

Assessment, Monitoring and Reporting Policy and Procedure

Ratification Date: RNS Board 01/09/2021	Next Review: 2022/23 or after an event or changes to the minimum standards as advised by the VRQA	Availability: <table><tr><td>Web</td><td>X</td></tr><tr><td>Office</td><td>X</td></tr><tr><td>On Request</td><td>X</td></tr></table>	Web	X	Office	X	On Request	X	Actions:
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1.0 PURPOSE

River Nile School is a Specialist Reengagement Senior Secondary School for young women who are Humanitarian Refugees and new arrivals to Australia. As such they are extremely vulnerable and generally have experienced significant trauma in their lives.

This policy refers to student assessment and reporting. It acknowledges the direct relationship between assessment, learning and teaching. It also outlines how River Nile School will meet Commonwealth Government and Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) student reporting requirements.

2.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all River Nile School teaching staff and students.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Assessment is the ongoing process of gathering, analysing and reflecting on evidence to make informed and consistent judgements to improve future student learning and teaching practice.

Reporting is the process by which assessment information is communicated to the students, parents and River Nile School. This information will inform recommendations for future learning and teaching

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION

It is the policy of River Nile School that assessment and reporting will focus on the individual, taking into account the unique needs of each individual. Assessment will:

- Identify appropriate standards and the criteria used for measuring student achievements and progress against the standards

- Address all facets of the VCAL curriculum as per VCAA guidelines
- Acknowledge that different learning styles and needs require a range of methods of assessment



- Acknowledge that different areas of the curriculum require varying methods of assessment
- Provide information on student knowledge, skills and behaviour to inform the next stage of learning and inform teaching practice
- Provide ongoing, constructive feedback and opportunities for student reflection and/or self-assessment to support future learning
- Provide information about what students have learnt in relation to the curriculum

5.0 STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

The VCAL Coordinator has the overall responsibility to ensure the standards of the curriculum and assessment follow the accredited VCAL curriculum and together with VCAL teachers, responsible for the compilation, maintenance and monitoring of students' assessments.

6.0 ASSESSMENT

The award of satisfactory achievement for a VCAL unit is based on a decision that the student has achieved the learning outcomes specified for the VCAL unit. The curriculum components in a VCAL learning program must be assessed in accordance with the requirements and guidelines outlined in the curriculum documents for the units and/or units of competency delivered in the learning program; that is, assessment of:

- VCAL units be in accordance with the assessment and quality requirements of the VCAA
- VET and FE units of competency/modules must be in accordance with the VET accredited curriculum or training package

Wherever possible, students should be observed to demonstrate competence on more than one occasion and in different contexts to make sure that the assessment is as reliable, fair, flexible, efficient and valid as possible.

Valid and reliable means

- Assessment tasks should be designed to reflect the nature of the outcomes/elements of the unit
- Students should be assessed across a range of different tasks and contexts
- Assessment should be conducted on a number of occasions

Fair means the

- Assessment tasks should be grounded in relevant context and be sensitive to gender, culture, linguistic background, physical disability, learning needs, socio-economic status and geographic location
- Instructions for assessment tasks should be clear and explicit

Flexible means

- Assessment should be open-ended and flexible to meet the specific needs of students
- Students should have the opportunity to demonstrate achievement at their own level and pace

Efficient means

- Assessment instruments provide evidence of achievement across a range of outcomes/units should be used

6.1 Assessment Methods

A range of assessment methods and task types may be used. These include:

- Evidence of information and communications technology (ICT), including Internet usage, blogs, wikis, podcasts
- E-portfolios, multimedia presentations and podcasts
- Teacher observation and/or checklists
- Self-assessment inventories
- Physical demonstration of understanding of written or oral text
- A portfolio of accumulated evidence
- Evidence accumulated through project or program participation
- Awards from recognised programs
- Oral or written reports and presentations
- Oral explanation of text
- Written text
- Discussion

- Debates
- Role-plays
- Evidence of contribution to group or collaborative work
- Folios of tasks or investigations
- Performing practical tasks
- Reflective work journals
- Student logbooks

Teachers must develop learning programs that provide opportunities for students to achieve the learning outcomes. A holistic approach to the development of skills through project-based activities that integrate the learning outcomes will ensure that students are able to identify and apply these skills within authentic social and working environments.

