

APPLICABLE TO	All Catholic schools in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle
DOCUMENT OWNER	Head of Teaching & Learning Services
APPROVAL DATE	September 2017
APPROVED BY	CSO Leadership Team
SCHOOL ACTIONS	A school policy is required to be developed that may be adapted from this policy, together with procedures, that are consistent with and aligns to this Policy.
LAST REVIEW DATE/S	2005
NEXT REVIEW DATE	This policy will be reviewed as required in line with amendments by NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA)
RELATED DOCUMENTS	Aboriginal Education 2013 Continuum of School Improvement 2016 Early Learning Policy 2017 Gifted Education Policy 2016 Learning Framework 2017 Learning Support Policy 2017 Programming K–12 Policy 2016 Reporting K–12 Policy 2007 (under revision)

Purpose

This Assessment K–12 Policy aims to support diocesan schools in implementing NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) curriculum requirements within a Catholic school context.

This policy acknowledges and promotes a standards-referenced approach to assessing and reporting student achievement, and the importance of assessment for, as and of learning as essential components of good teaching and learning.

Policy Statement

The 2017 revision of the Assessment K–12 Policy reflects changes to NESA syllabuses and advice incorporating the Australian Curriculum, registration and accreditation requirements, Commonwealth and State Government requirements, and the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST). It sets the framework for a K–12 approach to assessment.

As a system policy, Assessment K–12 is underpinned by a Catholic worldview that guides and informs everything we do in Catholic schools, and as espoused in the Nature and Purpose of Catholic Schools (2011), the Vision Statement for Catholic Schools (2016) and the system Learning Framework 2017.

Diocesan primary and secondary schools provide quality opportunities through teaching programs inclusive of assessment opportunities, which relate the curriculum to students' needs and abilities, recognising that students learn differently. In ensuring that teaching programs are inclusive of, and cater for all students, the Principal as instructional leader has overall responsibility for the provision of quality teaching, learning and assessment opportunities, and for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

Assessment K–12 fits within and is complemented by the diocesan Learning Framework, *Rich and Purposeful Personalised Learning*, in that it requires 'a deep understanding and implementation of the teaching and learning cycle regarding programming, assessment for, of and as learning....'

This policy will be reviewed as required by the system or NESA, or as prescribed by other Government legislation.

Definitions

This policy endorses and promotes the NESA definition of Assessment.

Assessment is the broad name for the collection and evaluation of evidence of a student's learning. It is integral to teaching and learning and has multiple purposes. It is the ongoing process of collecting, analysing and recording information about student progress towards achievement of syllabus outcomes. Assessment can enhance student engagement and motivation, particularly when it incorporates interaction with teachers, other students and a range of resources.

Assessment for learning, assessment as learning and assessment of learning are approaches that can be used individually or together, formally or informally to gather evidence about student achievement and to improve student learning.

Assessment

- provides opportunities for teachers to gather evidence about student achievement in relation to syllabus outcomes
- enables students to demonstrate what they know and can do
- clarifies student understanding of concepts and promotes deeper understanding
- provides evidence that current understanding is a suitable basis for future learning.

