

HSC ASSESSMENT STUDENT HANDBOOK 2026



Name: Admin:

Student Agreement (copy)

As an HSC student at St Joseph's Catholic College, Aberdeen, receiving this HSC Assessment Student Handbook, I am undertaking the responsibility to follow the procedures outlined in this handbook.

- I have read and understood the HSC Assessment Student Handbook, Schools HSC Assessment Guidelines and the SJCCA Statement of Practice HSC Assessment.
- I understand that:
 - attendance is a requirement of NESA to be eligible for an HSC.
 - I must apply myself with diligence and sustained effort to the set tasks and experiences provided in the course by the school, especially all assessment tasks.
- Wherever possible, I am to complete and present all assessment tasks by the due date and time; and to be present for those assessment tasks held at school.
- I understand that hand-in tasks are to be submitted by the designated due date and in some instances due time. Tasks submitted after the notified time will be considered **LATE** and may not be accepted.
- If I am unable to attend school on the day of an assessment task, I will ensure my parents/guardians
 place on Compass, phone (65437444) or email <u>admin@aberdeen.catholic.edu.au</u> the school by
 8:45am and explain my absence and inform staff that I have an assessment due including the
 subject and task number.
- If I am unable to attend or complete an assessment for reasons of ill-health, injury or misadventure, I will obtain relevant supporting documentary proof (medical certificate/police report etc.) and complete a School-Based Assessment Variation Form (available in this handbook). I understand that the Assessment Committee will decide on the validity of my application.
- If I am absent for an assessment task immediately upon my return to school, I will submit all supporting documents to the Executive Assistance and report to the relevant Leader of Learning, ready to submit or complete the task.
- In the event of a known absence from school on the due date of an assessment task, which prevents submission, I understand that it is my responsibility to inform the relevant Leader of Learning at least four (4) school days prior to the due date of my absence and submit a School-Based Assessment Variation Form.
- I understand that sporting, cultural events or family vacations should **not** prevent the submission of tasks on time. If the task is an in-class task, I am required to inform the relevant Leader of Learning at least four (4) school days prior to the due date of my absence and submit a School-Based Assessment Variation Form.
- I understand all applications for Extension/Illness/Misadventure are subject to the approval of the Assessment
 Committee, and that by submitting the application there is no guarantee of it being endorsed or accepted by the
 Assessment Committee. The Assessment Committee must consider what is right and just for all students in the
 course.
- If I fail to hand in an assessment task by the due date, without reasonable explanation and supporting
 documentary evidence, I will be penalised with a ZERO mark. However, I understand that I will still need to
 complete the task to a suitable standard to fulfil the requirements of the course and my eligibility to sit the HSC
 examination for that subject.
- I understand that technical issues are not an excuse for failure to submit a task. It is my responsibility to back-up all tasks.
- I understand that malpractice will not be tolerated, and I will only submit ALL MY OWN WORK
- I will be present at school the **day prior** to the submission or completion of a task. If I am unable to attend or complete an assessment for reasons of ill-health, injury or misadventure, I will obtain relevant supporting documentary proof (medical certificate or police report etc.) and complete a **School-Based Assessment Variation Form** (available in this handbook and from Student Services).

