Lachlan Access Program

Preliminary/HSC

2013/2014

Assessment Policy

www.lap.schools.nsw.edu.au
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Can be download and viewed at: [www.lap.schools.nsw.edu.au](http://www.lap.schools.nsw.edu.au)
INTRODUCTION

This handbook is designed to provide a summary of the Assessment Procedures which are followed by students studying HSC year courses through the Lachlan Access Program (LAP).

The Board of Studies recognizes LAP as a separate “school” for the purpose of Assessment and HSC examination.

A Coordinating Teacher is responsible for the overall coordination and organization of a course within the LAP Program. A co-teacher is responsible for the teaching of that course within their school.

All students, regardless of the school at which they are enrolled, are members of one LAP class. Each Assessment task is undertaken by all students within that class, marked by a single teacher, or joint marked and each student is ranked within the whole LAP class.

PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE OF THE HSC ASSESSMENT SCHEME

The provision of school assessments in reporting HSC grades provides an indication of a student’s attainment which is based on:

- a wider range of syllabus objectives than is measured by the external examination and
- multiple measures and observations obtained throughout the course rather than a single examination.

It is a requirement of the school assessment program that for each course they teach, schools or network groups where relevant, must establish a program of assessment tasks.

Each task enables teachers to collect information about the students’ achievement in relation to several outcomes, to award marks in accordance with marking guidelines, and to provide constructive feedback to students on their performances highlighting their strengths and where they can make improvements. The marks awarded for each task should be commensurate with the quality of the response. Work that shows more complex development and higher order achievement should receive more marks than work that demonstrates a more basic level of achievement.

THE AWARD OF THE HSC

The award of the Higher School Certificate is based on the student’s performance in the HSC examinations AND the LAP determined assessment mark for each course studied in the HSC year.

In addition, the Principal must certify that the student has studied a permitted combination of courses, completed the requirements for each course and completed the required number of tasks as set out in the school’s assessment schedule. To satisfactorily complete a course, the Principal must certify that the student has followed the course developed or endorsed by the Board, applied themselves with diligence and sustained effort to the set tasks provided in the course by the school and achieved some or all of the course outcomes.
A student who has met all the requirements will be awarded a Higher School Certificate and will receive the relevant documents from the following:

- Higher School Certificate Testamur
- HSC Record of Achievement
  - Assessment Mark provided by the school
  - Examination mark
  - HSC Mark – the average of the Assessment mark and the Examination mark
  - Performance Band – level of achievement in the course
- Course Report – for each course that has an examination
- VET Statement of Attainment or Certificate – list of all Units of Competency achieved
- Profile of Student Achievement – Outcomes achieved following study of a Life Skills course
LAP HSC ASSESSMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Number and types of tasks to be used:

- 2 Unit courses: Three to five tasks including the Trial HSC.
- 1 Unit courses: Two to three tasks.

Note: No task less is to be worth less than 10% or more than 40%. Examinations cannot make up more than 50% of the school based assessment mark. (Excluding specific syllabus requirements)

The types of assessment tasks to be used:

- Each course will comply with the suggestions found in the Assessment section of each Syllabus.
- Tasks should be developed to provide evidence of achievement across a wide range of outcomes.
- Tasks should be developed to provide evidence of achievement of outcomes not able to be adequately assessed in an external examination.

Students will be informed in writing of their assessment schedules prior to commencing the HSC course:

- During the first week of course presentation, students will be formally introduced to that Years Assessment Handbook which will include the number and nature of tasks and the timeframe in which they are due.
- Students, Teachers and Head Teachers will be required to sign an acknowledgement of receipt and understanding of requirements.

Scheduling of tasks will occur in a coordinated way:

- The Preliminary Yearly Examination and the Trial Examination will be the Final assessment items in each course, unless there exists a Board of Studies specified task submission date that lies outside this period.
- Stage 6 Planning Meetings will occur late in Term 3 (HSC) and Term 4 (Prelim) to compose the Stage 6 Assessment Schedules, Units of Work and Scope and Sequence.
- All course coordinators will be issued with a draft assessment calendar, of which they must schedule their tasks. Tasks will be scheduled across the entire length of the assessment period, avoiding a 'bunching effect'.
- All amendments to the time of Assessment Tasks are to be approved by the HT Access.

