



Nepean
Christian
School
In Christ We Grow

Senior Student Study Handbook

Including Assessment Procedures

Updated February, 2015

Welcome to Senior Study at Nepean Christian School. This booklet is designed to help you meet all the requirements for each course towards the award of a Record of School Achievement (ROSA) or Higher School Certificate (HSC).

It is the responsibility of our School to implement responsible assessment procedures for all students from Kindergarten to Year 12. The Senior Student Study Handbook contains the specific outworking of that policy for Years 9 to 12. It satisfies Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards requirements for both NSW ROSA and Higher School Certificate courses. It is manageable for staff, fair for students, and reflects the values and beliefs that underpin our School's educational outlook.

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The Record of School Achievement (ROSA)

What do I need to have done to qualify for a ROSA?

To qualify for the award of a ROSA, you must have:

- undertaken and completed courses of study that satisfy the BOSTES curriculum and assessment requirements for the Record of School Achievement;
- complied with any other regulations or requirements (such as attendance) imposed by the Minister or BOSTES; and
- completed Year 10.

What courses are needed for the ROSA to be awarded?

To be eligible for a ROSA, you must satisfactorily complete the following courses:

- English – 400 hours to be completed by the end of Year 10.
- Mathematics – 400 hours to be completed by the end of Year 10.
- Science – 400 hours to be completed by the end of Year 10.
- HSIE (History and Geography) – 400 hours to be completed by the end of Year 10. This must include 100 hours each of History and Geography in Stage 4 and 100 hours each of Australian History and Australian Geography in Stage 5.
- LOTE – 100 hours to be completed in one language over one continuous 12-month period between Years 7–10.
- TAS (Mandatory) – 200 hours to be completed by the end of Year 8.
- Creative Arts (Mandatory) – 200 hours to be completed by the end of Year 10, consisting of 100 hours in each of Visual Arts and Music.
- PDHPE – 300 hours to be completed by the end of Year 10.

What does it mean to ‘complete’ a course?

You must:

- follow the course developed or endorsed by BOSTES
- apply yourself with diligence and sustained effort to the tasks and experiences provided in the course by the school
- achieve some or all of the course outcomes

What if I don’t ‘complete’ a course?

If you are in danger of not meeting the requirements in a course, you and your parents / carers will be warned in writing. This warning email will detail what you must do to resolve the problem and the date by which you must do this. If appropriate, the school will offer you assistance to do this. You will be asked to acknowledge in writing your receipt of this warning email.

If you resolve the problem, the school will send an email which advises that you are no longer at risk of non-completion.

If you don’t resolve the problem, you and your parents / carers will receive a second warning email.

If you don’t complete a course, the Principal will inform you that an ‘N Determination’ has been made for that course. The course will not appear on your ROSA. If that means you don’t satisfy the ROSA structure, you won’t receive a ROSA.

Can I appeal a decision made by the school?

If you believe the wrong decision has been made with regard to an ‘N Determination’, you may submit an appeal in writing to the Principal. The Principal will convene a review panel to consider the appeal. If, after the review panel has made its decision, you remain convinced that an error has occurred, you may appeal to the Appeals Committee of BOSTES.

How will my final ROSA grade be decided?

The school will follow Method 1 as suggested by BOSTES. For more information, see <http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/rosa/grades/>

What if I am not suited for academic study? Are there other options?

Students are able to satisfy the mandatory curriculum requirements for the Record of School Achievement in individual key learning areas (KLAs) by completing courses based on Life Skills outcomes and content.

Students can meet the mandatory curriculum requirements by undertaking regular outcomes and content in some Years 7–10 Board Developed and/or Board Endorsed Courses and Life Skills outcomes and content in other courses of study.

What if I leave school after Year 10 but before the end of Year 12?

If you have met the requirements for it, you will be awarded a ROSA. It will reflect all coursework completed up until the time you leave – not just Year 10.

The Higher School Certificate (HSC)

How is the HSC structured?

All courses in the HSC have a unit value. Most courses are 2 units. All 2-unit HSC courses have equal status.

You must complete at least 12 units of Preliminary courses and at least 10 units of HSC courses. You must complete the corresponding Preliminary course before commencing an HSC course. (For example, you must complete Preliminary Biology before commencing HSC Biology.)

Are there any courses I must do to receive an HSC?

Both the Preliminary and HSC courses must include:

- At least 6 units of Board Developed Courses, including at least 2 units of English
- At least 3 courses of 2 units value or greater
- At least 4 subjects (including English)
- At most, 6 units of courses in Science can count towards HSC eligibility

What does it mean to 'complete' a course?