Contact Staff 2026

School Executive					
Principal		Mrs Veronica Rolfe (veronica.rolfe@mn.catholic.edu.au)			
Assistant Principal – Curriculum		Mr Joel Bristow (joel.bristow@mn.catholic.edu.au)			
Assistant Principal – Wellbeing		Mrs Marika Eveleigh (marika.eveleigh@mn.catholic.edu.au)			
Pedagogical Mentor		Mrs Sarah Paine (sarah.paine@mn.catholic.edu.au)			
	h and Development		paron.dent@mn.catholic.edu.au)		
	Lead				
Religion	Ms Kristy Roach		Studies in Catholic Thought		
	kristy.wadwell@mn.catholic.edu.au		Studies in Catholic Thought – Life Skills		
			Studies of Religion 1 Unit		
English	nglish Mrs Shannon Monro		English Life Skills		
	Shannon.monro@mn.catholic.edu.au		English Studies		
			English Standard		
			English Advanced		
			English Extension 1		
Mathematics	thematics Mrs Melanie Ritter		Mathematics Standard 1		
	melanie.carrigan@mn.catholic.edu.au		Mathematics Standard 2		
			Mathematics Advanced		
			Mathematics Extension 1		
Caianas	Mo Janona Tharrasar		Numeracy		
Science	Ms Janene Thompson		Agriculture		
	janene.thompson@mn.catholic.edu.au		Biology Biology Life Skills		
			Biology Life Skills Chemistry		
			Earth & Environmental Science		
			Investigating Science		
			Physics		
			Science Extension		
HSIE	Ms Wendy Thomas		Ancient History Legal Studies		
	wendy.thomas1@mn.catholic.edu.au	<u>1</u>	Ancient History – Life Skills Modern History		
			Business Studies Modern History – Life Sk		
			Economics Society & Culture		
			Geography		
PDHPE	Mr Stefan Sokulsky		Community & Family Studies		
	steven.sokulsky@mn.catholic.edu.au	<u>1</u>	Exploring Early Childhood		
			Health and Movement Science		
TAS	Mrs Kirralee Green		Sport Leisure and Recreation Industrial Technology Timber		
IAS	(kirralee.green@mn.catholic.edu.au)		Industrial Technology Timber Industrial Technology Timber – Life Skills		
VET	Mr Mark Caelli		Construction		
V L 1	(mark.caelli@mn.catholic.edu.au)		Primary Industries		
	(mark.cacticemm.cathotic.caa.aa)		Manufacturing & Engineering		
Creative Arts &	Mrs Claire Dent		Music 1 Japanese Continuers and		
Japanese	claire.dent@mn.catholic.edu.au		Music 1 Life Skills Beginners		
			Visual Arts Photography, Video and Digital		
			Visual Arts Life Skills Imaging		
			Drama		
Distance	Mr Joel Bristow		Industrial Technology Graphics		
Education	joel.bristow@mn.catholic.edu.au		Software Engineering		
			Engineering Studies		
Earth and Environmental Science					
Leader of Wellho	Support Staff Leader of Wellheing				
Leader of Wellbeing		Mrs Joanne Smith (jo.smith@mn.catholic.edu.au)			
Career's Advisor/ TAFE coordinator		Ms Kylie Watkins (kylie.watkins@mn.catholic.edu.au)			
Learning Support		Mrs Lauren Gallagher (<u>lauren.gallagher@mn.catholic.edu.au</u>)			
Indigenous Support		Ms Laura Pegrum (<u>laura.pegrum@mn.catholic.edu.au</u>)			
School Counsellors			ompson (christine.thompson@mn.catholic.edu.au)		
		Ms Natasha Solman (<u>natasha.solman@mn.catholic.edu.au</u>) Mrs Jordie Nixon (<u>jordie.nixon@mn.catholic.edu.au</u>)			
		IMIS JORGIE MIXON	<u>(јогите.піхоп@птп.catпоцс.edu.au)</u>		

Section 1 - General Information

1.1 Welcome and Introduction

Congratulations on the successful completion of the Year 11 Course and welcome to the HSC Course. To complete the HSC Course, you must successfully complete at least 10 units of HSC subjects. This will require a diligent approach to your studies and the conscientious completion of all relevant assessment tasks outlined in this handbook.

The key to academic success over the next year is a positive attitude and a committed approach. Constant reference should be made to this document and the assessment grids located on Compass under "School Documentation", as it contains the information you need for your approaching assessment tasks for each of your courses; the number, type, outcomes and weightings of each task, all of which should be references from this handbook in preparation for each task.

This handbook also contains an outline of your rights and responsibilities as set out by NESA; what to do if something goes wrong, and what will happen if you fail to follow the guidelines. There are also some useful documents that may assist you during the HSC Course.

It is important that you read this handbook and ensure you understand the information it contains. You are to seek clarification on anything contained that you do not fully understand.

The staff at St Joseph's wish you the very best for the HSC year, and hope that your hard work enables you to achieve your potential.

