



BSSS SENIOR ASSESSMENT HANDBOOK

2020

This handbook details the policies and procedures for assessment, grading (including V-grades for absences) and appeals followed at Merici College. This information is relevant to ALL students, in both Tertiary and Accredited packages, and includes relevant BSSS policies and procedures. Full BSSS documents are available at: http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/The_Board/policy_and_procedures_manual and all brochures at: http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_students

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1. Introduction

This booklet is designed to assist students understand their obligations and meet their responsibilities during their two years of senior study at Merici College.

Merici College wants all senior students to experience success and this handbook contains important information about the assessment program during Years 11 and 12.

It is important to read and understand this information about assessment in the Senior College, including the College Assessment Policy. Unit Outlines for each unit of study need to be read in conjunction with this information to allow students to form a clear understanding of course requirements and assessment procedures. These include procedures for calculating raw and standardised scores for 'T' units and moderation procedures undertaken by teachers of all senior classes.

The demands of the Senior College require students to devote sufficient time to their studies both at school and at home for the successful completion of courses. The College advises that senior students complete at least 12 hours of study per week outside class. The key to managing this is using study periods wisely.

Remember, the College has well-developed support structures to provide assistance if students need to discuss any aspect of their study or workload. Seek advice EARLY!

- Subject Teacher
- Studies Coordinator
- Pastoral Care Teacher
- House Coordinator
- Head of Senior School
- Deputy Principal Learning & Deputy Principal Development

The Goal:

Our goal is for every senior student at Merici to achieve The ACT Senior Secondary Certificate (ACT SSC), which consists of:

- the certificate, detailing your years of attendance and the college you are graduating from, and
- the Record of Achievement, which details your studies throughout college.

They are awarded to all senior secondary students who have successfully met the ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies (ACT BSSS) requirements.

2. Assessment in the Senior College

a. Purposes of Assessment

The purpose of assessment is to allow students to demonstrate what they know and can do. Senior courses are based on ACT-wide Course Frameworks that provide a structure for course development, assessment and the allocation of semester grades. From these, assessment programs are developed to allow students to demonstrate achievement on assessment criteria contained in the frameworks.

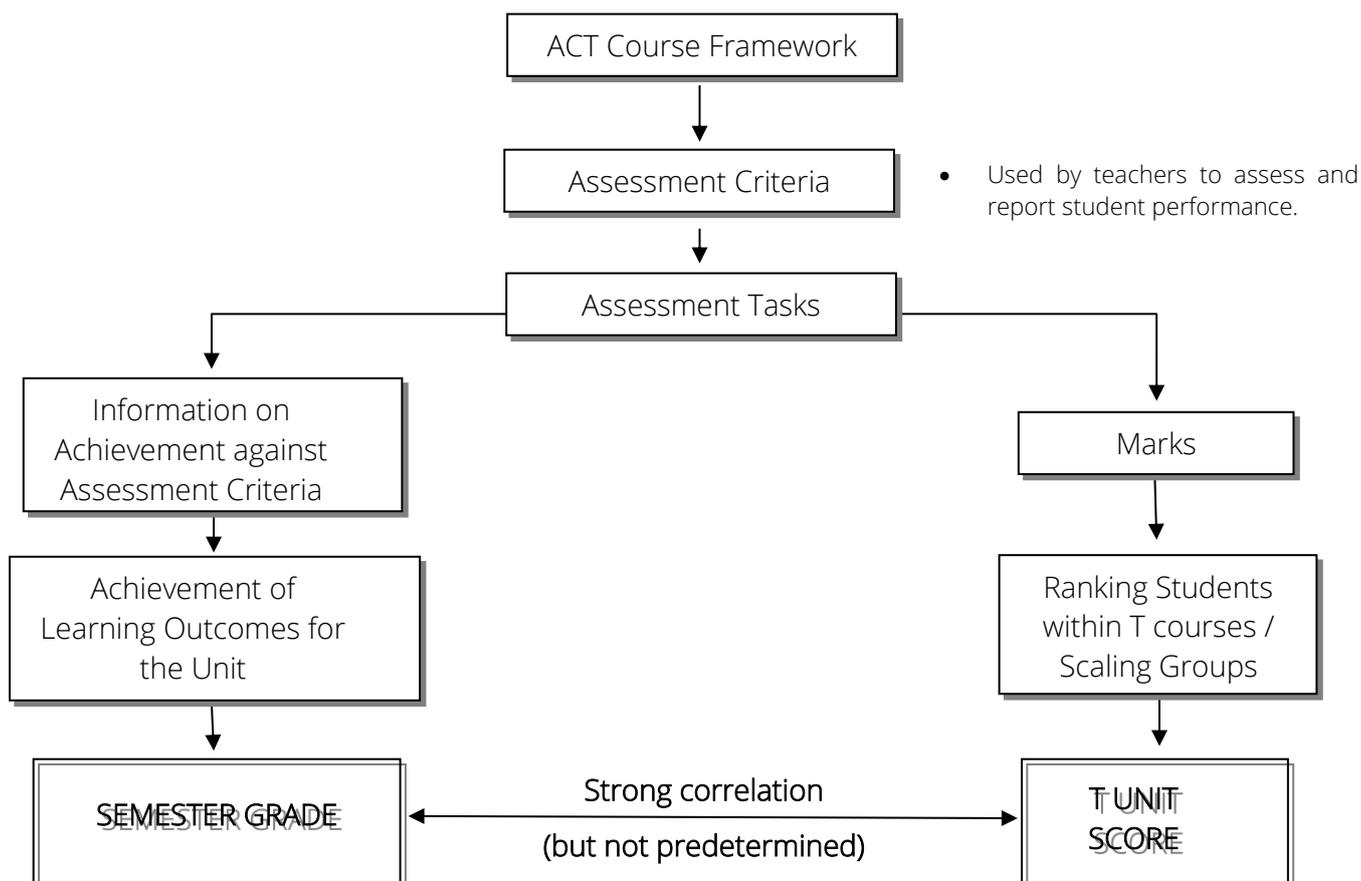
There are two purposes of assessment reporting in the ACT senior college system:

