Stage 6

Preliminary Course Assessment Handbook

Year 11 2006

Information for Students and Parents
Welcome to Stage 6, the final years of your secondary education. This stage is divided into Preliminary and HSC courses.

The following pages are designed to give you the necessary information regarding assessment procedures in the Preliminary Higher School Certificate Course. It is very important that parents and students read this handbook closely because it outlines the responsibilities of a senior student. It is imperative that each student undertaking the Preliminary HSC Course has a thorough understanding of the processes and procedures involved in order to maximise results and reduce misunderstandings.

The assessment procedures reward those students who are consistent and diligent in their approach to study.

Parents are encouraged to become familiar with the assessment processes and program so that they can help and encourage their daughters and sons to successfully manage their studies.

Students and their parents should be aware that failure to satisfactorily attempt 50% or more of the total assessment marks in any subject will require the Principal to notify the Board of Studies of an “N” Determination (i.e. Not satisfactory). In this event, the student may not be eligible to commence studies in their Higher School Certificate course.

After reading this carefully, students and parents are invited to seek clarification from relevant members of staff.

We wish you well with your senior studies.

Mr John Lo Cascio
Principal
Mrs Christine Peterson
Curriculum Coordinator
1. GOOD SAMARITAN CATHOLIC COLLEGE ASSESSMENT POLICY FOR YEARS 7 TO 12

At Good Samaritan Catholic College we believe:

- We are called to enrich and empower each student to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- All members of our community are encouraged to explore their potential and to strive for personal excellence.
- Compassion is an integral part of our journey at Good Samaritan College.

At Good Samaritan we define assessment to be ‘the process of gathering and interpreting information about the development of student learning’ including reporting – assessment for learning. Given the current Standard Referenced Framework in which we work, assessment will measure student achievement of observable classroom outcomes and enhance the teaching / learning process in the College.

Therefore we will:

- Use assessment to promote learning.
- Follow guidelines of the Board of Studies.
- Give regular feedback to the student to encourage further progress.
- Inform students about the outcomes being assessed and provide them with the criteria against which they will be judged.
- Indicate strengths and weaknesses in the student’s learning at regular intervals so that appropriate teaching / learning strategies can be planned and teaching strategies modified.
- Use a variety of assessment tasks to match the outcomes being assessed.
- Design assessment tasks to cater for the range of student abilities.
- Modify assessment tasks so that the range of student abilities is catered for within the one task.
- Only assess outcomes that have been part of the teaching / learning process.
- Provide opportunities for students to reflect on their progress and their level of achievement.
Use assessment as one indicator of the effectiveness of teaching that should contribute to continued improvement of the program and teaching/learning strategies.

2. CREDENTIALS AWARDED BY THE BOARD OF STUDIES FOR THE HSC

(a) The Higher School Certificate testamur is awarded to students who have fulfilled all eligibility requirements.

(b) The Higher School Certificate Record of Achievement is issued to students who have satisfactorily completed any Preliminary or HSC course.

For Board Developed HSC courses, except Life Skills courses and VET courses, the Record of Achievement shows the course name, the year in which it was successfully completed, an examination mark, assessment mark, HSC mark and performance band.

(Note: The student’s examination mark and assessment mark are averaged to create the HSC mark. It is the HSC mark that is shown on the performance scale and that determines the performance band to which the student’s result is allocated).

For students who elect not to sit for the optional examination in a 240-hour VET Curriculum Framework course, the course is reported without a mark and with the notation Refer to Vocational Documentation.

For students who do elect to sit for the optional examination in a 240-hour VET Curriculum Framework course, the course is reported without a mark and with the notation Refer to Vocational Documentation. The examination is reported with a mark in the columns headed Examination Mark and HSC Mark. A performance band is also reported.

For Board Endorsed HSC courses except VET courses and TAFE delivered courses, the Record of Achievement shows the course name, the year in which it was successfully completed and a school assessment mark.

