St Brigid's College  
Assessment Policy

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Introduction

Assessment is the process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about students’ learning. The central purpose of assessment is to provide information on student achievement and progress and set the direction for ongoing teaching and learning. The gathering of such information is an ongoing, dynamic cycle, including ‘drawing on professional knowledge, including in depth knowledge of each child’ (Early Years Framework 2013, p. 9).

Student achievement progress can be reported by comparing -
- the students’ work against a standards framework of syllabus outcomes/objectives/criteria
- the students’ prior and current learning achievements with those of other students

The following guidelines have been developed so that students, parents and teachers are aware of their responsibilities in the assessment process. The College’s Assessment Policy has been developed to enable the fostering of a positive work ethic and the promotion of individual achievement. Assessment at St Brigid’s College is based on the College’s Statement of Vision and Values. It is informed by the Gospel that seeks to promote justice, human dignity, compassion, hope and love; through our values of courage, honesty, inclusivity and thankfulness.

Through the Assessment Policy, the College ensures the use of practices and procedures that demonstrate a concern at all times for -
- the dignity and development of each student
- the student’s self-esteem
- the provision of continuity and cohesion in students’ learning
- the maturation levels of students
- the need of students to experience success, to be aware of their achievements and their learning differences in order to maintain a high level of motivation for school and learning

Well-designed assessment strategies enable teachers and students to -
- identify students’ strengths and weaknesses
- analyse individual student performances
- recognise persistent learning difficulties
- assist students to improve levels of performance
- identify students’ preferred learning styles
- plan for enhanced future learning
- gather data for reporting purposes and for developing programmes

Furthermore, in the early years of education there is a concern fostered for the development of
- a sense of identity
- a connectedness and contribution to the world
- a sense of well-being
- confident and involved learners

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• effective communicators

It is also acknowledged that ‘when educators establish respectful and caring relationships with children [of all ages] they are able to work together to construct curriculum and learning experiences relevant to children [and to provide meaningful feedback to all key stakeholders]’ (Early Years Framework 2013, p. 11).

Assessment Guidelines
The criteria used for assessments in the form of the Archdiocese Guidelines for Religious Education, International Baccalaureate Criteria, Australian Curriculum and emerging Western Australian Curriculum and AQTF competencies will be made as transparent as possible for students. Students should be provided with at least two opportunities to demonstrate an outcome, criteria and/or competency per year. It is acknowledged that it may be impractical for students to repeat some tasks.

• The Kindergarten to Year Five assessment structures adhere to the guidelines outlined by the Early Years Framework (Pre-Kindergarten to Year One only), Australian Curriculum and emerging Western Australian Curriculum and those outlined by the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme.
• The Years Six to Ten assessment structure adheres to guidelines outlined by the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme, whilst supporting the Australian Curriculum and emerging Western Australian Curriculum guidelines.
• The Year Eleven and Year Twelve assessment structure addresses guidelines set by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority and the College’s Registered Training Authorities (for example VETis).

‘Assessment for [student’s] learning refers to the process of gathering and analysing information as evidence about what [students] know, can do and understand. It is part of an ongoing cycle that includes planning, documenting and evaluating a [student’s] learning. It is important because it enables educators in partnership with families, children and other professionals to -

• plan effectively for [a student’s] current and future learning
• communicate about [a student’s] learning and progress
• determine the extent to which [a student is] progressing toward realising learning outcomes and if not, what might be impeding their progress
• identify [a student] who may need additional support in order to achieve particular learning outcomes
• evaluate the effectiveness of learning opportunities, environments and experiences
• offered and the approaches taken to enable [a student’s] learning
• reflect on pedagogy that will suit this context and these [students]

Educators use a variety of strategies to collect, document, organise, synthesise and interpret the information that they gather to assess [a student’s] learning.’ (Early Years Framework 2013, p. 17) Assessment must be collaborative and in partnerships with students, their families and teachers; in order to ensure appropriate learning goals are established, evaluated and then achieved.

Archdiocese Guidelines for Religious Education

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The Bishops’ Mandate Letter specifies that there are nine learning areas in the curriculum of Catholic schools in Western Australia. The first learning area in the curriculum of all WA Catholic schools is Religious Education. Religious Education ‘forms the Ministry of the Word that are appropriate to the Catholic school – primary proclamation, initiatory catechesis and Religious Education – are integral to the Catholic curriculum. This occurs through the integration of faith, culture and life into the nine curriculum Learning Areas, the first of which is Religious Education’ (Mandate 2009 - 2015, par. 43)

In the Religious Education Learning Area students’ knowledge, understandings and skills will be assessed. Students’ faith development cannot and will not be assessed.