Standards achieved by students: Each course studied in the senior college is written using assessment criteria and grade descriptors as outcomes for learning.

Ranking Students: This is where individual assessment items are aggregated to form a mark or score for the unit. Unit Scores are then calculated for Tertiary students.

Student achievements measured against the Course Framework's Assessment Criteria provide the basis for allocating grades at the end of the unit. Marks/scores provide the means to rank students on individual assessment tasks throughout the semester.

For Tertiary units, students should expect to be given their ranking for each assessment task so that final rankings are as expected.



The result obtained on each task indicates the extent to which the student has achieved the criteria that the instrument is supposed to assess. Assessment tasks also provide feedback to the student during the unit. Marked assessment tasks are expected to be returned to students within three

weeks unless advised by the teacher. If this does not occur and you cannot get a satisfactory reply from the teacher, please see the relevant Studies Coordinator.

b. Unit Assessment Outlines

Teachers will draw upon their professional judgement and specific subject area expertise to design the assessment program for each Unit. All information concerning assessment in a Unit is available in the form of a written Unit Assessment Outline finalised in the early stages of the semester. A copy is retained on file on Moodle and made available to students within the first 2 weeks of the start of the unit. Print copies can be made from your Moodle page.

The unit assessment outline identifies:

- The assessment tasks to be used in the unit
- Due dates
- Weightings for assessment items

c. Grades

All students will receive a Unit Grade (A to E, S, V or R based on the assessment tasks completed in the Unit (in both T and A). The grade/s will be reported at the end of each semester and will be based on achievement against Assessment Criteria. The award of a grade in a unit is in line with the grade descriptors in the relevant Course Framework. Students should have a copy of the Grade Descriptors for each particular course they are studying made available through their Moodle page. If this has not happened, see your teacher.

Generic Grade Descriptors:

A	Awarded to students who have demonstrated a very high level of knowledge and understanding of the full range of concepts and principles of the unit. They have shown evidence of a very high level of cognitive and practical skill in a wide variety of assessment situations.
B	Awarded to students who have demonstrated a comprehensive level of knowledge and understanding of most of the concepts and principles of the unit. They have shown evidence of a sound level of cognitive and practical skill in a range of assessment situations.
C	Awarded to students who have demonstrated a satisfactory level of knowledge and understanding of most of the key concepts and principles of the unit. They have shown evidence of a satisfactory level of cognitive and practical skill in most assessment situations.
D	Awarded to students who have demonstrated some knowledge and understanding of some of the key concepts and principles of the unit. They have shown evidence of a basic level of cognitive and practical skill in assessment situations.
E	Awarded to students who have demonstrated limited knowledge or understanding of the key concepts and principles of the unit. They have shown little evidence of cognitive and practical skill in assessment situations.

