

ARKANA COLLEGE ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING POLICY



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Rationale

Arkana College promotes an integrated approach to teaching, learning and assessment to ensure that every student is valued and supported to grow holistically reaching their full potential, through holistic learning programs that can be differentiated to meet the needs of each child.

Assessment is an essential component of teaching and learning with the purpose of gathering valid, reliable and useful information about student learning in order to:

- monitor student achievement in relation to outcomes
- guide future teaching and learning opportunities
- provide ongoing feedback to students to improve learning in a faith enriching environment, connected to real-life context
- nurture leaders of the future.

This assessment plan indicates how student performance in all KLAs is assessed, monitored, recorded and reported.

Overview of Student Achievement Record Process

The following steps is an overview of the process for reporting student achievement:

Teachers indicate in each of their Working Program Units of Work, at least 3 opportunities for Assessment of the Unit's Outcomes. This could include work samples, observations, checklists, discussions, chinning it, exit tickets, various other formative assessments and summative assessments, both formal and informal. They may also vary from presentations, projects, traditional pen and paper tests, hands on activities, or via set class tasks, individually, in pairs or in small groups.

- Support students are given scaffolding materials, comprising of, visual aids, charts, hands on materials, etc. As well as teacher support via the school's support staff, ie, assessments are completed with support staff in close proximity to assist and guide the students, in order to ascertain a more accurate indication of their progress.
- Teachers record results of these Assessments (often in a Blue Assessment Book, or on a Class Roll).

- Summative Overall Grades (using the Common Grade Scale A-E) are given and recorded (in Blue Assessment Book or Class Roll) based on an average of the 3 Assessments done for each Unit of Work.
- These grades are then recorded on Student Reports twice a year at the conclusion of Semester 1 (covering Terms 1 and 2 outcomes), and at the conclusion of Semester 2 (covering Terms 3 and 4 outcomes).

Assessment Strategies

A range of assessment strategies and approaches are implemented at Arkana College including, assessment for, assessment as and assessment of learning to enable teachers to gather evidence and make judgements about student achievement .

Assessment of Learning allows for clear insight into student learning. It gives the students the power to demonstrate to the teacher what they have learnt.

Assessment for Learning is interwoven with learning and provides information to the student and teacher in order to plan the next stage in learning.

Assessment as Learning: students are encouraged to be reflective students monitoring their own learning, asking questions and using a range of strategies to decide what they know and can do.

The type of assessment and the way evidence of learning will be gathered will vary, depending on the:

- outcomes being assessed
- evidence to be gathered
- teaching and learning activity
- context
- students' learning needs.

Students are provided with opportunities to demonstrate their learning through a variety of assessment activities that are accessible to all, as part of an ongoing process.

Assessment in the classroom includes:

- Student work samples to provide information about student learning.
- Anecdotal notes to record the learning process of students.
- Students reflecting upon their learning,
- Rubrics – including student and teacher developed.
- Records of test/task results (recorded in Teacher Markbooks and Compass).

Strategies used to assess student learning:

- Teacher Observations Performance assessments.
- Peer and Self-Assessment (self-assessment and self-evaluation).
- Collaborative Activities.
- Inquiry Based Research Activities Practical Activities.
- Presentations.
- Collections of student work.

Process of Assessment

- a. Diagnostic Assessment: Gauges the prior knowledge of students to inform teaching and learning and report on progress.
- b. Formative assessment: Interwoven with the daily learning and helps teachers and students find out what the student already knows in order to plan the next stage of learning. Formative assessments can be formal (structured work samples) or informal (teacher observations, exit cards) learning tasks
- c. Summative assessment: Takes place during specific stages of unit of inquiry and gives the students opportunities to demonstrate what has been learned. Summative assessments may include any of, and any combination of, the following: acquisition of data, synthesis of information, application of knowledge and processes.

Adjustments to Assessment for Students with Disability

The school ensures that students with disability can access and participate in education on the same basis as other students, as required under the Disability Standards for Education 2005. Some students with disability 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. If assessed eligible students may be given provisions such as:

- readers and/or writers
- time to rest and/or extension on submission of tasks or examination duration
- time to take medication
- large print
- separate or small group supervision
- adjustments to the physical environment, e.g. special furniture or lightning.