Adequate notice of the timing of Assessment Tasks will occur:

- Each assessment task / notification will be distributed to every student at least two weeks prior to the due date.
- A common assessment task notification proforma (see Proforma 1) is to be used by the coordinating teacher which requires the student to acknowledge receipt of the notification. The receipt of notification is to be suitably filed by the teacher at the student's school.
The student is absent from school when the assessment information was distributed:

- Students are to be made aware that on the day they return, it is their responsibility to investigate any requirements made of them during their absence.
- The student may wish to apply for an extension or for illness/misadventure, and as such should follow the appropriate appeal procedures.

The submission of tasks:

- All tasks must be converted to PDF and emailed to westernlap@det.nsw.edu.au before 9.00am on the due date.
- Student tasks should be emailed with delivery and read receipt.
- Tasks completed during school e.g: exams, practicals, orals etc must also be accompanied by a cover sheet. Any written component must be submitted to the westernlap@det.nsw.edu.au prior to 9.00am on the due date.
- Students submitting major works, posters, process diaries, portfolios. etc. will be required to submit to the front office prior to 9.00am on the due date.
- Cover sheets will indicate submission requirements.

Teacher absent on the day the task is due:

- Tasks that require the teacher to be present e.g.: orals, practical etc (not exams), may be delayed for no longer than three school days for the return of the class teacher. Absences for longer than three days will require:
  
  1. The course coordinator or co-teacher from another school to travel and conduct assessment. One days' notice is required by students.
  2. The task to be conducted using video-conference with a supervising teacher. One day's notice is required for students.
  3. An alternative task conducted when class teacher or qualified replacement teacher returns. Due date of alternative task requires 2 weeks notification.

Students who hand in work late:

- Tasks are required to be submitted to westernlap@det.nsw.edu.au (emailed in PDF form) by 9.00am on the first day of the teaching week. The N Warning process is initiated at 9.01am.
- Tasks required to be completed during a predetermined time during school hours will equate to the time in that same day, the supervising teacher declares the lesson has completed.
- The student who submits an Assessment Task late will receive a ‘0’ as well as a Non-attempt – warning letter.
- A student who feels they have a valid reason for failing to submit a task may apply for Illness/Misadventure through the correct process.

Student absence from tasks

- The Board expects students to attempt all assessment tasks set.
- The minimum requirement is that the student must make a genuine attempt at assessment tasks which contribute in excess of 50 percent of available marks in the course.
• If a student is aware of being absent on the day in which a task is to be scheduled within school hours, they should approach their class teacher to discuss the possibility of attempting the task at an earlier time. If this is not possible, the student should apply for an extension. Extensions on the grounds of illness must be accompanied by a relevant Doctor's Certificate.

• If a student is absent from an assessment task that is scheduled to occur within school hours, has not applied for an extension in a timely fashion, they will have a Non-Attempt registered for that task. An 'N' award letter will be posted to the student and their carer detailing the requirements to be followed to attempt an alternative task. Submission of an alternative task will result in the registered N.A. being changed to a zero.

• If a student is absent from an assessment task that is scheduled to occur within school hours and has their application for an extension accepted the following will occur:
  - the student will attempt the original task on their return if it is deemed by the HTA and coordinating teacher that no advantage has been gained from other students
  OR
  - the student will attempt an alternative task following one week’s notification of the due date from the date of the student’s return

• If a student is absent from school on the day the assessment task is due the following will occur:
  - the student may submit the assessment task before the due date.
  - the student will submit the task on the day of their return and will receive a ‘0’ if an extension is not granted by the HTA in consultation with coordinating teacher.
  - the student will organise for the incomplete task to be submitted by the due date thus allowing marks to be attributed to work completed. If an extension is applied for and granted for the remaining section of the task, no marks will be penalized if this section is submitted within an agreed time span, suitably being one day.
  - A N-Warning Letter will be posted to the student and carer within a reasonable time of the due date detailing an alternative task.
  - On submission of this alternative task, a zero will replace the recorded “N.A.” on the student’s record.

A student’s prolonged absence with leave:

• The principal has discretion in granting leave provided that he or she is satisfied that the reason for the absence is substantial and that the progress of the student towards course outcomes will not be unduly affected.

• If the period of leave falls over a scheduled assessment period, the student must discuss with their class teacher the possibility of either conducting the task under alternate supervised conditions or posting the completed task with the post date clearly visible.

• If a task can be conducted under alternative supervised conditions, the course co-ordinator will discuss with the HTA the most appropriate way for this to be accomplished. The student will be notified of arrangements before the period of absence.
• If the above arrangements are not deemed suitable by the course coordinator the student may:
  - attempt an alternative task on their return
  - or, as a last resort, have the marks of the remaining tasks re-calculated to accommodate the absence of this task.