V	A 'Void' grade is given where the student cannot receive a grade due to an insufficient amount of assessment submitted and/or poor attendance. Consequently, this unit cannot be used as part of the Year 12 Certificate and will not count towards tertiary entry.
S	A Status grade is awarded when a student has been unable to complete the unit through illness or misadventure and the college does not have enough evidence to award a grade.

Status units count toward the award of the Year 12 Certificate. There can only be a maximum of half the normal units required in a course, e.g. two Status units for a Major and one Status unit for a Minor.

- R A Recognition grade is awarded when a student has completed some Year 11/12 studies outside the ACT.
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d. Scores **T** Units and Courses

Students must take every opportunity to ensure that published scores are accurate. The capacity to appeal relies on timely reviewing of marks and scores.

The purpose of scores, which are issued in T units, is to rank students for tertiary entrance. It should be taken into account that ranking and spacing are crucial to the final distribution of scores. At the end of a unit, marks given on each of the assessment tasks for that unit are aggregated (combined) to produce a Unit Raw Score in accordance with the Unit Assessment Outline negotiated at the commencement of the unit. These Raw Scores need to be scaled following BSSS procedures.

i. Scaling

Scaling is a process used to convert your mark into a scaled score: it is an estimate of the effect of the AST. This may mean that your marks will change from the 'raw' marks you receive on your completed assessment tasks. Sometimes they will move up, and sometimes they will move down - but scaling should not change your mark by a significant amount in most cases. Your final scaling will be determined by the AST but in the meantime, we make an informed guess about how well the group you are studying with will perform. For each subject the mean and the standard deviation are determined by the scaling. The marks you receive for assignments and exams can change your rank within the class, but they cannot change the performance of the class as a whole. This can only be improved by preparing well for your AST. Scaling groups with less than 10 students do not have their scores scaled.

ii. Z-scores

Z-scores explain how far away you are, on average, from the middle of the group. If your z-score is negative, you scored below the average. If your z-score is positive, you scored above the average. They also give you an idea of how far away you were from the average. A z-score of 1.0 means that you are around halfway between the middle student and the top student, so a -1.0 z-score implies you are about halfway between the middle and the bottom. Usually, in a class of around 25 people, the top student will have a z-score close to 2.0 and the bottom student will have a z-score close to -2.0.

iii. Unit Scores

For students studying 'T' courses, a Unit Raw Score is produced. This is obtained by either adding together marks (weighted raw score) or your z-scores (weighted z-scores) for various assessment tasks, after using the weightings given on the Unit Outline. The Raw Scores are then standardised to ensure:

- Unit Scores should be comparable from unit to unit throughout the course
- Unit Scores should be comparable across courses/subjects in a particular semester

iv. Course Scores

For students studying 'T' courses, the basis for constructing Course Scores is as follows:

Course scores are calculated from those unit scores that comprise the best 80% of the minimum number of units required for that course type. Because Majors consist of a minimum 3.5 (63 hours) units, 80% equates to 2.8 units, which means that the top two unit scores are used along with 80% of the third best unit. This applies, also, in the majority of Colleges where Majors are 4.0 units of 55 hour duration. If a student completes more than the minimum, e.g. three units in their Minor, separate calculations will be made using the 80% rule with the first two scores and then using all three scores and the best result will be taken. In this way, students cannot be disadvantaged if they do more units.

Students studying H courses through ANU should refer to the University and BSSS website for additional information:

http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_students/what_additional_programs_are_available

v. Estimates

Students seeking Tertiary entry will receive an estimate of their ATAR at the end of each Semester. These are, as titled, estimates and are our best attempt to predict how the AST will impact College scores. Students should use them as a rough guide only.

3. Assessment Requirements

Choosing to study at Merici is in fact selecting a whole package that involves social, spiritual, physical and cultural components above the academic commitment required at some schools. Senior students at Merici are required to do more than the minimum required by the BSSS. Students who do not abide by the College's policy on the completion of courses are in jeopardy of foregoing the end of year functions for Year 12 students.

