the warning;
- issue at least one follow-up letter (Letter 2) if the problem has not been corrected.
- conduct an interview with the student, parent and teacher; and
- retain copies of the warning notice(s) and other relevant documentation.

Students who have not complied with the requirements for the satisfactory completion of a course at the time of finalising assessments, cannot be regarded as having satisfactorily completed the course. The Principal will then issue an 'N' determination and advise the NESAs.

Where a student is issued with an 'N' determination in a mandatory course, that student will become ineligible to be awarded the Record of School Achievement in that year.

Students cannot commence HSC courses until a Preliminary course is satisfactorily completed.

REVIEW AND APPEALS IN RELATION TO ASSESSMENT MARKS, PENALTIES, RANKS OR "N" AWARD APPEALS AGAINST 'N' DETERMINATIONS

Where the Principal has determined that a student is to receive an 'N' determination a Principal's Determination form should be completed and a copy given, together with the Student Appeal form, to any student issued with an 'N' determination in any course, or sent to the student's home address. The Principal must also advise the student's parents or guardians (if the student is under 18 years of age) in writing of their right to appeal against the Principal's determination.

If a student wishes to appeal this decision, the appeal should be made in writing to the Assistant Principal, Curriculum.

The Assistant Principal, Curriculum will:

- convene an Appeals Committee made up of the Assistant Principal, Pastoral Care, the Leader of Curriculum and a Leader of Learning, all of whom cannot have been involved in the issuing of the 'N' award;
- instruct the Appeals Committee to hear and review all evidence in relation to the appeal, including interviews with the student, parent and teacher(s) involved;
- instruct the appeal committee to follow guidelines as set down by the NESAs for the conduct and completion of a College Review;
- form a recommendation from the committee based on the evidence provided;
- inform the student and parent in writing of the decision of the panel; and
- keep copies of all appeal forms, and other documentation at the school.

If the appeal is upheld, the Assistant Principal, Curriculum (or delegate) will send notification of the new grades to the NESAs. If the appeal is declined, the 'N' determination will stand and may result in a student being unable to continue onto the HSC. If the student is not satisfied with the Appeals Committee decision they may request a NESAs review.

Since the appeal is related to the progressive and/or overall reporting and assessment by the College, NESAs will not revise individual tasks or test marks.

If at any time a student believes they have been unfairly treated with respect to the awarding of marks or penalties in a course of study, they have the right to appeal that mark. The appeal must be made, in writing to the Assistant Principal, Curriculum or Leader of Curriculum (or delegate), within five school days from when the student received the mark, grade, penalty or rank. The letter should outline the following:

- the name of the student;
- the course of study being undertaken;
- the original grade or mark awarded for the task; and
- a clear explanation of the grounds for appeal with attached evidence (the assessment item if possible).

When an appeal against the award of an assessment mark or penalty has been received the Assistant Principal, Curriculum will:

- inform the class teacher and the Leader of Learning that an appeal has been received;
- refer the appeal to the Assessment Appeals Committee which includes an Assistant Principal, Pastoral Care, the Leader of Curriculum/Assistant Principal, Curriculum and a Leader of Learning not involved in the marking or implementation of the penalty;
- instruct the committee to review all evidence in relation to the appeal, which may include interviews with the student, parent and teacher(s) involved;
- advise the committee to follow guidelines as set down by the NESA for the conduct and completion of an assessment mark review;
- form a recommendation from the committee based on the evidence provided;
- endeavour to inform the student and parent of the decision in writing, within 10 school days of receiving the appeal; and
- keep copies of all appeal forms, and other documentation at the school.

The committee's decision will be final except in the case of the final HSC rank which after determination by the Appeals Committee an appeal may be lodged with NESA. For further information please refer to <https://ace.nesa.nsw.edu.au/ace-11013>

NON-DISCRIMINATORY TASKS

Where a task is deemed not to have discriminated effectively, or fairly across a cohort, then the task shall be deemed invalid. In this case the Assistant Principal, Curriculum, in consultation with the Leader of Curriculum and the Leader of Learning will:

- advise students and parents immediately;
- design a new task that effectively discriminates the student group keeping in mind the original outcomes notified in the original task; and
- record the new marks in place of the old task on the official digital markbook.

CHANGES TO COLLEGE POLICY

College policy and procedures, as detailed in this book, may be changed in the light of experience gained, and / or as unforeseen problems arise, or to improve the efficiency of the Assessment system. If this occurs:

- a) students will be notified in advance; and
- b) no student will be penalised / disadvantaged as a result of changes made, in regard to assessment marks / rank gained, up to the time of change.

SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR EXAMINATIONS

The school follows the NESA policy for students who require special assistance in completing examinations.

