

THORNLIE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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.