Attendance

It is expected that students will attend all scheduled classes / contact time / structured learning activities for the units in which they are enrolled, unless there is due cause and adequate documentary evidence is provided. Any student whose attendance falls below 90% of scheduled classes / contact time / structured learning activities in a unit, without due cause and adequate documentary evidence, will be deemed to have voided the unit. The Principal has the right to exercise discretion in special circumstances if satisfactory documentation is supplied.

- A written note, from a parent/guardian must explain all explained absences within 5 school days of returning to the College.
- A medical certificate needs to be provided for absences exceeding 3 consecutive days.
- It will not be acceptable to bring in a note at the end of a semester with explanations going back to absences accrued through that semester unless they fall within the previous 5 school day period. In other words, these absences will remain as "unexplained" and accumulate towards a Void grade
- A summary of all absences will be provided to students and parents at least fortnightly. It is the student's responsibility to notify the College of any apparent errors in their attendance record, which will require verification from the classroom teacher. Absences (apart from data errors) can only be cleared if they still fall within the 5 day explanation period, regardless of the timing of the receipt of the attendance record.

- Excuses will not be accepted for absences during a school day, where the student has already attended classes, unless the student has provided Student Services with a note detailing the reason (evidence of appointments or a note from parents detailing due cause) for departure prior to leaving the College.
- These absences will remain as “unexplained” and accumulate towards a Void grade.
- Excuses will not be accepted if the student arrives late to the College without documentation of due cause provided to Student Services. Absence excuses, such as “sleeping in” and “traffic”, advise the College of absences for recording keeping purposes, however, any missed classes will remain as “unexplained” and accumulate towards a Void.
- Driving lessons/tests are not to be made during a student’s scheduled classes and will remain as unexplained absences.
- All students leaving the College due to illness must report to Student Services for signing out.
- A holiday scheduled during semester time is not a valid reason for being absent from class.
- Absences in such cases will contribute to unexplained absences and could lead to students receiving a Void grade. Applications for approved leave must be made in writing to the Principal, through the Head of Senior School, prior to the leave being taken. Approval will only be given in exceptional circumstances.

The College will advise parents when a student appears to have voided a subject and an interview will be arranged to discuss the situation

The full Merici Policy can be reviewed at: <https://www.merici.act.edu.au/node/781>

b. Completion of Assessment

Students are required to substantially complete all assessment items that contribute to the assessment for a unit unless adequate documentary evidence is provided demonstrating due cause. Exemption from an item and / or alternative assessment without penalty is available to students providing adequate documentary evidence. Students submitting less than 70% of unit assessment will be deemed to have voided the unit.

Students Voiding either semester of RE in Year 11 WILL be required to complete a minimum of one additional unit of RE in Year 12. This is to fulfil every students’ commitment to complete a Minor in Religious Education.

c. Late Submissions of Assessment Tasks

Students are compelled to submit work on time, as this is a valuable organisational skill. Students are encouraged to complete work even if it is late as there are educational benefits in doing so. The purpose of the late penalty is to ensure equity for all students. Failure to submit assessment tasks will affect the student’s result for the Unit.

Except in exceptional circumstances, students must apply in advance for an extension to the due date for completing an assessment task. The request must be made to the Head of Senior School 48 hours before the task is due, providing due cause and adequate documentary evidence. Extension requests sent after the 48 hour deadline will not be approved. Students on a Personalised Plan must request extensions in accordance with the 48 hour deadline to maintain fairness and equity to all students. Requests on the due day will not be considered. Technology problems are not considered reasonable grounds for an extension. Students need to ensure that they save their work appropriately to avoid losing their work electronically. It is recommended that students use OneDrive or Google Drive to assist in the storage of their work. Copies of the

extension form are available on the Senior Student Information Moodle page. The extension form needs to be completed by the student, signed by parents and sent to the Head of Senior School.

Submission of work via email is not permitted.

d. Late Penalties

Mark penalties for non-submission of work, including failure to present oral presentations on the scheduled day, will apply in Tertiary courses. A late penalty will apply unless an extension is granted. If an extension is not granted, the penalty for late submission is 5% of possible marks per calendar day late (including weekends and public holidays) to a maximum of 35% (or to the limit of the 'notional zero' – see below). Submission of work on a weekend or public holiday is not possible.

Accredited students will be penalised either with numerical penalties, to the maximum level possible through the criteria on the marking scheme or the grade awarded will reflect the work that would have been completed by the due date. The Principal has the right to exercise discretion in the application of the late penalty in special circumstances where satisfactory documentation is supplied.