Section 2 – Assessment Requirements and Guidelines

2.1 The Higher School Certificate

Performance in Higher School Certificate Assessment is as important as your performance in the HSC Examination. The NSW Educational Standards Authority (NESA) has set requirements for both schools and students. The syllabus and assessment information is available on NESA website: (https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/nesa/curriculum). Students must ensure they are aware of these requirements.

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

- have gained the Record of School Achievement (Year 11) or other qualifications as NESA considers satisfactory
- have completed HSC: All My Own Work (or its equivalent)
- have satisfactorily completed courses that comprise the pattern of study required by NESA for the award of the Higher School Certificate
- sit for and make a serious attempt at the requisite Higher School Certificate examinations (please note, some examinations are optional).

Candidates for the Higher School Certificate must undertake a program of study consisting of at least 12 units of Preliminary courses, and at least 10 units of HSC courses.

Both the Preliminary and HSC patterns of study MUST include:

- at least six units of Board Developed courses
- at least two units of a Board Developed course in English
- at least three courses which are of two-unit value (or greater), and
- at least four subjects.

Note: To satisfy pattern of study requirements for the Higher School Certificate, a maximum of six Preliminary units and seven HSC units can be counted from Science courses.

2.2 Satisfactory Completion

Satisfactory completion of a course involves participation in experiences, which are integral requirements of the syllabus, including: assignments, excursions, class participation, and practical work. **Students are required to complete all set tasks, not only those for assessment.** For the Principal to deem them as satisfactorily completing the course, students must make a serious attempt at assessment tasks.

2.3 Performance Bands

Six Performance Bands (Band 6 being the highest) give students an indication of their performance in a course in relation to stated syllabus outcomes, and relative to other students in NSW who completed the course. For 2 Unit Courses, the maximum possible mark is 100, and:

Band 6	90 to 100
Band 5	80 to 89
Band 4	70 to 79
Band 3	60 to 69
Band 2	50 to 59
Band 1 0 to 49	

Extension courses are of 1-unit value and have a maximum possible mark of 50, except for Mathematics Extension 2. Four bands are used in reporting extension courses:

Band E4	45 to 50			
Band E3	35 to 44			
Band E2	25 to 34			
Band 1	0 to 24			

2.4 Scaling for the ATAR

Calculation of the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) is the responsibility of the Technical Committee on Scaling on behalf of the NSW Vice-Chancellors' Committee. NESA provides the HSC data (consisting of both the examination marks and assessment marks) from which the ATARs are calculated, and the Universities Admissions Centre (UAC) then advises individual students of their ATARs.

The ATAR is a number between 0.00 and 99.95 (with increments of 0.05). It provides a measure of overall academic achievement in the HSC, which assists universities in ranking applicants for university selection.

The marks awarded to each student in each course are re-adjusted considering the general ability level of the cohort. Each cohort is calculated by considering their performance in all courses taken.

Only after this scaling process is it valid to add up the marks awarded to a student and use this total to calculate the ATAR. It is not possible to obtain the ATAR by a combination of the marks or percentile bands which appear on the Record of Achievement.

A candidate's ATAR is based upon the scaled aggregate of the marks in the best ten units of Board-Developed courses, subject to the following conditions:

- the best two units of English must be included in the ATAR
- the best eight units from the remaining Board-Developed Courses are included

The ATAR is a rank, not a mark. The only purpose of the ATAR is to assist universities in ranking school leaver applicants for tertiary selection in a fair and equitable way. The ATAR should not be used for any other purpose. Further information is available on the UAC website: **www.uac.edu.au**

Section 3 – Assessment Policy and Procedure

3.1 Assessment Policy and Procedures

A copy of the **Schools HSC Assessment Guidelines and the SJCCA – Statement of Practice – HSC Assessment** can be found on Compass – School Documentation – School Policies.

Catholic Schools HSC Assessment Guidelines SJCCA – Statement of Practice – HSC Assessment





Please note: All School Policies and Procedures are available on Compass School Documentation in the School Policies and Procedures

3.2 Malpractice and Collusion

Malpractice and collusion is any activity that allows students to gain an unfair advantage over other students. It includes, but is not limited to:

- copying in an exam from another student or using information secretly brought in
- sharing of your work with another student or handing in work that someone else did and saying it is your own
- making up journal entries for a research project or process diary
- using information from the internet or elsewhere and not acknowledging the source. This also includes the use of
 Al technologies. The Schools HSC Assessment Guidelines and the SJCCA Statement of Practice Academic
 Malpractice and Collusion outlines the acceptable use of Al technologies in assessments.