Provisions can be made to students who submit medical evidence and documentation (medical reports and certificates that are no longer than 12 months old) of a disability that may hinder the application of a student's performance to the Principal, K-2 or Yr. 3- Yr. 6 coordinator, NCCD Coordinator and the school Counsellor/Psychologist for provision and adjustments to be made to assessment tasks.

Parents/caregivers of students must inform their teacher, Coordinator, the school counsellor and/or the Principal if they believe their child might be eligible for a disability provision.

Recording evidence

At the commencement of each Semester, assessment plans are prepared by the teacher and stage coordinator, indicating the scheme in which students will be assessed for each Key Learning Area throughout the teaching and learning programs.

Evidence of learning may include teacher observation, questioning, peer evaluation and self-evaluation, as well as more formalised assessment activities, such as:

- gathering a range of students' work samples at various stages of an activity, including anecdotal records and students' oral, written and multimedia work samples
- assessing students' integrated use of knowledge, understanding and skills rather than discrete facts and skills used in isolation
- providing students with an opportunity to present to an identified audience
- providing students with authentic and contextual learning opportunities
- analysing the quality of student responses against criteria, including rubrics
- observing students during learning activities and participation in a group activity,
- evaluating student achievement across time
- facilitating student discussion or conferences
- reviewing student reflections about what they have learnt and how to improve.

Teachers use this evidence to:

- evaluate student progress in relation to the syllabus outcomes and content being addressed
- decide what needs to be taught next, and at what level of detail to assist students in their learning
- determine any adjustments to teaching, learning and assessment,
- form a judgement of student achievement at key points throughout the year
- students, parents and subsequent teachers of student progress, strengths and areas for improvement
- monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning programs.

Recording evidence for assessment may take a variety of forms, including individual comments or notations, marks, grades, or visual representations.

Recording evidence:

- needs to be manageable,
- may be formal and/or informal,
- should focus on student progress in relation to outcomes, particular strengths and areas for improvement.

Formal records of student results are entered on the school's Compass management system.

To facilitate the assessment and recording process, teachers are responsible for:

- developing and submitting assessments for approval through Stage Coordinators
- monitoring and assessing students' achievement in assessment tasks against performance standards
- recording assessment results electronically on Compass, with records kept by the class teacher and maintained by the Stage coordinator. It is the responsibility of the individual and Stage coordinator to verify that the entry of these marks is correct and kept up to date
- providing feedback to students on assessment tasks. This feedback provides students with information about their educational progress and achievements.

To support teachers, the Stage coordinator works collaboratively with teachers to facilitate the professional development of teachers to develop their skills in:

- designing, implementing and evaluating teaching and learning programs using knowledge of assessment and reporting best practice
- developing, selecting and using informal and formal diagnostic, formative and summative assessment strategies to assess student learning
- providing timely, effective and appropriate feedback to students about their achievement relative to their learning goals
- understanding and participating in assessment moderation activities that support consistent and comparable judgements of student learning
- reporting clearly, accurately and respectfully to students and parents/caregivers about student learning and achievement, making use of accurate and reliable records

Communicating Student Achievement to Parents/Caregivers

Teachers use both formal and informal means to communicate student achievement to parents and caregivers. Informal methods such as: phone and email communications, face to face interviews, written communication, certificates and awards and through newsletters. Aggregate school data, such as NAPLAN performance is provided through the School's annual report which is made available through the School's website.

At the end of Semester 1 and end of Semester 2, full academic reports are issued for each student outlining the students' progress and providing statistical and qualitative feedback, in the form of comments.

Students in Kindergarten to Year 6 receive A-E grades for each Key Learning Area, based on their achievements of the learning outcomes in their corresponding Stage levels (Early Stage 1, Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3).

Common Grade Scale

The Common Grade Scale describes performance at each of five grade levels.

