

## **GUNDAGAI HIGH SCHOOL**

### **HSC Assessment Policy and Procedures – 2018**

**The purpose of HSC assessment** is to measure a student's performance and progress in relation to the stated outcomes of the course over an extended period and across a wider range of course objectives than can be assessed in a single examination. In some subjects, aspects of the course are to be assessed but not examined.

**Assessment marks** will be moderated by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) according to the examination results of students in the external examination, i.e. adjusted for each subject group based on the group's performance relative to that of other students across the state.

**Ranking of assessment marks:** When all tasks have been completed, the school-based assessment rank will be provided to students. The final school-based assessment mark is not available to students.

When all HSC exams have been completed, NESA will provide students, via Students Online, with a record of the ranks in all courses for which they are entered.

**HSC results:** Students will receive for each course an external examination mark and a moderated school-based assessment mark. These will be reported separately on the Higher School Certificate and together make up the final HSC mark for the course.

### **Assessment Task Schedule**

There is an assessment task schedule for each subject. The indicative timeline is provided on each schedule following this policy statement. The schedule will be followed as published unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If it is impossible, or of disadvantage to students, to proceed with a task on the scheduled date, **two weeks' notice** of the revised date will be given. Also, if a scheduled task fails to show clear differences between students, a replacement task may be given (with due notice).

Components and component weightings are prescribed by NESA.

### **Marks and Ranks**

- **Marked assessment tasks** will be returned to students **showing the mark and the rank**. Students and teachers should keep an accurate record of accumulating rank as well as marks received over the assessment period.
- **Any queries about a task mark** must be made when the task is handed back and before the mark is recorded in the teacher's assessment record. Once the correct mark has been recorded, it cannot be questioned or be the reason for an appeal. A student does not have the right to question his or her teacher's professional judgment with regard to the marking of the content of an assessment task.
- **Cheating** will result in a **zero** mark for the task involved. Any student proved to have given or received information on the content of an assessment task may be awarded zero marks, and may place the award of an HSC in jeopardy.
- **Missed tasks:** If a task is missed (or if it has not been submitted by the due date) and the student has not provided a valid reason, a mark of zero may be awarded. A zero mark is noted as a non-attempt.
- **Request for consideration:**
  1. Students who know in advance they will be absent for a task must inform their teacher **in writing** prior to the due date, as soon as they are aware of the impending absence. This must be signed by a parent/carer.
  2. Students who miss a task due to an emergency must make every effort to phone the school before classes begin on the day of the scheduled assessment task. They must then see the relevant Head Teacher on the first day of their return, before attending class, to collect and complete an Illness/Misadventure form to apply for a late submission (see form immediately following the Assessment Policy and Procedures - 2018).

3. **If the student's absence extends beyond the date of the assessment task**, the student must contact the school to provide verbal advice about the extended absence. Other independent evidence must be submitted to support the additional date/s of absence. On the first day of their return, additional independent evidence to cover the additional date/s of absence must be presented to the relevant Head Teacher.

4. In all cases appropriate documentation must be provided and the matter discussed with the Head Teacher. Students who miss tasks because of illness must provide a medical certificate.

The medical certificate must be specific and include details of the onset of the condition, plus any additional dates of consultation, together with a statement about how this might be expected to affect the student's performance in the assessment task. A medical certificate only stating 'illness' will not be accepted. (Refer to NESA Assessment Certification Examination (ACE) 11003 Procedures for lodging an appeal). A proforma for this purpose is included following the Illness/Misadventure form on page 11 of this handbook.

• **Alternative tasks:** If the reason\*\* for absence is accepted as valid by the Head Teacher, the teacher may:

- arrange for the student to attempt the task at a different time
- arrange for the student to attempt an alternative task. An alternative task might include similar knowledge, skills and outcomes to the missed task.
- generate an estimate for the task missed, but only in exceptional cases and with the authorisation of the Head Teacher and the Principal, at the end of the course.

Where an advantage may be gained by a late submission, the allocated mark will be determined to maintain rank within the course.

\*\* *Attendance at a sporting or cultural event, or family holiday are not considered to be valid reasons. (Refer to NESA Assessment Certification Examination (ACE) 11004 Unacceptable grounds for appeal).*

• **Failure to complete tasks:** If a student fails to complete assessment tasks worth more than 50% of available marks, the Principal will not certify that the course has been satisfactorily studied. In such a case the student will not be eligible to sit for the HSC examination in that course.

• **Assessment Task Flow Chart:** Students should read the flow chart closely in order to understand the steps involved in the assessment process and 'N' Award (Non Award) determinations.

• **Review of final assessment ranking:** When students receive their final assessment rankings, if they consider that their rank in a particular course is incorrect, they are able to request a review of assessment procedures by the Principal and further by NESA if desired.

The Trial HSC examination rank and the assessment rank are recorded on the final Year 12 report. These results are only part of the total HSC assessment.