The Higher School Certificate Record of Achievement is a cumulative record of all Preliminary and HSC courses satisfactorily completed.

The Higher School Certificate Record of Achievement contains a statement indicating whether or not the student is eligible for the award of the Higher School Certificate.

(c) Course Reports are issued to students for every Board Developed HSC course (except for Life Skills courses and VET courses) they complete in a year. The single page Course Report shows the name of the course, the assessment mark and the examination mark, the course
performance scale (including the band descriptions and the minimum standard expected for the course) and the distribution of HSC marks for the statewide candidature of that course. The student’s HSC mark for the course is shown on the performance scale.

Note: For VET courses, only those students who sit for the optional examination will receive a Course Report.

3. CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS FOR THE HSC

The Higher School Certificate (HSC) is a Certificate issued by the Board of Studies.

To be eligible for the Higher School Certificate (HSC) a student must:

- Study a combination of courses, which meet the requirements of the HSC.
- Complete a Preliminary Course of study in an approved combination of subjects.
- Complete the course requirements (see Section 5).
- Have a satisfactory record of attendance and application in their studies.
- Sit for and make a genuine attempt at the HSC exam.

In order to gain a Higher School Certificate (HSC) students need to choose a course, which is appropriate to their abilities and their post school needs.

Students must choose at least 10 units of study including English and in order to complete the Higher School Certificate

Not all combinations of subjects will lead to the award of a Universities Admission Index (UAI).

In order to be eligible to receive a Higher School Certificate each student must:

1. Meet the Board of Studies requirements for attendance and application
2. Meet the following subject guidelines:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preliminary Year</th>
<th>HSC Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At least 6 units of Board Developed Courses</td>
<td>At least 6 units of Board Developed Courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least 2 units of Board Developed English</td>
<td>At least 2 Units of Board Developed English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least 3 courses of 2 Units value (or greater) and</td>
<td>At least 3 courses of 2 units value (or greater) and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least 4 subjects</td>
<td>At least 4 subjects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition:

- A maximum of 6 units from Science can count towards the study pattern for the Preliminary or HSC year.
In the Preliminary Year the pattern of study must comprise a minimum of 12 units and in the HSC Year a minimum of 10 units. In Catholic Colleges students study Religion in the Preliminary and HSC Courses.

4. UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS INDEX - UAI

Universities Admission Centre creates a UAI for students who request it and meet the qualifications of 10 (ten) Board Developed units. English is the only compulsory subject and two units of English are counted towards the UAI. There are no other restrictions, with the exception of Category B subjects (i.e. Industrial Technology, Business Services and Hospitality Operations). Only two units of Category B subjects count towards a UAI.

The Universities Admission Centre will scale the ten best units. To do this they use the combined H.S.C. exam and moderated assessment marks. They also use the rank order of students provided by schools through their assessment programs. School assessment is moderated through the HSC exam in each subject. Students’ UAI’s are calculated from scaled HSC examination and assessment marks.

5. COURSE COMPLETION CRITERIA

A student will be considered to have satisfactorily completed a HSC course if, in the Principal’s view, there is sufficient evidence that the student has:

(a) followed the course that has been approved by the Board

(b) applied themselves with diligence and sustained effort to the set tasks and experiences provided in the course by the school; and

(c) achieved a significant number of the course outcomes.

Adequate attendance is important. The Principal may determine that as a result of inadequate attendance, the course completion criteria have not been met.

6. NATURE OF HSC COURSE ASSESSMENT

Assessment is the process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about student achievement. Assessment can be used for a number of key purposes, including to:

- assist student learning
- evaluate and improve teaching and learning programs
- provide information on student learning and progress in a course in relation to the syllabus outcomes
- provide evidence of satisfactory completion of a course
- report on the achievement by each student at the end of a course
In the context of the Higher School Certificate a major requirement of the internal assessment program is to provide a summative measure of a student's achievement in each course based on:

- a wider range of syllabus outcomes than may be measured by external examination alone
- multiple measures and observations made throughout the HSC course rather than a single assessment event

It is a requirement of the HSC school assessment program that for each course they teach, schools must establish a program of assessment tasks.

