

Senior Secondary Assessment Policy

This policy is provided to all senior secondary students at Thornlie Senior High School and is based on School Curriculum and Standards Authority (Authority) requirements.

All Year 11 and year 12 students are enrolled in a combination of ATAR, General, Foundation and Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificates. Students gain credit for the WACE by completing an AQF qualification at Certificate II or Certificate III level. Students who complete the requirements of Workplace Learning also gain credit for the WACE.

Thornlie Senior High School is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO). All students enrolling in Certificate Courses from any training package will receive a VET Policies and Procedures booklet, which outlines all RTO requirements. A separate acknowledgement form must be signed and returned to the Careers Centre by the specified date.

This policy applies to the assessment of all WACE courses.

1. Student responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the student to:

- attempt all in-class assessment tasks on the scheduled date and submit all out-of-class assessment tasks by the due date
- maintain an assessment file for each pair of units studied which contains all completed written assessment tasks and to make this file available whenever required by the school
- maintain a good record of attendance, conduct and progress (a student who is absent from a class for five lessons or more per term is deemed to be 'at risk' of not achieving the best possible result. A child enters an 'attendance risk' category once their attendance drops below 90%)
- 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 and learning program that appropriately delivers the current Authority syllabus for the particular pair of units
- provide students with access to a course outline and an assessment outline
- ensure that all assessment tasks are fair, valid and reliable
- provide students with timely assessment feedback and with guidance about how best to undertake future tasks
- maintain accurate records of student achievement
- meet school and external timelines for assessment and reporting
- inform students and parents of academic progress, as appropriate

3. Information provided to students

Before teaching starts the teacher will provide on Connect the following documents:

- the Authority syllabus for the pair of units which includes the grade descriptions
- a course outline for the pair of units (or unit or semester) that shows:
 - the content from the syllabus in the sequence in which it will be taught
 - the approximate time allocated to teach each section of content from the syllabus
- an assessment outline for the pair of units that includes:
 - the number of tasks to be assessed
 - the approximate timing of each assessment task (i.e. the week in which each assessment task is planned or the start week and submissions week for each out-of-class extended task)
 - the weighting for each assessment task
 - the weighting for each assessment type, as specified in the assessment table of the syllabus
 - a general description of each assessment task
 - an indication of the content covered by each assessment task.

Note: Students without internet access at home can request from their teacher a hard copy of these documents.

4. Assessing student achievement

At Thornlie Senior High School all students are enrolled in a pair of units. In each pair of units, a number of assessment tasks occur during the year including end of semester exams in all ATAR courses and an Externally Set Task for Year 12 General and Foundation courses.

Each task provides evidence of student achievement. The teacher uses the total weighted mark from all assessment tasks when assigning a grade at the completion of the pair of units.

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 will be provided with the task.

Most tasks are completed in-class. Some courses may include tasks that are completed out-of-class (in which case, student achievement may be validated to ensure authenticity).

Some courses may include assessment tasks to be completed by a group of students. In such cases teachers will use strategies to enable them to assess the performance of each individual in the group. Typically this will be identified in the task (or task brief) provided to the students at the commencement of the task.

Where a student's disability, specific education needs or cultural beliefs will significantly affect their access to an assessment task the teacher may adjust the task in consultation with the relevant Head of Learning Area/Teacher-in-Charge responsible for the course.

School-based assessments are conducted by teachers in accordance with the school's Assessment Policy. At the end of a course unit, aggregate marks are used to produce a rank order of student achievement. Grade descriptors are then used to determine a grade (A-E) at the end of each course unit.

In their final WACE year, ATAR students will also receive an aggregate school mark out of 100 for each course unit.

For courses with practical (performance or production) components, a mark out of 100 may be required for each of these components.

Students are assessed in relation to the School Curriculum & Standards Authority (SCSA) assessment guidelines and awarded grades of -

- A** Excellent achievement
- B** High Achievement
- C** Sound achievement
- D** Limited Achievement
- E** Inadequate Achievement

5. School examinations School examinations are included in the assessment outline for the pair of units. The weighting (i.e. proportion of the final mark) for these school-based examinations varies between courses and can be determined from the assessment outline.

