



Chevalier College

FORTES IN FIDE | STRONG IN FAITH

Student Academic Handbook

Stage 4 (Years 7 and 8)

This handbook refers to the Chevalier College assessment policies and procedures for students. It provides guidelines to ensure that students meet the requirements of the NSW Education Standards Authority and the college. The contents of this booklet should be read carefully so that students are aware of their responsibilities and those of the college with regard to assessment.

The policies of Chevalier College, which are made from time to time, are made pursuant to the requirements set out in section 47 of the *Education Act* and of the NSW Education Standards Authority for registration of the college.



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1 Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (MSC) Vision of Education

MSC schools exist to proclaim and witness to the love of God. They aim to make gospel values real in the lives of young people, their families and the staff who serve them.

With care, compassion and understanding as their hallmark qualities, MSC schools strive to build a community of faith among staff, parents and students. Great value is placed on commitment, trust and acceptance of others in fostering the growth of community. In the spirit of a loving and supportive family, members help one another grow in knowledge, faith and service.

While aiming for excellence in the search for truth, MSC schools recognise the importance of balanced human development and strive to help young people to achieve their full potential in all areas of life, and to be ready to show initiative in parish, religious and civic life. They are attentive to the aspirations and needs of individuals, especially of those who are disadvantaged or isolated: mentally, physically, financially, emotionally or geographically.

Staff relate to students with compassion and availability, creating a sense of family which permeates their attitude as professional teachers and caring adults. Staff also relate to each other with the same sense of understanding and care, ministering to each other in an atmosphere of friendship and collegiality.

Staff strive to improve their professional appreciation of their work by sharing in prayer and staff development exercises, and participate regularly in programs which enable them to collaborate with greater understanding in the MSC style of education at their school.

Founded on love and built on love, MSC schools offer a vision of hope for humankind, one to which all their members can contribute as they grow strong in faith.

2 Student Absences

The Education Act 1990 (NSW) requires satisfactory attendance at school for all students under the age of 17 years.

Poor attendance at school, including habitual late arrivals or an absence from school for an extended period of time, is of extreme concern to the college. The college, acting on guidelines from the NSW Education Standards Authority, considers that students will find it difficult to achieve outcomes of a course if their attendance is poor. For this reason, the college will not generally approve foreseen absences for extended periods of time (e.g. family holiday during the school term). For more information, students and their parents should refer to the Guide to Student Services, which is published on the college website.

3 Academic Honesty

Throughout the assessment process, the highest level of integrity and honesty is required. Failure to meet this requirement may limit a student's final result.

A student's mark is determined by the quality of the work produced by the student only. Any take-home assessment task or submitted work must formally acknowledge any words, ideas, designs or workmanship of others used in producing the work. Students can refer to the *Student Guide to Referencing*, which is available on the college website.



It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all unacknowledged work is genuinely their own.

Malpractice is any activity undertaken by a student that allows them to gain an unfair advantage over others. It includes, but is not limited to:

- copying someone else's work in part or in whole, and presenting it as their own
- using material directly from books, journals, CDs or the internet without reference to the source
- building on the ideas of another person without reference to the source
- buying, stealing or borrowing another person's work and presenting it as their own
- submitting work to which another person such as a parent, coach or subject expert has contributed substantially
- using words, ideas, designs or the workmanship of others in practical and performance tasks without appropriate acknowledgement
- paying someone to write or prepare material
- breaching school examination rules
- using non-approved aides during an assessment task
- contriving false explanations to explain work not handed in by the due date
- missing a lesson or lessons prior to the due date for the task
- assisting another student to engage in malpractice.

Students are encouraged to incorporate research from a variety of sources, but sources must be clearly acknowledged through an annotated bibliography and/or footnotes. Students should follow the acknowledgment procedures specified *A Guide to Referencing*, which is available on the college website.

Failure to acknowledge sources constitutes plagiarism.

No work or part of any work that is tainted by suspicion of plagiarism, dishonesty or malpractice can be marked. Where there is any doubt, the onus is on the student to prove that the work is his or hers. Where part of a work is produced by dishonest means, that section will not be marked and a *Letter of Concern* sent to the parents or caregivers. Where the dishonesty affects a substantial part of a student's work, then a mark of zero will be recorded and a letter of concern will be sent home to their parents/caregivers. The student will be required to resubmit the task.