The Board of Studies indicates the mandatory components for HSC Assessment and the weighting to be attached to those components. That information is contained in this booklet under each subject heading. Each subject teacher, in conjunction with his or her KLA Coordinator, has determined the assessment schedules. These contain details on:

- the type of tasks,
- the components of the course,
- the weightings to be allocated to each task,
- the outcomes within each task to be assessed, and
- the term of each task.

At the end of the course the marks for each task are aggregated using appropriate weightings previously published in the school’s assessment policy to arrive at the final assessment mark for each student. These assessment marks, which are then submitted to the Board provide a rank order of students and show relative differences between student's performances.

In the moderation process for the HSC, assessment marks for a course that have been submitted by each school are adjusted using a statistical process. This process takes into account the performance of the school group on the examination. This process ensures comparability between assessment marks submitted by each school.

7. FREQUENCY AND SCHEDULING OF TASKS

When does ‘Formal Assessment ‘ begin?

Formal assessments will begin in Term 1 2006 and will conclude at the end of Term 3 2006.

In general, no tasks will be scheduled in the week prior to any major exam block.

Formal Assessment is limited so that students will generally complete 3 to 5 tasks for a 2 unit course, and 2 to 3 tasks for a 1 unit course.
How do I know when a task is due?
Approximate times are given for Assessment Tasks in the subject grids that follow at the back of this booklet. Teachers will give you written advice of the precise date and time of assessment tasks at least two weeks before the task. You should record the actual dates in your student diary or on the calendar provided. If you are absent on the day the class is given a notification, it is your responsibility to find out about the task.

8. SUBMISSION OF TASKS

What are the procedures for submitting a task on the date that it is due?

- The Board of Studies expects each student to complete all assessment tasks.
- All tasks are to be completed and submitted by the specified date.
- If the task is to be completed in class it is to be submitted at the prescribed time.
- Practical tasks in subjects such as Visual Arts must be completed under the direct supervision of your teacher.
- All other tasks are to be submitted to the KLA Co-ordinator or Subject Teacher in the Library by 8.20 am on the due date. When handing a task in at the library, students are to:
  - complete details in the Assessment Task Diary (i.e. date, name and subject)
  - hand task to KLA Co-ordinator or delegated Subject Teacher or the College Librarian.

NOTE: Tasks are NOT to be handed to teachers during a lesson or left in a teacher’s pigeonhole or at the College Office

- Practical Tasks in Visual Arts, Industrial Technology, Design and Technology need to be submitted by 8.20am on the due date to the specialist teaching area as directed by the KLA Co-ordinator (for example, Visual Arts to C Block).
- A task handed in after 8.20 am will be recorded as ‘Late’ and you will be required to submit an ‘Appeal’.

What if I need an extension of time to submit a task?

- The Curriculum Co-ordinator only may grant an extension of time. You must ensure that you apply for an extension before the date that the task is due.

- If you are going to be absent for an extended period of time (eg travel overseas, participation in sporting competitions etc.) you must make a written application to the Principal seeking approval, allowing sufficient time to make arrangements for assessment tasks. A decision will then be made regarding when tasks will be submitted or undertaken, or the granting of an estimate based on other evidence.
What if I have a task due whilst I am on Work placement?

Vocational subjects have compulsory Work placements. Work placement should be arranged around assessment tasks and is not a valid reason for a missed task.

If you are on Work placement at the time an assessment is due, you must follow the following procedure:
- “hand in” (submission) tasks must be submitted to the KLA Co-ordinator before attending Work Placement OR
- arrange for the task to be submitted by 8.20 am on the due date.
- “in class” task, such as tests, need to be completed at a time negotiated with the KLA Co-ordinator before attending Work Placement and before the date of the assessment (where feasible).