6.2 Features of evidence

Teachers must consider the following features of evidence when designing VCAL assessment tasks:

Valid: The task is consistent with the VCAL unit purpose statement; the learning outcome has been taken into account; the level is appropriate.

Sufficient: There is sufficient evidence to enable a decision to be made. This is important for activities involving a group of students working on an activity. There is a balance of direct and indirect evidence.

Authentic: The work of the student is their own.

Current: The work of the student is current and is not work submitted last year by another student.

Consistent: The evidence has been collected over time and in different contexts to ensure there is a consistent demonstration of competencies in the learning outcomes.

VCAL teaching staff coordinate the assessment and collection of results for all curriculum components within the VCAL program. The satisfactory completion of curriculum components must be in accordance with the assessment guidelines for the accredited curriculum.

Information about assessment processes and procedures for VCAL units can be found in the respective VCAL Strand Curriculum Planning Guide which is available on the VCAA website at: www.vcaa.vic.edu.au. Also refer to **RNS VCAL 3.1 Curriculum Framework**.

6.3 Assessment principles for VCAL

Assessment within the VCAL program should be based on the following principles:

- Assessment tasks/activities should be grounded in a relevant context and not be culturally biased
- Students should have the opportunity to demonstrate achievement at their own pace
- Students should be assessed across as wide a range of tasks/activities as possible, in order to increase reliability and validity of assessment
- One-off assessment tasks/activities do not provide a reliable and valid measure of competence
- Instructions for assessment tasks/activities should be clear and explicit. Students must know what is expected and the criteria by which satisfactory completion will be established
- Time allowed to complete a task should be reasonable and specified and should allow for preparation and reflection as appropriate to the activity
- Where the assessment task is linked to a project or activity the assessment tasks/activities may take place over a number of weeks
- Allow adequate evidence to be collected
- Assessment tasks/activities should be open-ended and flexible to meet the specific needs of students
- Assessment should include access to ICT where appropriate to the context of the activity or task
- Assessment must be valid in terms of context and methods. Assessment must be reliable in showing consistent results over a number of occasions. Assessment must not unduly disadvantage any student and must provide flexibility in the range of methodologies that cater to the needs of individual students.

When assessing students with particular needs, the validity of assessment must be maintained. Flexibility in assessment strategies must be maintained to ensure alternative methods are utilised to allow the demonstration of achievement of learning outcomes without disadvantaging the student. The conditions related to assessment of the learning outcome may differ according to the particular learning environment, mode of delivery and field or topic of study. Students will have access to:

- A range of assessment tasks/activities
- A learning environment appropriate to the task
- Resources appropriate to the task
- Support and advice

- Communication supports as required (for example, dictionary and personal word lists)

6.3 Submission of Work

The submission of work on time requires all students to demonstrate organization, independence, consideration and effort.

Students are expected to:

- Maintain an appropriate record of work required
- Plan the preparation of work so as to meet the required submission date
- Submit all work by the due date set by their teacher
- Speak with their teacher before the set due date to discuss possible issues with the appropriate submission of work
- Maintain the highest standards of work by ensuring that all work submitted is their own and incorporates appropriate recognition for any work taken from another source
- Be familiar with procedures for submission of work as outlined for VET and VCAL Units and follow processes in line with these certificates.

Teachers are expected to:

- Provide details of a work required and due dates with appropriate time for completion and submission
- Provide details of expectations for work to be completed
- Work closely with students expressing concerns about their ability to meet due dates to consider the limitations and implications
- Provide alternative due dates when student's may not be able to meet due dates due to illness or personal circumstances beyond their control
- Modify required work and assessment procedures to meet the personal learning needs of students, particularly students with medical needs
- Provide appropriate feedback for students within a reasonable time, after submission of work
- Return submitted work to students, with feedback, so as to support student follow-up, goal setting and continual practice for learning from class work and assessment tasks
- Seek advice if they are uncertain of appropriate practices. The VCAL Coordinator should be the first source of support for teachers

7.0 INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT

Where possible, assessment in the VCAL should focus on integrated projects/activities. It is preferable for assessment tasks/activities to integrate more than one learning outcome. In developing an integrated or holistic approach to assessment, a number of outcomes (VCAL learning outcomes and/or VET or FE learning outcomes) from curriculum components in one or more strands can be grouped into logical, assessable activities that take into account project-based or thematic activities.

