Assessment Rules and Procedures

GENERAL

Each student will receive an Assessment Calendar for each subject at the beginning of each Term. These dates will also be scheduled in the online student portal, Edmodo, and will thus be available to Parents/Guardians.

1. Each student will receive a formal NOTICE OF ASSESSMENT, in writing electronically, TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE DATE OF THE ASSESSMENT. This will include:
   - The nature of the task
   - The weighting of the task
   - The outcomes to be assessed
   - The marking criteria

2. The Notice of Assessment will be emailed to each individual student as well as being available on the class’ file retrieval software, Dropbox.

3. To accustom students to the rigorous standards of responsibility and behaviour expected in the senior years, the following rules will apply:
   a) Students must be aware of the dates of Assessments, and make sure they do not conflict with other obligations. The School is always careful to ensure Excursions, Sporting Fixtures and Competitions are scheduled to avoid such conflict.
   b) If there is a serious reason for a student’s absence from an Assessment, the class teacher must be informed IN WRITING, and leave applied for, within a week of receipt of the notice of assessment. If such leave is approved, an alternative time/task or estimate will be arranged after consultation between class teacher and Head of Department.
   c) Failure to comply with this requirement (e.g. an excuse note the next day indicating that the student was absent to attend a family wedding, and forgot about the Assessment) may result in the award of a 0 score.
   d) Students are expected to be on time for all scheduled tests and examination. Lateness (except in exceptional circumstances, accompanied by a note or telephone call from a parent) will not be compensated for at the end of the Assessment.
   e) Students MUST come prepared with their own pens, pencils, other stationery, and mathematical or scientific equipment.
   f) In the case of International Students, an electronic dictionary will be permitted of permission has been sought BEFORE THE TEST. This should be done through the Head of Department.
4. **CHEATING** is anathema to the ethos of PAL International School: we consider it morally reprehensible, and educationally self-defeating. Any suspicion of cheating (talking, notes brought into the classroom and so on) will be immediately investigated, and if substantiated, will result in the award of a 0 mark, the contacting of parents, a disciplinary mark, and a detention.

More than two proved instances of cheating in a student’s school career may result in his/her expulsion from the School.

**REQUIREMENTS OF STUDENTS**

5. **Students are required to complete all assessment tasks in every course.** All tasks must be attempted to the best of their ability so that they demonstrate maximum level of achievement. It is the responsibility of the student to demonstrate through application and achievement, that they have met the requirements of the course. If a student is absent for the task then the student must ring the school to notify of the absence prior to the task taking place and a Doctor’s certificate must be provided on the first day the student returns. Students who do not complete assessment tasks due to absence or who fail to submit tasks on the due date risk a late penalty of 10% of the total mark per school day. Tasks not submitted after 5 days receive zero. The student is to report to the head teacher of the course concerned with the reason for non-completion stated in writing from the parent/carer. If the reason is acceptable the student may be allowed to sit the task or a substitute task, or be granted an extension of time. If a zero mark is awarded the parents will be notified in writing stating any action required by the student. The task still needs to be completed in order to demonstrate achievement of outcomes.

6. **Students are required to submit their own work and not the work of other students.** Dishonesty will result in zero marks. Students should also make themselves aware of the meaning of plagiarism. This too may result in a student receiving zero marks. Cases of cheating during examinations will also result in zero marks. Parents will be notified in writing of any zero mark awarded for dishonesty.

7. **Students will be informed of their results for each assessment task.** Students must ensure that any questions that they have about the marks awarded or comments made for an individual piece of work are resolved at the time the work is handed back. Full school reports will be completed twice a year. These reports will indicate a class/course mark, a class/course average as well as an indication of progress against course outcomes and learning skills.

8. **Students who transfer to PAL International School after the assessment program has begun and before the final date of Board of Studies entry will have their final grade prepared based on the assessment tasks completed since their arrival.** If insufficient assessment results are available the student’s previous school may be contacted for information regarding the student’s performance relative to the Course Performance Descriptors.
9. Students who are accelerants will follow the same course and assessment procedures for the purpose of awarding the Record of Student Achievement.