9. ABSENCE

What if I am absent on the day I have an “in class” task (also known as “Illness and Misadventure”)?

- Make sure you have official documentation to explain your absence such as a doctor’s certificate. A note from parents will not be sufficient in most cases.
- in the case of an examination, make a phone call to the school before 9.00 am and leave a message for both the KLA and Year Co-ordinator.
- report to the Office before school on the first day back from your absence to collect an “Illness and Misadventure Appeal” form with an explanation and the required documentary evidence,
- take the completed Appeal form, and attached medical certificate to the KLA Co-ordinator before you go to class.
- If you miss an exam, it is expected that you will complete this at the first available time slot.

What if I submit my task late?

- Regardless of the reason, if an assignment is submitted late you must report immediately to the Office, collect an Illness and Misadventure Appeal form and hand it to the KLA Co-ordinator on the submission day. In most cases late submission will result in a ZERO (no marks).
- However, if the advantage gained by extra time is not considered to outweigh the penalty the following will apply.
  - If you submit a task within 24 hours of the due submission time, a penalty of 33% deduction of the task total mark value will apply.
  - If you submit a task within 48 hours of the due submission time (but later than 24 hours) a penalty of 66% deduction of the task total mark value will apply.
What if my computer cannot print my task, or the computer will not save my work?

The use of technology (e.g. word processors, computer printers) is your responsibility. *No allowances will be made for problems related to technical malfunctions etc.* The College will not accept Assessment tasks submitted on student floppy discs.

- Work that has been completed on a computer is to be saved on both the hard disk and a disk.
- All draft work completed on a computer should be printed out regularly and kept by the student.
- An additional safeguard in an emergency is that you can email the task to the College if you experience a printing failure the night before submitting a task. The College email address is: enquiry@goodsamaritan.nsw.edu.au

Students who experience technology failure should submit drafts of the assessment task and can complete the Appeal procedure. Failure to comply with the procedures as listed above will result in a zero for the task concerned.

10. ZERO AWARDS

- A student will be deemed to have a non submission on an assessment task and therefore a zero award (no marks) if he/she:
  - has not submitted the task by the due date or time
  - fails to provide an acceptable reason for absence from a test.

- A warning letter will be sent home to parents. *The reply slip must be returned to the Curriculum Co-ordinator.*
  - The task must then be completed within the specified time period, as outlined in the warning letter. The task will be marked and feedback given. A zero mark will then be awarded.
  - Following the first warning letter, if the task is still not satisfactorily completed within the specified time, then a second warning letter will be issued. This may be considered sufficient documentation for an ‘N’ determination for that subject.

Malpractice

- Malpractice is any activity that allows you to gain an unfair advantage over other students. It includes:
  - copying someone else’s work in part or in whole, and presenting it as your own
  - using material directly from books, journals, CDs or the internet without reference to the source
  - building on the ideas of another person without reference to the source
  - buying, stealing or borrowing another person’s work and presenting it as your own
  - submitting work to which another person such as a parent, coach or subject expert has contributed substantially
  - using words, ideas, designs or the workmanship of others in practical and performance tasks without appropriate acknowledgement
- paying someone to write or prepare material
- breaching school examination rules
- using non-approved aides during an assessment task
- giving false explanations to explain work not handed in by the due date
- assisting another student to engage in malpractice.

If a student’s work is found to exhibit malpractice, a zero mark is likely to be allocated and parents will be informed via a warning letter.

