



STAGE 5 Student Assessment Handbook

INTRODUCTION

This handbook summarises the requirements and expectations for students in Year 9-10 at The Nature School, including requirements for eligibility for the Record of School Achievement (RoSA).

The NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) is responsible for setting all regulations for completion of Stage 5. Students must:

- attend an accredited school
- complete four years of secondary education
- follow and complete an approved pattern of study
- meet all NESA requirements

1. SUBJECTS

1.1. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

NESA requirements outline the following pattern of study for students in Stage 4 and 5 (Years 7-10):

Mandatory curriculum requirements for the award of the Record of School Achievement	
English	The Board Developed syllabus to be studied substantially throughout each of Years 7–10. 400 hours to be completed by the end of Year 10.
Mathematics	The Board Developed syllabus to be studied substantially throughout each of Years 7–10. 400 hours to be completed by the end of Year 10.
Science	The Board Developed syllabus to be studied substantially throughout each of Years 7–10. 400 hours to be completed by the end of Year 10.
Human Society and Its Environment	The Board Developed syllabuses are to be studied substantially throughout each of Years 7–10. 400 hours to be completed by the end of Year 10, including 100 hours each of History and Geography in each Stage.
Languages Other than English	100 hours to be completed in one Board Developed syllabus or Board Endorsed language course over one continuous 12-month period between Years 7–10 but preferably in Years 7–8.
Technological and Applied Studies (Technologies)	The Board Developed Technology Mandatory syllabus to be studied for 200 hours in Years 7-8.
Creative Arts	200 hours to be completed consisting of the Board Developed 100-hour mandatory courses in each of Visual Arts and Music. It is an expectation that the 100-hour mandatory courses in these subjects will be taught as coherent units of study and not split over a number of years.
Personal Development, Health and Physical Education	The Board Developed mandatory 300-hour integrated syllabus in Personal Development, Health and Physical Education to be studied in each of Years 7–10.

1.2. ADDITIONAL COURSES

Other subjects and extra-curricular groups offered at TNS (such as Enterprise Projects in Stage 4 or Electives in Stage 5) are in addition to these minimum requirements and are recorded on School Reports. Electives are **only** recorded on a student's RoSA if they are taught during Stage 5 and in accordance with the relevant NESAsyllabus and indicative time requirements.

1.3. ATTENDANCE

Students must maintain satisfactory attendance to ensure that courses are completed and all course requirements are met. Attendance must continue until the last day for Year 10.

1.4 COURSE COMPLETION

For each course, a student will be considered to have satisfactorily completed a course if, in the Head of School's view, there is sufficient evidence that the student has:

- followed the course specified by NESAs
- applied themselves with diligence and sustained effort to the set tasks and experiences provided in the course by the School; and
- achieved some or all of the course outcomes

The School is required to certify that students have satisfied these expectations.

1.5. NON-COMPLETION ('N' DETERMINATIONS)

A student who fails to meet the requirements in any course can receive an 'N' for that course, to indicate non-completion of a course. The 'N' is recorded instead of a Grade. If at any time it appears that a student is at risk of receiving an 'N' determination, the Head of School will:

- i. advise the student of the task to be undertaken in time for the problem to be corrected, and alert the student to the consequences of an 'N' determination
resubmission of the task may be allowed
- ii. advise the parent/guardian in writing
- iii. request acknowledgement from the student AND parent/guardian in writing
- iv. issue at least one follow up warning letter if the first letter is not effective
- v. retain copies of all relevant documents

An 'N' determination can lead to a student not being eligible for the completion of Stage 5 and therefore not receiving their RoSA.

2. ASSESSMENT

2.1. ASSESSMENT PLAN

Each student's achievement in each course will be measured through formal assessment. This assessment will determine what a student knows, understands and is able to do. There will be a variety of assessment tasks in each course. The plans for formal assessment are provided in the Assessment Schedule given to students at the beginning of each year (See **4. ASSESSMENT SCHEDULES**).

2.2 SUBMISSION OF TASKS

2.2.1 The assessments listed on the Assessment Schedule will contribute to both the final grades and the achievement reported in the School reports.

2.2.2. Each student is expected to personally complete the assessment tasks listed as well as all the other assessments which teachers may use to determine student progress.

2.2.3 Written notification of assessment tasks will be provided at the beginning of each term in the form of Assessment Task Sheets, and must allow for at least two weeks before any due date. Assessment Task Sheets will include notification date; description of the task; outcomes assessed, what students are expected to do for the task; the due date and where the task is to be handed in.

2.3 VARIATIONS TO SUBMISSION DATE

2.3.1 Written notification for a change of date will be given to all students in a class/course if authorised by the Head of School. Any change must still allow at least two weeks before any due date.