Determination of malpractice is initially the responsibility of the Leader of Learning concerned, although, in exceptional cases, the matter may be referred directly to the Assistant Principal – Learning and Teaching.

4 About Assessment

Assessment is the process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about student achievement. Assessment can be used for a number of purposes, including to:

- assist student learning



- evaluate and improve teaching and learning programs
- provide information on student learning and progress in a course in relation to the syllabus outcomes
- provide evidence of satisfactory completion of a course
- report on the achievement by each student at the end of a course.

The Leader of Learning – Curriculum Administration, manages the assessment program at Chevalier College in collaboration with the other Leaders of Learning.

All assessment practices are supervised by the Assistant Principal – Learning and Teaching.

Assessment tasks can be in differing formats, e.g. online activities, in-class tests, hand-in assignments prepared outside the class, responses to video material or other stimulus material, practical work, aural, oral.

Each assessment task enables teachers to collect information about the students' achievements in relation to several outcomes, to award marks in accordance with marking guidelines, and to provide constructive feedback to students on their performances, highlighting their strengths and where they could make improvements.

The marks awarded for each task should be commensurate with the quality of the response. Work that shows more complex development and higher order achievement should receive more marks than work that demonstrates a more basic level of achievement.

4.1 Assessment Principles

The college follows assessment practices¹ promoted by the NSW Education Standards Authority. These practices emphasise *Assessment for and as learning*, while retaining *Assessment of Learning* (summative assessment).

The principles of assessment for learning and assessment as learning strategies have some common elements such as:

- self-assessment and peer assessment
- strategies for students to actively monitor and evaluate their own learning
- feedback, together with evidence, to help teachers and their students decide whether the students are ready for the next phase of learning or whether they need further learning experiences to consolidate their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Teachers, using their professional judgment in a standards-referenced framework, are able to extend the process of assessment for learning into the assessment of learning.

¹ <https://arc.nesa.nsw.edu.au/go/9-10/afl/>



4.2 Assessment Policies and Practices

The college assessment policies, expressed in this handbook are designed to encourage student learning, to be fair to students on an individual basis and as a group in each course, and to be fair to the teachers who have responsibility for their implementation.

The college aims to provide students with relevant and meaningful assessment tasks. Therefore, assessment tasks are designed to:

- clearly and effectively assess appropriate outcomes
- allow students to demonstrate their level of achievement
- encourage deeper learning
- use an appropriate level of language, difficulty and time length
- be creative and interesting
- include clear instructions outlining what is expected.

Assessment in Stage 4 usually consists of a varying number of class-based assessment tasks, some of which may be formal in nature. All of these tasks are used for the purpose of awarding grades for reporting. In all assessment, the professional judgement of the subject teacher, under the guidance of the relevant Leader of Learning, is used to ensure that students are assessed appropriately.

4.3 Assessment Program

The beginning of the assessment program at Chevalier College will coincide with the start of the academic year and, unless the Assistant Principal – Learning and Teaching advises other arrangements, will conclude at the end of Term 4. Most assessment processes will be semester-based, as will be the reports.

Every student will be given access to an assessment guide outlining the requirements in each subject. A schedule giving a general timing of tasks is contained in the assessment guide.

4.4 Assessment Responsibilities

4.4.1 Chevalier College

The NSW Education Standards Authority requires that each school develops an assessment program for each course. In general, this means that Chevalier College is required to:

- set tasks that will be used to measure the student's performance in each component of a course
- specify the value of each of these tasks
- keep records of each student's performance on each task
- provide students with information on their progress
- inform the student in writing of:
 - an indication of when the various assessment tasks will take place



- the task value for each task
- the nature of each assessment task (e.g. assignment, test, project etc.)
- details of the administrative arrangements associated with each task (e.g. student absence, late submission of work etc.).

4.4.2 Students

Students are expected to perform the tasks that are part of the assessment program. Students must be aware of the rules and information in this handbook and the dates of assessment, as published in Canvas.

