

# SECONDARY SCHOOL ASSESSMENT POLICY

Excellence, Diversity, Learning, Integrity,  
Community



Adopted – September 2017  
Version – 1.0  
Reviewed – May 2020  
By – SSLT

Review- March 2020

# ASSESSMENT POLICY

## Rationale

The Secondary School Assessment Policy provides a clear framework for both staff and students to successfully satisfy course requirements with regard to assessment. Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about continual progress in students' learning. The processes of assessment and reporting can be succinctly summarised as observing what students write, say, make or do, interpreting these results, recording the results, communicating to the various stakeholders and using assessment outcomes to inform teaching practice.

At VISS, we are committed to improving student learning and giving students several opportunities through the assessment framework to develop higher order thinking skills. We value the importance of teacher feedback, student reflections and goal setting in student learning. To that end, students' achievement in formative and summative assessments is taken into consideration whilst making a holistic judgment on their readiness to progress to the next grade level.

## Purpose

The aim of assessment at VISS is to provide a supportive and positive mechanism that helps students to improve their learning, teachers to improve their teaching and parents to understand and assist in their child's progress. The purpose of this policy is to ensure consistency in the approach to assessment and reporting across all subject areas and all grade levels.

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning of the school and, in committing to this policy, VISS will ensure that:

- Assessment tasks will pose significant, challenging and real world problems in order to engage students in the task and in their overall learning. The tasks will be varied in their demands and form and will be constructed using a taxonomy of thinking that enables students to show their learning at the highest levels of evaluation and creating.
- The tasks will be set to capture the growth students have made and to show areas where development is still to be made. They will be achievable but challenging
- Teachers will ensure that students are familiar with unit and lesson learning goals and will be made aware of the methods in which their learning will be assessed, both formatively and summatively.
- Parents and care-givers will be provided with an assessment outline to ensure that a genuine partnership is promoted between school and home.
- Clear criteria for success will be included in the tasks.
- Students will be provided with specific oral and written feedback on their progress during each unit and through each formative assessment task. The feedback will be timely, regular and constructive. There will be opportunities for students to act on the feedback they receive to edit and improve what they have done, presented, made or written and to demonstrate their learning.

- Moderation will be undertaken by teachers at appropriate stages of the programme to ensure that tasks are rigorous and reliable in their assessment of student learning. The moderation process will also be used to ensure a common understanding of the demands of the task and consistency of teacher judgement of a student's progress.
- Examinations will form part of an assessment program in part to assess student progress but more broadly to educate students around preparation for tasks covering the whole semester, time management and coping with stress.

## Principles of Assessment:

A combination of the following principles of assessment contribute to the assessment framework at VISS:

### **Assessment FOR Learning should –**

- Inform teaching practice, highlighting areas for targeted teaching
- Provide students an opportunity to reflect on the feedback and set goals for achievement in the curriculum.
- Identify the need for curriculum and pedagogical review.

### **Assessment OF Learning should –**

- Determine what students know and establish the progress made by students at the given level in the curriculum.
- Identify and place the students on a progress continuum in the curriculum with the relevant level or grade indicators.
- Inform the reporting process.

### **Assessment AS Learning should -**

- Enable students to reflect on their learning and set goal for themselves.
- Provide opportunities for students to engage in self and peer assessments.

### **For the purpose of this document following definitions will be used:**

#### **Summative Assessments –**

Assessment designed to determine the level of achievement of a student, generally at the end of a course of study.

#### **Formative Assessments –**

Assessment designed to identify the learning needs of students. Formative assessments become part of the learning process itself.

## Implementation

### Reports:

- Grade 6 - formal reports will assess students against the Australian Curriculum (Victorian) achievement standards and on a scale of Well Above, Above, At, Approaching, Below or Well Below Standard.
- Grades 7-10 - formal reports will assess students against the Australian Curriculum achievement standards and on a scale of Well Above, Above, At, Approaching, Below or Well Below Standard which will be correlated to percentages and grades on a scale of A\* to E.
- Grades 11 & 12 – formal reports will assess students against IB or GC achievement standards. For IB on a scale of Level 1 to 7 and for GC on a scale of A\* to E.
- Formal written reports will be issued to parents at the end of each term and Parent Teacher Interviews will be held at the beginning of each term.