**PYP Assessment Guidelines**

‘Student learning is promoted through planning and refining the teaching and learning process to meet individual or group needs. Assessing the students’ prior knowledge and experience as well as monitoring their achievement during the teaching period will enable teachers to plan and refine their teaching accordingly.

Summative assessment aims to give teachers and students a clear insight into students’ understanding. Summative assessment is the culmination of the teaching and learning process, and gives the students opportunities to demonstrate what has been learned. It can assess several elements simultaneously: it informs and improves student learning and the teaching process; it measures understanding of the central idea, and prompts students towards action.

Formative assessment provides information that is used in order to plan the next stage in learning. It is interwoven with learning, and helps teachers and students to find out what the students already know and can do. Formative assessment and teaching are directly linked and function purposefully together. Formative assessment aims to promote learning by giving regular and frequent feedback.’ (PYP Making It Happen, p. 45)

St Brigid’s College’s staff will, through appropriate teaching and learning strategies, ensure that students have opportunities to engage in reflective practices, in relation to assessments (Programme Standards and Practices, 2014).

All essential elements of the programme are to be address and evidence is collected, demonstrating student learning over time.

**MYP Assessment Guidelines**

Assessment in the Middle Years Programme (MYP) should be an integral part of teaching and learning. The use of assessment in a formative sense, to judge regularly the effectiveness of both teaching and learning processes, is essential in allowing teachers and students to identify strengths and weaknesses. The purpose and means of assessment should be clearly explained to the students prior to the commencement of the assessment process. Assessment forms should -

- allow both the student and teacher to assess what the student can do, and how he/she can use knowledge, concepts and skills
• measure the application of knowledge, concepts and skills rather than the mere recall of facts
• reflect achievement against the criteria for the subject
• involve student participation and reflection; for example, students should know the assessment criteria for a given task and, on occasion, help devise an assessment grid (rubric) to measure various aspects of their performance
• provide students with an opportunity to analyse their own learning and to recognise what areas need improvement
• be based on agreed standards of performance for a particular year group, with expectations set by teams of classroom teachers and clearly communicated to students and parents
• be informative for students, parents and teachers, and provide direction for future instruction
• provide equal opportunities for all students regardless of gender, culture and special needs

Assessment Criteria

• Years Six - Nine - teachers are required to use the MYP Assessment Criteria. Teachers are able to modify the assessment criteria to better suit the needs of students, this includes students who may experience language or learning difficulties. Teachers may modify the descriptors (to alter expectations, make them task specific, or both).

The MYP criteria is used when assessing students and is available in the ‘St Brigid’s College International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme Assessment Guide’, as are copies of the Grade Descriptors. Subject Guides are to be referred to for specific subject requirements.

• Year Ten - All MYP schools use the published assessment criteria and achievement level descriptors when assessing student work in the final year of the programme.

Moderation – Validation Of Grades
St Brigid’s College will submit the grades of our Year Ten students to be validated by the IB. To this end the College is required to submit samples of student work for external moderation, thus allowing for the standardisation of students’ assessments according to international standards.

The MYP Grades awarded by staff at St Brigid’s College, are according to the prescribed criteria for each subject area and the corresponding grade boundaries. ‘Samples of this work are reviewed by external moderators, appointed and trained by the IB, who apply the same criteria and achievement levels.’ (IBO website)

The moderation process may entail –
• the application of a moderation factor where needed (i.e. where subject teachers have been too generous or too harsh)
• detailed advice for the school in relation to understanding subject-specific objectives and applying the assessment criteria.
Upon completion of this process, each student who has completed the MYP Programme shall receive IB Statement which displays the grades achieved for each subject and for the personal project plus an official IB certificate (providing certain stated requirements have been met). All students who have completed Year Ten at St Brigid’s College will receive in addition to the IB certification, a record of achievement indicating involvement in the MYP Programme.

Allocation of Grades – Moderation Year Ten
A student’s final grade allocation may be altered after final MYP Moderation has been completed and may occur after the College’s Final Report for Year Ten has been issued. The purpose of the MYP Moderation is to ensure that standards are consistent internationally.

Results Awarded To Students For Criteria – Grades
A requirement of the IBMYP is that for students to be awarded a level for a criterion all parts of the descriptor must be met by the student in the given task. Where there has been no actual attempt by the student to meet the requirements of a descriptor a ‘0’ will be awarded. Please note that this is the case as;

- the criterion in its entirety is not reflected in any other level given.
- this is also the case if other strands of the same criterion have been completed to a high standard.

