

Governor Stirling Senior High School



**GOVERNOR
STIRLING**
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Lower School Assessment Policy

Vision

Imagine

Create

Achieve

The school assessment policy has been developed and is guided by the statement of our Values, School Wide Pedagogy and the requirements of the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA).

Values “The Rock on which the School is built”

The values described below form the basis for our school code which defines our purpose and guides our actions as a school community in working with the students at Governor Stirling SHS.

1. Respect

Treat others with consideration, courtesy and fairness

2. Tolerance

Accept individual differences

3. Personal Excellence

Strive to achieve your best. Persevere.

4. Responsibility

Acknowledge and accept the consequences of your actions.

5. Honesty

Be honest, sincere and seek the truth in words and deeds.

School Wide Pedagogy

Assessment should be seen as part of the school wide pedagogy. Lessons should be:

INNOVATIVE

Creating a diverse, exciting and relevant learning environment which provides challenge

ENGAGED

Motivating students to develop the skills and understandings which promote and nurture a learning community

RELEVANT

Creating a meaningful context which connects individuals with real life experiences

COLLABORATIVE

Working together to create a supportive teaching and learning environment with a well-defined sense of purpose

WELL-PREPARED

Student focused planning based on deep subject knowledge and pedagogy with a readiness to be flexible

Assessment Policy

The following guidelines have been developed so that students, parents and teachers are aware of their responsibilities in the assessment process.

1. Overview

Assessment of student work assists teachers and the school in:

- ◆ monitoring the progress of students and diagnosing learning difficulties;
- ◆ providing feedback to students and parents on student performance and guide strategies to improve their achievement;
- ◆ adjusting programs to ensure all students have the opportunity to achieve the intended outcomes;
- ◆ developing subsequent learning programs;
- ◆ reporting student achievement to parents;
- ◆ whole-school and system planning, reporting and accountability procedures.

Assessment procedures must therefore be fair, valid and reliable.

2. Assessment Guidelines

Lower School student assessment is governed by the K-10 syllabus as mandated by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA). For years 7-10 assessment structures must meet the requirements of the K-10 Syllabus.

3. Student responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the student to:

- **attempt all assessment tasks** on the scheduled date and submit all out-of-class assessment tasks by the due date
- **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)
- speak to teachers about 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.

4. Teacher responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the teacher to:

- develop a teaching and learning program that appropriately delivers the current syllabus for the course
- provide students with access to a course outline and an assessment outline (see Section 5 below for details) on CONNECT
- 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 on Reporting to Parents
- meet School timelines for assessment and reporting
- inform students and parents of academic progress, as appropriate.

5. Information provided to students

A Course Outline including deadlines and a clear Assessment Schedule will be communicated to all students at the commencement of each learning program via CONNECT.

Documentation includes:

- a course outline (term, semester or year as applicable) 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 course 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
 - 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.

6. Assessing student achievement

Lower school assessment at Governor Stirling SHS is guided by the six Assessment Principles as expressed by SCSA:

1. Assessment should be an integral part of Teaching and Learning
2. Assessment should be educative
3. Assessment should be fair
4. Assessments should be designed to specifically meet their purposes
5. Assessment should lead to informative reporting
6. Assessment should lead to school-wide evaluation processes

Teachers use the Achievement Standards for each subject and year level to assist in providing feedback and allocating final grades. The Achievement Standard describes an expected level that the majority of students are achieving or working towards by the end of that year of schooling. Some students will have progressed beyond the standard; others will need additional support. The expected standard for each year is described as 'C' or Satisfactory. Teachers use SCSA Judging Standards material, in particular the assessment pointers, to guide them in the final allocation of grades.

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.

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. (See Section 13 for further information on students with a disability). Staff are encouraged to utilise moderation techniques with teachers of similar courses to ensure consistency of assessment.

7. Colours in Lower School MESH classes

Lower school students are organised into classes named as colours (Red, Orange, Yellow, Blue, Indigo or Violet and sometimes Green if student numbers require) for Mathematics, English, Science and HASS (the MESH subjects). The Red class is the Gifted and Talented class for all year groups.