The Principal will ask the Assessment Committee to review any cases of suspected malpractice and recommend the appropriate action should malpractice be proven.

The student, in writing, must make any appeal against such a decision to the Principal, within 24 hours of the decision being taken. If malpractice is proven, a mark of ZERO will be awarded.

SJCCA – Statement of Practice - Academic Malpractice and Collusion.



3.3 Illness, Misadventure or extension

Scenario 1 Unforeseen Absence Illness or Misadventure	Scenario 2 Foreseen Absence Extension	Scenario 3 Fails to submit or attend with no supporting evidence
Receive Assessment Task Notification and sign for it	Receive Assessment Task Notification and sign for it	Receive Assessment Task Notification and sign for it
U	U	U
Prepare your task as per the Assessment Task Guidelines	Prepare your task as per the Assessment Task Guidelines	Prepare your task as per the Assessment Task Guidelines
U	U	U
Unable to attend school due to unforeseen or unavoidable circumstance.	Complete a School-Based Assessment Variation Form at least 3 days prior and Submit your completed School-Based Assessment Variation Form with your documentary proof of	Fail to submit a hand-in task or attend an in-class task on the due date/time with no reasonable excuse (as per School-Based Assessment Variation Form) Or submits a task which has evidence of malpractice.
U	absence and other forms to the Executive Assistant. You will be informed via email of	U
Parents must contact the school by 8:45am via Compass, phone 65437444 or email admin@aberdeen.catholic.edu.au to notify the relevant Leader of Learning that you have a task due and are unwell.	further steps for submission. Note: Zero marks awarded until extension is granted	Student re completes the task and re submits.
U	U	U
Submit task via email or another student if possible.	Submit Assessment Task as per the alternative assessment arrangements on the new due date.	Teacher refers student to LOL for further investigation and issues a detention for task completion if required. Zero mark awarded on Compass.
U		U
Obtain proof of illness or misadventure i.e. Doctor Certificate, Pharmacy Certificate or Police Report. Complete a School-Based Assessment Variation Form		Student re-completes the task and re-submits.
U		U
Immediately upon return to school report to the Leader of Learning and submit task (if not already submitted). Submit your completed School-Based Assessment Variation Form with your documentary proof of absence and other forms to the Executive Assistant Note: Zero marks awarded until evidence is submitted.		Teacher mark the task and provides feedback (even if zero marks are awarded).
You will receive in writing by email confirmation of all process of the assessment variation.		

NB: Failure to follow the above may result in a ZERO mark for your assessment task

3.4 'N' Determination

Students undertaking the HSC Course must make a genuine/serious attempt to satisfactorily complete course and assessment requirements. These requirements include students applying themselves with diligence and sustained effort to set tasks and experiences provided for the course by the school, regardless of whether these tasks contribute to the final assessment mark. **Attendance is an integral part of satisfactorily completing a course.**

It is a matter for the class teacher's professional judgment to determine whether a student has made a genuine attempt to complete these requirements. Students must make a serious attempt at assessment tasks that add to the total assessment mark.

Students who are not meeting course and/or assessment requirements (including mandatory Workplace hours for VET course) at any stage of the course will be informed, in writing, of the potential of an 'N' determination in the course. Students and parents/guardians will be informed in writing, allowing sufficient time for the problem to be corrected, thus enabling the student to meet the course and/or assessment requirements satisfactorily. The school will retain copies of all relevant documentation.

Any student who is at risk of not meeting course and/or assessment requirements will be notified via official school documentation. The purpose of the warning is to give the student sufficient time and opportunity to correct the identified problem(s).

If a student does not meet course and assessment requirements in an HSC course, an 'N' determination will be given. This means that the course will not be listed on the student's Record of Achievement, and it may also mean the possible withholding of the whole Higher School Certificate. Until a student has satisfactorily completed 12 units of Preliminary Courses and 10 units of HSC Courses which fulfil the NESA pattern of study requirements, they will not be eligible for the award of the HSC.