**How do I know if my Illness and Misadventure appeal has been accepted?**

- An Appeals Committee will meet to determine the acceptability of the reason given for the late submission or absence. The KLA Co-ordinator will then inform the student of the decision.
- Irrespective of the outcome of the Appeal, you are still to have completed /submitted the task on the first day you returned to school
- Where your appeal is accepted for an ‘in class task’, you may have to sit for a substitute task.
- In circumstances where a substitute task is not feasible, unreasonable or where the conditions of the missed task are difficult to duplicate, the Curriculum Co-ordinator may authorise the use of an estimate based on other appropriate evidence at the end of the course.
- If you are dissatisfied with the result of an appeal, you must write to the Curriculum Co-ordinator requesting a review. The Curriculum Co-ordinator must receive the written request within four school days of the return of the marked task. You will need to explain the reasons why you are requesting a review of the mark awarded.
- The Curriculum Co-ordinator will then discuss the appeal with the student and teachers involved, and the matter may then be referred to the Appeal Committee.
- No consideration for an Appeal will be given to those students who fail to follow the above procedure within the time period specified. The committee will consist of the:
  - Curriculum Co-ordinator (Chair)
  - Year Co-ordinator
  - KLA Coordinator

**11. RETURNING A TASK**

- No task will be returned to students until the results of any appeal(s) are known. In returning tasks the privacy of each student will be respected.

**12. DECLARING A TASK ‘VOID’**

- The Principal reserves the right to ‘void’ a task or change the weighting if the results are invalid or unreliable. This means that no marks are awarded for particular task or part of a task. You would be informed in writing in these circumstances.
13. ASSESSMENT REVIEWS

- If you wish to appeal a mark or grade on a particular task you must approach the class teacher and the teacher who marked the task.
- If you require further consideration of task mark you must approach the KLA Co-ordinator within two school days of the return of the marked task.

14. CHANGING ANNOUNCED POLICY

- Assessment tasks, indicated on both the Assessment Grids and the Assessment Calendars, may need to be re-scheduled for a variety of reasons. Where this is necessary, the KLA Coordinator will inform all concerned students of the new date in writing.
- In re-scheduled tasks it is still necessary that students be given two weeks notice of the approaching task.

15. RISK NOTIFICATION

- If it appears that a student is at risk of not satisfactorily completing a School Certificate, Preliminary or HSC course, a warning letter will be issued.
- Your parents will be advised, in writing by the Principal, of the need to correct the problem and alert them to the possible consequences of you receiving an ‘N’ determination.

16. ‘N’ DETERMINATION

- The Board expects that each student will complete all assessment tasks. Failure to complete a task will seriously place at risk the student’s chance of achieving a satisfactory completion of the School Certificate, Preliminary or HSC course.
- In cases of non-satisfactory completion, a ‘N’ determination will be submitted to the Board.

17. ASSESSMENT IN VET COURSES

All VET courses are competency-based courses. This means your assessment is based on your ability to demonstrate course competencies. Your performance is judged against standards prescribed for each element of competency in the course. Wherever practical, your teacher will gather assessment evidence of your knowledge and skills in each competency on a number of occasions and in a variety of contexts. You will be judged as either competent or not yet competent. If you are judged as not yet competent then you should be given other opportunities to demonstrate competence.

You do not have to do the optional external examinations that are offered for HSC VET courses. However, if you want those courses to be available for inclusion in the calculation of your UAI, you MUST undertake the written exam. Of course all students must complete any tests, internal examinations and assessment tasks that are a part of the school’s assessment program for these courses.
SUBMISSION OF ASSESSMENT TASKS
(School Certificate, Preliminary and HSC)

Students will be given at least 2 weeks notice of a "submission" or "in class" task.

Satisfactory attempt

Illness or misadventure

Failure to make a satisfactory attempt at a task

On day of return to school:
- fill in form and attach documentation.
- give form to KLA Coordinator with the task.

Subject Coordinator makes recommendation to Appeals Committee

Appeal is accepted

Appeal is not accepted

Task is accepted OR a date is set if it is an "in class" task, OR an estimate may be given.

Zero marks awarded

Official Warning Letter is sent. Parents sign and return slip.

Task to be completed by advised date on Warning letter

Result is added to final assessment mark that is to be submitted to the Board of Studies (in SC and HSC courses)

Failure to complete tasks totalling 50% or more in a course results in "N Award"

Principal advises the Board of Studies of "Unsatisfactory Completion of a Course"