### **CHECK LIST OF STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Acknowledge, by signature and date, that you have received and read this 2017-2018 HSC Assessment Handbook.
2. Read carefully the attached extract from the NESA ACE website in relation to attendance and satisfactory completion of an HSC course (<http://ace.nesa.nsw.edu.au>).
3. Attend regularly, punctually and complete all assessment tasks. Assessment task schedules are provided in advance to allow for planning ahead appropriately.
4. Keep a record of assessment marks and ranks.
5. For missed tasks, complete the *Illness/Misadventure* form, with appropriate supporting documentation, to apply for late submission. This must be presented to the Head Teacher on the first day you return after your absence or beforehand if the absence was known in advance. **If your absence extends beyond the date of the assessment task**, you must provide verbal advice to the school. On the first day you return, you must provide additional independent evidence to cover the additional date/s of absence.

## Assessment and the HSC

In the HSC, the assessment mark provided by the school makes up 50% of the final HSC mark. Both the assessment mark and the HSC exam mark are also shown separately on the Higher School Certificate.

A number of principles apply to the tasks which make up the assessment program for any course.

1. Assessment tasks and HSC exams will be **standards-referenced**.

What does this mean?

- Results will depend on students' achievement in relation to predetermined standards and NOT on achievement relative to other students.
- Marking schemes for tasks are linked to standards.
- Standards are based on syllabus outcomes and the HSC descriptive performance bands. The performance bands clearly describe what students at each level of achievement typically know and can do in the course.
- The mark will reflect the rank order and relative differences in student achievement.
- Students will be informed of their final position or ranking at the end of the course.

2. Assessment tasks are designed to measure performance covering a wider range of outcomes than may be tested in the HSC examination, therefore, assessment tasks will not all look the same as HSC questions.

3. Students will be informed in advance of:

- the dates of each Assessment Task
- the type of skill involved in the task
- the syllabus outcomes for each task
- the marking criteria which will be used
- the value of each task within the whole HSC program (its weighting).

NESA has established weightings for the different components or skills to be tested. The table of weightings is included in the Syllabus for the relevant course. All schools use these weightings in calculating assessment marks.

4. Students will be given feedback on their performance in assessment tasks.

5. The HSC TRIAL examination is intended to give students practice in the style of the HSC exam. Each question will show the **marks** allocated as in the HSC exam. These marks will then be converted to reflect the weightings set out in the assessment schedule.

6. The full script of each syllabus and other supporting documents including specimen exam questions and draft performance bands are published on the NESA website. Performance Bands developed by NESA are provided on their website.

<http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/home/>

Students should also refer to Students Online and the 2018 HSC Rules and Procedures Guide. This guide must be read by all students entered for an HSC course.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. Why do I have to complete assessment tasks?

The purpose of a separate school assessment is to provide an indication of a student's achievement based on:

- (a) a wider range of syllabus outcomes than is measured by an external examination
- (b) marks obtained throughout each course rather than at a single examination.

The assessment marks submitted by the school for a particular course are intended to measure the student's achievement against standards set by NESA.

### 2. When do the assessments start?

With the exception of Mathematics Extension 1, assessments for the HSC course must not commence until after the completion of the Preliminary course. Students who have been allowed to enter the HSC course on probation will need to complete outstanding Preliminary assessment tasks concurrently with HSC assessment tasks.

Assessment for the Mathematics Extension 1 HSC course can be based on the whole of Mathematics Extension 1 (both Preliminary and HSC courses). However, assessment for Mathematics Extension 1 should not begin until the school program of HSC assessments for other subjects begins (this is usually no earlier than term 4 of the Year 11 school year).

### 3. What tasks are assessment tasks?

Not all work marked by your teachers is used for HSC Course Assessment. Other work is given to you to develop your knowledge and skills, and to prepare you for tasks that are assessable and to assess your learning.

If a task is assessable you will be:

- i) provided with an assessment task notification in writing. This will contain information about the nature of the task and will indicate what percentage of the total assessment it will be worth.
- ii) given at least 2 weeks prior notice of the due date.

This school has a policy that no:

- (a) single assessment task is worth less than 10% of the total subject assessment mark.
- (b) assessment tasks are to be due 7 days prior to a Mid Course Examination, 14 days before a Trial HSC Examination or after the Trial HSC Examination.

### 4. What happens if I know I am going to be absent to complete an assessment task?

Students who know in advance they will be absent for a task must inform their teacher in writing prior to the due date, as soon as they are aware of the impending absence. This must be signed by a parent/carer.

### 5. What if I am absent when an assessment task is set?

Part of the reason for this handbook is to help you organise and take responsibility for your own progress. If you are absent from school, it is your responsibility to find out what work you have missed and whether the exact timing of tasks has been set.

If your absence is through extended sickness, injury or an emergency, it is then up to you to follow the Illness/ Misadventure procedure in order to have alternative arrangements considered.