It may not be possible to accept late work after marked work is returned to other students. If marked work is to be returned to students sooner than seven days after the submission date, students are to be informed on the assessment task when it is given out.

e. Notional Zeros

The 'notional zero' is defined as the mark that is between 10% of a standard deviation below the lowest score awarded and a score of zero for the assessment item. Students in Accredited units who fail to submit a task will be awarded an actual zero score.

Students and parents are reminded that taking holidays during a semester is not grounds for being awarded estimates for assessment tasks.

	Due Monday	Due Tuesday	Due Wednesday	Due Thursday	Due Friday
Received Monday	0 Penalty				
Received Tuesday	5% Penalty	0 Penalty			
Received Wednesday	10% Penalty	5% Penalty	0 Penalty		
Received Thursday	15% Penalty	10% Penalty	5% Penalty	0 Penalty	
Received Friday	20% Penalty	15% Penalty	10% Penalty	5% Penalty	0 Penalty
Saturday					
Sunday					
Received Monday	35% Penalty	30% Penalty	25% Penalty	20% Penalty	15% Penalty
Received Tuesday	Notional Zero	35% Penalty	30% Penalty	25% Penalty	20% Penalty
Received Wednesday	Notional Zero	Notional Zero	35% Penalty	30% Penalty	25% Penalty

Received Thursday	Notional Zero	Notional Zero	Notional Zero	35% Penalty	30% Penalty
Received Friday	Notional Zero	Notional Zero	Notional Zero	Notional Zero	35% Penalty

f. **Absence from an Assessment Task on the Day**

Students should only miss assessment tasks in the case of illness or exceptional circumstances. The teacher concerned, the relevant Studies Coordinator or the Head of Senior School must be contacted on the day of the absence by phone or email. On the first day of return to the College after the absence the student must present a parent's note or doctor's note to the teacher indicating an understanding that the absence took place when an assessment task was due. Students are required to complete the task on their first day of return or if this is not practicable, as soon as is possible. The teacher concerned and/or the Studies Coordinator will decide when is practicable.

The College understands that it is difficult on occasions to see a doctor to get a medical certificate, and that it can be expensive, so a parent's note will be accepted. However, a central record of absences from assessment tasks will be kept in order to monitor incidences.

4. **Breaches of Academic Discipline**

The College has the power to impose any one of the following penalties for a substantive breach of rules:

- reprimand of the student, except in cases where the student would have derived benefit from such breaches
- the making of alternative arrangements for the assessment (e.g. through a reassessment)
- cancellation of the result in the particular component of the college assessment concerned
- cancellation of the total college assessment result in the unit/course concerned
- cancellation of all the student's results for Years 11 and 12 in assessments conducted.

The College keeps a file of all significant breaches of discipline in relation to school-based assessments. Students and their parents will be informed in writing of any consequence of a breach of academic discipline.

In all cases in which a school assessment result, or a component thereof, has been cancelled by the College as a result of discipline procedures, the student has a right of appeal to the Board's Discipline Committee, provided that she, within fourteen days after the day on which the College principal's written decision was given to the candidate, gives written notice to the Director of the Board of her intention to appeal.

a. **Proven Dishonesty**

A 'notional zero' mark will be given in Tertiary units for the task/part of the task if a student is found to be cheating. This also applies to the student who allows another to cheat from her. Unless specifically stated in the assessment task students must not work together on a task. This is particularly important in tasks where groups may have collected the data together but where individual discussion of results is paramount to the task. An example of this might be for Biology practical assessment tasks.

Students in Accredited units found to have cheated will be given a zero score.

b. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious offence and it is your responsibility, as a student, to ensure that you do not commit this breach of discipline whether intentionally or otherwise. It is essential that you acknowledge the use of all sources and that direct quotations are explicitly footnoted. The BSSS guidelines are available through the board website:

http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_students/whats_plagiarism_how_to_avoid_it

Students have an obligation to read this information and seek advice should they require clarification.

Any suspected case of plagiarism will be investigated. Where plagiarism is suspected, students could be asked to substantiate or verify the authenticity or integrity of completed assignments. If there is evidence of plagiarism the student must be interviewed and given the opportunity to explain her case before a penalty is determined. If plagiarism is shown to have occurred, a committee of independent teachers will determine the penalty. The BSSS booklet also details the steps followed for repeat offences.