NESA 2017

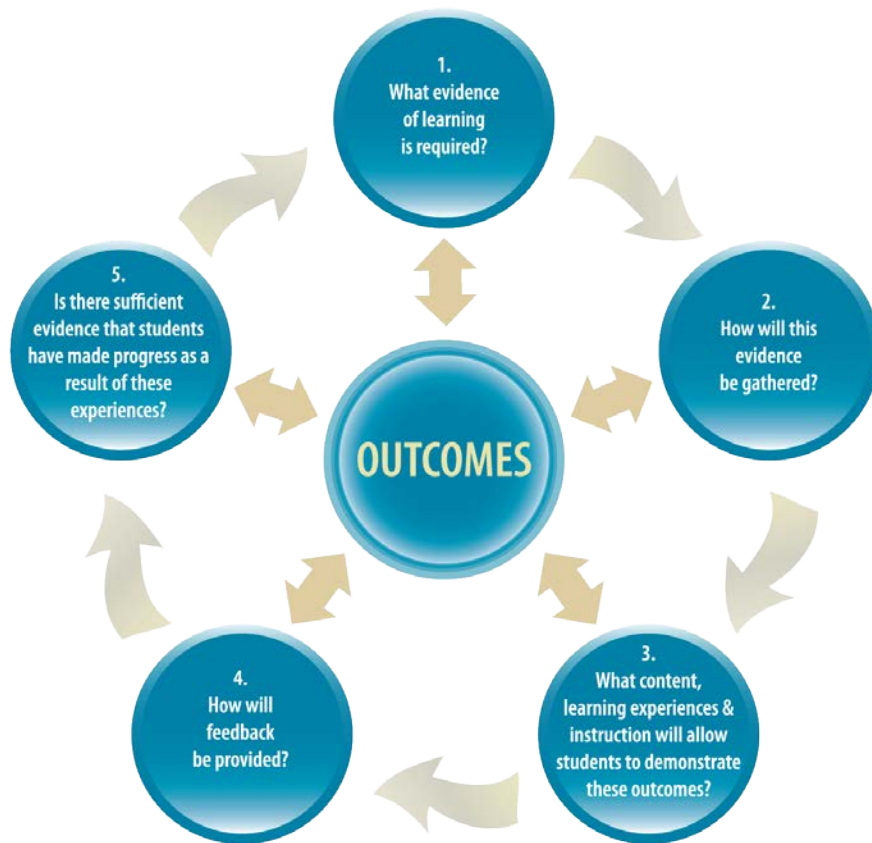
Scope

This policy applies to all teaching staff and system personnel in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.

Guiding Principles

Assessment should:

- be an integral part of the teaching and learning cycle.
- reflect a belief that all students can learn and improve.
- be inclusive of and accessible to all students.
- be valid and be based on syllabus outcomes.
- include criteria to clarify for students what aspects of learning are being assessed.
- enable students to demonstrate their learning (what they know and can do) in a range of learning contexts.
- be reliable, free from bias and provide evidence that accurately represents a student's knowledge, understanding and skills.
- enable students and teachers to use feedback effectively and reflect on the learning process.
- be part of an ongoing process where progress is monitored over time.



This model emphasises:

- that outcomes are central to the decisions teachers make about teaching, learning and assessment
- the importance of gathering evidence about student learning in relation to the outcomes
- how teachers use evidence to determine how well students are achieving in relation to the outcomes
- the importance of teacher feedback and student reflection
- how evidence of student achievement informs future teaching and learning.

The Teaching and Learning Cycle NESA 2017

Responsibilities

The following information sets out levels of responsibility for those involved in the processes of developing quality teaching programs inclusive of assessment opportunities that provide purposeful learning experiences for students.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE

The Catholic Schools Office is responsible for:

- providing support to schools in the process of embedding Catholic Principles in teaching programs inclusive of assessment practices.
- providing direction to schools through the implementation of the Assessment K–12 Policy.

- providing advice, support material and opportunities for professional development in relation to meeting NESA requirements for assessment.
- monitoring the implementation of the Assessment K–12 Policy through relevant system review processes through the Continuum of School Improvement (COSI) in Curriculum Focus Days (CFDs).
- providing support to schools in the analysis of external assessment data and programs, e.g. Best Start, National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), Religious Literacy Tests, Higher School Certificate (HSC) and Results Analysis Package (RAP).

SCHOOLS

As part of NESA and diocesan requirements, schools will have:

- an **Assessment Policy** which overviews the overall school process for assessing, monitoring and recording of student learning.
- an **Assessment Plan** for each KLA which indicates how students' performance is:
 - **assessed**
 - **monitored**
 - **recorded**

An Assessment Plan should complement the school's Scope and Sequence and programming documents. Other school documents that indicate these processes could include the KLA Policy, an assessment schedule for standardised testing, school-based assessment, faculty handbooks and teacher record 'books', Continuum data, NAPLAN, HSC, and other data analysis records etc.

Teachers may plan for and gather evidence about student achievement in a variety of ways at key points during, and at the end of, a unit, a term or a semester. This evidence can assist teachers in making professional judgements about a student's progress and achievement of syllabus outcomes, and provides feedback about how students can improve their learning.