2.4 EXTENSIONS

2.4.1. Extensions of time may be granted only in exceptional circumstances. Students are not to consider that extensions of time will be granted automatically for assessment tasks.

2.4.2. Written approval must be obtained in advance (more than 48hrs before due date).

2.4.3. Classroom teachers are unable to give extensions on Summative Assessment Tasks and must consult with the Head of School for approval.

2.4.4. Students on 'Approved Leave' will still be required to complete all assessment tasks by the due date unless prior approval is granted for an extension for each task.

2.5 MISSED ASSESSMENT TASKS: In-Class

2.5.1. The parents/guardians of a student who is away on the day of an in-class assessment task (including examinations) should contact the School by 9:00am to let the Head of School know they will be missing the task.

2.5.2. Generally, in-class assessment tasks can only be missed for exceptional circumstances.

2.5.3. The student must speak to the Head immediately on their return to School. If the Head of School is unavailable they should consult with the relevant teacher. Failure to follow up after a missed task can result in a zero mark being awarded.

2.5.4. The Head of School, in consultation with the relevant teacher, will determine alternative arrangements and penalties for any missed assessment task.

2.5.5. Independent documentary evidence, including a medical certificate, should be supplied to the School. A note from a parent/guardian may not provide sufficient reasons to explain being absent from an assessment task.

2.5.6. Being away from School for a sporting trip or holiday is not considered to be exceptional circumstances by NESAs.

2.6 MISSED ASSESSMENT TASKS: Hand-In

2.6.1. A student who is away on the day of a hand-in task is still expected to email their task to the relevant teacher. A penalty for late submission may apply for any students who fails to upload a task electronically.

2.6.2. If a student is unable to submit their task electronically due to illness, a medical certificate should be supplied to the School. A note from a parent/guardian may not provide sufficient reasons to explain being absent from an assessment task.

2.7 Unapproved late submission

2.7.1. Unless an Extension has been granted, all students must complete all assessment tasks on the specified due date.

2.7.2. Computer hardware/software or printer failure will not be accepted as an excuse for late submission.

2.7.2. There will be a penalty for unapproved late submission. This penalty will be 10% for each day. After 5 days the student will receive a zero mark. Failure to submit or complete work (even if zero marks will be awarded) is 'non-completion' and may lead to an 'N' Determination (see **1.5 NON-COMPLETION ('N' DETERMINATIONS)**).

2.8. MISADVENTURE/ILLNESS

Misadventure/illness is an event immediately prior to or during an assessment that is beyond the student's control and which allegedly affects the student's performance on that assessment.

2.8.1. If Misadventure or illness is considered to have negatively impacted a student's performance on internal assessment task, they should meet with the Head of School. The decision by the Head will be made in consultation with the relevant teacher and be based on the nature of the task and documentary evidence provided by the student.

2.8.2. If the Misadventure applications appears to disadvantage other students and appears unreasonable then the application may not be approved.

2.8.3 If the student's application for Misadventure is approved then the following may occur:

- i. a resubmission of the task may be allowed
- ii. an extension may be granted
- iii. a higher moderated mark may be awarded
- iv. a mark from a 'like-task' may be used

2.9. MALPRACTICE/PLAGIARISM, NON-GENUINE ATTEMPTS

2.9.1. Academic malpractice is serious and can result in a zero mark being awarded.

2.9.2. The Head of School will investigate malpractice in consultation with the relevant teacher. Parents will be contacted after the initial investigation. The penalty will be determined by the Head of School, however proven dishonesty in an assessment task may result in a zero mark.

2.9.3. If a student does not make a genuine attempt at an assessment task a zero mark may be recorded.

3. FINAL GRADES

3.1.1. For each course studied the student is awarded an A-E Grade. In Mathematics, grades are further differentiated to nine levels (A10, A9, B8, B7, C6, C5, D4, D3, E2)

3.1.2. In each subject the School will:

- i. add the weighted marks gained by each student in the listed assessment tasks
- ii. rank the students in order of total mark
- iii. match the student to the appropriate Course Performance Descriptor and assign the grade

3.1.3. The School will allocate to each student the Grades which reflect the level of achievement reached. These Grades will appear on the Record of School Achievement (ROSA) issued by NESAs when the student leaves school.

3.1.4 If the Head of School determines that a student has not complied with course completion criteria, and has received at least two written warnings as per section **1.5 NON-COMPLETION ('N' DETERMINATIONS)**, then under the authority delegated by NESAs the student may be awarded an 'N' determination.

3.1.5 The Head of School is responsible for completing a formal Stage 5 entry for each student.

4. ASSESSMENT SCHEDULES

Assessment schedules are provided to Stage 5 students at the beginning of the School year.