The full Merici Policy can be reviewed at: <https://www.merici.act.edu.au/node/410>

5. Review of Assessment & College Appeal Procedure

Students have rights of appeal at every stage of the College assessment process: against individual assessments, unit grades or course scores, but not against their ATAR. There are several levels to the Appeal Procedure outlined below.

The Merici Policy can be reviewed at <https://www.merici.act.edu.au/node/782>

a. Assessment Tasks Counting Towards a Unit Score

Any initial inquiry about an assessment item (marks, grades) should be directed to a class teacher. This takes the form of a clarification or explanation of a mark/grade or a remark if felt necessary. If you are not satisfied with the resolution, a query can then be made to the relevant Studies Coordinator, who may seek guidance of the Head of Senior School. This should be made within five working days following the return of the work. In Year 12, Term 4, the query should be made within two working days. There is a clear distinction between teacher - student review of assessment and the formal College appeal.

If you are still not satisfied consult with the Deputy Principal Learning who will facilitate a formal Appeal if necessary.

b. College Appeal

The appeal process begins officially with the lodging of a written appeal by the student to the Deputy Principal Learning, and is finalised by written advice from the College Appeal Committee to the student.

The written appeal should include:

- the student's name and ID
- the specific mark/s, score, grade, penalty being appealed, including the task, unit, course concerned
- the specific remedy being sought for each matter being appealed
- a statement setting out and supporting the matters of appeal

The student should be able to present further evidence to the College Appeal Committee

c. Lodgement Period

Except in Semester 2 of Year 12, appeals against assessment should be lodged within five working days of:

- the assessment outcome being available to the student i.e. task mark/grade being provided to the student
- student being advised in writing of the penalty for breach of discipline
- unit grades/scores being published by the school.

In Semester 2 of Year 12:

- appeals against an assessment task, unit grade/score, breach of discipline should be lodged within **two working days** of the results being published
- appeals against a course score should be lodged within **one working day** of the results being published.

Colleges must inform students of these final dates by the end of Term 1 of Year 12.

d. College Appeal Committee

The Principal is responsible for establishing a College Appeal Committee. This Committee consists of the Principal or Deputy Principal Learning, a member of the teaching staff and an experienced member of the teaching profession nominated by the Board from outside the college. One of the members of the committee must be a teacher experienced in the supervision of student assessment.

No member of the College Appeal Committee should have had any direct dealings with the matter of the appeal at an earlier stage.

The teacher will need to provide:

- Written evidence of steps taken to resolve the issue
- The assessment task with clean rubric or marking scheme
- A statement setting out matters related to the appeal from the markers perspective

i. Friends Accompanying Students

Students may be accompanied by a friend. Students making an appeal will be allowed either to present their own case or have their case presented by a friend. The friend may be another student, a parent or some other person.

ii. Right to Make a Statement

An important aspect of natural justice is the opportunity for both the student, and the teacher or head of department, to correct or contradict evidence submitted to the College Appeal Committee. Each has the right to make an uninterrupted statement to the College Appeal Committee, be subject to questioning from the Committee, but not subject to cross examination from each other. The teacher or head of department and the student, or her/his friend, may seek clarification of issues from each other through the College Appeal Committee Chair. However, the appellant should be given the opportunity to make the final statement.

The College has procedures that safeguard confidential information, but ensures both the student, and teacher or head of department have maximum access to all the evidence being considered by the College Appeal Committee.

iii. Sources of Information

The College Appeal Committee may seek advice or evidence from any source it considers relevant. Where appropriate, a college may seek an independent evaluation from teachers external to the college. This can be arranged through the Executive Officer of the BSSS. It is expected that both the student, and teacher or head of department, will have an opportunity to comment on the advice or evidence collected from the relevant source(s).

iv. Communication of College Appeal Committee Decision

The College Appeal Committee will make a decision and communicate the outcome and reasons for it in writing to the student with a copy to the principal.

v. Time Period to Finalise Appeal

Except in Semester 2 of Year 12, appeals will be finalised within fourteen working days of the lodgement of an appeal. Appeals at the college in Semester 2 of Year 12 should be completed by the day prior to the final date for appeals to the Board published annually in the BSSS General Schedule of Meetings and Events.

http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_teachers/general_schedule_of_meetings_and_events

vi. Outcomes of the Appeal

Students and others involved in an appeal should understand that there are three possible outcomes for an appeal against marks, grades or scores:

- a higher mark, grade or score
- no change
- a lower mark, grade or score.