In the case of Extension Courses, students who do not meet the assessment requirements of the co-requisite English Advanced, Mathematics Advanced or Science course will not receive a result in either course.

The final decision regarding any 'N' determination recommendation will be made by the Principal. Any student given an 'N' determination has the right to appeal against the decision. The appeal review will be conducted by the Assessment Committee. The outcome of the appeal will be notified to the student, the parents and NESA.

3.5 **Assessment Appeals**

Each student has the right to ask the class teacher to review an assessment task. If the student is dissatisfied with the response given, the Leader of Learning of the course involved should be consulted.

Disputes over an individual task must be resolved as soon as possible by the Assessment Committee. The Assessment Committee's decision is final.

Note: The Assessment Committee will make recommendations to the Principal who is the final arbiter.

Where circumstances arise in the administration of the assessment of HSC courses not covered by the procedures described in this document, they should be referred to, and discussed with, the Principal for resolution.

3.6 **Disability Provisions**

Disability provisions are arrangements designed to help students who could not otherwise make a fair attempt to demonstrate their knowledge in an examination room. The disability provisions are intended to reduce disadvantage in an examination situation. The provisions granted are determined by how the student's examination performance is affected.

Any students with a disability recognised in the Disability Standards can apply for disability provisions. These provisions apply to students, who qualify on the grounds of a diagnosis of a recognised disability or learning difficulty, medical condition or injury. Students may be given Disability Provisions for assessment tasks prior to the HSC, based on evidence supplied to the Learning Support Coordinator, however, this is not automatically granted in the HSC

examinations as the final decision for the granting of Disability Provisions can only be determined by NESA.

Students eligible to apply for Disability Provisions need to see the Learning Support Coordinator to ensure the completion and submission of the relevant forms by the due date.

3.7 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Support

St Joseph's Catholic College, Aberdeen, would like to respectfully acknowledge the Wonnarua and Gamilaraay people who are the Traditional Custodians and First People of the land on which our school is built on. We pay our respects to the Elders past and present and we would like to extend our respect to the Aboriginal people, staff and students past and present of St Joseph's Aberdeen.

St Joseph's Catholic College, Aberdeen, has a vibrant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student population who are supported and encouraged in their endeavours and studies by the College. All students of the College are educated in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, spirituality and traditions.

St Joseph's Catholic College, through funding provided by the Catholic Schools Office employs an Aboriginal Educational Teacher and Aboriginal (Education) and Torres Strait Islander Education Worker (Culture) who works with students through an individual mentoring program and/or through provision of tutoring.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Educational Teacher and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Worker support the senior students with HSC course choices so as to find the right balance in their journey through their school life and to support the student through their various pathways after school such as:

- Career notifications-information and traineeships.
- University information camps, open days and alternative pathway entry.
- Scholarships and
- Post school support.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Leaders are involved in a range of activities under the guidance of the Aboriginal Educational Teacher and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Worker in relation to the celebration of days of significance, such as, Reconciliation Week. Care is taken to encourage students, families and staff to immerse themselves in an appreciation and understanding of our shared Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage.

Our college welcomes active participation by members of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in the education of our students.

3.8 Course Changes, Dropping Courses & Pathways Students

For students changing courses, the Principal must be satisfied that they will be able to complete all course outcomes before the completion of the HSC Course. NESA entrance and completion dates for courses must also be adhered to. Students wishing to change courses or drop a course must make an appointment to see the Assistant Principal to discuss the matter. No changes can be made after 30 June.

3.9 **VET Courses and Assessment**

Vocational Education & Training (VET) courses are competency based, and no internal assessment mark is required. However, if VET students intend to sit for the HSC VET Examination, an estimate mark will need to be submitted to NESA based on the Trial HSC Examination. Competencies are recorded and can be accessed using the Unique Student Identifier (USI).

There is no pass or fail in the VET system; students are either deemed competent or not yet competent for each unit. Hence, assessment in VET is ongoing throughout the course and may consist of a combination of written tasks, practical tasks or demonstrations. All units of competency will count towards the student's achievement of the AQF (Australian Qualification Framework) Certificate, which may be awarded at the end of the year provided all units of competency are achieved.