10. **Assessment Policy Booklet**: When Stage 5 students receive their Assessment Policy Booklet, they will sign to indicate they have received it. This will be the responsibility of the Deputy Headmaster.

**REQUIREMENTS OF THE SCHOOL**

11. **The School Assessment program conforms to Board of Studies requirements**

   a. The Deputy Headmaster is responsible for the school assessment program conforming to Board of Studies requirements.
   b. The Deputy Headmaster ensures that the assessment program for each course in each subject is written and implemented according to mandatory Board of Studies requirements.
   c. The Heads of Department is responsible for the daily management of the Assessment programs.
   d. Heads of Department are responsible for the writing of an assessment program for each course in each subject according to the mandatory components and weightings determined by the Board of Studies.
   e. Heads of Department monitor the conduct of the assessment program for each course to ensure that Board of Studies and School requirements are fulfilled.

12. **Students are given written information about RoSA**

   a. A web link to the *ACE Manual* is available to students and teachers on the file retrieval software Dropbox.
   b. Each Head of Department has a copy of the relevant Board syllabus and supporting curriculum documentation.
   c. The Deputy Headmaster oversees the production and distribution of the School Assessment Handbook(s).
   d. The School Assessment Handbook(s) contains information about the Board of Studies grading system.

13. **Procedures are in place for failure to submit a task on the set date**

   a. The class teacher informs the Head of Department if a student fails to submit a task by the due date. There are penalties for late work that has no extenuating circumstances.
   b. Penalties will apply if the work is late. However, the task must be handed in to fulfil course requirements.
   c. The Head of Department sends a letter to the parents of a student who has received a zero grade. The letter must identify the task, mention the date due and the criteria assessed, give the reason(s) for the zero award and request their written acknowledgment of receipt of the letter.
   d. A copy of the letter is placed in the student’s file.
e. All assessments and assignments are to be handed in strictly according to the Assessment’s instructions.

f. Problems with the use and/or functioning of a home or school computer; incompatibility of home and school programs and hardware, unavailability of a home or school computer or printer; blackouts, lightning strikes or other organisational, natural or technological mishaps are not acceptable excuses for failure to hand in a task.

g. In order to safeguard work, particularly long assignments, students are advised to:
   - save work as they go
   - make hard copies of work in progress
   - print the final copy the day before it is due
   - regularly back up work completed.

h. In exceptional circumstances where, despite due care by the student, unforeseen technological problems occur that may prohibit the handing in or work on the due date, the School may allow an estimate to be given for the appropriate portion of the task effected. This may only occur in instances where the class teacher can verify that he/she has seen the work in progress and/or complete.

14. Arrangements are made for students who suffer from sickness or misadventure on the date that a task is to be done or handed in or during an examination period

a. If a student suffers sickness or misadventure on the day that a task/examination is to be done or task handed in, the student or his/her parent/carer must phone the School and leave a message with the class teacher.

b. The student must provide written evidence of sickness or misadventure. This letter must be presented to the class teacher immediately upon the student’s return to school. A medical certificate must be given to the class teacher in the case of illness. This must be submitted on the day of the student’s return to school. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate contact with the class teacher. If the class teacher is unavailable, the student must submit documentation to the Head of Department.

c. A student who feels unwell or experiences misadventure on the day of a task and who chooses to do the task accepts that no consideration can be given in the marking.

d. A student who becomes ill during a task must notify the supervisor immediately.

e. Subsequently, the student must provide a medical certificate in order for an alternative task/date to be approved.

f. Any irregularities will be referred to the Head of Department.

g. A student must make arrangement for a hand-in task to be submitted on the due date if she is absent on that day.

h. A medical certificate written by a member of the student’s immediate family will not be accepted.

i. A medical certificate must specify student’s name, dates, duration and nature of the illness.
15. In the case of sickness or misadventure a student may be given a substitute task and/or date

a. The student must contact the class teacher on the day of returning to school in order to make arrangements for an alternative task/date.

b. If the class teacher is unavailable the student must contact the Head of Department as appropriate or the Deputy Headmaster.