A The student has an extensive knowledge and understanding of the content and can readily apply this knowledge. In addition, the student has achieved a very high level of competence in the processes and skills and can apply these skills to new situations.

B The student has a thorough knowledge and understanding of the content and a high level of competence in the processes and skills. In addition, the student is able to apply this knowledge and these skills to most situations.

C The student has a sound knowledge and understanding of the main areas of content and has achieved an adequate level of competence in the processes and skills.

D The student has a basic knowledge and understanding of the content and has achieved a limited level of competence in the processes and skills.

E The student has an elementary knowledge and understanding in few areas of the content and has achieved very limited competence in some of the processes and skills.

Parent/Teacher interviews are conducted annually to provide parents with the opportunity to meet each teacher and discuss their child's progress. Additional face to face interviews may also be conducted on a regular basis at the request of either parents/caregivers or teachers.

Documentation

The School maintains documentation that records:

- an overview of the School's educational program, including assessment plans indicating how student performance in each subject area is assessed, monitored and recorded
- an overview of the processes for reporting student achievement in the form of samples of assessment tasks.

Documentation is maintained and reviewed by the Stage Coordinator.

Appendix 1 – Assessment for, as and of learning

Assessment for Learning

Assessment for learning involves teachers using evidence about learners' knowledge, understanding and skills to inform their teaching. Sometimes referred to as 'formative assessment', it usually occurs throughout the teaching and learning process to clarify learner 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 learners can improve
- encourages self-assessment and peer assessment as part of the regular classroom routines
- involves educators, learners and parents reflecting on evidence
- is inclusive of all learners.

Assessment as Learning

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 information for new 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 of Learning

Assessment of learning assists teachers in using evidence of student learning to assess achievement against outcomes and standards. Sometimes referred to as 'summative assessment', it usually occurs at defined key points during a teaching work or at the end of a unit, term or semester, and may be used to rank or grade learners. The effectiveness of assessment of learning for grading or ranking purposes depend on the validity, reliability and weighting placed on any one task. Its effectiveness as an opportunity for learning depends on the nature and quality of the feedback.

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

The approach or approaches used will be informed by:

- the evidence of learner learning to be gathered
- the processes for gathering the evidence
- the feedback to be provided to students.

Formal assessment provides an opportunity to collect evidence of student learning and may be used for grading and ranking purposes (assessment of learning) as well as informing feedback for students to improve their learning (assessment for learning).

Appendix 2 – K-6 Assessment Strategies

The following strategies include observations, collaborative activities and activities of a reflective nature.

Educator observations in relation to outcomes

Evidence may be gathered and recorded formally and informally, where:

- informal observation and feedback occur during teaching and learning activities
- formal observation involves planning for an opportunity to observe specific learning outcomes.

Assessment activities may include:

- listening, viewing and response tasks
- teacher/student discussions or conferences
- student participation in practical activities and demonstrations
- observation of students as they participate in and engage during learning activities
- strategic questioning to determine individual level of understanding
- student manipulation of materials to demonstrate conceptual understanding of key concepts.

When teacher observation is used for assessment purposes, evidence can be gathered about students' ability to:

- explain 'how or why' (Critical and Creative Thinking)
- demonstrate their understanding of key concepts
- use appropriate language for discussing their learning experiences
- apply their understanding to new contexts and situations
- communicate effectively.

Peer and self-assessment

Peer and self-assessment strategies can be formal or informal.

- Teachers may choose to incorporate peer and self-assessment into teaching, learning and assessment to assist students to develop a better understanding of themselves (Self-awareness)
- Peer and self-assessment can encourage students to reflect on their learning in relation to the outcomes, their personal best goals and recognise the next steps needed to improve their learning.

Peer assessment

Teachers should model the appropriate language and clarify expectations for activities that incorporate peer feedback. Feedback may be oral, written or digital, and may provide an opportunity for students to develop their social, collaborative and reflective skills. Students may provide feedback to their peers about what has been completed.

Feedback can include

- strengths and/or what aspects have been completed well
- suggestions to improve their work with reference to the learning and assessment intention
- alternative strategies to complete the activity.