Students and others involved in an appeal should understand that there are four possible outcomes for an appeal against a penalty imposed for a breach of discipline in relation to assessment:

- withdrawal of the penalty
- a reduction in the penalty
- no change
- an increased penalty.

vii. Effects on Other Students

The upholding of an appeal may result in the alteration of the appellant's unit or course score. A change in the scores of other students arising from the appeal will be made only if determined by the College Appeal Committee Chair.

It should be understood that when the outcome of an appeal causes changes to the results of other students, the principal is responsible for informing these students, and further appeals related only to these changes should be allowed. These appeals must be lodged with twenty-four hours of notification.

6. Procedures for Handing in Assessment Tasks

Regular Assessment

- All Assessment Tasks must contain the student's ID and teacher's name. Do not use your student name.
- All appropriately sized tasks are to be placed in the assignment box in the Book Room by 5pm on, or before, the due date.
- Attach the next available label number on the top left corner of your assignment and record that number on the assessment page in your planner. This will enable the College to assist with recording who has handed a task in and on which date.
- Attach a signed 'Cover Sheet and Authorship Statement'.
- The box will be cleared daily, the Assessment Task dated, the number on the task noted then given to the appropriate teacher.
- No Assessment Tasks are to be placed in the Staff Room or given directly to teachers. An exception to this is that oversized items must be handed to the class teacher.

Work Submitted on USB (Technology Based Subjects Only)

- The USB itself must be clearly labelled with the following information:
 - Student I.D.
 - Your teacher's name
 - Subject/Unit
- The USB must be accompanied by a sheet showing the following details:
 - File name
 - Any special instructions for accessing the file
- Include a Cover Sheet and Student Authorship
- Work on USB is to be placed in the assignment box. You should not give the assessment task to your teacher.
- Secure the above sheets and the USB, e.g., use an envelope.

Bulky Work

Tasks that are too bulky to fit in the assignment box must be submitted directly to the teacher. You still need to complete a Cover Sheet and Student Authorship.

It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of the task (e.g. photographs).

Turnitin

Teachers will expect, wherever practicable, that students will submit work through Turnitin. The electronic record of submission will be through this system both for the student and teacher and by submitting work you are acknowledging the work as original. Check the Task cover sheet for whether the work still needs to be submitted through the Assignment Box.

Declaration of Original Work

The BSSS requires students to verify that the work they are handing to meet the requirements of the courses they are studying is, firstly, their own work and secondly, that any other person's work, words or ideas have been correctly cited and referenced.

You also need to acknowledge any help you have had from another person.

Presentation of Work

Assessment tasks submitted by students must adhere to the assessment criteria established for each task. The Cover Sheet and Declaration of Original Work can be found outside the Records Office.

Work Submitted on Paper

- All sheets must be stapled/pinned together. You do not have to use a plastic sleeve.
- The assessment task must contain a Title Page.
- A signed copy of Cover Sheet and Student Authorship must be attached to the task.
- Number each page.
- Typing or word processing is encouraged.
- Black or blue pen is to be used if you are handwriting.
- Work submitted in pencil cannot be remarked if queried after it is returned.
- It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of the task, e.g. original Word, PowerPoint, Excel document, photocopy or digital photograph (particularly for art works, long handwritten documents e.g. Maths assignment).

7. Patterns of Study

Detailed Course information is available through the Senior Handbook issued earlier, which is also available electronically on the Merici website.

a. Students Studying an Accredited Package

You are required to have 17 points to earn a Year 12 Senior Secondary Certificate. Considering the structure of Merici Senior study program, this is easily achievable. While it may be the minimum requirement for a Senior Secondary Certificate, it is a much reduced way of looking at your senior studies. Instead, students are encouraged to think about what their Senior Secondary Certificate is going to be used for. If it is to go into the workforce, students are advantaged by having a full and varied program of study reflected on their certificate. If you are hoping to go to CIT following Year 12, it would be highly desirable to finish Year 12 with at least one Certificate II and possibly a statement of attainment. Any study you do under the vocational framework is recognised by the CIT and means you will have a head-start in completing your post-school study. Talk to the Careers advisor, Mrs McDonnell, about this if you require more information.

8. Moderation

Moderation is the means whereby standards of achievement are cross-referenced with other groups or classes. There are three types of moderation used in the ACT senior college system: moderation within the College, small group moderation and inter-college moderation.

