Alstonville High School Assessment Policy
For implementation and review 2006

“Goal Statement”

Alstonville High School
Our community values integrity in all aspects of life.

Values

• A positive, healthy and safe learning environment
• Respectful attitudes and actions
• Diversity
• Pursuit of personal excellence
• Service to community
• Team work
• Quality learning and self discipline

Learning

• Life – long learners
• Creative and critical thinkers
• Effective communicators
• Skilled in literacy and numeracy
• Independent and organised
• Competent and innovative with technology
• Environmentally, socially and culturally informed
• Caring and compassionate

General Policy

Assessment is the process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about a students’ learning. The purpose of assessment is to provide information on student achievement and progress and set the direction for ongoing teaching and learning.

Reporting is the process of communicating information about student achievement and progress.

Responsibility

The role of teachers is to use assessment to:
• Support student learning and achievement
• Monitor student learning
• Diagnose student needs
• Evaluate the effectiveness of our teaching programs
• Inform student/parents about progress, and
• Assist accountability

What is effective assessment practice?
• It is clear and directly linked to the syllabus outcomes
• It is integral to teaching and learning
• Ensures Life Skills students and those needing special provisions are appropriately supported ie; Life Skills students are offered alternative assessment tasks
• It is balanced, comprehensive ,varied and relevant to recent learning experiences
• It is valid, fair and reliable
• It engages the learner
• It values teacher judgement
• It is time efficient and manageable
• It recognises individual achievement and progress
• It involves a whole school approach
• No more than 50% of assessment tasks should be in the form of across the year formal exams
• Class placement will be based on a cumulative year assessment
• Students are given a week’s notice of impending tasks.
• It is consistent with regard to penalty for lateness

Stage 4 – Penalty 10% per day for five days then zero. Expectation that task must be submitted.
Stage 5 & 6 – 20% per day for five days then zero (see details appendix 1)

Each teaching faculty at Alstonville High School has a faculty assessment policy that builds more specifically on this whole school policy. The faculty policies also describe the processes used to determine class placement for different year groups.

Alstonville High School publishes Assessment Information Booklets for students in Year 7, 10, 11 and 12. These support the above beliefs. The booklets inform students and parents in general terms how each individual will be assessed in each subject.

Alstonville High School has pro-forma for advising students and parents about upcoming assignments. Pro-forma will include information such as dates, faculty, teacher, topic and assignment information, marking guidelines.

Alstonville High School has developed outcome based reporting that is completed by staff at the end of each semester. It has been developed as a whole-school approach. The outcomes are linked to assessment and are then reported on each semester. The reports are expressed in plain English and through consultation with the community are constantly being reviewed in order to enable parents to know how their children are progressing. Reports will be semester based.

The task of students is to:
• Attempt all tasks to the best of their ability
• Be aware of the assessment schedule and seek assistance if needed
• Understand assessment requirements and rules

Parents and carers can help by:
• Understanding assessment processes
• Being aware of assessment booklets and requirements
• Attending parent /teacher information evenings
• Encouraging students to do their best
• Contacting the school when they need assistance
Appendix 1
ASSESSMENT POLICY
Preliminary Course
(Students & Parents)

1. Students who are absent from **scheduled lessons on the same day and/or on the day prior to an assessment task** will be penalised 20% of the value of the task. The penalty is subject to the Principal’s discretion or the production of a medical certificate. All assessment tasks will be submitted no later than 9.00am on the due date with the exception of ‘in-class’ assessment tasks or exams.

2. Inability or failure to complete an assessable task:
   (a) Where the result of an assessment task has been affected for a valid reason by a satisfactorily explained absence or other misadventure preventing the presentation of all or part of an assessment task, a mark may be awarded on a substitute task, or in exceptional circumstances, an estimate based on other evidence may be given.
   (b) Invalid reasons for absence from an assessment task will result in a mark of zero being awarded.
   (c) Penalty for late submission or non-completion of assessment tasks: (no satisfactory explanation) 20% of the value of the task per calendar day (5 days late = zero). The task may still have to be completed to satisfy the requirements of the course. The decision is subject to the Principal’s discretion or the production of a medical certificate.
   (d) Refusal to complete a task will result in a zero award and could jeopardise the student’s having ‘satisfactorily studied the course’. ”A warning letter will be sent”
   (e) Cheating, copying, plagiarism, presentation of another student’s work could result in a zero mark.
   (f) Where a student has been given zero marks for assessment tasks totalling 50% or more of the final course assessment mark, their assessment will be zero. The Principal will then clarify that the course has not been studied satisfactorily.
   (g) Any student missing a formal examination in any course, irrespective of whether the examination is completed at a later date, will have the examination mark shown on the report as an estimate. The student should still be ranked with the other students in the course and the rank shown on the report.
   (h) Should a task prove to be invalid or fail to discriminate, a replacement task may be set by the faculty involved.
   (i) Under no circumstances may a student attempt a formal examination **before** the scheduled time without express approval of the Principal.
   (j) Application for extension of time for the completion of a task must be made on the appropriate form before the due date.
Appendix 2
ASSESSMENT POLICY
H.S.C. COURSE
(Students & Parents)

PREAMBLE:

School based assessment is intended to provide an indication of a student’s attainment based on:
(a) a wider range of syllabus outcomes than can be measured by a single external examination,
(b) measures and observations obtained throughout the course rather than at a single examination.