Whenever students are being formally assessed, they need to follow the guidelines set out in this handbook for absence, illness, misadventure etc.

Assessments may be conducted for individuals or groups. Assessment tasks (written or practical) are required to be completed or demonstrated to a standard specified in the training package for that qualification to be deemed 'Competent'. If a student is assessed as being 'Not Yet Competent' in a unit of competency, they will be required to be re-assessed.

Students have three attempts to show they are competent in a "Unit of Competency", up until a date determined by the teacher (supplied in the Year 12 Assessment Calendar). A unit of work will not be reassessed after it has been delivered and THREE assessment opportunities provided.

Work Placement – as a part of the formal assessment for VET courses there is a compulsory work placement of 35 hours per year (70 hours in total), with the exception of Manufacturing and Engineering which has 35 hours in total. The rules for absence or misadventure as set out in this handbook apply as well.

HSC examinations for VET students – students wishing to use their VET course towards their ATAR (where the subject is deemed eligible) can choose to undertake the written NESA examination and will nominate this option during the HSC year. The written examination is independent of the competency-based assessment undertaken during the course. The marks achieved by students in the examination are used for the ATAR calculation only.

3.10 TAFE students

Students enrolling in TAFE will need to liaise with the TAFE college they attend regarding assessment requirements for the course. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the specific requirements for their course. These courses will also include a work place hours component.

3.11 Distance Education students

Students enrolling in Distance Education courses are responsible for ensuring they communicate regularly with their Distance Education Teacher via online methods, mobile phone or email. Assessments will be conducted as per the instructions provided by the Distance Education School.

Section 4 – Assessment Documentation

Referencing Guide

The **Harvard Reference Generator** tool is designed to create references for your bibliography in the correct form. The SJA Librarian recommends Neil's Tool Box: http://www.neilstoolbox.com/ and for a Plagiarism Checker: http://www.neilstoolbox.com/plagiarism-tester/index.htm

HSC Key Terms

Account - Account for: state reasons for, report on. Give an account of: narrate a series of events or transactions

Analyse - Identify components and the relationship between them; draw out and relate implications

Apply - Use in a different, new or unfamiliar situation

Appreciate - Make a judgement about the value of

Assess - Make a judgement of value, quality, outcomes, results or size

Calculate - Ascertain/determine from given facts, figures or information

Clarify - Make clear or plain

Classify - Arrange or include in classes/categories

Compare - Show how things are similar or different

Construct - Make; build; put together items or arguments

Contrast - Show how things are different or opposite

Critically analyse/evaluate - Critically analyse: use interpretation and reasoning to assess a range of evidence and make judgements based on detailed analysis. Critically evaluate: add a degree or level of accuracy, knowledge and understanding, logic, questioning, reflection and quality to evaluate.

Deduce - Draw conclusions

Define - State meaning and identify essential qualities

Demonstrate - Show by example

Describe - Provide characteristics and features

Discuss - Identify issues and provide points for and/or against

Distinguish - Recognise or note/indicate as being distinct or different from; to note differences between

Evaluate - Make a judgement based on criteria; determine the value of

Examine - Inquire into

Explain - Relate cause and effect; make the relationships between things evident; provide why and/or how

Extract - Choose relevant and/or appropriate details

Extrapolate - Infer from what is known

Identify - Recognise and name

Interpret - Draw meaning from

Investigate - Plan, inquire into and draw conclusions about

Justify - Support an argument or conclusion

Outline - Sketch in general terms; indicate the main features of

Predict - Suggest what may happen based on available information

Propose - Put forward (for example a point of view, idea, argument, suggestion) for consideration or action

Recall - Present remembered ideas, facts or experiences

Recommend - Provide reasons in favour

Recount - Retell a series of events

Summarise - Express, concisely, the relevant details

Synthesise - Putting together various elements to make a whole

4.1 School-Based Assessment Variation Form



4.2 School-Based Assessment Appeal Form



4.3 Statutory Declaration



4.4 Assessment Cover Sheet



Please note: All assessment documents are available on Compass School Documentation in the Assessment Documents folder.