You must:

- follow the course developed or endorsed by BOSTES
- apply yourself with diligence and sustained effort
- achieve some or all of the course outcomes
- complete work placement for VET Board Developed Courses (if applicable)
- make a genuine attempt at assessment tasks that total more than 50% of the available school assessment marks (for HSC courses only).

What if I don't 'complete' a course?

If you are in danger of not meeting the requirements in a course, you and your parents / carers will be warned in writing. This warning email will detail what you must do to resolve the problem and the date by which you must do this. If appropriate, the school will offer you assistance to do this. You will be asked to acknowledge in writing your receipt of this warning email.

If you resolve the problem, the school will send an email which advises that you are no longer at risk of non-completion.

If you don't resolve the problem, you and your parents/carers will receive a second warning email.

If you don't complete a course, the Principal will inform you that an 'N Determination' has been made for that course. The course will not appear on your HSC Record of Achievement. If that means you don't satisfy the ROSA structure, you won't receive a ROSA. If that means you don't satisfy the HSC structure, you won't receive an HSC.

Who will monitor my compliance with the requirements for eligibility for the award of the Higher School Certificate?

The Secondary Team Leader will care for you in this regard.

What marks/grades will I receive with my HSC?

For each HSC course that you complete, you will receive a School-based Assessment Mark and an Examination Mark (if applicable). The total HSC mark for each course is the combined result of these 2 marks.

What is the ATAR?

ATAR stands for Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank. It is administered by the University Admissions Centre (UAC) which oversees the process for people applying to University. The ATAR is a rank out of 100, with the highest possible rank being 99.95. It reflects the percentage of candidates above which you have been ranked. For example, an ATAR of 73.2 means you have been ranked above 73.2% of students who applied for an ATAR.

Assessment at Nepean Christian School

Why does Nepean Christian School assess?

The primary purpose of assessment is to accurately evaluate a student's learning of certain content or outcomes, provide feedback on that learning, and report this in a clear and appropriate manner to parents, students and the NSW BOSTES.

In addition to this primary purpose, assessment in Years 10-12 determines the ROSA grade as well as the School-based Assessment Mark, which appears on the Higher School Certificate Record of Achievement.

There are many vital aspects of school life that do not lend themselves to being assessed and their importance is not lessened by this e.g. your wisdom, your commitment, your courage, your organisation, your kindness, your sense of humour, your maturity, your resilience, your faithfulness, your contentment, your solidarity.

How does Nepean Christian School view assessment?

We believe:

1. God judges the motivations of people, as well as their actions (i.e. their response to the Gospel in thought, word and action)
2. God's judgement is always just, fair and inclusive
3. Truth, kindness, humility and authenticity are outworkings of Christ-likeness
4. Segments of life need to be contextualised in the multi-layered, integral contexts of real life
5. God creates and sustains as He sees fit, and hence, grading His creation can be degrading to students and dishonouring to Him
6. Christ's death is the highest price for every success and the deepest comfort in every failure
7. God is most glorified in us, when we are most satisfied with Him

and we recognise:

1. Children have a myriad of different abilities, disabilities, dispositions, cultural backgrounds, worldviews, expressions of sinfulness, learning styles and intelligences
2. Criterion-referenced assessment is more valuable, equitable and informative than norm-referenced assessment
3. External exams can often be "the tail that wags the dog"
4. Assessment and feedback are vital aspects of the learning process

therefore we will:

1. Anchor assessment in real contexts when at all possible
2. Activate assessment that is wise, fair, inclusive and equitable
3. Wisely assess movement towards Christian faith and action
4. Inspire a spirit of learning and assessing for their worthwhileness (i.e. growth in maturity, self-fulfilment, service of the Lord and others etc) rather than for a test or a mark
5. View mistakes, failure and mishaps as an essential part of growth in Christ-likeness
6. Provide clear and swift feedback that leads to further individual and corporate learning
7. Promote a spirit of acceptance and support of one's own and others' idiosyncrasies
8. Encourage courageous, candid self-reflection and kind, forthright peer assessment
9. Protect the privacy of students and sensitively encourage students who might feel degraded by being graded.

Assessment Procedures

What type of assessment tasks might there be?

Assessment tasks may include:

- formal examinations
- unit or class tests
- aural tests
- oral tasks / presentations
- research projects
- practical tasks
- field work
- essays
- reports

How many tasks will I have?

You will undertake a range of assessment tasks in accordance BOSTES requirements for that course. The number of tasks for Year 9, Year 10 and HSC will generally be no fewer than 4 and no more than 5. For Preliminary courses the number of tasks will generally be no fewer than 3 and no more than 5.