8.0 ASSESSING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND/OR LEARNING AND ACCESS NEEDS

The VCAL structure provides a number of strategies to support students with disabilities and/or learning and access needs. However, all VCAL students are required to meet the course requirements as outlined in the VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook and the VCAL Strand Curriculum Planning Guides.

Appropriate strategies and adjustments available within the VCAL design structure to support students with disabilities and/or learning and access needs include:

- Flexibility in assessment. For example, allowing additional time for the completion of tasks, extending deadlines for assignments, if a person is unable to communicate by speaking, then an alternative means of communicating may be used to demonstrate achievement of unit learning outcomes normally demonstrated through the spoken word.

However, while flexibility in relation to assessment methods and assessment tools is encouraged to meet the specific needs of students, the validity and reliability of the assessment must not be compromised in any way.

- Appropriate VCAL level. The VCAL has three levels:
 - Foundation – high level of teacher support
 - Intermediate – some teacher support but there is an expectation that students will demonstrate independent learning
 - Senior – students work as independent, self-directed learners

It is important that students are enrolled in a VCAL level that is appropriate for them. For example, Foundation VCAL students require a high level of teacher support and direction and apply their skills to familiar tasks in everyday contexts. Senior VCAL students work as independent and self-directed learners with the capacity to undertake complex tasks in an abstract context.

- Access to assistive technology as required. Every effort will be made to ensure that facilities and assistive technology are available to enable students to participate in classroom learning and access all assessment. Computers, specialist software, recording devices and other technology can be made available to help students to complete work. If word-processing software is used, a spell-check may be activated as part of its operation. Other specialist equipment used in conjunction with computers is encouraged for students who are vision

impaired. Audio equipment may also be used to supply assessment tasks to students who cannot access text (for example, students with vision impairment).

- Students with a physical disability or other impairment may receive assistance from an aide in both classroom learning and when completing a task in order to demonstrate achievement of a learning outcome. Such assistance may include an aide's recording or participating on behalf of the student in applied learning activities. Students may also use a scribe.
- Time to achieve a VCAL certificate. The nominal duration of VCAL is 1000 hours. In most cases students can achieve a VCAL certificate within one year, whilst students with learning and access needs may need two school years.

9.0 SATISFACTORY COMPLETION OF VCAL UNITS

All activities designed for assessment of VCAL unit learning outcomes should be assessed by the teacher/trainer to verify satisfactory completion.

Satisfactory completion of the VCAL units must be based on evidence that demonstrates that the student has achieved the learning outcomes. The curriculum for the VCAL unit will include learning activities that develop the student's knowledge and skills, as well as instance/s of assessment. When developing an assessment task/activity it must enable students to complete the learning outcome/s.

The elements further describe the learning outcome/s and are a guide to the requirements for satisfying the learning outcomes at the appropriate VCAL level. The learning outcome is achieved when the student demonstrates achievement in all the elements.

VCAL providers will report results for each unit as **S (Satisfactory)** or **N (Not yet completed)**. Where the teacher records an N for a VCAL unit they can record an S for individual unit learning outcomes that have been achieved.

Students are assessed regularly and should be given multiple opportunities to demonstrate competence. Staff should use a variety of methods to assess.

Students at risk of failing or being unable to complete requirements of the course are identified early and are counselled and supported to ensure they have every opportunity to complete the required tasks. Support can be offered by Student Services, Education Support Officers/Integration Aides and at study support sessions (ie Homework Help). Contact and discussion with the student's parent is also expected.

Validation of assessments for VET and FE units of competency/modules will be the responsibility of the relevant Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and will be in accordance with the requirements of the AQTF.

9.1 VCAL students at risk of not completing VET program

Students that are “at risk” of non-completion or competent for VET programs due to behavioural or non-submission of work issues should be provided with pro-active support from the VCAL Coordinator or student services. This would allow for and ensure the student understands their choices if an exit occurred before completing the program, as well as an opportunity to use a clearly defined pathway as a motivating tool to overcome the behavioural or lack of work issue. The VCAL Coordinator or student services should also notify parent/carers of at-risk status.

10.0 AUTHENTICATION

Students must submit work that is clearly their own. Apart from reference to source material, no part of a student’s work may be copied from any other person’s work. In order to attest that work is genuinely that of the student, teachers and students will observe the following procedures:

- Each piece of assessment will have a student declaration on the front cover which all students must sign prior to submitting their work.
- Teachers will monitor the development of tasks in class, by sighting plans and drafts of students’ work and keeping records of their progress
- Students are expected to retain appropriate documentation of the development of tasks. Students may be requested to present such documentation to prove authenticity of work
- A teacher may ask a student to demonstrate his or her understanding of a task to ensure authenticity
- Work will only be assessed when the teacher can attest that, to the best of his or her knowledge, the work is the student’s own
- Students must not submit the same piece of work for assessment in more than one VCAL unit
- A student's work cannot be authenticated where the requirements of the attendance policy have not been met.