Where there are cases of limited evidence of a strand, then the maximum mark that can be allocated for the criterion, is the level that best describes the lowest achieving strand. Please note that this is also the case if other strands of the same criterion have been completed to a high standard.

Link To The Emerging Western Australian and Australian Curriculum – PYP and MYP
Assessment in Years One - Ten reflects the guidelines of the emerging Western Australian and Australian Curriculum. Students are central to the teaching and learning programmes and are reflected in the College Reports; which are distributed three times a year. Assessment should reflect the following principles –

- It should be an integral part of teaching and learning
- It must be educative
- It must be fair
- It should be designed to meet specific purposes
- It should lead to informative reporting (refer to the College’s Reporting Policy)
- It should reflect whole school evaluation processes

Standardisation – PYP and MYP
If more than one teacher is involved in one subject for a single year group and/or multiple classes for a year level in the Junior School, standardisation of assessment provides a common system for the application of the assessment criteria to each student. Standardisation of internal assessment is best achieved through -

- the use of common assessment tasks
- shared assessment between the teachers involved
- regular communication between the teachers
- discussions relating to the awarding of criterion results
- Regular moderation activities at whole staff level
  (Kindergarten to Year Twelve)
Senior School Assessment Guidelines – Years Eleven and Twelve

Assessment procedures for senior secondary schooling are generally mandated by the Schools’ Curriculum and Standards Authority. Aspects of assessment that are mandated by the Schools’ Curriculum and Standards Authority are the assessment outline, which includes the types of assessment, relative weightings and outcomes. Weightings are identified in each course syllabus.

Procedures

The College is bound by the following Schools’ Curriculum and Standards Authority assessment protocols. Should a student fail to meet these protocols, the following apply ‘If the reason for non-completion or non-submission is acceptable to the school, but sufficient evidence is not available, then the school may;

• modify the task so that it can be completed by the student, or
• providing an alternative assessment task which conforms to the assessment requirements of the course (e.g. modify the task but maintain the same standards), or
• extend the due date for an out-of-class assessment task or delaying an in-class assessment task, or
• submit a notation of ‘U’ (Unfinished) for a non-final year student, if insufficient evidence is available to make a professional judgement of the grade but there will be an opportunity to assign a grade after providing more time to complete further assessment tasks (typically early in the next semester). Note: a ‘U’ notation cannot be submitted for a Year Twelve student unless the student is returning to Year Twelve in the following year to continue the course unit; or, to a non-final year student who is exiting the course.’ (WACE Manual 2014 – 2015, p. 38)

Allocation of Grades

A grade (A, B, C, D or E) is assigned for each course unit. Grades are assigned using the total weighted mark for all assessment tasks. The assessment outline, provided to all students for each course unit (and available on the college’s intranet) shows the weighting of each assessment task.

Students are required to:

• submit all out-of-class assessment tasks for marking on or before the due date
• attempt all in-class assessment tasks on the scheduled date.

Courses delivered at St Brigid’s College in Years Eleven and Twelve are delivered concurrently and assessment is combined, as illustrated in assessment outlines of subjects.

Grade descriptions

Grade descriptions describe the general characteristics of student performance and achievement at each of the grades A, B, C, D and E in a given stage of a course. Grade descriptions provide a final point of reference when assigning grades at the completion of a unit or pair of units (i.e. when determining cut-offs on the ranked list of students).

Grade descriptions:

• relate directly to the content of the units studied at a particular stage

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• express, in positive terms, what a student knows, understands and is able to do
• clearly define the level of proficiency for each grade on a continuum of performance
• were developed by the Authority with reference to student work samples and should be read in conjunction with these work samples
• are not used to grade individual assessment tasks
• provide a guide for teachers when developing teaching and assessment programs
• provide improvement targets for students
• provide a guide to parents, employers and post-school education and training providers of the
• relative achievement of students against defined achievement standards
• are subject to continuing review by the Authority.

The grade descriptions are supported by annotated student work samples.

**Allocation of Grades – Consensus Moderation and Small Group Moderation**

Where a subject in Years Eleven and Twelve is involved in either a Consensus Moderation or Small Group Moderation partnership (Year Twelve only); grades allocated must be in line with the moderating partner’s grade cut-offs and final result allocation. A student’s final result and/or grade allocation may be altered after final consensus is reached with all partners (including after the College Report is issued).

**Years Eleven and Twelve Assessment Outlines**

- All students are to receive an Assessment Outline at the commencement of the school year. Where amendments are made, the Outline must be re-issued. Assessments are to be weighted according to the Syllabus Outlines of the Schools’ Curriculum and Standards Authority and are to be individually weighted according to the depth of knowledge and understanding required.