c. The Head of Department gives approval for a student being given an alternative task/date and informs the class teacher and Deputy Headmaster.

d. Before granting approval for a student being given an alternative task/date the Head of Department refers any anomaly to the Deputy Headmaster.

 e. The Deputy Headmaster may investigate further the reasons given for a student seeking an alternative task/date.

f. After investigation, the Deputy Headmaster may refuse permission for an alternative task/date to be given.

g. The Head of Department negotiates with the class teacher and the Deputy Headmaster the timing of an alternate task and informs the student of the new date and time in writing.

h. An alternative task while having differences, must be of the same form, duration, scope, and level of difficulty as the original task.

i. If it is not practicable (e.g. because of prolonged student absence) for an alternative task/date to be set, the Deputy Headmaster may recommend that an estimate be given.

j. No compensation will be made for factors such as loss of preparation time, extended illness, long-term domestic problems or holiday trips which may affect a student’s preparation for or performance on an assessment task.

k. Students who miss an assessment task due to holidays taken in term time cannot assume an alternative task will be given. This is at the Head of Department’s discretion.

l. There will be no compensation for matters which could have been avoided by the student, for example, misreading an examination timetable.

m. An alternative task is of equal weighting to the original task.

n. The timing of an alternative task is determined by the Head of Department after discussion with the Deputy Headmaster, the teacher and the student. The two week advanced notification does not apply.

16. In exceptional circumstances a student may be given an estimate of achievement

a. If it is not practicable (e.g. because of prolonged student absence) for an alternative task/date to be set, the Head of Department may recommend that an estimate be given.

b. An estimate is determined by the teacher in consultation with the Head of Department.

c. The student must have made a genuine attempt at tasks in the course that are worth at least 51% of the total assessment marks before a decision can be made about the granting of an estimate.

d. An estimate is not based on the student’s potential, ability or aptitude.
e. An estimate is based on assessment tasks that are as similar as possible to the task that was missed.

f. Where appropriate (e.g. in the case of there being no or few similar tasks) achievement levels in other assessment tasks in the course may be used to moderate the estimate.

g. An estimate takes into account the student’s performance in formative tasks and students who have achieved at similar levels for the tasks that are used as the basis of the estimate or to moderate the estimate.

h. An estimate takes into account the performance of all students in the cohort for all tasks that are used as the basis of the estimate or to moderate the estimate.

i. The student will be given feedback about the process on which the estimate is based.

17. Students who suffer from a disability or injury may request disability provisions in assessment tasks and examinations

See Special Provisions Policy.

18. All tasks must be the student’s own work

a. Where long term tasks or projects are carried out beyond the classroom students must give evidence of the progress of their work.

b. The assessment program for the course specifies details of the type of evidence required and the deadline(s) for the submitting of evidence.

c. Students must acknowledge the source of any information or material they present as part of an assessment task both in the bibliography and in the body of the task.

d. Where a Turnitin report is mandated as part of the assessment, the report must be submitted with the student’s overall assessment.

e. A student who copies, plagiarises or in any way misrepresents the origin of her task will receive zero for all or the pertinent part of the task.

Plagiarism is taking another’s thoughts, writings etc. and presenting them as the student’s own, thereby gaining an unfair advantage. Plagiarism includes any unacknowledged use of sources: books, journals, etc., text and graphics copied from the Internet and other digital sources e.g. CD-Roms. It also includes the use of work done by a tutor, a parent, or another student.

Panel: When necessary, a panel including the Deputy Headmaster, the Head of Department of the subject area involved, and the class teacher, will convene to consider instances of plagiarism and improper conduct. Decisions will be based on all evidence including the student’s demonstrated standard of work and on the professional judgement of the members of the panel.