Students must make every effort to phone the school before classes begin on the day of the scheduled assessment task. They must then see the relevant Head Teacher on the first day of their return, before attending class, to collect and complete an *Illness/Misadventure* form to apply for a late submission

### 6. What if I do not submit an assessment task?

Assessment tasks assess the knowledge and skills of a student against syllabus outcomes. It is the student's actual performance not potential performance. It is the students' performance in these tasks that culminates in the student's assessment mark and rank.

Your teacher will automatically send a *Course Warning Letter* when a task is not handed in by the due date.

1. If you are absent from an examination, test, or when an assessment task is due you **must**:
  - i) collect an Illness/Misadventure form from the Principal/Deputy Principal/Head Teacher for each task missed,
  - ii) complete the form with relevant details and attach a medical certificate for illness,
  - iii) hand the completed form to the Head Teacher of the subject area of the task missed.

The Head Teacher will consult with the teacher and a decision will be made.

There is an appeals process that is considered by the Principal which is outlined on the form.

If it is due to illness, supported by a medical certificate, or endorsed leave:

- a) The teacher may give you an extension of time
  - b) The teacher may set a substitute task
  - c) In exceptional cases the Principal may authorise the use of an estimate based on other appropriate evidence.
2. If there is no valid reason you will score zero.

### **7. What if I submit an assessment task late?**

Students who submit an assessment task late will get zero.

Your teacher will automatically send a *Course Warning Letter* when you do not hand in a task by the due date.

Assessment tasks not submitted by the due date will be marked for the students in order to determine the students achieved knowledge and skills.

### **8. How will my Principal warn me if I am at risk of not completing course and internal assessment requirements?**

If it appears that a student is at risk of not meeting the course and internal assessment requirements in a subject, a warning must be given.

The Principal must:

- a) advise the student in writing, in time for the problem to be corrected, specifying details of action required by the student and alerting the student to the possible consequences of an 'N' determination;
- b) advise parents/carers in writing if the student is under 18;
- c) request from the student and/or parents/carers a written acknowledgement of the warning;
- d) issue at least one follow-up warning letter (if the student is still at risk of not meeting requirements);
- e) retain a copy of the warning notice and other relevant documentation.

### **9. How can I ensure that I satisfactorily complete my courses?**

A student will be considered to have satisfactorily completed a course if in the Principal's view, there is sufficient evidence that the student has:

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

The Principal has the right to determine whether absences have caused a student to be in danger of not fulfilling course completion criteria. As a general rule, students may be considered *at risk* if their attendance rate falls below 85%. As soon as a student appears to be *at risk*, the student must be warned in writing (and parents/carers should be notified if the student is under 18 years of age). This warning must be given in sufficient time to allow the student to meet the course completion criteria. Should the criteria not be met an 'N' will be awarded and the student may not progress to the related HSC course. Students may appeal against the decision of an 'N' award.

### **10. What is malpractice and what are the consequences?**

The following are considered as malpractice:

- a) cheating during an assessment task
- b) copying from another student and claiming that work as your own
- c) allowing other students to copy your work
- d) plagiarism of material with no due acknowledgment.

In any of these cases you will receive a score of zero for that task and it will be noted as a non-attempt.

### **11. What if I would like to change subjects, courses or units?**

Students studying a HSC course may not change subjects or courses unless the Principal is satisfied that they have satisfactorily completed the Preliminary course in the subject they wish to enter and that they will be able to complete all HSC course requirements, including assessment. Completion of the relevant transfer form is required.

### **12. What if I change schools?**

Students who transfer to a new school prior to June 30th in the HSC year will complete assessed tasks set from the date of enrolment at that school and for moderation purposes, will then be included in the new school cohort.

Students who transfer to a new school after 30th of June in the HSC year will be assessed from assessment information collected by their former school and will be treated as a member of their former school for moderation purposes.

### **13. What if I repeat Year 12?**

Students may repeat one or more HSC subjects within a five year period.

Students, who repeat Year 12, will have their assessment based on work in Year 12 of the repeat year only. Students studying courses requiring the submission of major works or research projects may not resubmit for marking any major works or projects entered and marked in a previous year, without permission from the NESA.

### **14. How will I receive information about my performance?**

For each task you will be told your assessment mark and your ranking in that task. You will receive two school reports.

The **Mid Course Report** will record:

- your mark in the Mid Course Examination for each course studied
- a list of outcomes for the course and an indication of the level which you have achieved those outcomes
- a personal profile of your work and study habits
- your teacher's comment

The **Final Report** will record:

- your rank in Trial HSC Examination for each course studied, as well as your final assessment rank
- a list of outcomes for the course and an indication of the level to which you have achieved those outcomes
- a personal profile of your work and study habits
- your teacher's comment

NOTE: Marks for one-unit subjects (eg Extension 1 Mathematics) will be out of 50, two unit subjects out of 100.

### **15. What if I disagree with my cumulative assessment rank?**

You are not told your final assessment mark but you will be told of your cumulative HSC assessment rank.

Other than when you first receive an assessment task mark, you cannot seek review against the mark awarded for individual assessment tasks, i.e. when your teacher returns a marked assessment task in class that is the time to query the mark.