• The student may complete the assessment task before taking a period of prolonged absence.

Occasions when estimates are given or substitute tasks administered:

• Substitute tasks may be administered for the following reasons:
  - A student has been granted an extension
  - The courses coordinator, in consultation with the HT Access, may decide a substitute task is required if the original task did not allow the full range of marks to be awarded or the task was ineffective in some other way.
  - In the case of malpractice, the Principal may deem that the offense was not serious enough to incur a zero and a substitute task will be administered.
  - A student has transferred into the course after the commencement of the Assessment Period.

• An estimate mark will be given as a last resort. If the estimate mark will be calculated as follows:

  “The gap between the student’s accumulated marks from the preceding tasks will be the gap between the marks allocated to the absent student.”

• An estimated mark may be given following a period of prolonged leave.

Occasions when zero marks will be awarded:

• If the course coordinator, in consultation with the co-teacher, is of the opinion that the student did not make a genuine attempt at a task.

• If the course coordinator, in consultation with the co-teacher, is of the opinion that serious malpractice such as plagiarism and cheating at examinations has occurred.

• A student submits a task following the due date without an extension granted.

Invalid tasks / parts of tasks or non-discriminating tasks:

• Occasionally, assessment tasks may not function as required, do not adequately discriminate between students and incur problems with the administration. If any of these occasions present themselves in the opinion of the course co-ordinator, in consultation with the HTA, course co-ordinator and school principal, then the following is to apply in order of preference:
  1. An additional task or part of a task required, giving students at least two weeks notice of the due date with an appropriate percentage weighting. Reducing the weighting of the task of concern and re-calculating the weighting of the remaining tasks.
  2. The task discarded completely and the weighting of the remaining tasks re-calculated.
  3. An alternative task is devised, giving students at least two weeks notice of the due date.
The HT Access, will liaise with the Principal and Coordinating teacher to determine a suitable outcome.

**Special Provisions:**

- Students studying a Life Skills course will undertake assessment activities according to their individual education program.
- Special provisions may be made by the Principal for students with identified needs. If appropriate and suitable, the provisions allowed for in-school tasks could be the same as those the student will have in the Higher School Certificate examinations. The judgment of the school counselor should be taken into account by the Principal before allowing special provisions to be made.
- The course teacher or co-ordinator will indicate in the appropriate place on the Notification of an Assessment Task proforma. The course teacher should indicate that special provisions were used in attempting the task, on the Assessment Task Cover Sheet.
- Students who have a pre-existing condition that may manifest itself during the attempt of an assessment task e.g. asthma, should complete an illness/misadventure form. Conditions such as these do not constitute an application for special provisions.

**Procedures to be followed when dealing with malpractice in tasks**

- Malpractice includes cheating in exams, plagiarism, submitting work composed by someone other than the student and any other activity that will result in an academic advantage of the perpetrating student over another.
- Any student proven to have acted with malpractice will incur the following:
  1. A zero mark will be allocated for that task on the student’s record.
  2. A warning letter will be posted to the student and their carer detailing further responsibilities required of the student.
  3. The student will be subjected to the procedures of their School’s Discipline and Welfare Policy.
  4. In some circumstances, the Principal may deem that the offense was either not intentional or of a less serious nature and an alternative task will be administered under strict supervision.

**Procedures to ensure the security of records of all marks awarded for assessment tasks:**

- The following procedures will be followed in the collection and recording of assessment marks:
  1. The course coordinator, or nominated teacher, will mark all tasks and record results in an appropriate form e.g: the mark collection section of a Teacher's Day Book.
  2. The results of the assessment tasks will immediately be forwarded to the LAP Office for electronic recording.
  3. A computer generated hard copy will be filed in the Assessment Recording Folder in the office of the HT Access.
  4. Assessment marks will be recorded in each school according to their respective Assessment and Reporting Policies.
Procedures for providing assessment marks for students who transfer into the school after the commencement of the HSC course

- For students who transfer into a school after the 30th June in the year of the Higher School Certificate examination, the previous school is to provide assessment marks.
- Assessment Tasks to be completed after the 30th June within LAP will be attempted and marks posted to the previous school. Close liaison between HT Access and the student’s previous school will ensure an accurate school assessment mark is posted to the BOS.
- Units and/or Elements of Competency acquired in Frameworks courses will be directly credited to the students new assessment record providing a qualified assessor from an RTO has signed off on the aforementioned competencies.