<http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/understanding-the-curriculum/assessment/recording-evidence>

Principals and/or their delegates will be responsible for:

- ensuring that the school policy is adapted from or revised to align with this system policy.
- leading a review of school procedures, as necessary, to align with this policy.
- ensuring that NESA requirements for curriculum and registration compliance are in place.
- ensuring that assessment practices are consistent and enacted by all staff.
- ensuring that teachers are using all available evidence to inform teaching programs and learning opportunities from ongoing class assessment data and from external assessment data including Best Start, NAPLAN, Religious Literacy, ACER PAT, HSC etc.
- committing appropriate resources to the ongoing development/implementation of assessment practices.
- leading the analysis and discussion of data including state-wide tests and examinations to inform teaching and learning.
- providing ongoing opportunities for collaboration between teachers to ensure consistency of judgement.
- providing regular opportunities for parents and carers to be informed about student progress.

Teachers are responsible for:

- meeting the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
- planning integrated teaching, learning and assessment activities based on the relevant syllabus outcomes to be achieved
- differentiating learning and assessment activities for students
- collaborating with colleagues in analysing evidence of student learning to moderate and develop consistent 'on-balance' judgements within the standards framework
- using records of assessment data to monitor the progressive achievement of students over time
- ensuring that data from ongoing class assessment data and from state-wide tests and examinations e.g. Best Start, NAPLAN, Religious Literacy, ACER PAT, HSC etc. is used to reflect on and guide learning and assessment
- engaging in professional development to enhance their understanding of assessment practices and standards
- evaluating student progress in relation to the syllabus outcomes and content being addressed
- evaluating teaching programs and assessment strategies to inform teaching and learning
- ensuring that sufficient assessment data is available to make professional judgements for A-E reporting
- providing feedback to students about their progress, strengths and areas for development
- informing parents and teachers about a student's progress, strengths and areas for development.

<http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/understanding-the-curriculum/assessment/k-6-assessment-strategies>

<http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/understanding-the-curriculum/assessment/7-10-assessment-strategies>

Students with Special Education Needs

Some students with special education needs will require adjustments to assessment practices in order to demonstrate what they know and can do in relation to syllabus outcomes and content. The type of adjustments and support will vary according to the particular needs of the student and the requirements of the activity. These may be:

- alternative formats for responses, for example written point form instead of essays, scaffolded structured responses, short objective questions or multimedia presentations
- adjustments to assessment activities, for example rephrasing questions, using simplified language, fewer questions or alternative formats for questions
- adjustments to the assessment process, for example additional time, rest breaks, quieter conditions, or the use of a reader and/or scribe or specific technology.

It is a requirement under the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* for schools to ensure that assessment tasks are accessible to students with a disability. Schools are responsible for any decisions made at school level to offer adjustments to course work, assessment tasks and in-schools tests. Further examples of adjustments to assessment for students with special education needs and information on assessment of students undertaking Life Skills outcomes and content can be found on the NESA website in support materials for Life Skills Years 7–10.

<http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/understanding-the-curriculum/assessment/adjustments>

Gifted Students

Gifted students have specific learning needs that may require adjustments to the pace, level and content of the curriculum. Differentiated educational opportunities assist in meeting the needs of gifted students. Curriculum strategies for gifted students may include:

- differentiation: modifying the pace, level and content of teaching, learning and assessment activities
- acceleration: promoting a student to a level of study beyond their age group
- curriculum compacting: assessing a student's current level of learning and addressing aspects of the curriculum that have not yet been mastered.

Gifted students may also benefit from individual planning to determine the curriculum options, as well as teaching, learning and assessment strategies, most suited to their needs and abilities.

<http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/diversity-in-learning/gifted-and-talented-students>

Budget

The CSO will provide support for schools in developing their policy through the provision of personnel and professional development opportunities.