In Year 7, the classes are heterogenous (i.e. not streamed academically) for the other colours. After Year 7, students are placed into one of two pathways. Students are nominated for each pathway based on academic achievement. Pathway 1 (Orange and Yellow) encompasses courses with more academic rigour, and pathway 2 is for students who would benefit from more support to succeed at the WA Curriculum. The Heads of Learning Areas in MESH subjects make the selections after reviewing results at the end of the year for Year 7s and at the end of each semester for Years 8, 9 and 10. There is allowance for movement between the pathways at this time, but movement into pathway 1 is limited by the number of places available in the two classes.

8. School examinations

Year 10 Red, Orange and Yellow (ROY) students complete a two-hour examination towards the end of each semester. Year 9 Red, Orange and Yellow students complete a one-hour examination towards the end of Semester Two only. Blue, Indigo and Violet (BIV) students may complete an in-class one-hour examination at the teachers' discretion. Year 10 Students from BIV classes may be invited to complete the two-hour examination if they have been identified by teachers as being capable of achieving success. Class changes may occur for the next semester as a result of examination marks.

Learning Areas other than MESH may also require students to complete an examination, particularly those subjects which are offered as ATAR courses for upper school. Some learning areas may also include a practical component.

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

(see Section 15 below for details) 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 for an alternative but similar exam, or where this is not possible the student will not sit the examination. In this case, a predicted examination score will be allocated based on the student's performance in other assessments relative to that of the cohort and the performance of the cohort in the examination.

9. 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, parent, tutor or expert)
- copied or downloaded from the internet without acknowledging the source
- paraphrased 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, or an alternative assessment is provided with a negotiated penalty.

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

Mobile phones must be turned off and inaccessible during any in-class assessment.

10. Security of assessment tasks

Where there is more than one class studying the same course 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 at the discretion of the Head of that particular Learning Area.

11. Retention and disposal of student work

The School will retain all assessment tasks for a period of 12 months from the end of the school year. This material is required by the teacher when assigning grades at the completion of the course and may be required by the Authority for moderation purposes.

To assist students, the School establishes an assessment file for each student for each course/program. The file holds all marked written assessment tasks. Students will have access to this file for revision purposes. The School retains the files for one year until the marks have been accepted by the Authority. All assessment tasks are available to students for collection after that time. All materials not collected by the end of the school year are securely disposed of by the School.

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

12. Modification of the assessment outline

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

Where a disability, special education needs or cultural beliefs have 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.

13. Students with a disability

Students with a diagnosed disability will, where their disability, impairment or medical condition will significantly affect their performance on a particular assessment task, have the tasks (including school examinations) adjusted by the teacher in consultation with the relevant Education Assistant and Head of Learning Area responsible for the course. Adjustments, depending on the individual student's 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.

14. Completion of a course

A grade (A, B, C, D or E) is assigned at the end of each semester in the student report.

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.

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 (see Section 15 below for details).

Where the reason for not submitting an assessment task or attending a scheduled in-class assessment task **is acceptable** to the School (see Section 15 below for details) the student's assessment outline will, where possible, be adjusted and a grade assigned.

If a student does not submit an out-of-class assessment task or attend a scheduled in-class assessment task, without providing an acceptable reason, the teacher will contact the parent/guardian to discuss the possible impact of the penalty on the student's grade and negotiate actions to prevent this re-occurring.

Where an out-of-class assessment task is submitted after the due date or is not submitted, and the student **does not** provide a reason, which is acceptable to the School (see Section 15 below for details), the following penalties apply:

- 5% reduction in the mark for every school day late. After 10 school days late a student will be awarded a zero.

Where an in-class assessment task is missed and the student **does not** provide a reason which is acceptable to the School (see Section 15 below for details) the student will receive a mark of zero.

15. 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) 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 9.30 am 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 in that assessment type (provided, in the opinion of the teacher, sufficient evidence exists in the other tasks completed 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.

16. Transfer between courses

Should a student commence a course late they will be at risk of being disadvantaged compared to others in the class. An application to transfer between options courses is made through the Vice 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 course into which they wish to transfer.

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.

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 course 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 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 Lower School assessment policy
- procedural errors have occurred in the determination of the course 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.