



Mercedes College
ASPIRE EXCEL LEAD

Years 7 to 10 Assessment Policy

INTRODUCTION

The Mercedes College Assessment Policy reflects the Mercy values of integrity, excellence, compassion and justice.

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process that assists schools to provide students, parents/guardians and teachers with information on student progress and inform future learning. It is therefore essential that assessment practices be fair, equitable, valid, reliable, and transparent. The purpose of this policy statement is to articulate how Mercedes College ensures that its assessment practices meet these requirements.

The policy is provided to all Year 7 to 10 students at Mercedes College and is based on the School Curriculum and Standards Authority requirements.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Approved Absence

Absence due to illness, bereavement or attendance at an endorsed College event. Approval may be granted only if appropriate documentation is provided (eg. Medical certificate or parent letter outlining illness or significant event). Please note requesting an approved absence for an assessment task does not guarantee approval.

Unapproved Absence

Absence from the College with no acceptable explanation and/or no documentation provided.

Standardised Score

Score generated using the cohort mean and standard deviation with reference to the absent individual student's mean and standard deviation for all other assessment tasks in that course. The standardised score will be generated using SEQTA and **adjusted at the end of the course when all other tasks are completed.** In some circumstances the Head of Learning Area may use an alternate method to generate the score in the best interest of the students. In all cases a notation will be provided on SEQTA.

1. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the student to:

- maintain a sound record of attendance, conduct and progress (a student who has attendance below 90% is deemed to be 'at risk' of not achieving the best possible result)
- initiate contact with teachers concerning absence from class, missed in-class assessment tasks, requests for extension and other issues pertaining to assessment, prior to the assessment task due date
- complete all in-class assessment tasks on the scheduled date and submit all out-of-class assessment tasks by the due date
- follow all of the College's policies, rules and procedures in regard to assessment, attendance, sickness, etc.
- check assessed work and school assessment records meticulously and ensure that any queries or issues are raised immediately when a concern arises

2. COLLEGE RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the College to:

- develop a teaching and learning program that appropriately delivers the current syllabus
- ensure that all assessment tasks are fair, valid, and reliable
- provide students with timely assessment feedback and with guidance
- maintain accurate records of student achievement
- meet College and external timelines for assessment and reporting
- inform students and parents of academic progress, as appropriate
- establish procedures and strategies to ensure that school marks and grades are comparable across all classes studying the same course
- consider queries from students in regard to the marks achieved in assessments, provided such queries are made within 48 hours of work being returned. Students must respect their teachers' expertise and experience in this area. Any such queries need to be dealt with by teachers in the first instance, then Heads of Learning Area if required
- Use data obtain from assessment to inform future teaching and learning programs

3. PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the College to:

- familiarise themselves with the Mercedes College Assessment Policy and Procedures
- maintain communication with their child about assessments and curriculum content in order to support the learning process
- access SEQTA Engage to be informed of upcoming events, assessments, content, homework requirements and teacher feedback to assist in improvement
- check SEQTA Engage for assessments if your daughter is unwell or absent from school
- inform the relevant school personnel (teacher, Head of Learning Area, Head of Year, Deputy Principal, Principal) of any changes to circumstance, conditions or arrangements which may impact on the learning of a student and the outcomes of that learning
- respond to advice about course selections, methods of study and application to targeted skill development as provided by teaching staff

4. ATTENDANCE

Where attendance drops below 90% (equivalent to one day of absence in every ten-day cycle), learning will almost certainly be significantly affected. A student's attendance record is therefore an important consideration when decisions are made in regard to assessment of her learning.

It is important for parents to be aware that strong patterns of attendance often correlate to strong student performance, and the converse is also true: high levels of absenteeism often lead to diminished progress, as it is difficult for students to learn the missed concepts.

It is an expectation of the College that parents will:

- organise holidays during holiday breaks only
- ensure students are present from the very beginning of term until the very end of term

Teachers are not able to provide extended tutoring for students who have missed lengthy periods of school time.

5. PROVISIONS FOR SICKNESS AND MISADVENTURE

Absence from Class

Students take responsibility for determining what work has been missed, whether assignments or other work have been scheduled, and for catching up on work missed.

If a student is absent from an assessment because of an excursion or other school-related activity, they will complete the assessment or a comparable assessment upon their return to school. It is the student's responsibility to notify their teachers in advance of any such absence and negotiate arrangements in regard to missed assessments. The College will make no allowances for students who miss assessments due to appointments that could have been arranged outside of school hours.

If a student is absent from class for a prolonged period of time over the course of a year, it is possible that there will be insufficient evidence for them to be graded. Students with insufficient evidence of achievement will receive a E grade (Very Low Achievement). Parents will be notified when a student is at risk on this criterion.