4.5 Assessment Notification

All assessment task notifications will include the following information as the minimum:

- The name of the subject or course
- The date and time the task is to be submitted
- The outcomes being assessed
- A clear description of the task and what students are required to complete. (At times a sample scaffold suggesting a sample way to complete the task may be provided)
- The mode of submission
- A marking scheme or other criteria

Notification of assessment tasks will be communicated to students by the class teacher through Canvas, at least 14 days prior to the due date of the task.

4.6 Word Limits

In cases where Leaders of Learning specify that a word limit is mandatory, not advisory, on the notification, student submissions will not be marked past the word limit (with a ten per cent allowance) if they exceed the word limit. If a student's written submission contains an insufficient number of words, the Leader of Learning may judge that the student has made a non-serious attempt and the student may be required to submit the task again.

4.7 Submission

The submission method is outlined in the assessment notification, and will be to either upload via Canvas or submit by hand.

Assessment tasks must be submitted on the due date by the time advised on the assessment notification. **The due date applies even if the student is absent from school, on an excursion, other school activity or is suspended.** It is the student's responsibility to ensure the assessment task is submitted by the due date.

Students are advised to keep a copy of all submitted tasks (where possible).

The use of email is discouraged and difficulties with email will not be considered to excuse a late submission.



Technology failure is not an acceptable excuse for the late submission of a task. Students are encouraged to keep draft copies and notes related to assessment tasks, which must be submitted in the event of technology failure. These will be regarded as final assessment submission.

Students who arrive late to the lesson after the assessment task has been collected without sufficient reason will be penalised.

4.8 What if I have difficulties completing a task?

4.8.1 Special Consideration

Extensions

Where a student is aware that they may be away from school on the day of an assessment task, or believe they should be permitted to hand in a task after the due date, they should supply a written request from their parent/carer to the class teacher. Under normal conditions a student must give two days' notice before an extension will be considered. Approval of extensions is the responsibility of the relevant subject Leader of Learning in conjunction with the class teacher.

Absences

If a student is absent from an assessment event, such as an examination, the relevant Leader of Learning will make a determination as to whether the student's reasons are valid, and decide:

- an appropriate time for the student will sit the task; OR
- if the student will sit a substitute task; OR
- in exceptional circumstances, if an estimate will be given (although the student must still complete the task).

Where the student completes the task after the usual assessment or examination period, or completes a substitute task, the student's result will inform an estimated mark and the student will be advised of the outcome. **Students must make a serious attempt at all substitute tasks to receive an estimate.**

The steps below must be followed in the event of absence on the due date of an assessment task or absence on the day of an assessment event, such as an examination.

Step 1 Students must notify the class teacher upon return to school.

Step 2 Students must provide a written explanation of their absence to the teacher from their parent/carer.

Students are encouraged to submit applications for special consideration in a timely manner to ensure that the application can be fully considered.



4.8.2 Failure to submit a task

A basic principle of assessment for learning is that students will be given every opportunity to provide evidence of their learning. Therefore, the college will encourage the student and provide them with every opportunity to submit the task.

The following provisions will apply if a task is not submitted on time or a student is absent from an in-class assessment task or exam.

- (a) Where a student is unable to submit or complete a task due to illness or misadventure, they must follow the procedures in **section 4.8.1 Special Consideration – Absences**.

Every effort will be made by the class teacher on the advice of the Leader of Learning to ensure that alternative arrangements are made for the student to submit the task or complete the test. However, in exceptional circumstances, an estimate will be given (although the student must still complete the task).

- (b) Where a student fails to complete the task without adequate excuse:
- i. the class teacher will inform the Leader of Learning, who will arrange for the student's parents to be informed in writing using a standard letter of concern
 - ii. the student will be given a mark of zero and will be required to submit the task within a period of time to be determined by the Leader of Learning

If there are repeated infringements or serious breaches, the student's parents will be invited to attend a meeting with the Assistant Principal - Learning and Teaching where appropriate strategies will be put in place.

Suspension from school is not considered to be a satisfactory reason for missing a task.

4.9 Assessment Feedback

Students have the right to adequate, timely and meaningful feedback on all completed tasks. This may take the form of an appropriate mark, grade or other symbol of achievement, accompanied by all or any of the following:

- A written comment
- On-line feedback
- A meeting with the teacher who marked the task
- The opportunity to resubmit the task or test

Any discussion about the task result should occur at the time when the teacher returns the task to the student.