19. Procedures are in place for dealing with improper conduct

a. A non-serious attempt at a task could lead to a zero criteria achievement level being recorded for that task.

b. If a student’s conduct is not satisfactory or in the teacher’s opinion there is an
apparent irregularity in the completion of the task a zero criteria achievement level could be recorded for that task or an alternative task/date could be set at the Deputy Headmaster’s discretion.

c. A student who cheats will receive zero for the criteria assessed by that particular task.

d. Any of the above could render the student ineligible for a Grade in that subject. In some instances this may render the student ineligible for the award of the RoSA.

e. Teachers are to report cases of suspected improper conduct to the Head of Department.

f. Each case of suspected improper conduct is considered individually by the Deputy Headmaster, the relevant Head of Department and teacher(s). A recommendation to record a zero achievement level or to change in any way the results of an assessment task is made to the Deputy Headmaster.

20. Tasks are set and administered in a way that is fair for all students

a. When more than one class does the same course there are common tasks and conditions.

b. When the same task is administered to different classes administrative arrangements are made to ensure the security of the task.

c. Where students do different strands/topics/options of the same course, tasks of similar difficulty are set so that all achievement levels can be placed on a common scale.

d. Tasks are designed in such a way that they discriminate between the achievement of individual students.

e. The assessment strategies used are appropriate to the component of the course being assessed, e.g. science practical skills, language speaking skills, research skills.

f. Tasks are set at an appropriate level of difficulty that allows the full range of achievement levels to be used.

21. Marking procedures ensure fairness to all students

a. In the case of large candidature tasks, all teachers involved in the marking agree to a common standard and application of criteria achievement levels.

b. In the case of large candidature tasks, in order to maintain consistency either collaborative marking is practised or one teacher marks the whole of one section or marking is done according to agreed written criteria.

c. In ascertaining Board of Studies Grades, levels must not be awarded for syllabus objectives in the affective domain (values and attitudes).

d. Moderation of achievement levels may be used at the discretion of the Head of Department.

e. Students will be informed in writing if moderation is used.

22. Students receive meaningful feedback on their performance

a. Feedback on tasks is meaningful and provides students with an indication of their performance and their general progress.

b. There will be two semester reports recording:
• Course descriptions
• BOS Course Outcomes
• Approaches to learning
• An overall BOS subject grade and graph of grade distribution

The focus of these reports will be on the student’s academic achievements and progress.

c. It is the responsibility of each Head of Department, in consultation with that department’s class teachers, to determine the process for allocating RoSA grades.

23. Procedures are in place to deal with invalid or unreliable tasks, tasks that fail to discriminate between students and problems with the administration of task

a. Cases where results of a task are considered to be invalid, unreliable or insufficiently discriminatory, or where there are problems with the administration of a task are to be referred to the Deputy Headmaster.

b. The Deputy Headmaster may convene a panel to investigate the problem and to propose a solution. The Panel would normally include the Headmaster, Deputy Headmaster, the Head of Department, and the teacher(s) involved.

c. In exceptional circumstances the Panel may recommend:
  ‣ the setting of additional task
  ‣ the setting of an alternative task
  ‣ the modification of the results of a task
  ‣ the discarding of a task or part of a task.
  ‣ In the event of a task being discarded an alternative task will be set.
  ‣ In the event of an additional or alternative task being set, the Panel will decide on a reasonable period of notification. The two week stipulation does not apply.

d. Students are informed in writing of any amendments/modifications to the original task or its results.

24. Students have the right to request a school review of achievement levels awarded and the administration of an assessment task

a. Students who wish to query the achievement levels awarded for an assessment task must ask the teacher at the time the task is returned.

b. Students must address concerns about the administration of an assessment task to the teacher no later than one week after the task has been completed in class or handed in.

c. After speaking to the teacher about achievement levels or the administration of a task, a student may address her concerns to the Head of Department.

d. The Head of Department reports the student’s concerns to the Deputy Headmaster.

e. The Deputy Headmaster may convene a panel to deal with a student’s appeal.

f. An appeal panel would normally include the teacher(s) of the relevant course, the Head of Department, the class teacher, and the Deputy Headmaster.

g. The Appeal Panel recommends a course of action regarding the student’s appeal to the Headmaster.

h. Each appeal will be considered individually.
i. The outcome of the review will be communicated to the student in writing.