**Students who have not submitted course work by the end of each academic semester, may be required to**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester One</th>
<th>Attend school on the last day of Term Two holidays</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Semester Two (Year Twelve Students)</td>
<td>Attend school on the last day of Term Three holidays</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Invitation to Graduation Mass/Lunch may be withdrawn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester Two (Year Eleven Students)</td>
<td>Attend school for one day after Year Eleven Academic Year has concluded for the current year.</td>
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</tbody>
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**Comparability Between Classes**

Internal comparability is a fundamental premise underlying College assessments. In the event that more than one class is studying the same subject or unit, procedures are required to ensure that assessment between the classes is internally comparable. Small group moderation partnerships are compulsory for schools or providers with fewer than six students undertaking W.A.C.E. examinations.
Retention Of Work Samples
A requirement of the Schools’ Curriculum and Standards Authority is that schools keep a record of students’ assessment items for future reference or moderation. The Schools’ Curriculum and Standards Authority requires that Year Twelve assessments be kept until the school’s grade distribution has been finalised and this typically occurs in November. Similarly Year Eleven assessments should be retained until the final grade approval process is concluded, when grades are validated by the Schools’ Curriculum and Standards Authority. Assessments are to be stored in a secure environment for the duration of the year. Students may access their assessment items for review, and take assessments home for signing/viewing by parents but they may not permanently remove the items from the College, until grades are validated by the Schools’ Curriculum and Standards Authority.

Procedures Applying To The Junior, Middle and Senior Schools

Academic Honesty - Cheating, Collusion and Plagiarism (refer to College Academic Honesty Policy)
‘Academic honesty must be seen as a set of values and skills that promote personal integrity and good practice in teaching, learning and assessment. It is influenced and shaped by a variety of factors including peer pressure, culture, parental expectations, role modelling and taught skills. This is in direct reference to plagiarism, collusion and cheating in examinations, whenever possible the topic must be treated in a positive way, stressing the benefits of properly conducted academic research and a respect for the integrity of all forms of assessment.’ (International Baccalaureate – Academic Honesty, 2007, xii).

- Students shown to have cheated in assessed work or in examinations will not receive an assessment result for that task
- Collusion is when a student submits work that is not his or her own for assessment
- Plagiarism is when a student uses someone else’s words or ideas without acknowledging that they have done so (i.e. referencing)
- If work that is not the original product of a student is submitted for assessment, it will be either awarded zero marks or not assessed
- Students found to be involved in situations involving cheating, collusion or plagiarism may be required to be interviewed by the Head of Junior, Middle or Senior School, Deputy Principal, Director of International Baccalaureate or Principal

Absences From Class and Missed Work
It is the student's responsibility to approach the teacher to get any missed work. If students are absent from a specially scheduled assessment (including tests and examinations), teachers will require both or either of the following -
- A medical certificate
- A letter from parent to the appropriate subject teacher/relevant Curriculum Team Leader citing an acceptable reason for the absence. Please note – where teachers consistently receive communications from parents requesting extensions and/or reasons for absences from school on days of assessments; penalties for late work will still apply.
- An Application For Extended Leave is to be completed for absences of three days or more. Please refer to the College website for the complete application. Students who are absent from school due to extended holidays must be aware that –
Students will not be able to sit Assessments and Examinations earlier or later than the scheduled completion date. Students and their families are provided with an assessment outline at the commencement of the term/semester, so as to monitor deadlines. This is intended to ensure equity for those students who are present at the College.

- Where students are absent for a scheduled assessment or examination, a ‘0’ will be awarded.
- It is the responsibility of students to ensure that they have maintained their study load whilst absent from regular classes. It is not the responsibility of staff members to provide additional ‘catch up sessions’ for students taking extended holidays.
- It is expected that all students (day and boarding) attend all contact days in the College’s calendar. Boarding students are not permitted to be absent for additional days, whereby a Boarder’s Long Weekend, Gazetted Long Weekend or a Public Holiday occur; as a student’s learning is directly affected by being absent from classes and often assessments are not able to be sat. In the interest of equity to all students who are in attendance; students who are absent and do not have a medical certificate, will be included under the College’s Extended Leave Policy. Exemptions due to travel arrangements may be applied for by Boarding Parents.

Parents/Boarding House Mothers and/or College Nurse are required to contact all teachers where a student is absent from an assessment; failure to do so will result in a penalty being awarded.

Where possible, a satisfactory explanation of the absence will enable the student to complete that assessment task or a similar task. This is at the discretion of the subject teacher. Where a student is unable to attend school for a lengthy period, due to injury or illness, the College will endeavour to provide support to the student’s learning programme.