Such assessment permits due weight to be given to a student achievement which is evident to the class teacher but is difficult to be assessed by a single external examination. Assessment throughout the course serves three purposes:
(a) it enables consideration to be given to all outcomes, the attainment of which can be best demonstrated over time e.g. practical skills, oral work, group work.
(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 by utilising multiple measures.

Eligibility for H.S.C. Study

To be eligible for the award of the Higher School Certificate students must:

(a) Have gained the School Certificate or such other qualifications as the Board of Studies considers satisfactory.
(b) Have attended a government school, an accredited non-government school, a school outside New South Wales recognised by the Board or a college of TAFE;
(c) Have satisfactorily completed courses that comprise the pattern of study required by the Board for the award of the Higher School Certificate;
(d) Sit for and make a serious attempt at the requisite Higher School Certificate external examinations.

Requirements for the Award of the H.S.C.

If you wish to be awarded the H.S.C:
- You must have satisfactorily completed courses that meet the pattern of study required by the Board of Studies for the award of the Higher School Certificate. This includes the completion of the practical, oral or project works required for specific courses and the assessment requirements for each course.
- You must have sat for and made a serious attempt at the Higher School Certificate examinations.
- You must study a minimum of 12 units in the Preliminary course and a minimum of 10 units in the H.S.C. course. Both the Preliminary course and the H.S.C. course must include the following:
  - At least 6 units from Board Developed Courses including at least 2 units of a Board Developed Course in English
  - At least three courses of 2 units value or greater
  - At least four subjects
At most 6 units of courses in Science can contribute to Higher School Certificate eligibility.

- The Board of Studies publication, *Studying for the New South Wales Higher School Certificate – An Information Booklet for Year 10 Students*, contains all the H.S.C. rules and requirements you will need to know.

- If you wish to receive the Universities Admission Index (UAI), you must study a minimum of 10 Board Developed units in the H.S.C. Course. The booklet, *University Entry Requirements 2003 Year 10 Booklet*, published by UAC and available June, 2000, will contain important information about entry to university courses, course prerequisites and other information to assist your choice of H.S.C. courses for study in Years 11 and 12 in preparation for university entry.

- If you do not wish to receive a UAI, the rest of your courses may be made up from Board Endorsed Courses once you have studied six units from Board Developed Courses.

Satisfactory Completion of a Course

The following course completion criteria refer to both Preliminary and H.S.C. courses.

Course Completion Criteria

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 school; and  
(c) achieved some or all of the course outcomes.

GENERAL POLICY:

1. Four formal examinations will be conducted during Year 11 and 12 as follows:
   (a) Preliminary Course Half Yearly examination Term 2 Year 11 in some courses.*  
   (b) Preliminary Course Yearly examination Term 3 Year 11.  
   (c) H.S.C. Course Half Yearly examination Term 2 Year 12 in most courses.*  
   (d) Trial H.S.C. Term 3 Year 12.
2. Assessment of H.S.C. students will commence on the first day of Term 4 in Year 11.
3. There will be two assessment periods during the H.S.C. Course.
4. A component of the assessment will be derived from formal examinations.
5. Grouping of students for assessment:
   (a) Where parallel classes exist assessment strategies such as common tasks and/or moderation will be designed so that comparisons can be made for purposes of assessment as part of one course.
   (b) Extension students will be assessed with the 2 Unit students as a single group on the ‘common’ component of the course.
   (c) The ‘additional’ component of extension courses will be assessed without reference to other courses in the subject.
(d) No attempt will be made to relate the achievement of students in 2 Unit, 2 Unit Z or 2 Unit (other) courses within a subject.

(e) In Mathematics, the extension 1 and 2 Mathematics will be assessed in a single group on the (additional) components. The Extension 2 Mathematics students will be assessed on the Extension 2 (additional) component of the course without reference to other course candidature on the subject.

6. Assessment tasks:
   (a) The actual weighting will be stated early in the assessment policy for each course.
   (b) An attempt will be made to limit the number of assessment tasks completed in one week, by any one student, to two.
   (c) Formal examinations should have the same time duration and be of a similar format to the H.S.C.

7. Assessment will not:
   (a) Take into account student conduct.
   (b) Compensate for such factors as extended illness, misadventure or domestic problems affecting the preparation or performance of a student during the course.

* For specific details re Assessment Schedule for each course.

8. The assessment co-ordinator, prior to each assessment period, will draw up a schedule of assessment tasks across all subject areas, mindful that:
   (a) The various School Assessment policies are being adhered to.
   (b) Students are not being over assessed.
   (c) Undue pressure is not being placed on any group of students.
   (d) A fair balance exists between the various faculties.

