

Preliminary Course



Student Assessment Guidelines

2017

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ST PAULS CATHOLIC COLLEGE

Year 11 Assessment Policy

1. RATIONALE

St Pauls Catholic College, in its efforts to promote the growth of the whole person through a planned, balanced and relevant school curriculum, recognises the uniqueness, potential and dignity of each student.

The school promotes and encourages students to learn and to develop skills and attitudes, which will enable them to grow as individuals and to be responsible and successful members of the Christian Community.

Assessment is one of the significant means of inspiring and assisting growth in students. At St Pauls Catholic College, the assessment methods and procedures used are aimed at giving every student the opportunity to demonstrate their talents and abilities to their full potential.

The Disability Discrimination Act and the Disability Standards for Education require the College to ensure that students with a disability are able to access and respond to assessment tasks and activities and as such, any task may be modified or a student given provisions to complete examinations. (If you believe your son has learning difficulties that have not been identified, please contact the Learning Support Team at the College.)

This assessment policy meets all the requirements of the New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESAs) for the awarding of Record of School Achievement (RoSA).

2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF SENIOR STUDENTS

Each student has the responsibility to:

- a. become fully aware of the Board's requirements, the College policy and the assessment program for each of his subjects;
- b. note carefully the schedule of assessment tasks to complete, complete set assessment tasks to the best of his ability, present them on time and conduct himself honestly;
- c. maintain a balance between time and effort devoted to formal tasks (whose marks are used to determine the final assessment mark) and informal assessment tasks that assist in the meeting of course outcomes;
- d. keep his parents informed about progress and problems;
- e. seek help and advice from teaching staff;
- f. keep a file of marked assessment tasks and results;
- g. provide written evidence (e.g. Doctor's Certificate) of reasons for absence from or late submission of formal assessment tasks;
- h. show satisfactory pattern of attendance;
- i. keep drafts, records, notes and evidence of process work as well as completed tasks;
- j. ask for a review of mark immediately on return of assessment task if the need arises;
- k. contact the College on the morning of the task if he is missing an assessment task because of illness;
- l. apply in advance for leave or special consideration.

3. PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT

The use of achievement measures at points during the course is seen as serving three purposes:

- a. It enables consideration to be given to aspects of the course, the attainment of which can best be demonstrated over time, e.g. practical skills.
- b. It caters for any "self contained" elements such as fieldwork, which occur as an isolated part of the course.
- c. It increases the accuracy of the final assessment of a student's achievement by utilizing multiple measures.

The assessment is to encompass all syllabus objectives other than those relating to the affective domain (interests, attitudes). It will include that content and those objectives which are currently measured by the external examination. It should be stressed that the formal assessment will not take account of conduct.

4. COMPLETING A PRELIMINARY COURSE

A student may not commence the study of an HSC course until the Preliminary course in that subject has been satisfactorily completed.

The completion of a Preliminary course is not automatic. A student must comply with the following requirements as laid down by NESAs.

5. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SATISFACTORY COMPLETION OF COURSES

In addition to meeting course requirements, students must have a satisfactory record of application and attendance unless an exemption from attendance or leave is granted.

Set out below are guidelines to assist Principals in applying the application and attendance provisions of the Act.

6. APPLICATION

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 the Board; and
- b. applied themselves with diligence and sustained effort to the set tasks and experiences provided in the course by the College; and
- c. achieved some or all of the course outcomes.

Satisfactory completion of courses is judged, among other things, by the student's level of involvement, the proportion of assignments, homework, etc, completed, and level of achievement commensurate with ability.

7. ATTENDANCE

Students:

- a. whose absences are so frequent that they do not enable the student to reach a satisfactory outcome in a particular course or courses, or
- b. who have a record and/or a pattern of attendance which in the Principal's judgement warrants the withholding of a Preliminary course will be required to justify the award of a Preliminary course to the Board's satisfaction following a review of their attendance undertaken by the College Principal.