Personal Best self-assessment and self-evaluation

Student Personal Best self-assessment can help students to identify what they know, where they need to be and how to get there in their learning. Gathering information about the way learners think and reflect on their learning can provide educators with information to inform future teaching and learning. Strengthening the skills of self-assessment may enhance the ways students interpret feedback.

Self-evaluation encourages the development of metacognitive thinking as students reflect on themselves as learners and identify their learning style and how they learn best. It also encourages students to set learning goals in relation to syllabus outcomes, identify what they have learnt and what they still need to learn, and act on feedback. Portfolios, work samples and journals, including online journals, can support the reflective process where learners can set goals, reflect on their goals and monitor their learning.

Self-evaluative questions may include:

- What will help me achieve my Personal Best and why is it important to achieve this goal?
- What do I already know about this topic?
- What other information could assist me in my understanding?
- How will I know when I achieve my Personal Best goals?
- What do I notice when I compare my work to earlier samples?

- What helped me when something became difficult in learning to ...?
- What do I need help with?
- Am I learning the best way for me? What learning strategies do I need to complete/learn this?
- What is really making me think?
- Did everyone stay on task in our group?
- What is a question worth asking for next time?

Prompts for learners may include:

- Things I have learned are ...
- I need to work on ...
- My strength today was ...
- My biggest improvement is ...
- I would like to learn more about ...

Assessment activities may include:

- creating portfolios or folders of work with negotiated content and reflections on the learning processes used (e.g. portfolios, journals, personal goals)
- self-assessment of progress towards achieving outcomes during a series of activities or an individual activity
- peer evaluation of a performance
- evaluating the contributions of individuals to a group task
- individual Personal Best goal and target setting, including the use of learning logs and journals where learners track thoughts, questions, activities and any revisions made over the term
- reflections on the learning processes used, including portfolios, learning logs, blogs and journals.

When peer and self-assessment and self-reflection are used for assessment purposes, evidence can be gathered about learners' ability to:

- evaluate their own work and thinking, as well as the work of others
- develop learning strategies based on their evaluation
- critique their own work and the work of others against criteria.

Collaborative activities

Collaborative learning activities occur as a result of interaction between learners engaged in the completion of a common task. Learners work together, face-to-face and in or out of the classroom.

They may use ICT to enable group discussion or complete collaborative tasks within their school, between schools, locally, nationally and internationally.

Assessment activities may include:

- evaluating and challenging views through group discussions
- cooperative group work, team assignments and investigations, including the allocation of specific roles and responsibilities

- group-prepared presentations on a range of topics for a variety of purposes and audiences
- group critiques/team challenges, including the use of technology to aid preparation, delivery and accountability
- mixed-ability and differentiated group activities as appropriate
- paired tasks (think–pair–share, brainstorming, email sharing and forums)
- student question/answer sets, including learners creating their own content in Learning Management Systems
- student response partners, such as offering constructive feedback about work in relation to criteria.

When collaborative activities are used for assessment purposes, evidence can be gathered about students' ability to:

- work cooperatively as a team
- solve problems and make decisions with others
- take responsibility for individual and group learning
- think critically and creatively, and offer constructive criticism
- demonstrate cognitive skills, such as the ability to analyse, evaluate and synthesise information
- understand the roles and responsibilities of individuals in groups, including the capacity to communicate effectively within a small group.

The following strategies include inquiry-based research and hands-on activities.

Inquiry-based research activities

Students can develop their critical and creative thinking skills when they are provided with opportunities to research, evaluate information, consider new ideas and make connections. Students can develop their research skills as they use information drawn from a range of sources, including the library, the internet, databases, spreadsheets and other digital resources. Educators may use ICT collaboration tools (such as wikis, blogs and learner moderated forum discussion) and graphic organisers to involve learners in active thinking about relationships and associations.

Assessment activities may include:

- inquiry and design (e.g. personal interest projects, investigations and learning contracts)
- explanations or evaluations
- strategic, open-ended and inquiry questioning
- comparing and contrasting
- written or spoken responses, which could be short or extended
- game-based learning opportunities.