Legislative/Professional Guidelines

Australian Professional Standards for Teachers NSW Institute of Teachers 2015

Catholic Education Commission NSW, Catholic Principles 2016

Continuum of School Improvement (COSI) CSO 2015

Disability Discrimination Act 1992

Disability Standards for Education 2005

Early Years Learning Framework Australian Gov 2009

NESA/BOSTES Assessment Certification and Examination (ACE) 2015

NESA/BOSTES Policies and Guidelines

NESA/BOSTES Registration Manual for Member and Non-Member Schools, 2016

Teacher Accreditation Act 2004

Resources

- NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA)
<http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/understanding-the-curriculum/assessment>
http://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/assets/global/files/advice_on_assessment_guide_web.pdf
- Registration for Non-Government Schools (NESA)
<http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/regulation/school-registration/registration-system-and-member-non-government-schools-manual>
- Assessment Resource Centre (ARC) The aim of this website is to support and enhance professional practice in the assessment and reporting of student achievement across Years K to 12 <https://arc.nesa.nsw.edu.au/>
- <https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/wcm/connect/c204171e-a570-4947-8107-dc934ab2f70b/learning-assessment-report.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=>

Glossary

Assessment

Is the ongoing process of collecting, analysing and recording information about student progress towards achievement of syllabus outcomes. Assessment involves reflecting on evidence to make informed and consistent judgements to improve future student learning. Assessment is integral to teaching and learning. A variety of assessment strategies and contexts should be used to give students opportunities to demonstrate in an authentic manner, what they know and understand as well as what they can do. <http://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/support-materials/assessment/>

Assessment as Learning

Occurs when students are their own assessors. Students monitor their own learning, ask questions and use a range of strategies to decide what they know and can do, and how to use assessment for new learning.

Assessment as learning:

- encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning
- requires students to ask questions about their learning
- involves teachers and students creating learning goals to encourage growth and development
- provides ways for students to use formal and informal feedback and self-assessment to help them understand the next steps in learning
- encourages peer assessment, self-assessment and reflection.

Assessment for Learning

Involves teachers using evidence about students' knowledge, understanding and skills to inform their teaching. This is sometimes referred to as 'formative assessment, it usually occurs throughout the teaching and learning process to clarify student learning and understanding.

Assessment for learning:

- reflects a view of learning in which assessment helps students learn better, rather than just achieve a better mark
- involves formal and informal assessment activities as part of learning and to inform the planning of future learning
- includes clear goals for the learning activity
- provides effective feedback that motivates the learner and can lead to improvement
- reflects a belief that all students can improve
- encourages self-assessment and peer assessment as part of the regular classroom routines
- involves teachers, students and parents reflecting on evidence
- is inclusive of all learners.

Assessment of Learning

Assists teachers in using evidence of student learning to assess student achievement against learning outcomes and standards, sometimes referred to as 'summative assessment.' It usually occurs at defined key points during a unit of work or at the end of a unit of work, term, semester. Its effectiveness as an opportunity for learning depends on the nature and quality of the feedback.

Assessment of learning:

- is used to plan future learning goals and pathways for students
- provides evidence of achievement to the wider community, including parents, educators, the students themselves and outside groups
- provides a transparent interpretation across all audiences.

Assessment Plan

Indicates how student performance in each KLA is assessed, monitored and recorded.

Australian Professional Teaching Standards (APST)

Standard 1 Know students and how they learn

Standard 2 Know the content and how to teach it

Standard 3 Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning

Standard 4 Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments

Standard 5 Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning

Standard 6 Engage in professional learning

Standard 7 Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community

Evidence

A range of data that indicates students' progress and achievements over time.

Feedback

Feedback enables students to recognise their strengths as well as areas for development, and to identify and plan with their teacher the next steps in their learning. Students should be provided with opportunities to improve their knowledge, understanding and skills through feedback that:

- is timely, specific and related to the learning and assessment intention.
- is constructive and provides meaningful information to students about their learning in a variety of forms.
- focuses on the activity and corrects misunderstandings.
- identifies and reinforces students' strengths.
- provides information about how they can improve.
- facilitates the development of and provides opportunities for self-assessment and reflection during the learning process.
- informs future teaching and learning opportunities.

Feedback can occur at any point in the teaching, learning and assessment cycle. It may:

- include regular teacher-student dialogue to guide student learning
- focus on particular knowledge, understanding and skills related to content, and/or processes applied to an activity.

Standards-referenced assessment

Links the achievement of students to specified standards through evidence collected from a number and variety of activities and from observations over time. It involves teachers gathering evidence of student achievement formally and informally, to make judgements and to facilitate and monitor students' progress using syllabus outcomes.