8. NOTIFICATION OF ASSESSMENT TASKS

General notice of Preliminary assessment tasks will be given a precise date in writing at least two weeks before the task is due. All formal examinations are part of formal assessment programs in accordance with the information in this booklet, unless you are informed otherwise.

9. SUBMISSION OF ASSESSMENT TASKS

Research assessment tasks or assessment tasks completed out of College are to be handed to the teacher of that subject only, unless that teacher is away on the due date in which case the relieving teacher will collect the class's assignments. Any students not in the class are to hand their assignment in to the Teaching and Learning Coordinator or teacher at the next available opportunity, either when they arrive at College (if arriving late) or at the start of the first day they return from an absence. (Note clearly that students cannot wait for the next time the lesson occurs to submit the task.). They must also complete an "Illness/Misadventure" form. This form can be obtained from the Curriculum Coordinator, completed and returned within two days. Assessment tasks will not be accepted from students unless they have been present for the entire College day on which the task is due. (In other words, you cannot spend the day at home working on an assessment task and then bring it in later in the day). Students who truant lessons to complete a task will receive a mark of zero for the task.

Appointments known in advance will not be a sufficient reason unless prior approval has been made and an "Illness/Misadventure" form has been completed and approved.

10. NON SUBMISSION OR NON-COMPLETION OF TASKS

If a student is away from College when a task is due to be handed in or a task is done in class, he must submit an "Illness/Misadventure" form immediately on his return to College. This form should be used in advance where a student knows beforehand and feels he has good reason for being away from College on the day a task is due.

If the form is not submitted within three days of returning to College, the student will receive no marks for the assignment although he will still be required to complete the task or a substitute task. His parents will be sent an 'N Warning' form notifying them that he did not complete the assessment task. The task is still to be completed, in order to avoid a final 'N Determination', even though the mark will not count. For those tasks requiring work to be completed by a due date, late submission will result in a zero.

Where a student fails to complete an Assessment task a score of zero will be recorded. Students are warned that failure to complete assessment tasks totalling more than 50% of the final assessment mark will result in the Principal certifying that the course has not been studied satisfactorily. (See 'N' Grade award.)

Claims of lost tasks will not be given any special consideration. Claims of stolen tasks will be subject to investigation. A copy of written tasks should be kept. In the case of tasks on disk, hard copies should be kept both during and at the end of the task preparation period. In addition, assessment tasks are expected to be submitted in hard copy form, unless other arrangements have been approved by the Teaching and Learning Coordinator. Consideration will not be given generally for faulty technology. A form for non-submission should be filled in, whatever the reason. Please note:

- a. Missing an assessment task or not handing it in will only be justified if the reason is deemed sufficiently serious. This would generally not include forgetting to bring a task; nor would it include a known absence where an alternative arrangement was not made.
- b. Handing in a "Illness/Misadventure" form is not a guarantee that you will get it approved.

- c. Illness would have to be serious enough to affect your ability to do the assessment task. It would not be an acceptable excuse where the illness occurred briefly near the time of submitting an assessment task for which you had substantial time to complete the task but left it until the last minute.
- d. Illness may be substantiated by a parental note, but a doctor's certificate is preferable. In either case, the note must clearly state why the task could not be attempted. A simple statement that the student was not able to come to College is not sufficient. If there is a pattern of recurring illness affecting submission of assessment tasks, the College may require a doctor's certificate.
- e. The following cases are examples where absence from an assessment task would not generally be acceptable: dental/orthodontist appointments, holidays, driving tests or sporting events, unless there were extenuating circumstances and approval to miss the task was granted before the task took place.

The Curriculum Coordinator will then determine if approval is granted.

Incomplete assignments should be submitted at whatever stage they are up to. Students who do not bring assessment tasks to College on the day they are due must see their teacher immediately. For other tasks, where there may be a perceived advantage for a student to do the task later the student will get an alternative task or an estimate based on previous performances.