Approved Absence

Absence from a scheduled assessment task in Years 7 to 10 for reasons other than illness such as a significant pastoral issue or state sporting representation must be referred to the Head of Year and Deputy Principal for approval.

Absence from a scheduled assessment task in Years 7 to 10 due to illness or injury must be ratified by a medical certificate or parent note, submitted to Student Services within 48 hours of the day of the assessment. This includes days on which take-home assessments are due for submission.

The student will then be temporarily excused from the assessment but will be asked to complete or submit it, on the day they return to school. If a student has been absent for a week or more prior to the in-class assessment, they may apply to their teachers prior to their return for an adjusted date to undertake the task (usually within 5 days of returning to school). In any procedure, matters of equity, validity and comparability will be considered and applied.

Students should not complete assessments or examinations when they are ill. If a student chooses to sit an assessment when they are covered by a medical certificate/ parent note, or subsequently provide a medical certificate/ parent note, having already sat the assessment, no review of results will be considered.

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5. PROVISIONS FOR SICKNESS AND MISADVENTURE (CONT.)

Students who are ill and/or covered by a medical certificate or parent note and miss an assessment but who then elect to attend a school activity (e.g. sport training, drama rehearsal) on the same day as the missed assessment will nullify the cover of the medical certificate and may be awarded a zero for the missed assessment.

In the instance of an approved absence where the task cannot be completed by the student, one of the following scenarios may be applied as appropriate and at the discretion of the Deputy Principal and Head of Learning Area.

- provide a comparable task after it has been completed by the rest of the cohort
- apply a standardised score.

Please note that if a standardised score is applied during the year, it may change when recalculated at the end of the course after the completion of all other assessment tasks.

Chronic or frequent illness

Whilst the College will undertake to accommodate the needs of students who suffer chronic or frequent illness that provide sufficient evidence and supporting documentation as required by SCSA.

Where possible, and following the guidelines set by SCSA, alternative assessments or assignments will be provided. To ensure comparability, there is a limit to how many alternative assessments can be undertaken. If an alternative task cannot be given then a standardised score may be applied. Professional judgement will evaluate whether the student has had the opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and understandings that should have been acquired throughout the year.

The ultimate decision on the extent to which a student who has suffered chronic or frequent illness can be provided appropriate accommodation in line with SCSA requirements will be made by the Senior Leadership Team in consultation with the Head of Year and Head of Learning Area.

Assessments impacted by a catastrophic event

If a catastrophic event (eg. Pandemic) affects the completion of assessment tasks the college will determine the impact on the student(s) and implement one or more of the following as deemed appropriate:

- Arrange an alternative assessment task
- Apply a standardised score for the task where sufficient data is available

In all the above instances students will be notified of changes and how their achievement will be determined.

6. PENALTIES

Unapproved Absence

If a student provides no reason or a reason which is not acceptable to the school for non-completion or non-submission of an assessment task, they will:

- receive a mark of zero for an in-class assessment task not undertaken on the set date.
- receive a 10% deduction in marks for submitting an out-of-class assessment task the day after the due date.
- receive a 20% deduction in marks for submitting an out-of-class assessment task two days after the due date.
- receive a 30% deduction in marks for submitting an out-of-class assessment task three days after the due date.

No assessment work will be accepted for credit after the third day or after solutions have been discussed in class. A mark of zero will be recorded for that assessment.

If a student does not complete or submit an assessment task and is at risk of receiving a grade lower than expected, the student and the parent/guardian/carer will be advised by the teacher.

Please note that Oral Presentations and Practicals will be treated as Written assessments and the due date will be considered the first day that the presentations are due in class. If students are required to produce written evidence (notes, research, palm cards) on the first day and are unable to do so, a marks penalty will apply. Due to the nature of Oral assessments, not all students will be able to complete their assessment on the due date. If due to time restrictions, a student does not complete the assessment on the first day though in attendance and is subsequently absent on any day when the remainder of the orals are being assessed, the same conditions outlined above will apply. If a student knows she will be absent due to another co-curricular commitment, she must volunteer to complete her talk/presentation on the first day.