In some cases, students may be unable to demonstrate their learning or competency in a given examination due to a medical condition or a learning difficulty. In such cases special provisions may include a reader/writer, a computer or additional time for the examination.

Applications for special provisions in the HSC must be submitted to the NESA during Term 4 of the year prior to the examinations.

In all cases parents are asked to contact the Assistant Principal directly and early in the year, to request special provisions for their child. A committee will then gather evidence and determine what, if any, provisions will be granted.

STAGE 6 ASSESSMENT POLICY

SUMMARY OF THE NSW EDUCATION STANDARDS AUTHORITY POLICIES / REQUIREMENTS / PROCEDURES

1. THE HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE

- will be awarded at the completion of Year 12; and
- indicates that a student has satisfactorily completed Senior Secondary Education according to NESA requirements.

At the end of Year 12, students will receive an attractive and durable portfolio, designed to contain the Higher School Certificate, Certificate of Achievement, school reports, references and other awards.

Eligibility

The Higher School Certificate will be awarded to Year 12 students who have satisfactorily studied the required pattern of courses. This includes at least two units of a NESA-determined course in English, and at least eight other units including a minimum of one unit of Studies of Religion. Students must also have met assessment requirements and have presented for the HSC examinations.

Requirements

- The required 10 units must include:
 - at least 6 units of NESA-developed courses (courses for which the Board itself sets the syllabuses and the examination);
 - at least 2 units of a NESA-developed course in English;
 - at least 3 courses of 2 units value or greater;
 - at least four subjects; and
 - at least one unit of Studies of Religion.

Measuring achievements

This is done by:

- school assessments throughout each course, based on set tasks, which may include assignments, projects and tests; and
- the Higher School Certificate examination itself, which measures performance under examination conditions.

For each NESA-developed HSC course the Record of Achievement in Year 12 will show:

- the course name;
- the year in which it was successfully completed;
- a scaled examination mark for each NESA-developed course;
- an assessment mark for each course (which is moderated for NESA-developed courses);
- HSC Mark (the average of the exam mark and assessment mark); and
- a performance band – determined by the HSC mark.

Course reports are issued to students for every NESA-developed HSC course (except for Life Skills courses and VET courses) they present in a year.

The single page Course Report shows the name of the course, the assessment mark and the examination mark, the course performance scale (including the band descriptions and the minimum standard expected for the course) and the distribution of HSC marks for the state-wide candidature of that course. The student's HSC mark for the course is shown on the performance scale.

The Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR)

This is a ranking based on a scaled aggregate of at least 2 units of English and the next best 8 units of NESA-determined courses as calculated by the University of Sydney and recorded as a mark out of 100. This calculation is based on a composite of both the examination and assessment marks and will not be included on the Higher School Certificate or Record of Achievement itself but will be available to students on a separate document. Please note that a maximum of 2 units of Category B subjects may count towards an ATAR, and at least 2 units of English will be included in the calculation.

The ATAR is used by most of the Tertiary Institutions for their entry requirements.

Higher School Certificate results

The HSC and Year 12 Record of Achievement Certificate will be mailed to students late in December. Students will receive the ATAR separately.

2. ASSESSMENT

Purpose

The provision of a separate School Assessment in reporting Higher School Certificate results has a twofold purpose. It is intended to provide an indication of a student's attainment which is based on:

- a wider range of syllabus objectives than is measured by the external examination; and
- measures and observations throughout the course rather than at a single external examination.

Such assessment allows due weight to be given to indications of student achievement which, although evident to the class room teacher, cannot be adequately assessed by a single external examination.

What the Assessment is:

1. The assessments submitted by schools for a particular course will measure their students' achievements of the course outcomes by the end of the course in Year 12. They will be based on achievements measured throughout the HSC course.
2. The use of achievement measures throughout a course will serve several purposes:
 - a) It enables consideration to be given to aspects of the course, the attainment of which can best be demonstrated over time, for example practical skills; and
 - b) It caters for "self-contained" elements such as fieldwork which occur as an isolated part of some courses.
3. The assessment is to encompass a wider range of syllabus outcomes that can be measured by a single external examination, but will not assess interests and attitudes.
4. The assessment will also include that content and those outcomes currently measured by the external examination.
5. The school assessments for each course will be moderated on a common scale by the NSW Education Standards Authority so that they can be compared with those of other schools.

INFORMATION TO STUDENTS

The following is an extract from the NESA outlining our duty of informing students about assessment schedules. Points (v) and (vi) are covered for all courses in our assessment handbook, while points (i) to (iv) should be outlined by each individual course teacher.