11. "N" GRADE AWARD

As one of the criteria for gaining a Preliminary Certificate and RoSA is a student's application, it is expected that all assessment tasks for all subjects be completed on time and demonstrate a serious attempt. If students do not complete assessment tasks, their parents/carers will be notified. Continued non-submission of assessment tasks, and lack of application in class tasks will result in the student being warned that he is in danger of receiving an 'N' grade for that subject in the Preliminary Certificate.

An 'N' grade means the student is considered not to have completed the course. He will not get a result for that subject. A student will not be permitted to study a subject for the HSC until he has satisfactorily completed the Preliminary course in that subject.

12. STUDENT'S OWN WORK

All work submitted by a student for an Assessment Mark must be completed by the student himself. Work not considered the student's own work includes work copied from other sources, purchased from other sources or produced by another person, whether voluntarily or for a fee.

If doubt arises regarding the authenticity of work submitted for an Assessment Mark the matter will be considered by the Teaching and Learning Coordinator, in consultation with the Curriculum Coordinator. Any work submitted for assessment which is significantly or wholly plagiarised will receive zero. Lesser examples of plagiarism will be penalised in the marking of the task. Any information taken from another source, including the internet, must be properly cited. Information regarding the citing of sources is available from the library.

In the case of submission of work which has been completed at home it is highly recommended that drafts/evidence and preparation be sighted throughout the process. It is strongly recommended that students keep drafts/records/notes/evidence of process work for submission if required by the teacher.

Students found cheating in examinations run the risk of receiving zero for that examination.

13. ASSESSMENT OF VET COURSES

Assessment is the process of gathering information and making judgments about student achievement for a variety of purposes.

VET courses are competency-based courses. The Board of Studies and the Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB) require that a competency-based approach to assessment be used and that the records are kept of the competencies achieved.

In a competency-based course, assessment of competencies is **criterion referenced**. This means that a participant's performance is judged against a prescribed standard – not against the performance of other participants.

The purpose of assessment is to judge competence on the basis of performance against the performance criteria set out under each element of competency. A student is judged either **competent or not yet competent**.

A student should be given a fair and reasonable number of opportunities to achieve and demonstrate competence, if this is not demonstrated on the first attempt. Rather than specify a number, it is advised that teachers should continue to provide assessment opportunities as long as it is evident that the student is making effort to progress.

Competency based assessment incorporates all aspects of skills performances, including problem solving and the capacity to apply skills and knowledge in both familiar and new situations. Assessment of competence involves the assessment of skills and knowledge combined.

It is not necessary, nor is it necessarily desirable, for individual performance criteria to be demonstrated separately for assessment purposes. Rather, assessors should adopt an **integrated or holistic approach** to assessment. This means that a number of elements of competency or even several units of competency are assessed together. This method of assessment is encouraged in line with the concept of competence as the integration of a wide range of skills, knowledge and attitudes.

The Training Package sets out detailed assessment requirements – the evidence guide – for each unit of competency and provides advice indicating where units can be assess interdependently. These requirements are set out within the text of each unit of competency included in Part B of each Industry Curriculum Framework Syllabus.

To achieve an AQF Certificate or Statement of Attainment a student must be assessed competent according to the requirements set out in the national Training Package by a qualified assessor.

In general terms, there are two components of assessor qualifications:

- A minimum qualification as a workplace assessor -Certificate IV Assessment and Workplace Training
- An industry specific AQF certificate at the level at which competence is being assessed

Assessment Guidelines

The role of the Assessment Guidelines is to provide the principles and guidance to ensure that assessment is fair, valid, consistent and to industry standard. Teachers should also refer to their Part A Industry Curriculum Framework Syllabus document for assessment requirements.