Late Work Penalties
Students are made aware of the timeline for submission of assessed work. Due dates are expected to be adhered to. Teachers will provide advice if dates are changed. Students can apply to the relevant Curriculum Team Leader for an extension, this is to be requested no less than three days prior to the due date. Applications received after this date will not be accepted. These will be given at the sole discretion of the relevant Curriculum Team Leader in the case of illness, critical events or significant personal issues. Where a student fails to submit work by the due date without an extension and with no acceptable excuse, the work will not be accepted nor assessed after a period of three days (where a weekend falls within this period, one day is counted). After such period, penalties will apply.

In the case of MYP work not submitted; students who demonstrate unsatisfactory effort or whom fail to submit a task will be issued an Academic Detention and during this session work will be required to be completed and submitted at this point for assessment. Where adjustments are made to the assessment schedule, it should be done in close consultation with all involved students and clearly publicised.
- It is a teacher’s responsibility to manage the assessment schedule
- It is a student’s responsibility to submit assessed work on time
- Parents/guardians will be notified in cases where concern for a student’s progress emerges

**Late work will be penalised for subjects allocating a percentage/mark (i.e. Courses of Study Subjects)** -

- One School Day Late - 10% of students score deducted
- Two School Days Late - 20% of students score deducted
- Three School Days Late - 30% of students score deducted
- Four School Days Late - Zero score

Please note - Where a weekend occurs (i.e. work due on Friday), students will be penalised 10% of their score.

Students are reminded that a piece of work submitted after the end of a lesson, for which that work is due, is classified as being late. This includes the receipt of hard and electronic copies by teachers. Where electronic copies of an assessment are submitted, unless written confirmation (i.e. via email) is received by the class teacher, the work is not considered to have been submitted on time.

**Completion of Group Tasks**

In order to promote collaborative learning, group tasks are often set across all year levels. It is expected that where a group task is to be used for assessment purposes, it is expected that all members of the group are allocated tasks of equal weighting, hence promoting equal contribution to the final result. Where a teacher deems inequity is evident, results will be adjusted accordingly for individual students.

(i) Where a member of a group is absent on the day the assessment is due, all group members are expected to submit their contribution to the assessment piece.
(ii) Where a group member is absent for an extended period leading up to the submission date, the allocation of duties may be required to be renegotiated and/or an alternative task set for the absent student.
(iii) In some tasks (i.e, performance based) an alternative may be unable to be provided. In such cases, staff may use anecdotal evidence.
(iv) All students are encouraged to save copies of tasks in their St Brigid’s College workspace, to allow access in the event of group members being absent.

**Additional Opportunity to Complete a Task**

In accordance with Schools’ Curriculum and Standards Authority and Australian Training Packages’ guidelines, students may be provided with an additional opportunity to complete a task if:

- The teacher agrees that it is feasible
- The student has attempted other set assessment tasks but requires an additional opportunity to demonstrate achievement of an outcome

**Academic Detention**
‘Academic Detentions’ are awarded to students who have repeatedly failed to complete homework and/or assessment pieces, after the class teacher has previously addressed this area of academic concern. Parents will be contacted by the class teacher where detentions are issued or concerns have arisen. The aim of the detention, is to assist students in developing good work habits, further raise standards of work and to encourage students to successfully complete all tasks set. Where a student does not attend a detention, two further detentions will be allocated. In the case where three lunch detentions or more have been issued, a student may be placed on an Academic Contract and/or a Student Free Day Detention.

Task Sheet Distribution

Common assessment tasks are required for use across subject areas. Teachers are required to distribute copies of assessment task sheets to relevant teachers and Curriculum Team Leaders five days prior to the assessment being handed to students. Sufficient time is then allowed for staff members to comment on the assessment task sheet.

Technology

Students at St Brigid’s College have been provided with outstanding learning opportunities in regards to the usage of technology to complement their learning; however, with these opportunities comes responsibility. All technology practices must reflect the highest standard of accountability. In relation to assessment it is the student’s responsibility to ensure that all data is backed up regularly to an external hard drive (or flash drive), their College work space, Time Machines for Mac laptops and by synching the iPad with a computer or use of drop box to save files. Work ‘lost’ due to technological faults, is not an accepted as a reason for non-submission of work, as in these cases, students should be able to provide to the class teacher sufficient evidence that they have been working on their submission prior to the incident (restored from their back up and printed). This should be accompanied by written confirmation of the issue from the student’s parent/guardian. All students are strongly encouraged to regularly ensure that their work is saved directly to their College workspace, as it is a secure site and is backed up each evening. In cases where technology is not available for the completion of the submission of work, the student must revert to hand written submitting work to the best of their ability.