In addition to formal assessment tasks, you will be expected to complete other ongoing homework, assignments and course work. This work is viewed as an integral part of the course and, therefore, must be taken seriously and completed.

How will I know when tasks are due?

Teachers will develop assessment schedules in each course, adhering to any course-specific requirements mandated by BOSTES. These tasks will be entered into Edumate by the end of the second week of the year. Students can view all assessment tasks for the year once they been entered.

The assessment task entries in Edumate will contain the following information:

- the title of the task
- the date on which the task will occur or is due
- percentage weighting of each task in relation to the total weighted mark for the course
- a very brief description of the task or type of task eg oral presentation, written report etc.

Due to the dynamic nature of school life, the due dates of some assessment tasks may change within these parameters:

- The amended due date will differ from the original due date by no more than 2 weeks.
- Once a *Notification of Assessment Task* has been issued, the due date will not change.

You will be issued with the *Notification Of Assessment Task* at least two weeks prior to the due date. A copy of the actual assessment task will be included with the *Notification*, except in the case of tests (either written or of a practical nature) or examinations. In such cases a *Notification Of Assessment Task* will include only the date and weighting of the task. The *Notification* will also be emailed to your parents / carers. Please note that these *Notifications* will not be issued for individual examinations that are conducted during the official school examination period.

It is your responsibility, when returning from absences, to check that you have not missed notification of any assessment tasks. You should check with each individual teacher. Further confirmation will come by referring to Edumate.

How many tasks will I have at any time?

Teachers will endeavour to ensure that assessment tasks are spread as evenly as possible over the entire Assessment period. There will however, be times, where assessment requirements may be heavier. These are most likely to occur towards the ends of courses, as many assignments can only be completed after the unit of work has been adequately covered.

How do I submit a task?

Unless otherwise specified on the *Notification Of Assessment Task*, each assessment task must be completed and submitted via edumate by 3.45pm on the due date. If the assessment task is of a type that cannot be submitted electronically, it must be submitted in person to your teacher by 3.45pm on the due date. If your teacher is not available (absent, or on an excursion, etc) you must hand the task to the Secondary Prep Room by 3.45pm on the due date. You are required to hand the task to a member of staff. The member of staff will initial your assessment task and your Organiser.

You should hand in your own work. In the case where a parent or sibling is handing in work on your behalf (when you are absent), he/she must inform the staff member of the situation. In this case, work should be accompanied by a note indicating the reason for your absence. In the case of absence, the task should be submitted in at 9am on the due date – not 3.45pm.

All tasks must be submitted in accordance with the instructions on the *Notification Of Assessment Task*.

Failure to meet these requirements will result in a zero mark being allocated for this task. The subject teacher will then send an email to your parents / carers indicating a zero mark on an assessment task, within five school days of the due date.

When will the task and mark/grade be returned?

Your assessment task will be marked and returned within 1 school week of the due date (ie not including holidays). When external marking is required (eg. Major Design Project) this may take longer than 1 week.

What happens if I submit a task late?

Any late submissions will automatically receive a zero mark. See further questions below for other circumstances. Nevertheless, you must complete the assessment task.

What if I have a good reason for handing in a task late?

If you have missed an assessment task or were late handing in an assessment task due to illness or serious and unavoidable circumstances, or believe that you have been unfairly disadvantaged in an assessment task because you were ill during an in-school task, you may apply to sit for or to submit this task at a later date.

In this case medical documentation or the equivalent will be required. You should collect an *Illness or Misadventure* form from the office and return the completed form to the Secondary Team Leader.

Can I apply for an extension before a task is due?

If you believe you have a legitimate reason for an extension in an assessment task, you may complete an *Illness or Misadventure* form and submit it to the Secondary Team Leader. An application will only be considered if it is submitted by 3.45pm two school days before the due date of the task. You must attach appropriate documentation with the form. Your teacher and the Secondary Team Leader will together decide on the result of the application.

What will the school do if a teacher suspects cheating or other malpractice?

If a teacher suspects malpractice of any kind, he or she will refer that to the Secondary Team Leader who, in most circumstances, will convene a Review Panel. The penalty for malpractice may include, but is not limited to, a zero mark for the task.

Can I appeal a decision made by the school?

In the first case, you should discuss the situation with your teacher. If you still believe the wrong decision has been made, you may submit an appeal in writing to the Secondary Team Leader. In most circumstances, the Secondary Team Leader will convene a review panel to consider the appeal.