### Communication:

- Grades 6-10 - Edmodo will be used to communicate all homework and formal assessment tasks. For core subjects (English, Mathematics, Science and Humanities) grades will be communicated via the teacher. For Ministry, PE, Languages and ADT subjects, grades will be communicated via Edmodo mark book.
- Grades 11 & 12 – ManageBac will be used to communicate homework, resources, CAS and documentation for formal assessment tasks.

### Examinations:

- Grade 6 - End of Year exams only for all Ministry of Education subjects i.e. Arabic, Islamic and Social Studies.
- Grades 7 – 10 - End of Year exams will be held at the end of the year for all core subjects (English, Mathematics, Science and Humanities) as well as for all Ministry subjects.
- Grade 11 & 12 – End of Year exams for all subjects including Ministry subjects. IB Visual Arts and GC Design Technology do not have End of Year exams.
- Mock examinations only for IB students will be held every year close to the examination period in which they are held.
- VISS specific coversheet for exam papers are required.
- Exams papers, where feasible, should be written from own material in alignment with relevant curriculum or modified past papers (e.g. alter the operative verbs or content or the focus of the questions).
- All identification marks (codes, labels, banners, number sequences etc.) from past papers if parts of them are used should be removed.

## Assessment Grading

### Grades 6 to 10

GRADE	PERCENTAGE	STANDARD	PROGRESSION
A*	90% and above	Well above standard	1 year or more above
A	80-89%	Above standard	6 months above
B	70-79%	At standard	At expected level
C	60-69%	Approaching standard	6 months below
D	50-59%	Below standard	1 year below
E	49% and below	Well below standard	1.5 year or more below

### Grade 11&12 (IB & GC Diploma Programme)

*Please note - All subjects in the IB Diploma Programme have different grade boundaries. Following is a guideline for the correlation of IB Grades with school grade boundaries.*

IB Grade	GC Letter Grade	Percentage	Level
6/7	A*	90 to 100	Excellent
5	A	80 to 89	Above
4	B	70 to 79	At Standard
3	C	60 to 69	Approaching
2	D	50 to 59	Pass
1	Fail	49 and below	Fail

### Assessment Practices

VISS employs a variety of assessment practices to accommodate a range of teaching and learning approaches. This allows students with different learning styles an opportunity to demonstrate progress and therefore provides a balanced view of each student's development. Please see the appendix for description of practices.

### Assessment Expectations

**Students at VISS can expect to:**

- Be aware that failure to meet set deadlines could result in reduced effort and achievement marks.
- Be aware of the weighting of each assessment in the overall assessment pattern.
- Be aware of the implications of failure to submit assessment.
- Ensure they are academically honest with regards the work they produce and submit.

- Understand that every piece of work completed may not be formally assessed.
- Have a clear idea of the knowledge and/or skills that are being assessed.
- Receive clear feedback regarding the mark/grade/level/comment that has been awarded.
- Be able to see each marked assignment.
- Be provided with the opportunity to have their performance assessed qualitatively.
- Have access to all criteria being used in the assessment.
- Be given advance warning of any assessment for which preparation is necessary and be clear about the date of the assessment.
- Be given opportunities to assess themselves and also their peers' work at regular intervals.
- Be given opportunities to reflect on their work and set goals for improvement.

#### Teachers at VISS should:

- Monitor each student's progress and support an effective formative and summative system of recording, assessing and reporting.
- Agree to deadlines in the light of the students' other workload and give adequate time for the completion of out-of-class assessments.
- Clearly define common assessment tasks within faculties/subjects for each grade level.
- Provide assessment outlines/schedules and rubrics for formal assessments
- Post formal assessment tasks and relevant rubrics on Edmodo (Grades 6-10)
- Use student performance as a feedback mechanism to initiate refinements to, or changes in, the curriculum and its delivery.
- Use a variety of assessment tools but within a common framework which all members of a faculty understand and commonly apply.
- Provide a wide range of learning opportunities and styles of learning including ICT opportunities.
- Use oral as well as written feedback for all informal class work or homework and ensure that homework has a clear purpose, focuses on appropriate tasks and the application of knowledge.
- Teach students how to set their own individual targets and raise achievement levels.
- Ensure that students have the opportunity to raise issues regarding written comments on their work either at the end of a lesson/break time or lunchtime, as and when is convenient, to discuss individual issues in order to support any student with their work.
- Where relevant, ensure that Subject Assessment Criteria are available to students either electronically, as a hardcopy guidebook or within the classroom.
- Promote the values and need for academic honesty and offer instruction when necessary.