The full text of the assessment guidelines is included in the Training Package and is on the National Training Information Service (NTIS) website: www.ntis.gov.au

Assessment Procedures

The Training Package User Guides provide guidance on the design of assessment materials and advise that close attention be paid to the performance criteria, range statements and evidence guides.

Assessors must use methods that enable the gathering of valid, sufficient, accurate, consistent, current and authentic evidence for assessment decisions. The process must also be valid, reliable, flexible, fair and cost-effective.

*Valid: The assessment actually assesses what it claims to assess, integrating knowledge and skills with their practical application. For more detailed approaches to Assessment Validation refer to 'On Track' produced by VEAC/TAFE 2002.

*Reliable: The assessment process must be able to produce consistent results, no matter who does the assessment or when the assessment is done.

*Flexible: The assessment should be able to be conducted in a variety of situations. It should allow for diversity in how, where and when competencies have been acquired.

*Fair: The method chosen must not disadvantage any person, with reasonable adjustments made to assessment procedures for people with special needs. Assessment Tasks should be determined with the participation of the persons being assessed.

*Cost-Effective: The process must be as cost-effective as possible in terms of both time and money.

The recommended assessment methods, encompassing a range of techniques, include the use of:

- Direct observation of performance.
- Simulations of workplace activities.
- Oral questioning.
- Practical exercises.
- Projects/assignments.
- Work portfolios
- Student self and peer assessment

Units of competency should be integrated where appropriate, and a holistic approach to assessment employed. Assessors are encouraged to develop assessment methods that enable a number of related competencies to be measured simultaneously.

Conduct of Assessment

Whether in the classroom or in the workplace, assessment procedures must address the key assessment principles of being valid, reliable, flexible, fair and cost-effective.

Teachers will need to develop assessment programs that provide a balance between formal holistic assessment events and tasks and the less formal on-going gathering of evidence to ensure students are competent.

Assessment should be conducted in a non-threatening atmosphere. The assessor needs to establish rapport with students and provide timely feedback. The assessment process should foster communication between students and assessors, and ensure that:

- Students know and agree to the assessment procedures before assessments take place.
- Students are encouraged to conduct self-assessment according to the agreed assessment criteria, to test their own readiness.
- Wherever practicable, assessment evidence is gathered on a number of occasions in a variety of ways and contexts
- During the assessment period, assessors and students engage in feedback and discussion and can seek assistance to have disagreements resolved
- Records of assessment remain confidential.

Workplace assessment is encouraged and indeed preferable for authenticity, where possible. Employers, employees and any service providers need to establish, an assessment process, which meets the needs of the enterprise and is acceptable to all interested parties, before the event.

Assessment Task Requirements

1. Assessment of competencies needs to be ongoing and major tasks should be indicated on the School Assessment Calendar where possible.
2. Assessment tasks must reflect the elements of competency from the Curriculum Framework and Training Package Qualification being delivered.
3. Assessment tasks must provide clear information to students about the requirements for successful completion and the performance criteria for assessment.
4. Formal examinations reflecting the NESA requirements for the Higher School Certificate optional examination are to be included in the school's examination timetable. It is recommended that schools conduct examinations for all VET Framework courses as practice for the HSC examinations and as a basis for determination of an estimate mark, which may then be used in cases of student misadventure. However, it should be noted that the examinations are independent of the competency-based assessment undertaken during the course and have no impact on student eligibility for AQF qualifications.
5. Students are entitled to multiple attempts at a task to demonstrate competence.
6. Successful completion of assessment tasks and events will demonstrate the attainment of the required standards.
7. Assessment results and the number of attempts must be recorded in an assessment register and should be reported to students in writing.

Additional Board of Studies Requirements

To be satisfactory in HSC courses, students must:

- Show diligence and sustained effort in achieving competencies by attempting all competency-based assessment, participating actively in all class activities and attending on a regular basis
- Attend mandatory work placement for assessment of work site competencies.