At all times the college reserves the absolute right to determine the validity of an assessment mark and to modify.



4.10 What if I disagree with a mark or an outcome?

All queries regarding assessment should initially be made to the relevant class teacher and Leader of Learning, including queries regarding marks, grades or feedback, as Leader of Learning can ask the marker to re-examine the student's task. For any other action to be taken, students need to make a formal appeal using the *Assessment Task Application for Appeal form*, which is available from the Assistant Principal – Learning and Teaching.

5 Course Completion

A student will be considered to have satisfactorily completed a course if there is sufficient evidence that the student has:

- followed the course developed or endorsed by the NSW Education Standards Authority; and
- applied themselves with diligence and sustained effort for the set tasks and experiences provided in the course by the school; and
- achieved some or all of the outcomes.

The Principal may also determine that a poor record of attendance could indicate the course criteria has not been met.

6 Formal Assessment Rules

- a) Students who have been granted special provisions such as reader/writer/additional time will be given separate supervision. The learning support team will provide this information.
- b) Students should seek information prior to exam about the equipment they will require for the exams. This includes paper, calculators, bibles etc.
- c) Students should be well prepared and have with them all necessary equipment such as a number of pens, pencils, rulers, staplers, mathematical equipment, calculators etc.
- d) For class assessments, students must ensure that they are on-time for the lesson.
- e) There should be **no speaking** in the examination room.
- f) There should be no borrowing of equipment during the examination.

Any student who breaches any of the above rules or is found cheating during an examination or who knowingly helps another student cheat, may be give a mark of zero for that examination. Further action may be taken under the college Behaviour Management Policy.

7 Reports and the Allocation of Grades

Reporting is an essential part of the process of engaging parents, students and teachers in a conversation about learning.

Students in years 7–10 will receive a full report each semester, and an interim report in April. All reports are designed to be easy to understand.

Interim reports indicate application, progress and conduct of the student – they do not report grades.



Each full report includes:

- a performance grade based on the Common Performance Descriptors for the Record of School Achievement determined by the subject teacher's judgment of achievement in class assessments
- a measure of achievement against key outcomes
- a student evaluation / learning profile
- absences from school and whether those absences are explained or unexplained

The fundamental purpose of assessment and reporting is to improve student learning.

7.1 Grades

The outcomes for a course specify the intended results of student learning. Through a variety of assessment instruments, information is gathered, so that teachers can make judgements about the standard to which each student has achieved these course outcomes.

While the specific methods of assessment will vary for each subject, the student's achievement is shown on their report using the A – E grades, as listed in the following table.

Standard of Achievement	What this means
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.

There are no set percentages of students in each category; instead each student's achievement is measured by her or his own performance.

7.2 Applying Standards for Report Grades

Grades from A – E will be awarded for all subjects in reports to parents during Stage 4. These grades will be awarded on the basis of "Course Performance Descriptors" issued by the NSW Education Standards Authority for each course. They will be used to indicate the student's level



of achievement relative to the knowledge objectives and skill objectives of the course studied. Assessment of a course will be in the prescribed areas for assessment for each course as indicated on the Stage 4 course performance descriptors for that course.

Achievement in a course will be measured by assessment strategies throughout the duration of the course within the prescribed areas for assessment for the course. Students' grades will be based on the school's assessment of a student's performance against the "descriptors" in particular courses.

The assessment tasks set by the school will be used to provide data to assist teachers to determine which description best reflects the level of achievement in the course obtained by each student at the end of the course for that student. The final decisions are made in relation to the "standard" reached by the individual student, not in relation to performance relative to other students.

Applying the descriptors will involve teachers in:

- using a range of assessment events which relate to the knowledge objectives and skill
- making assessment observations and recording their judgements
- making a summative assessment judgement for each student; that is, assessing the extent of a student's achievement at the end of the course
- applying the course performance descriptors for a course to determine the most appropriate overall description of each student's achievement at the completion of the course, in conjunction with the common grade scale.

The choice of a particular grade will be made because it relates to the best overall description of the student's achievement in that course of study.