11.0 RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is the acknowledgment of skills and knowledge obtained through any combination of formal or informal training, work experience or general life experience. RPL is a process to assess successful completion of VCAL learning outcomes through skills, knowledge and experience gained in other settings besides traditional school programs, for example, through part-time work or voluntary involvement in a community organisation. RPL can only be applied to the VCAL Work Related Skills, VCAL Personal Development Skills and VCAL Skills for Further Study – Senior units.

Decisions regarding RPL are the responsibility of the enrolling VCAL provider, ie River Nile School. Where students have been granted RPL, evidence that demonstrates successful completion of the entire unit learning outcomes must be completed and kept by the VCAL provider.

Information about RPL procedures and processes will be directed to the VCAL unit at the VCAA.

12.0 SPECIAL PROVISION

Students may be eligible for Special Provision if, at any time, they are adversely affected in a significant way by:

- An acute or chronic illness (physical or psychological)
- Factors relating to personal circumstance
- An impairment or disability, including a learning disorder. These circumstances do not include matters or situations of the student's choosing, such as involvement

Students granted Special Provision must still complete all schoolwork related to satisfactory completion of the outcomes of a VCAL unit. Students absent from school for prolonged periods must still comply with the school's authentication procedures to demonstrate that they have completed the work and that the work is their own.

13.0 INDIVIDUAL PATHWAY PLAN

Each student is provided with an Individual Pathway Plan (IPP) that is developed during the first few weeks of school. The IPP is a teaching tool used to deliver a targeted educational program to achieve appropriate learning outcomes for all River Nile School students. It is developed using the student's LLN outcomes and career aspirations and provides a guide and learning framework for each student. It is developed through a collaborative planning process involving River Nile School staff, parents/carers, student and where required other external agencies. It is a flexible living document that is used to review and monitor the student's progress during the year. The IPP should:

Articulate the student's learning style, interests, goals and support needs

- Be based on an assessment of the student's specific learning needs and capabilities
- Establish short-term goals that will lead sequentially to the achievement of long-term goals
- Reflect high expectations of the student's capacity for educational achievement
- Outline their VCAL (inclusive of VET) program
- Be developed in consultation with the student, River Nile School and members of Student Services
- Ensure that the goals are measurable, achievable, supported, and time-limited
- Clearly articulate River Nile School supports

14.0 RELEASE/STORAGE OF STUDENT WORK

It is expected that students will retain ALL work completed during a year, till the end of the year in which the work was undertaken. Such work may be requested by the VCAA as part of the process of course sampling.

Any student work assessed as N, or about which any concerns are held, should be retained by the teacher in original or photocopied/scanned form. Teachers should retain a representative sample of student work for each outcome to assist in the review of River Nile School courses and VCAL quality assurance processes.

15.0 REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS AND RESULTS

The final date for student results to be entered onto VASS is advertised in the VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook. However, results must be forwarded to the Administrative Officer one week prior to this date for input onto VASS.

Students will receive an 'S' for Satisfactory Completion or 'N' for Non-Satisfactory Completion on VASS.

At the end of Term 1 students receive an interim report and at the end of each Semester, students receive their written reports. At the end of Term I and Term II parents are also invited to attend parent interviews to discuss the student's performance. Student progress is monitored at fortnightly VCAL team meetings and updates to the IPP are registered. The IPP is also formally reviewed at least three times a year. Parents/Carers are invited to attend these meetings so that they also have the opportunity to discuss their child's report and progress with the teacher. An interpreter will be arranged if needed.

Furthermore, each student receives an official VCAA report at the end of each year showing the satisfactory completion of Units.

16.0 ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

At the end of each year all results are analysed by River Nile School staff to establish how each student has performed in the VCAL course. Results of this analysis are reported on River Nile School website via the annual report. The aim is always for improved outcomes.

Of particular importance with River Nile students is the transition process to either work or further study. The school works closely with students on their individual transition and continues to support students post school via the Pathways Fund where philanthropic donations support students with on costs to study.