Using an Assessment Register

Assessment register samples for all Curriculum Framework courses may be downloaded from:
<https://staffnet.parra.catholic.edu.au/vet>

After customising the register for selected competencies, tasks and students, assessment results are recorded in the register at the time of assessment.

The register must record results by elements and not just whole competencies.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

All RTO's have a mutual obligation to recognise AQF qualifications or Statements of Attainment issued by other RTO's. However the principle of RPL goes beyond mutual recognition of formal qualifications and embraces the acknowledgement that students can bring a whole range of skills and knowledge acquired in a variety of ways throughout life, to any learning situation and that this should be taken into account as a matter of good practice.

RPL is a central part of the new nationally consistent system for recognition of training. All VET courses must allow for RPL and all education and training providers wishing to deliver accredited training are required to include RPL as a normal part of their operation.

Board of Studies Special Advanced Standing Requirements for VET

1. A formal RPL process including a range of assessment methods should be used. This requirement will be waived if students provide satisfactory documentation attesting to achievement of identical units of competency drawn from national Training Packages, identical national modules or identical modules accredited by VETAB.
2. Assessment for purposes of RPL may only be conducted by a teacher accredited to teach the course or by a qualified assessor as defined by the relevant training package or accredited by the relevant industry training body.
3. In assessing achievement of competencies in VET courses, the assessor will need to make a judgement according to the criteria set out in the national Training Package or Part B of the relevant syllabus.
4. Advanced standing for a unit of competency or module should only be granted where the student is able to demonstrate achievement of all of the learning outcomes for that unit of competency or module. The student would then be exempted from undertaking the unit of competency or module. (The words 'advanced standing' should then be noted next to the relevant units of competency/modules submitted to the Office of the Board to indicate which have been completed).
5. Unless students are able to demonstrate all the elements of a unit of competency or all the learning outcomes for a module either:
 - They must not be granted advanced standing and they must undertake the entire unit of competency/module even though they may be repeating some prior learning **OR**
 - At the discretion of the school they may be granted advanced standing for the relevant elements of competency and undertake a structured individual learning program designed to provide them with the opportunity to achieve the elements in which they are deficient, conducted by an accredited trainer.

It is acknowledged that there are considerable resource requirements in the approach recommended in 5b above and therefore, in most circumstances, it is anticipated that advanced standing will be granted at the level of the unit of competency only.

Complaints, Grievances and Appeals

From time to time, students or parents may have concerns about some aspect of the course. It may be about resources, facilities, another person, an assessment task or it's result. A grievance is any type of problem and may be about an act, omission, situation or decision that is considered unfair, discriminatory or unjustified. The following grievance procedure will be followed:

- All complaints will be treated privately, confidentially and in a timely manner.
- If the complaint is not dealt with by the teacher to the satisfaction of the student, then the student will be asked to put the complaint in writing and give it to the VET Coordinator.
- The VET Coordinator will allocate enough time to hear the complaint without judgement and will discuss the complaint with the student and teacher about how to arrive at a solution to the problem.
- The complainant will receive a written statement of appeal outcome, including reasons for the decision.
- Further investigation will be carried out if necessary and a record of action and interview kept.
- If the complaint is not dealt with by the VET Coordinator to the satisfaction of the student, then the student will be asked to put the complaint in writing and forward it to the Manager RTO.

Students should be advised to follow these steps if wishing to make a complaint or appeal:

1. Try to sort out the problem with the person involved, but if this does not work then:
2. Put the complaint or appeal in writing.
3. Ask for an interview with the VET teacher and the VET Coordinator, or in the case of harassment, the school's principal and support officer, with notes of the meeting to be taken and agreed on at the end of the interview.
4. A copy of the record of complaint and outcome of the appeal will be given to the student.
5. If the complaint is not settled, the Manager RTO or Diocesan Harassment Support Officer must be approached.