When inquiry-based research opportunities are used for assessment purposes, students may be assessed on their ability to:

- describe a valid problem to research
- compare information sources for accuracy and relevance
- choose appropriate information sources and work critically with them to provide explanations and evaluations
- analyse findings and draw valid conclusions
- establish cause-and-effect relationships

- assess areas for improvement or further research
- present data and information using multimodal texts
- select appropriate digital, oral, written and other communication forms to present the findings of their research.

Practical activities

Practical activities can provide students with opportunities to pose questions, investigate, make decisions, manipulate and make observations. Learners may work individually or in groups.

Assessment activities may include:

- discussion, debate or role play
- participation in hypothetical scenarios
- investigation and problem-solving activities
- rotation of learners through a range of skill-based activities
- scriptwriting, filming and evaluating the process
- performance evaluation and review
- responses presented in a variety of ways and through a combination of modes
- manipulation of materials, including ICT, to demonstrate a conceptual understanding of key ideas.

When practical activities are used for assessment purposes, students may be assessed on their ability to:

- identify and investigate a problem
- make and record accurate observations
- use and construct models
- draw valid conclusions
- display a range of speaking and listening skills (eg prepared and impromptu oral presentations, debating)
- use critical thinking skills to analyse data and information, to identify relationships and to draw conclusions
- ask questions to clarify, reflect and take part in class or group discussions
- plan and carry out a procedure or response to stimulus
- select and use appropriate strategies, equipment and technology to convey ideas to an audience.

Presentations

Presentations provide learners with opportunities to demonstrate their understanding to an audience. The format may be spoken or written, multimedia or a combination of these.

Presentations may be prepared or impromptu, depending on the activity requirements. Peer and self-assessment may be used in conjunction with this assessment strategy.

Assessment activities may include:

- prepared and impromptu presentations (e.g. role-plays, debates, dramatic presentations)
- presentations using ICT tools (e.g. preparation of a 20-second radio news bulletin, podcast, vodcast, documentary filmed on location using green-screen technology)

- web publication of learning (e.g. learning blogs, learner-created websites) and the use of age appropriate social technologies as a platform for presenting assessment activities and/or capturing evidence of learner performance
- observation of real or simulated performances
- storyboard reports
- poster presentation explaining what worked and what did not
- drawings, symbols and words to connect the ideas and relationships between concepts.

When presentations are used for assessment purposes, students may be assessed on their ability to:

- identify, comprehend and evaluate sources
- use appropriate terms and concepts
- use appropriate forms to communicate their understandings
- present their findings using a variety of media
- combine visual and digital elements for a variety of audiences and purposes.

Collections of student work

Assessment can enhance learner engagement and motivation, particularly when it provides opportunities for interaction with educators, other learners and a range of resources. Collections of student work may be reviewed at specific points in the learning process to inform future teaching and learning opportunities or as summative assessment at the conclusion of a unit of work.

Assessment activities may include:

- diaries and journals
- learner self-reflections and evaluations
- drafts and completed versions
- problem-solving activities and investigations
- composing a visual representation that emphasises a particular point of view (e.g. a storyboard)
- directed reading strategies (e.g. cloze)
- research using a variety of print and multimedia, internet and electronic sources of data and information
- pen-and-paper tests, including multiple choice, online quizzes and short response
- written activities (e.g. range of text types, including reports, letters, reviews, newspaper articles, comments on an article's perspective, learner-produced overviews or summaries)
- organising and presenting learning in a variety of ways (e.g. crossword, mind map, fact–opinion chart, true/false statements, fishbone, vocab bank, three-level guide) open-book tests, where appropriate
- pre-testing, mid-unit testing and post-testing.

When these strategies are used for assessment purposes, students may be assessed on their ability to:

- use appropriate terms and concepts
- select effective strategies

- justify and support ideas
- develop effective arguments
- explain different contexts, perspectives and interpretations
- effectively communicate their understandings
- respond accurately to stimulus
- sequence events
- evaluate a range of sources, including ICT sources