7. AUTHENTICATION OF STUDENT WORK

Out of class assessments

Teachers will ensure, to the best of their ability, that an out-of-class assessment is completed by the student. To authenticate that a student has completed an out-of-class assessment task without unfair assistance teachers may use strategies such as:

- teacher monitoring of student progress at regular intervals.
- administration of the task in class with open access to reference notes
- validation of student achievement by an in-class assessment task under test conditions after the submission of an out-of-class task
- completion of the task partially at home and partially at school
- requiring a signed student declaration stating that all unacknowledged work is the student's own
- on task submission, requiring students to complete questions on the research process undertaken (this need not contribute to the mark on a task – its purpose is to authenticate that the student carried out the research required for the task)

Assessing Individual performance in group tasks

The assessment of individual performance in a group task is acceptable when the purpose of the assessment task is to assess the individual's knowledge, understandings and skills while in the group situation (rather than to assess the student's capacity to work in a group). In such tasks, all students within the group will have the same opportunities to demonstrate the knowledge, understandings and skills that the task aims to assess.

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8. STANDARDISED TESTING

Strategies will be used to ensure the marking of the group assessment task takes account of different achievement of individuals within a group. To monitor individual performance on a group task, teachers may use strategies such as:

- teacher monitoring of group and individual progress
- use of a teacher-monitored logbook to document the stages in the development of the task
- peer evaluation

Cheating, collusion and plagiarism

Students engaging in cheating, collusion or plagiarism 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 any work which is prepared or substantively contributed to by another person (e.g. student, teacher, tutor or expert)

submit for marking any work which is copied or downloaded from the internet without acknowledging the source

submit for marking any work which paraphrases or summarises the work of others

disclose information about assessments to others that have yet to sit the task

use or be in possession of any unapproved items during an assessment task

talk or interact with other students during an assessment task

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. As part of this process, the student and the parent/guardian will be informed of the suspected inappropriate behaviour.

If it is demonstrated 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.

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

8. STANDARDISED TESTING

NAPLAN

Year 7 and 9 students will sit NAPLAN in term one. Students and parents will receive:

- an information brochure
- a school schedule of testing prior to the testing window

There will be catch up sessions provided within the testing window for any student that may have been absent. Priority for catch up testing will be given to Year 9 students.

OLNA

Students required to sit the OLN will be notified at the start of the school year. Students and parents will be provided with information and a schedule of testing prior to the testing window for each round of OLN. Year 10 students that are required to sit the OLN will do so in the term two and three testing windows.

Religious Education Assessment

Year 9 students in WA Catholic schools participate in the Religious Education Assessment (previously called the BRLA) in term three. Students and parents will be provided with information and a schedule of testing prior to the testing window.

9. YEAR 10 EXAMINATIONS

A written examination will be held in all core subjects at the end of Semester 1 and the end of Semester 2.

The examination timetable is issued to students prior to the start of the examination period. Students are expected to attend and complete all scheduled examinations. Under no circumstances will a student be allowed to sit an exam prior to the assigned time.

Exam rules and instructions will be provided to the students the week before they commence. It is the responsibility of each student to ensure that they understand all instructions relating to the examinations.

10. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Students who have diagnosed special education needs will be provided with opportunities to demonstrate their achievements within the assessment requirements in the syllabus.

Standards for student achievement must be applied in the same way as for all students enrolled in a course. The College will implement special arrangements where a student with disability cannot complete an assessment task (written or practical) under the standard conditions.

Students with a diagnosed disability will, where their disability, impairment or medical condition significantly affects 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 responsible for the course. These adjustments, depending on the individual student's education needs, can include special equipment, modified papers, provision of a scribe, or additional time to complete the task.

Students that require significant differentiation of the curriculum to cater for their individual learning needs may have the curriculum modified. The Inclusive Education Department will negotiate any variation to the Western Australian curriculum with the student and her parents/guardians, and document the decisions made in an individual education plan. They will also receive a report on their daughter's progress and achievement in terms of the modified curriculum.

11. REPORTING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Student achievement is formally reported at the end of each semester.

Reports for year 7 to 10 students will include the following:

- mark
- grade (A-E with descriptors included on report)
- attributes relating to student engagement
- exam percentage (Year 10 only)
- cohort exam average percentage (Year 10 only)

At the end of the year parents may request information on the number of students in each of the five achievement levels (A-E) if they wish.

Teachers will use moderation and the SCSA judging standards to ensure comparability of grades.

Student achievement in each assessment task will be released on SEQTA for students and parents.

Triangular meetings are an opportunity to discuss progress and receive feedback for each subject.

12. CHANGE OF COURSE

Subject selection for Year 7 to 10 occurs at the end of the previous year. The timetable is built around student selections and as such requests to change electives at the start of the school year will not be considered. Students requiring a subject change for medical reasons (for example injury that renders them unable to participate) can apply to their Head of Year.

Requests to change class for core subjects will not be considered unless for academic reasons. Requests to change for academic reasons should be made to the relevant Head of Learning Area. All subject changes depend on the ability of the College to accommodate the request.