- A written examination will be held in all ATAR courses at the end of Semester 1 and the end of Semester 2.
- A practical/performance/oral exam will also be held in those courses with a practical, performance or oral ATAR examination.
- In Year 11 written examinations are typically 2.5 or 3 hours in duration.
- In Year 12 all written examinations are 3 hours duration except for courses with a practical, performance or oral examination, which are 2.5 hours plus a separate practical, performance or oral examination.
- The examination timetable is issued to students two weeks before the start of the exam period. The examination rules are available on Connect.

If an examination contains an error or questions are based on content that is outside the syllabus, or there is a breach of security the school will:

- remove the question containing the error or that is based on content outside the syllabus, **or**
- set a new examination if there is a breach of security that affects all students, **or**
- penalise the students involved if there is a breach of security limited to only them (i.e. a mark of zero)

Where health issues or personal circumstances prevent a student from completing one or more school examinations, as for all other assessment tasks, the school will determine whether the reason is acceptable and if not acceptable the student will be given a mark of zero. If the reason is acceptable to the school an alternate date will be set or where this is not possible the student will not sit the examination and their marks for other tasks will be re-weighted.

6. Externally set task

All students enrolled in a Year 12 General or Foundation course are required to complete an externally set task (EST) for that course.

The EST is included in the assessment outline for the pair of units. This assessment task has a weighting of 15% of the final mark for the pair of units.

The EST is a 50 minute written assessment task developed by the Authority based on content from Unit 3. It is completed in class under standard test conditions.

Where a student does not complete the EST due to absence they will be required to complete the task at the first available opportunity (generally within two days of the student's return to school). If this is not until after the date that the Authority requires the school to submit the EST marks then the mark will be included in the student's school mark but will not be uploaded to SCSA.

7. Cheating, collusion and plagiarism

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

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

- prepared or substantively contributed to by another person (e.g. student, teacher, tutor or expert)
- copied or downloaded from the internet without acknowledging the source
- paraphrases or summarises the work of others

If a student is believed to have engaged in cheating, collusion or plagiarism, the teacher will refer the matter to the relevant head of learning area/teacher-in-charge responsible for the course. As part of this process, the student and the parent/guardian will be informed of suspected inappropriate behaviour. The student will be provided with the right of reply.

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

- a mark of zero for the whole assessment task, **or**
- a mark of zero for the part of the assessment task where the teacher can identify that the work is not the student's own
 - a student who 'provides' their work for others to claim as their own has colluded, and so the previous two dot points will apply to them as well as to the student submitting such work.

The parent/guardian will be informed in writing of the decision made, the penalty and any further disciplinary action.

8. Security of assessment tasks

Where there is more than one class studying the same pair of units at the school, all or most, of the assessment tasks will be the same to ensure student marks are on the same scale. 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 and retained by the teacher until the task has been completed by all classes. In their own interests, students must not discuss the nature of the questions with students from the other classes until after all classes have completed the task. Discussion of the questions will be treated as collusion and the students will be penalised.

Where the school uses the same assessment task or exam as other schools, the task/exam and the student responses will be retained by the teacher until all schools have completed the task/exam.

9. Retention and disposal of student work

Students are responsible for retaining all of their marked written assessment tasks. The school will retain all non-written assessment tasks (typically as audio or video recordings or digital products). This material is required by the teacher when assigning grades at the completion of the pair of units and may be required by the Authority for moderation purposes.

To assist students, the school may establish an assessment file for each student for each course/program. The file would hold all marked written assessment tasks. Students would have access to this file for revision purposes. The school would retain the files until the Authority has accepted the marks. The written assessment tasks would be available to students for collection after that time. The school would securely dispose of all materials not collected

by the end of the school year. All recorded evidence of performance for non-written assessment tasks would be deleted/erased at the end of the school year.