#### Grade Level Leaders and Home Group Teachers at VISS should:

- Support and utilize the traffic lighting system effectively that reviews progress throughout the academic year and sets new and clear targets for the future.
- Support students in the use of Edmodo or ManageBac and help individuals with time management strategies and general organization skills.
- Support and manage students who are consistently missing deadlines.
- Reinforce the need for academic honesty

#### Parents of students at VISS should:

- Support all policies of VISS particularly those that relate to learning.
- Participate in their child's learning and agree to any individual learning plans that have been set and work in partnership with the school.

- Support and encourage their child/children to meet set deadlines for work.
- Attend parent teacher interviews throughout the school calendar where there is an opportunity to discuss their child's current attainment and to understand strategies for development.
- Understand that Parent Teacher Interview evenings constitute a formal reporting opportunity
- Support and encourage their child/children to abide by the rules governing academic honesty.

#### VISS should:

- Provide parents with clear information to enable them to have an understanding as to how they can support their child's learning within the home.
- Produce examination timetables with enough notice for students and teachers to formulate a revision programme.
- Archive records of achievement.
- Produce reports on a regular basis throughout the academic year that are clearly understood by both students and parents.
- Set clear targets within their School Development Plans in raising student achievement and monitor performance regularly through critical reflection and through analysis of past performance.
- Continue to set high expectations as to what their student body can and should achieve.
- Provide adequate professional development related to assessment of and for learning.
- Provide professional development on how to ensure academic honesty and the available tools.

#### Defaulting on Assessment Deadlines

Teachers will communicate clear expectations about every assessment task, including submission due dates and assessment criteria. A schedule of assessment tasks with due dates will be provided to students and parents as a guide to the schedule of major assessments for the term.

Teachers will encourage and expect students to seek help, explanation and clarification when unsure and will insist that students report difficulties to them early on. Teacher will hold students accountable for showing their progress with the assessment task along the way, through interim checks, drafts of work or one-to-one conversations.

For various valid reasons, there will sometimes be students who are unable to complete assessment tasks by the due date. It is important that there are clear policies and procedures in place to support these students to submit work for assessment and to model strategies to help students to develop good homework and study habits for the future.

Please refer to the appendix for a flow chart that shows the process for making defaulting students accountable and offering them opportunity.

#### Absence of students during school assessments Grade 6 to 12:

- If a student is absent on the day a task is due it is their responsibility to see the teacher on the day they return to school and submit the work. If a student misses an in class test they should expect to do this assessment in their next timetabled class
- Absence during school assessments and exams is only permissible with a medical note or proof of serious adverse circumstances.
- If the student has complied with the required documents for absence, the teacher will arrange to reschedule the assessment task at a suitable and convenient time.

### Extension of school based assessments

- To ensure equity between all students, extensions will only be given when students have experienced significant disadvantage in their preparation or completion of the task over other students in the cohort. This might include:
  - Long term absences or difficult family circumstances.
  - Extenuating circumstances such as prolonged illness.
  - Genuine failure of technology.
- Students may be granted an extension of time for the submission of assigned work. This does not usually exceed one week and will be two weeks at maximum. A signed letter from a parent, clearly indicating the student's circumstances, is required to support the request for an extension.

### Access to marked formal assessments/exam scripts for Parents and Students

- Students will have the opportunity to see their marked assessments/exam scripts. This is valuable in terms of feedback. Students are not allowed to bring these scripts home.
- Parents may request to see marked assessments/exam scripts. They may read through these scripts at school and may not be allowed to copy them or take pictures.
- Exam scripts of end of year exams will be shared only under special circumstance on a case by case basis.

