



ST ALBANS  
SECONDARY COLLEGE

# Assessment Policy

## RATIONALE

An effective assessment policy assists in improving student outcomes by establishing common practice across the College and encouraging teachers to further improve their practice. Assessment also becomes a vehicle for improving communication between the College and parents.

## AIMS

- To improve student outcomes by providing a feedback mechanism that encourages students to become more involved in their own learning and to take responsibility for that learning.
- To give students and their parents a measure of the students' progress at a specific point in time.
- To report to students and their parents accurately and comprehensively.

## GUIDELINES

### ASSESSMENT

Assessment is the ongoing process of gathering, analysing and reflecting on evidence to make informed and consistent judgements to improve future student learning.

### Guiding Principles

Student feedback is highly valued by the college. It is an integral part of assessment. Effective assessment and feedback:

- enables consistent comparison of each student's achievement, across each subject at a year level, against standards;
- provides students with regular, high quality feedback that tells them where they are in relation to the expected standards, and what they need to do to or learn to progress to the next level;
- scaffolds students' skills and knowledge in preparation for later years assessment;
- challenges and extends each student;
- enables teachers to adjust the curriculum and their teaching to address each student's learning needs;
- provides parents with a clear understanding of their child's progress against national standards;
- supports students to monitor and reflect on their own learning; and
- requires a written record of student achievement.

## Formative and Summative Assessment

### *Formative Assessment*

Formative assessment is a process used by teachers and students during instruction. It provides feedback that allows adjustments to be made to ongoing teaching and learning in order to improve students' achievements of intended instructional outcomes. Formative assessment involves getting the best possible evidence about what students have learned, and then using this information to decide what to do next.

### ***Summative Assessment***

Summative assessment provides students and parents with information about levels of performance arising from key assessments. Summative assessment may also be used formatively.

### **Learning Activities and Common Formative Tasks**

Common formative tasks provide:

- timely, regular information for students, teachers and parents about each student's achievement in relation to the standards;
- teachers with evidence about what students have learned, and should be used to provide regular feedback to students about where they are now and what they need to do next; and
- a common basis for discussion between teachers, about student work and achievement across classes, against the standards.

Common formative task requirements:

- are linked to the curriculum standards;
- are stepping stone activities that provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding, and that build students' knowledge and skills to successfully complete learning activities and assessment tasks;
- are regularly spaced throughout the semester, every 2 or 3 weeks;
- direct that there are between 6 and 9 per semester, in all subjects at each year level;
- ensure that the first common formative tasks each term are assessed and reported on in the progress reports in week 5;
- reflect the type and range of assessments undertaken across the subject; and
- challenge students.

### **Assessment Tasks**

- Common assessment tasks are used in each subject at each year level, and are given to students across a subject or year level at the same time.
- Each subject or unit at Years 7–11 has a minimum of three graded assessment tasks per semester.
- Assessment tasks for Year 7–11 reflect the type and range of assessments undertaken at Year 12, and are scoped to progressively build the knowledge and skills needed to be successful in VCE.
- Each assessment task:
  - is linked to the standards;
  - requires higher order thinking skills and promotes creativity;
  - assesses subject specific literacy skills, in particular vocabulary, writing, and reading as well as discipline, knowledge and skills;
  - will have a common rubric with success criteria, based on the standards;

*Note: In some KLAs a standards-based marking scheme may be used instead.*

- is assigned a numerical score based on the rubric/marketing scheme;
- is structured to cater for the different range of student abilities; and
- challenges and extends all students.
- The assessment tasks in each subject at Years 7–11 will be scored out of a total of 100 points each semester, with each task being assigned a weighting to make up 100 points. The relative weighting of the individual assessment tasks at Years 10 and 11 will reflect the weighting given to Year 12 School Assessed Coursework (SAC's).
- The A+–UG grade for each assessment task on the semester reports will correspond to the numerical score assigned to the assessment task.
- At Year 9, semester tests will form one of the required assessment tasks in core subjects.
- An assessment schedule that includes the timing of common formative tasks, learning activities and assessment tasks is available for each KLA and year level. The Student Weekly Planner is aligned with this schedule and is published on the Student Learning page of the school website each semester.
- Discipline standards, general capabilities, and cross curricular priorities are assessed and reported on in each KLA.
- Moderation of assessment tasks is used to promote, as far as possible, consistency in teacher judgments.

## Feedback

Connecting feedback to data about student actions and performance will result in more positive student behaviour, and progress will accelerate. Feedback supports students to develop independence as learners. It directs and focuses their learning.

Feedback is clear, descriptive, criterion-based information that indicates:

- *Where am I going?* Where students are in a learning progression.
- *Where am I right now?* How their understanding differs from the desired learning goal.
- *How will I get there?* How they can move forward.

The main purpose of feedback is to reduce discrepancies between a learning intention or goal and current understandings, behaviours or performance.

Feedback is most effective when teachers:

- share and clarify learning intentions – *Where am I going?;*
- facilitate effective discussions and other learning tasks to elicit evidence of student understanding;
- explicitly teach students how to ask for, understand, and use the feedback provided;
- provide feedback that moves the learning forward;
- recognize the value of peer feedback, and explicitly teach students to give each other appropriate feedback;
- know that when students have more challenging targets, they are more receptive to feedback;
- know that students prefer feedback that focuses on progress, rather than simply being corrective – *How will I get there?;*
- provide the feedback in manageable units to avoid overload; and
- revisit the learning intention at the end of the lesson to assess how the learning has progressed, and to provide quality feedback.

## IMPLEMENTATION

- All students know how, when and why they are being assessed.
- Students are explicitly taught the discipline-based knowledge, skills and vocabulary, and the literacy skills they need in order to succeed in each assessment.
- Teacher assessed work is returned to students as soon as possible within two weeks of being turned in, with specific feedback related to how the student can improve.
- Each student receives feedback each lesson.

The implementation guidelines for the policy are further detailed in the College's Assessment and Reporting Handbook.

## EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council In...	September 2016
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