25. **Students have the right to appeal to the Board of Studies against Grades, ‘N’ determinations or the Headmaster’s determinations of unsatisfactory completion(s) of course(s)**

   a. The Deputy Headmaster informs students, by means of the Year 10 Assessment Handbook, that an appeal to the Board may be made against grades.
   b. There can be no appeal to the Board of Studies against a teacher’s judgement of a student’s performance in a particular task.
   c. A student who wishes to appeal to the Board must submit a written appeal, together with evidence, to the Principal.
   d. The Deputy Headmaster organises for the student to provide the appropriate documentation and forwards the documentation to the Board.

26. **Procedures ensure the secure and confidential recording of achievement levels**

   a. Recording of assessment performance will be kept in at least two different places. One of these may be the class teacher’s record.
   b. One place of achievement level storage must be electronic, in the School’s Student Management System, which is available to the Head of Department, the Deputy Headmaster at all times.
   c. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure that the marks are stored in such a way that they are protected from fire, theft etc. and use by unauthorised persons.

27. **Students may accelerate and/or accumulate courses for their RoSA**

   a. Students and their parents must request to accelerate or accumulate a course or courses in writing.
   b. The Deputy Headmaster in consultation with the relevant Head of Department, grants approval for a student to accelerate or accumulate a course/courses and informs the Headmaster that such approval has been granted.
   c. An accelerant must complete all assessment tasks or the equivalent that are undertaken by students completing the usual assessment program.
   d. The Head of Department, in consultation with the Deputy Headmaster approves changes in order and timing of assessment tasks for an accelerant.
   e. An accumulant may not submit a major work or project that was marked for that course in a previous year.
   f. Students accelerating will complete the RoSA in the year in which they complete the Board of Studies requirements.

28. **Procedures are in place to warn students who are in danger of being given an ‘N’ determination**

   a. Whilst the Board of Studies does not mandate attendance requirements, there is a guideline that if a student’s attendance falls below 85% of a school’s programmed lesson time for a course, the Headmaster may determine that, as a result of
absence, the course completion criteria may not have been met.
b. Students must make a genuine attempt at assessment tasks that contribute in excess of 50% of the total assessment schedule.
c. Students must make a genuine attempt to complete course requirements, both in set tasks and assessments.
d. The Head of Department ensures that teachers are informed of the requirements for a course and for assessment.
e. A teacher must notify the Head of Department if a student appears not to be fulfilling the requirements for the course and for the assessment program.
f. Notification of possible failure to fulfill course requirements must be made as soon as it is observed and in time for the student to rectify the situation.
g. The Head of Department, in consultation with the Deputy Headmaster, notifies the parents in writing of possible failure to fulfil course requirements.
h. Normally the Head of Department will use the sample warning letter provided in the ACE Manual to notify parents of possible failure to fulfil course requirements.
i. The letter will:
   • advise the student of the issue giving adequate time for the problem to be corrected;
   • specifying details of action including a timeframe required by the student;
   • alert the student to the possible consequences of an ‘N’ determination, and
   • request from the student and his/her parent a written acknowledgement of the warning;
j. If the student is still at risk and is failing to address the issue detailed in the initial letter, a second follow-up warning letter will be issued.
k. On the first warning letter, a student may be interviewed by the classroom teacher. On the second warning letter, the student and their parents may be required to attend an interview with the head teacher (this may involve phone contact).
   An N determination in a course may place the award of the Record of Student Achievement or the Higher School Certificate in jeopardy and the individual course will not appear on the students’ Record of Achievement.
l. The Head of Department ensures that copies of all correspondence relating to possible failure to fulfil course requirements are submitted to the filing clerk for placing in the student’s file.

29. **Procedures are in place for students transferring into the School**

   a. It is at the Headmaster’s discretion that transferring students are deemed to have met all mandatory requirements for the award of the RoSA.
   b. The School accepts responsibility for confirming the program of study undertaken by the student at the former school and for collecting from the former school grades for any Stage 5 courses completed at that school.

30. **The Principal has the discretion to make rulings in special cases when exceptional circumstances make the procedures of the School Assessment Policy inappropriate**