### Provision for retaking end of year exams to address progression related issues:

- **Grades 7 to 10 –**
- If students have passed all classwork and end of term assessments satisfactorily but have failed the end of year exam, they will be given one opportunity of retaking a maximum of 2 exams before the start of the next academic year.
- In case of non-examined subjects, students will be given one opportunity to resubmit a major coursework for a maximum of 1 subject before the start of the next academic year.
- **Grade 11 & 12 (GC) –**
  - If students have passed 40% compulsory coursework component of their courses, they will be given one opportunity to retake a maximum of 3 end of year exams at the start of the next academic year to make up credits.
- **Grade 11 & 12 (IB) –**
  - If students do not pass the end of year exams and their total IB Diploma points are below 21, they may be advised to drop one or two subjects and do IB Courses.
  - Retake exams in the subsequent November or May sessions.



## Appendix A

### Description of VISS Assessment Practices

#### (a) End-of-Year Examination

Held in a controlled environment under standard examination conditions in accordance with external examination procedures. Aimed at measuring student performance over the whole course taught to date. End of year exam papers require a VISS specific coversheet.

#### (b) Mock Examinations

Held in a controlled environment under full examination conditions in accordance with external examination procedures. Aimed at simulating a full examination for the IB Diploma Programme for all relevant subjects.

#### (c) Unit Test

- A formalised, in-class and controlled activity where students have been given notice of at least three school days.
- They should measure student performance on work that has been taught in previous weeks.
- Work should be limited to a defined unit of work that students are aware of as being a unit, although there may be several topics covered within the unit.
- Duration of the test should be no more than 80 minutes.

#### (d) Quiz

- A formative piece of assessment on a small part of a unit, or through an informal class activity, given after the completion of a particular topic.

#### (e) Lesson Review

- Short verbal or written questions to assess student understanding of a given lesson.
- All material reviewed should have been taught.

#### (f) Investigation

- A piece of structured work not necessarily linked to specific course content.
- Problems are often “open-ended” with students achieving results through investigative work.

#### (g) Formal Essay

- Extended piece of independent student work.
- Can reflect a student generated title, a teacher-set title, be open or closed in nature and may have guiding questions.
- As students progress in age, this activity will move from descriptive to analytical or evaluative and increasingly have a formal structure dependent upon the subject area.

#### (h) Research Project

- Involves both teacher guided and/or independent student work done both in class and/or as homework.
- Requires appropriate referencing of research particularly when using the internet.
- The product may be in any defined medium: oral presentation, written work, video, computer presentation or appropriate combinations.

**(i) Journal Writing**

- A continuous-assessment activity, which can be part of class work or homework.
- Criteria, guiding how student performance will be determined, should be made available prior to the beginning of the activity.

**(j) Field Work**

- Off-site data collection for analysis and interpretation.

**(k) Practical/Experimental Work**

- Involves both teacher guided and/or independent work.
- This activity is usually in a lab or specialist room involving specialist equipment.
- Clear criteria, stating how student performance will be measured should be available prior to the activity.

**(l) Performance/Presentation**

- Part of a continuous activity.
- Clear criteria, stating how student performance will be measured, should be available prior to the activity.

**(m) Group Work/Class Activities**

- Part of a continuous activity or a part of other assessment tools.
- Individual student performance must be acknowledged as well as the group performance.

**(n) Course Work or Portfolio**

- A collection of different activities done in class or as homework.
- Clearly defined criteria are required.

**(o) Homework**

- Work done at home, although it may be begun in class, in a non-controlled environment.
- Should take the nature of set reading, set writing, reviewing work, revising work or consolidating work that has already been taught.
- May allow continued work on research projects or other projects.
- Should be set in accordance with the VISS Homework Policy.