Procedures for students who enter the HSC course after the commencement of the HSC Assessment Program:

- Students are to transfer subjects at the earliest possible date.
- An estimated mark will be allocated at the completion of the course. The estimation of a mark will follow the same procedure as is mentioned previously for any missed assessment prior to enroll.

Procedures to monitor the provisional entry of students into HSC courses:

- The Principal may allow a student who has received an ‘N’ determination in a Preliminary course, to proceed to an HSC course provisionally while concurrently satisfying outstanding Preliminary course requirements. Principals will, however, be required to confirm at the time of the HSC entries, that the student has now satisfactorily completed the relevant Preliminary course requirements and that their entry for the HSC is valid.
- The student’s school record card will indicate information pertaining to the submission of assessment tasks, the distribution of warning letters, any ‘N’ determinations and satisfactory course completion acknowledgement.
- If an ‘N’ determination has been awarded, the student’s school record card will indicate the requirements and due dates for any outstanding work alongside the requirements of the HSC course.
- The student file will be available to Principals to confirm satisfactory completion of both the Preliminary and HSC course.

Procedures for dealing with the assessment of accelerants and accumulants:

- Students who have the approval of the Principal to undertake Preliminary and/or HSC courses (except VET Framework courses and Beginners Language courses) in advance of their usual cohort or in less than the Board’s stated indicative times will have an individualised assessment scheduled.
- Students who are deemed as accelerants will attempt assessment tasks of the same genre but with alternative requirements.
- Students who are undertaking an approved pattern of study that allows an accumulation of courses within a five year period will have information recorded on their student file to this effect.
- Students accumulating courses will receive yearly Recognition of Achievement notification from the Board following entry by the Principal from the school in which they are enrolled.
- All rights and responsibilities as outlined in the LAP assessment policy will apply to accelerant and accumulant students alike.
Marks to be awarded for an assessment task:

- On all occasions, coordinating teachers will ensure that the full range of marks will be reflected in the marking guidelines to allow acknowledgement of responses detailing more complex development and higher order achievement. The marking guidelines will also outline the low marks for a basic level of achievement.

Level of discrimination used when applying standards:

- On all occasions, coordinating teachers will develop comprehensive marking guidelines that adequately discriminate between the achievements of the students.

Feedback to be given to students in relation to the standards:

- Coordinating teachers and co teachers will be encouraged to incorporate the standards packages into their general teaching program.

Will students be given an indication of their general progress?

- Students will formally be informed of their general progress following the half-yearly and yearly examination period. The details of the information are as indicated below: - cumulative assessment rank

What procedures will be established for the distribution of the Assessment Rank Order Advice to each student at the end of the HSC exams?

- Upon request to the course of the school in which the student is enrolled, the student will be issued with their Assessment Rank Order Advice which is readily obtainable from the Schools Online website

What procedures are in place to monitor satisfactory completion of a course?

- The HT Access is responsible for the central recording of assessment marks and BOS entries for the Lachlan Access Program.
- The HT Access is responsible for the compilation of warning letters or at request of coordinating teachers for LAP subjects.
- Within three school days of a due date, The HT Access will process 'N' warning letters to the Principal of the school in which the student is enrolled.
- The HT Access will supply the Coordinating Teacher and Principal with a copy of the 'N' Warning letter
- It is anticipated that the principal will sign and distribute the 'N' warning letters within two days of receipt.
- The principal will then return a copy of the signed 'N' warning letter to the HTA teacher, and place on the school file
- Within a timely period of approximately five weeks, the coordinating teacher and/or the class teacher may have concerns regarding the satisfactory completion of a course by one or more of their students, for example, high rate of absenteeism, failure to complete class work etc. The coordinating teacher or the class teacher is required to request the compilation of a warning letter from the HT Access.
- HT Access to liaise with Principals at the end of each term outlining students at risk of non-completion of subjects.
What procedures are in place to inform parents when students have failed to submit or undertake assessment tasks?

- The Principal of the school in which the student is enrolled will distribute any ‘N’ warning letters to the student and their carer(s). Distribution may be either by mail, hand delivery or at a parent/principal interview.

What procedures will be used to warn students who are in danger of being given an ‘N’ determination?