The school will not use the materials for any other purposes without the written permission of the student.

10. Modification of the assessment outline

If circumstances change during the teaching of a pair of units, requiring the teacher to make adjustments to scheduled assessment tasks, then students will be notified and the modified assessment outline will be placed on the school intranet.

Where a disability, special education needs or cultural beliefs has resulted in the inability of a student to complete one or more assessment tasks the assessment outline will be adjusted and provided to the student and parent/guardian.

11. Students with a disability

Students with a diagnosed disability will, where their disability, impairment or medical condition will significantly affect their access to a particular assessment task, have written and/or practical assessment tasks (including school examinations) adjusted by the teacher in consultation with the relevant head of learning area/teacher-in-charge responsible for the course. These adjustments will be consistent with those described in the Authority's *Guidelines for disability adjustments for timed assessments*, which can be accessed from the Authority website. Adjustments, depending on the individual students' education needs, can include special equipment, provision of a scribe, or additional time to complete the task.

Students who are unable to complete an assessment task because of their disability will be provided with alternative opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understandings.

12. Completion of a pair of units

A grade (A, B, C, D or E) is assigned for each pair of units completed.

Students are required to:

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

If an assessment task cannot be submitted directly to the teacher it is to be submitted to the relevant head of learning area/teacher-in-charge.

Where health issues or other personal circumstances may prevent a student completing an in-class assessment task, the student (or the parent/guardian) must discuss the matter with the teacher at the earliest opportunity before the scheduled date. The school will determine whether the reason is acceptable.

Where the reason for not submitting an assessment task or attending a scheduled in-class assessment task is **acceptable** to the school the student's assessment outline will, where possible, be adjusted and a grade assigned.

- ***Students who miss an "in-school" assessment task must, by the next lesson attended, produce a medical certificate or a parental note explaining their absence. If the reason for missing an in school assessment is considered valid by the HOD/TIC/Deputy Principal the student will not be penalised and may be permitted to complete a similar assessment task at the next convenient opportunity***
- *If a course has an assessment task such as a camp or other practical task that cannot be repeated, the student will receive a zero and parents/guardians notified immediately*
- *If a student has been provided with the opportunity to complete the assessment requirements for a course unit or subject but does not use this opportunity for reasons that are not acceptable to the school (e.g. absence on the due date of an assignment or on the day of a test, late submission of a long-term assessment task) then the student will awarded a zero mark for that assessment task*
- *Extension to due dates must be negotiated with the HOLA/TIC at least 2 school days before the due date. This negotiated due date is a final deadline after which a student will be awarded a zero (0) mark for that assessment. Extension for lateness must be covered by a medical certificate or parental notification of other serious reasons, which clearly indicate why work cannot be submitted on time prior to the due date*
- *An alternate test/task may be provided for students who are absent if the reason for missing an in school assessment is considered valid by the HOD/TIC/Deputy Principal*
- ***Students who do not comply with the course and assessment requirements will be issued with a Letter of Concern as soon as possible***

13. Acceptable reasons for non-completion or non-submission

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

- where sickness, injury or significant personal circumstances prevents a student attending on the day that an in-class assessment task (including school examinations and the externally set task) is scheduled
- where sickness, injury or significant personal circumstances for part or all of the period of an out-of-class assessment task prevents completion or submission by the due date.

In such cases the parent/guardian must:

- contact the school before 9:30am on the day of the in-class assessment task or due date for submission of an out-of-class assessment **and**
- provide either a medical certificate or a letter of explanation immediately the student returns to school

Where the student provides a reason, which is **acceptable** to the school for the non-completion or non-submission 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**
- decide on an alternate assessment task (if, in the opinion of the teacher, the assessment is no longer confidential), **or**
- not require the task to be completed and re-weight the student's marks for other tasks (if, in the opinion of the teacher, sufficient evidence exists in the other tasks completed to meet the Authority requirements for the course and to enable a grade to be assigned)

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). In exceptional circumstances, the parent/guardian may negotiate with the Year Co-ordinator the development of an individual education plan. This plan will show how the missed lesson time will be compensated for and any adjustments to the assessment outline.