"Inform students in writing of the assessment requirements for each course before the commencement of the HSC course. This written advice to students must include:

- i) the components and their weightings for each course as specified in the Assessment and Objectives Guide in the relevant Subject Manual;
- ii) the nature of each assessment task (e.g. assignment, test, project, etc);
- iii) an indication of when the various assessment tasks will take place. In addition, there must be provision for adequate notice of the precise timing of each assessment task;
- iv) the mark value of each task in relation to the total number of marks for the course;
- v) details of the administrative arrangements associated with each task (e.g. student absence, late submission of work, etc.); and
- vi) details of the school's policy on malpractice in assessment tasks".

NON-COMPLETION OF ASSESSMENT TASKS

The following context is an extract from NESA on student failure to submit assessment tasks:

"If a student fails to submit an assessment task specified in the assessment program and the teacher considers that student has a valid reason, for example illness or endorsed leave, an extension of time may be granted or a mark be awarded based on a substitute task."

In exceptional circumstances, for example where the completion of a substitute task is not feasible or reasonable, or where the missed task is difficult to duplicate, the Principal should authorise the use of an estimate based on other appropriate evidence. (This should be in the form of a Z-score, as calculated by Accelerus).

Where there is no valid reason for non-completion of an assessment task, a zero mark must be recorded for that task.

If a student's attempt at a particular task scores zero, it is a matter for the teacher's professional judgement whether the attempt is a genuine one".

Implementation:

The cumulative results gained by each student contribute to the final assessment mark gained by each student in each course. In most courses, formal assessment will commence at the start of Term 4 in Year 11 (i.e. the commencement of the HSC course) and continue throughout Year 12.

Faculty policies / procedures that follow at the end of this document show different measuring instruments used for making the assessment in the various courses.

Moderation of Assessment Marks:

To ensure that students are not disadvantaged by the pattern of marks used by their school for assessments, the NESA uses moderation procedures. These procedures will be based on each school's performance in the external exam in the appropriate course and will retain the school's judgement of order of merit and relative difference between students. The procedures will adjust the Assessment to a common scale for all schools to ensure state-wide comparability.

Standardisation of Marks:

The subject policies outlined in this handbook state component weightings which are prescribed by the NESA and are compulsory for all schools. The weight of a component is a measure of the influence of that component on the final assessment. The specified weightings ensure that schools place similar emphasis on the various objectives of a syllabus when determining the composition of the HSC assessment mark.

To ensure that these requirements are satisfied, standardisation of marks will generally be applied. Standardisation helps to ensure that marks allocated in the assessment tasks contribute to the correct weighting of the final mark.

Should any task fail to discriminate between students, the School reserves the right to omit that task from the assessment process or add additional tasks. Such a situation may occur if task results are of a uniformly high or low standard. It will not be possible for students to calculate their final assessment mark. School assessment marks will be moderated by the NSW Education Standards Authority.

Conduct and Attendance:

The Principal will be required to acknowledge that a student's conduct and attendance have been satisfactory throughout Stage 6 as a requirement for the award of a HSC. If a student's absences exceed 15% of available time in any given course, the Principal may give an "N" indicator for that course unless the student can demonstrate that they have achieved the outcomes of the course as outlined in the syllabus in this reduced time.

Failure to Complete a Course

Where a candidate fails to complete assessment tasks to the best of their ability it may be considered a non-serious attempt and the student will be required to re-sit the task. Failure to complete 50% or more of the total course assessments satisfactorily will result in the Principal being unable to certify that the course has been completed satisfactorily.

"N" Determinations:

In order for a student to be considered as having satisfactorily completed a Preliminary or HSC course, they must have:

- a) followed the course developed or endorsed by NESA;
- b) applied themselves with diligence and sustained effort to the set tasks and experiences provided in the course by the school; and
- c) achieved some or all of the course outcomes.

Any student failing to satisfy one or more of the above criteria may be awarded an "N" determination by the school, in which case the NESA will not recognise enrolment in the particular course.

An "N" Determination will only be given after at least 2 warning letters have been issued to the student and parents, and extensive consultation has taken place in an attempt to rectify the situation.

Changes of Courses or School:

If a student transfers to another school, the new school will prepare the final assessments on those tasks completed at the new school. Information received from the former school may be considered. If the transfer occurs just prior to the HSC examination, (after the final date on which all students have completed final entry procedures for the HSC in the latter part of Year 12), the former school will provide the assessment.

NSW EDUCATION STANDARDS AUTHORITY DOCUMENTATION

In keeping with recommendations from the NESA, documentation relevant to courses taught at MacKillop College is available for student reference on the NESA website. Such documentation includes Syllabuses, Course Support Documents and HSC Examiners Comments. Past HSC Exam papers, sample responses and markers' comments are also available for some subjects. Students may need to consult course teachers if these are not available through the library.

Students are encouraged to make themselves familiar with this material in order to gain a greater appreciation of the content and methodology of courses studied, of assessment requirements and examination formats. The Assistant Principal, Curriculum or delegate should be consulted for assistance in this area.