- Students studying an HSC course must make a genuine attempt to complete course requirements. These requirements include students applying themselves with diligence and sustained effort to the set tasks and experiences provided in the course by the school, regardless of whether or not these tasks contribute to the final assessment mark.
- Any student who fails to submit an assessment task by the due date will have a warning letter posted to themselves and their carer in a timely manner.
- Following a timely period of approximately five weeks a coordinating teacher may request a warning letter to be distributed to a student who is not applying themselves with diligence and sustained effort to the requirements of the course, irrespective of their submission of formal assessment tasks. The HT Access will initiate the warning letter and distribute such as is mentioned above.
- The student will be counseled within the school in which they are enrolled as according to their school’s Welfare and Discipline Policy.

What procedures will be used when disputes arise over assessment tasks?

- Following an unresolved discussion with the class teacher, the dispute will be investigated in a consultative manner between the HTA, ISACS of the school in which the student is enrolled and the Course coordinator. In the event that the course coordinator is not the appropriate person, an executive from another school will be invited to form a team to resolve the dispute.
- All stakeholders will be required to discuss their views.

What procedures will be established for conducting school reviews of assessment?

- School reviews of assessment can only occur following the final examination for the student and who has requested their Rank Order Advice.
- Following a request by the student, the Principal of the school in which the student is enrolled will form a panel consisting of an executive member, HT Access and/or the Coordinating Teacher. The procedures for review will be implemented and the student notified of the results of the review, by their principal.

What procedures will be established for handling appeals to the Board? How will the relevant documentation be processed?

- Following a successful appeal to the Board by the student, the Principal of the school in which the student is enrolled will form a further review panel consisting of an executive, HT Access and/or coordinating teacher and/or a Principal from another school.
- The responsibility of informing both the student and the Board of Studies lies with the Principal of the school in which the student is enrolled.
Where in the school can student, parents and staff go for advice?

- Students and parents will always be welcome to discuss any issues with the executive of the school in which the student is enrolled.
- Students and parents will be made aware of where the ACE manual can be accessed including the BOS web site. This information will be included in the Students Assessment Policy and Schedule.
- Staff may access advice firstly from their in-school supervisor and secondly, the HTA. Further advice may be obtained from the LAP Manual, the ARC Packages, the Board of Studies Liaison Office, and the Regional Vocational Educational Consultant.

What procedures are in place to convey to students, parents and teachers information about the Board’s Assessment moderation, judging and alignment procedures, as well as information on university scaling of marks for ATAR purposes?

- Students and Carers will be informed of the BOS assessment moderation, judgment and alignment procedures as well as information on university scaling of marks for ATAR purposes at any or all of the following occasions:
  - The Course Selection Information Session when the student is in Year 10.
  - The information session when the Student's Assessment Policy and Schedule is distributed.
  - At individual sessions conducted by the Careers Advisor.
- Teachers of Stage 6 courses will undertake a yearly staff development session on assessment and reporting best practice procedures typically late in Term 3. At this session, teachers will be informed of the Board’s Assessment moderation, judging and alignment procedures, as well as information on university scaling of marks for ATAR purposes. Typically, the Board of Studies Liaison officer will be invited to attend and present the aforementioned information and answer any questions.

What are the features of quality assessment tasks?

The following checklist can assist teachers to ensure that the tasks they design promote student learning as well as obtaining accurate measures of student achievement.

Assessment tasks should:

- focus on outcomes
- give students the opportunity to demonstrate what they know and can do and assist their learning
- be valid and reliable, measuring what the task to assess and providing accurate information on each student’s achievement
- allow for discrimination between the performances of individual students.

The effective marking of assessment tasks requires:

- marking guidelines or criteria that provide clear descriptions of the quality of response required to receive each mark
- a mark range that allows for discrimination between the performances of individual students
- a shared understanding of the demands of the tasks among the teachers responsible for the marking
- consistent application of marking guidelines.
Feedback and reporting on student progress and achievement should be:

- meaningful and constructive, designed to assist students to improve their performance
- linked to the specific outcomes and marking criteria addressed by the task
- provided in a timely manner.

Marks for individual assessment tasks and records of competency should be:

- recorded by the teacher responsible for marking the task
- checked to ensure any marks for various parts of a task have been correctly totalled transferred to a file or record containing the marks awarded for all tasks for all students in the course
- maintained in a secure and safe location.

Monitoring Folders/Evidence File:

Both Coordinating and Cooperating Teachers are required to keep detailed records of student performance. These records include and are not limited to:

- Program
- Registration
- Assessment Tasks
- Ranks and Grades
- Scope & Sequence
- Assessment Schedule
- Record of Attendance
- N Warning Letters
- Reports

These records will provide supporting documentation in the case of an appeal to ensure due process has been followed.