Where a catastrophic event (e.g. a pandemic) affects delivery of the teaching program, the completion or submission of one or more assessment tasks and/or completion of the school examination timetable, students will be advised by the school of adjustments to the task requirements and/or the assessment outline.

14. Transfer between courses and/or units

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

At Thornlie Senior High School the deadline for student transfers in Year 11 and Year 12 is *Friday of Week 3 in Term 1*, as all courses are assessed as a pair of units. In **extenuating** circumstances a request for transfer may be considered by the Deputy Principal after this date.

AQF Certificate course are of two years duration. A student in Year 11 may transfer to another certificate before the end of week three Term One. Consultation with the RTO Manager, the Vet staff and administrators is required in these circumstances. Counselling will be aimed at achieving 'completion', and where completion is unlikely or not possible, transfers between certificate courses will be disallowed. There will be no further option of a transfer between certificates in the over the two years.

Students studying a Foundation course can transfer to a General course after the OLN results are received from the Authority.

When a student transfers to a different course within the same subject (e.g. from English ATAR Year 11 to English General Year 11) or to a similar course (e.g. Human Biology ATAR Year 11 to Integrated Science General Year 11), the marks from completed assessment tasks will be used, where they are appropriate, for the unit into which the student is transferring. These marks may 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 to enable a grade to be assigned, the teacher will develop an individual education plan showing the work to be completed and/or an adjusted assessment outline. The plan and/or the adjusted assessment outline will be discussed with the parent/guardian and provided to the student.

15. 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 school with evidence of all completed assessment tasks. The Deputy Principal will contact the previous school to confirm:

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

The head of learning area/teacher-in-charge responsible for the course will:

- determine how the marks from assessment tasks at the previous school will be used
[Note: Where necessary these marks will be statistically adjusted to ensure that they are on the same scale as those at Thornlie Senior High School.]
- determine the additional work, if any, to be completed
- determine the additional assessment tasks, if any, to be completed to enable a grade to be assigned

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

16. Reporting student achievement

The school reports student achievement at the end of Semester 1 and at the end of Semester 2. The report provides for each course:

- a comment by the teacher
- a grade
- the percentage mark in the school-based examination (for ATAR courses)
- the percentage mark (calculated from the weighted total mark)
- certificate courses
- VET/Certificate courses report affective qualities (attitude), achievement of competencies/modules and Workplace Learning results

At the end of the year, students will be provided with a Thornlie Senior High School statement of achievement, which lists the school mark and grade for each pair of units. These are the results, which will be submitted to the Authority.

All final grades are subject to approval by the Authority at the end of the year. The student (and parent/guardian) will be notified of any changes that result from the Authority's review of the student results submitted by the school.

17. Reviewing marks and grades

If a student considers that there is an issue about the delivery of the course, the marking of one or more assessment tasks or the grade assigned for a pair of units they should, in the first instance, discuss the issue with the teacher.

If an assessment issue cannot be resolved through discussion with the teacher then the student (or the parent/guardian) should approach the relevant head of learning area/teacher-in-charge responsible for the course.

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

- the assessment outline does not meet the syllabus requirements
- the assessment procedures used do not conform with the school's senior secondary assessment policy
- procedural errors have occurred in the determination of the course mark and/or grade
- computational errors have occurred in the determination of the course mark

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

If this review does not resolve the matter, the student (or parent/guardian) may appeal to the School Curriculum and Standards Authority using an appeal form which is available from the Deputy Principal or the Authority website. Authority representatives will then independently investigate the claim and report to the Authority's student appeal committee.

If the committee upholds a student appeal the school will make any required adjustments to the student's mark and/or grade and where required the mark and/or grade of other students and re-issue reports and/or the statement of achievement as necessary.