Moderation within Merici College

Where there is more than one class in the same unit (e.g. two classes of Biology):

In this case all classes use the same assessment tasks and assessment is moderated. The teachers of the unit either mark a section of the piece of assessment across all classes or each teacher corrects his/her own class work using the assessment criteria contained in the Course Framework. In the latter case, selected pieces of work are then compared across classes to ensure fairness in assessment for all students studying the unit.

Where different units are studied in the same subject area and are part of the same moderation group (eg classes in History studying different themes):

In this case, teachers consult to ensure identical weightings of assessment task types, and that tasks are of similar academic and time demand. Teachers correct their own class work and selected pieces of work are then compared across classes as described above.

b. Meshing within Merici College

Where two or more subject areas are combined for scaling purposes into the same moderation group (e.g. Geography/Business Studies/Legal Studies, Art/Photography/Media, Dance/Drama/Music, Chemistry/Physics), results from subjects are meshed into one group in the following ways:

- Results from common AST testing done in Term 4 of Year 10 and Term 1 Year 11 of all T students are used as a guide for determining appropriate parameters for each subject
- Results of students in Year 11 in core subjects (English, Mathematics and Religious Education) may be used as a guide in the same way
- Historic parameters are used to inform judgements
- Where possible similar assessment tasks are incorporated into all subject areas
- Selected pieces of work are compared by teachers across subjects
- Teacher judgement using the Grade Descriptors of the relevant Course Framework is used.

The detailed processes used for each meshing group are detailed on the course Unit Outline.

c. Small Groups and the Process for Moderation

For those T courses/moderation groups with less than eleven students, the Board of Senior Secondary Studies appoints an expert teacher in the subject who is in charge of the moderation process. This teacher examines student work and compares this with work from students in other colleges across the ACT. Merici students are then ranked within the larger ACT group. The College does not scale scores on Semester reports for these subjects internally. For these reasons, Small Group scores are unreliable for calculating an estimate of an ATAR. The cohorts 2017/2018 & 2018/2019 do not have any small groups.

d. Inter-College Moderation

This takes place twice yearly on Moderation Days where teachers from different colleges compare standards of student work. These days help to establish consistent standards among all ACT colleges so that unit grades are comparable for the award of the Year 12 Certificate.

Moderation Day 1 looks at work done by the Year 11 students from Semester 2, of the previous year.

Moderation Day 2 looks at work done by the Year 12 students from Semester 1.

The AST is the external moderator for T courses within colleges and across colleges.

9. Study Help

The first port of call for every student, however, is their classroom teacher. As a senior student you are expected to seek assistance as required and teachers are expected to provide you with necessary help.

Students are encouraged to form study groups based around common subjects.

The Head of Senior School will meet with students at any time to assist them with their program of study. They can help in times of difficulty but also can support students to optimise their study habits when things are going well.

You are also encouraged to use the online study skills handbook available to all students at Merici. To access the handbook, go to:

www.studyskillshandbook.com.au

and login as a subscriber with these details:

username: mericcollege

password: 24achieve

10. Board of Senior Secondary Studies Information

The Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS) oversees all college courses in the ACT. Their website is <http://www.bsss.act.edu.au>

The following information guides are available from the BSSS.

http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_students

ACT Qualifications (i.e. what certificates could you obtain?)

http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_students/act_qualifications

Scaling and the ATAR

http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_students/scaling_and_the_atar

ACT Scaling Test (i.e. What is the AST?)

http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_students/act_scaling_test

Your Rights to Appeal

http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_students/your_rights_to_appeal

Equitable Assessment & Special Consideration in Assessment in Years 11&12

http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_students/equitable_assessment_and_special_consideration_in_assessment_in_years_11_and_12_student_guide

11. Key Dates for 2020

<i>Key Event</i>	Semester 1	Semester 2 *	
	Years 11 &12	Year 11	Year 12
AST practice exam	Exam week	Exam week	N/A
Publication of exam results	24 June	20 November	20 November
Exam return lessons	25-26 June	23 November	23 November
Appeals on exams close	30 June	26 November	24 November
Unit score check	1 July	30 November	30 November
Appeals on Unit Scores close	8 July	4 December	2 December
Appeals on Course Scores close	N/A	N/A	4 December

* Any amendments to Semester 2 dates will be made by the end of Week 2, Term 3.