   This Schedule of Assessment Tasks will be issued to all students prior to the start of each assessment period.

9. Students who are absent from scheduled lessons on the same day and/or on the day prior to an assessment task will be penalised 20% of the value of the task. The penalty is subject to the Principal’s discretion or the production of a medical certificate. All assessment tasks will be submitted no later than 9.00am on the due date with the exception of ‘in-class’ assessment tasks or exams.

10. For each assessment task, each student will be given a rank (which could be a mark) in the course. Students will be kept informed of their progressive ranking’s, care being taken at all times not to infringe on the privacy of that student or other students in the course.

11. For students who transfer to another school and that school requests assessment information, all available assessment information in terms of ranks, will be forwarded to their new school.

12. Students who transfer to Alstonville High School will be ranked in the courses using available tasks completed at this school and the teacher’s professional judgement. Because assessment is a rank within the course in this school, ranking’s from other schools are of little significance.

13. Reporting on student’s progress:
   (a) Four student progress reports will be issued:
      Half Yearly and Yearly in the Preliminary Course (Terms 1, 2 and 3 of Year 11).
      Half Yearly and Trial H.S.C. in Year 12.
   (b) For the purpose of reporting (and ranking for assessment) a student studying an extension course will be regarded as studying two separate courses; a 2 Unit course and a extension course in that subject. Extension English and Mathematics students will be regarded as studying a further extension course.
   (c) 2 Unit positions in course will include any extension students studying that subject. Extension 1 Mathematics positions in course will include any extension 2 students.
All reports will show an examination mark obtained from a formal examination or formal Assessment Tasks and the appropriate position (rank) in each course.

Where a student completes a formal examination at a later date than the scheduled time, or an estimate is given, the report examination mark and rank will be shown as an ‘estimate’. The student will still be positioned among other students in this course.

In the Year 12 examinations the student’s progressive assessment rank (position) will be shown for each course.

14. Inability or failure to complete an assessable task:
(a) Where the result of an assessment task has been affected for a valid reason by a satisfactorily explained absence or other misadventure preventing the presentation of all or part of an assessment task, a mark may be awarded on a substitute task, or in exceptional circumstances, an estimate based on other evidence may be given.
(b) Invalid reasons for absence from an assessment task will result in a mark of zero being awarded.
(c) Penalty for late submission or non-completion of assessment tasks: (no satisfactory explanation) 20% of the value of the task per calendar day (5 days late = zero). The task may still have to be completed to satisfy the requirements of the course. The decision is subject to the Principal’s discretion or the production of a medical certificate.
(d) Refusal to complete a task will result in a zero award and could jeopardise the student’s having ‘satisfactorily studied the course’.
(e) Cheating, copying, plagiarism, presentation of another student’s work could result in a zero mark.
(f) Where a student has been given zero marks for assessment tasks totalling 50% or more of the final course assessment mark, their assessment will be zero. The Principal will then clarify that the course has not been studied satisfactorily.
(g) Any student missing a formal examination in any course, irrespective of whether the examination is completed at a later date, will have the examination mark shown on the report as an estimate. The student should still be ranked with the other students in the course and the rank shown on the report.
(h) Should a task prove to be invalid or fail to discriminate, a replacement task may be set by the faculty involved.
(i) Under no circumstances may a student attempt a formal examination before the scheduled time without express approval of the Principal.
(j) Application for extension of time for the completion of a task must be made on the appropriate form before the due date.

15. Standards Referencing:
Students will be assessed according to their achievements against course standards. This is termed a standards referenced approach.

16. Where requested, a student will be provided with their order of merit in each of their courses after the last H.S.C. examination.

17. Student’s may appeal against the school’s order of merit in any course where they consider their rank order is not consistent with their expectations.
(a) Any appeal must be made before the closing date for appeals as determined by the Board.
(b) The appeal committee will be comprised of the Principal, the assessment co-ordinator, and the subject head of the department concerned.
(c) The appeal committee will conduct a review of school assessments initiated by the student.
(d) Any review (including any second review) will be finalised prior to the end of the school year.
(e) In reviewing assessments the committee will ascertain that:
   (i) The weights specified by the Board’s requirements as detailed in the Subject Assessments Guide have been followed by the subject faculty.
(ii) The procedures used by the subjects faculty for determining the final assessment mark conforms with its stated policy. In particular, the weights used for the various assessment tasks should be consistent with those specified in the assessment policy.

(iii) There are not computation errors or other clerical errors in the determination of the assessment mark.

(f) The teacher’s judgement of worth of individual assessment tasks as reflected in the marks or grades awarded to a student, is not subject to this final review. Any appeal on these grounds must be made immediately after the student becomes aware of the outcome of the particular task (and within three school days). As a consequence, faculties are not required to retain test papers, student assignments, projects, practical exercises or other materials as evidence for assessment.