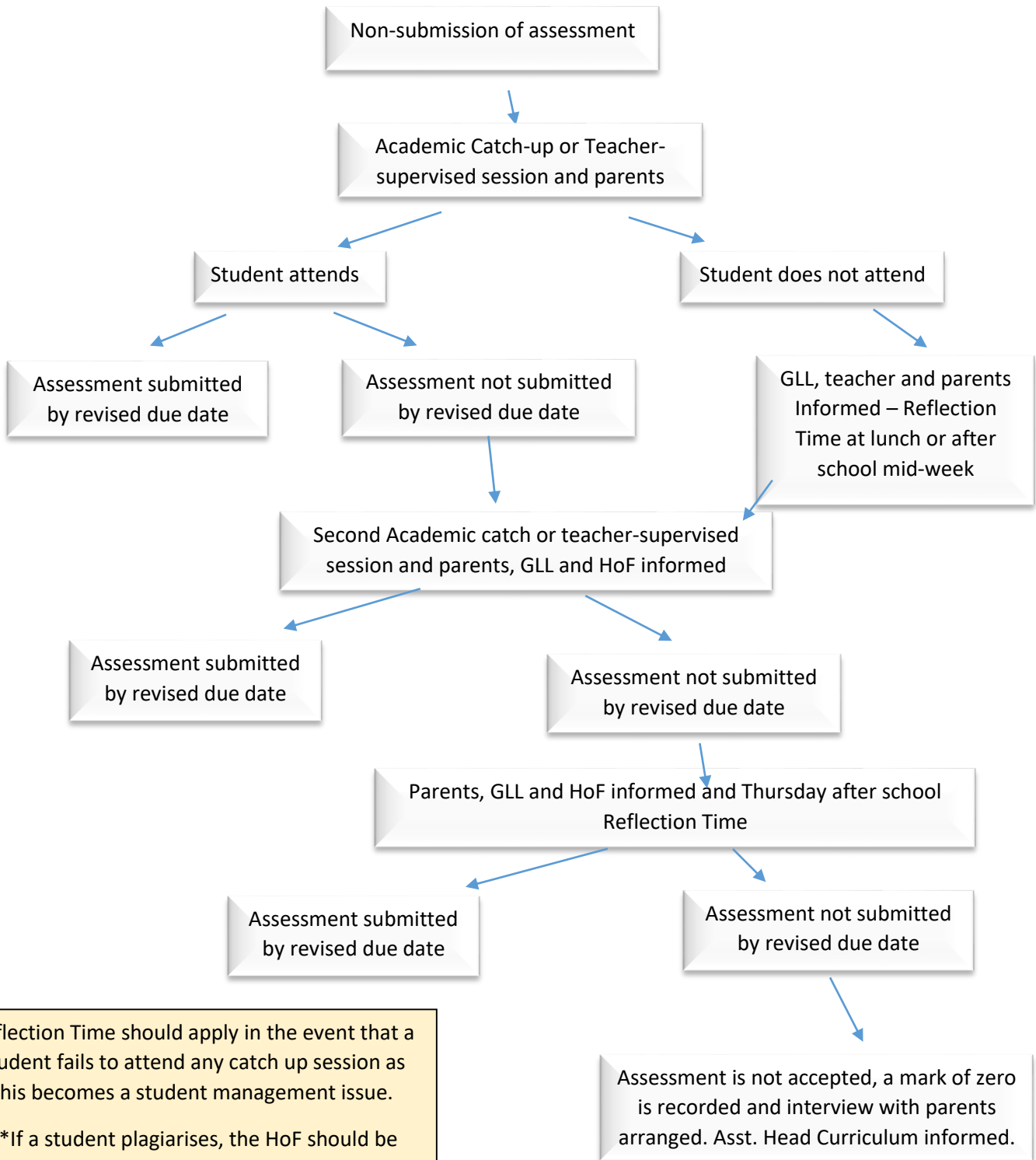
**(p) Peer Assessment**

- Peer assessment involves students taking responsibility for assessing the work of their peers against set assessment criteria. They can therefore be engaged in providing and receiving feedback to/from their peers.

**(q) Self-Assessment**

- Self-Assessment involves students evaluating their own work to identify gaps in their skills, revise their work and set realistic goals.

## Appendix B - Grades 6-10 Non-Submission of Assessment Flow Chart



Reflection Time should apply in the event that a student fails to attend any catch up session as this becomes a student management issue.

\*\*If a student plagiarises, the HoF should be notified immediately, as per the Academic Honesty Policy.