VET Assessment Validation Guidelines

Any assessment validation policy must respond to:

- **AQTF Standard 1 Element 2:**
Strategies for training and assessment meet the requirements of the relevant Training Package or accredited course and are developed in consultation with industry stakeholders.
- **AQTF Standard 1 Element 4:**
Training and assessment are conducted by trainers and assessors who continue developing their vocational and training and assessment competencies to support continuous improvements in delivery of the RTO's services.
- **AQTF Standard 1 Element 5:**
Assessment, including Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) meets workplace and, where relevant, regulatory requirements.
- **AQTF Standard 2 Element 5:**
Employers and other parties who contribute to each learner's training and assessment are engaged in the development, delivery and monitoring of training and assessment.

Workplace Learning

Student work placement is a mandatory component of all VET Stage 6 courses within industry curriculum frameworks. It is strongly suggested for most other Stage 6 NESA Board Endorsed Courses.

Work placement involves students participating in structured training programs at workplaces. Work placement requires negotiation between the school and the employer about the course competencies to be achieved on the job. It involves an integrated approach to off-the-job and on-the-job training.

A key feature of work placement involves in-situ opportunities for student demonstration of industry recognised skills and knowledge which should be reported through a work placement log/journal. Students undertake work placement to gain hands-on training and experience in a number of entry-level skills and competencies that are applicable to a particular industry. This industry experience will be used to reinforce and consolidate the theoretical and practical learning that students receive in school.

Students With Special Needs

Vocational Education and Training has an important role to play in the development of the social, interpersonal and employment skills that are a key component of the educational focus that will lead to successful community participation for students with special needs.

Students with special needs are encouraged to participate in VET courses on an equitable basis. The decision by a student with a special educational need to undertake a VET course should be carefully planned through the education planning process conducted for each student. This ensures that the student chooses courses, which meet their individual interests and needs.

Maximum benefit for students with special needs will only be achieved through careful matching of students to courses and the provision of appropriate levels of support. The course selected should provide realistic occupational outcomes and/or a vocational pathway to further training.

14. APPEALS

A student can appeal their task result in the following situations:

- A clerical error in adding marks. This should be brought to the teacher's attention as soon as possible.
- If they believe:
 - The task was not marked according to the marking criteria.
 - A 'zero' determination relating to the non-completion of a task is not warranted.
 - There is evidence to show that malpractice did not occur.

These circumstances should first be discussed with the Teaching and Learning Coordinator of that subject before being taken to the Curriculum Coordinator. A panel consisting of the Assistant Principal, the Curriculum Coordinator and a teacher nominated by the student will then consider the matter. The student will be notified of the panel's decision.

15. CANCELLATION OR REPLACEMENT OF TASKS

The policy of NESA is that assessment tasks must accurately measure the achievement of students and discriminate between different levels of achievement. If an assessment task does not adequately fulfill these requirements, the Principal reserves the right to amend the weighting of the task or order a new task to be set.

16. SPECIAL PROVISIONS

Students entitled to special provisions (extra time, readers, etc) will be entitled to this in examinations and formal assessments, although in the latter case, this will generally be restricted to extra time. If there are queries in this area, see one of the Special Education teachers. Students who are entitled to special provision for an assessment task should draw this to the attention of the teacher concerned before the task is due.

17. DUAL-ACCREDITED COURSES

Dual-accredited Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses taught at the College in 2007/2008 are Hospitality Operations, Information Technology and Entertainment.

For each of these courses, ongoing assessment is carried out both within the classroom and within the workplace. A record of student achievement of course outcomes is maintained in a Competency Record that is signed by the teacher or workplace assessor. There are no formal assessment tasks for these courses in the Preliminary year, but there is for the HSC year. Students will get detailed information in the HSC assessment book in early Term 4.

NOTE: Copies of the Assessment Certification Examination (ACE) Manual and all current syllabi studied in Year 11 2015 are kept in the Curriculum Coordinator's office or can be found on the NESA web site at www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au.