



Temasek Secondary School Assessment Policy

1. Assessment Philosophy

1.1 Assessment is the process of gathering and analysing evidence about student learning to enhance teaching and learning, and to inform educational decision-making.

1.2 TMS seeks to implement a learner-centred and balanced assessment system that supports quality teaching and learning. The school aims for sound assessment design and delivery, a good balance between formative and summative forms of assessment¹, a safe, motivating and empowering assessment culture, and the engagement of learners in the assessment process so that we can work towards the long-term goal of reflective and self-directed learning.

1.3 Assessments such as tests and examinations also help students to ascertain their **progress and understanding** of what has been taught for each subject. In order for assessment to be a true reflection of a student's academic learning, a student should not discuss test questions with his/ her peers. A student should understand the **value of upholding the integrity of a paper**, not allowing others and himself/ herself to be unfairly advantaged or disadvantaged.

2. Weighted and Non-weighted Assessments

2.1 Both Weighted Assessments (WAs) and non-Weighted Assessments (non-WAs) are conducted to check for understanding and to use the information to support students in achieving the intended learning outcomes. Teachers conduct these assessments to find out what students have learnt, provide them with feedback on their learning gaps and mastery of concepts, and improve teaching and learning. Information from these assessments also serves to provide a gauge of students' academic competencies and readiness for the next level of education.

2.2 The difference is that only the scores from WAs count towards a student's overall result in a subject for the semester or the year, and will be officially reflected in the progress reports and/or holistic development profiles.

The Assessment Weighting for WAs for all courses and levels is as follows:

Secondary One and Three

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Total
WA1	WA2	WA3	SA2 (FTE)	
15%	15%	15%	55%	100%

Secondary Two

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Total
WA1	SA1 (MYE)	WA3	SA2 (FTE)	
15%	25%	15%	45%	100%

In Lower Secondary levels, the coursework-based subjects of Food & Nutrition and Design & Technology are conducted over one semester. The Assessment Weightings are as follows:

Subject (conducted over one semester)	WA	SA	Total
Food & Nutrition	30%	70%	100%
Design & Technology	30%	70%	100%

¹ **Formative Assessment** is usually carried out during the instructional process to provide feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning in order to improve the students' achievement of intended instructional outcomes. It may involve informal methods such as observation and oral questioning, or the formative use of more formal measures such as examinations, tests, traditional quizzes, portfolios, or performance assessments. **Summative Assessment** is usually carried out at the end of an instructional unit or course of study for the purpose of giving information on students' mastery of content, knowledge and skills, assigning grades or certifying student proficiency. It is designed primarily to serve the purpose of accountability, ranking, or certifying competence or achievement at a particular point. It is also possible to use summative assessment in a formative way, as explained above.

Secondary Four and Five

Mid-Year Examination	Preliminary Examination
100%	100%

Please also note that the overall result for Secondary Four and Five will reflect only the Preliminary Examination results/grades.

2.3 To ensure validity of the assessment, the planning of the scope and period of WAs take into account the pace of teaching and learning so that students will have sufficient time to internalise the new knowledge learnt prior to assessment.

2.4 The outcomes of WAs and non-WAs are used in a formative way by teachers to analyse, unpack, and inform students of their strengths and areas for improvement. In this way, students are better able to address their learning gaps. Such assessment practices are **developmental in nature** and **focus on learning for mastery**, instead of grades. Similarly, purposeful reflection of the performance of each assessment is also encouraged to ensure students gain a better understanding of where they are and how they can improve.

2.5 The table below shows examples of WA and non-WA.

Examples of WA	Examples of non-WA
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Class Tests e.g. time-controlled written tests at the end of a unit of teaching- Graded Assignments- Semestral Assessments: Mid-Year Examinations (MYE) or Final Term Examinations (FTE) or Preliminary Examinations- Projects <p>Note: There is an exception for coursework which includes assessment of theory in the form of written test as well as project components.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Short pieces of practice questions/daily work- In-class or online quizzes

2.6 Dates of Class Tests and Test Topics will be made available to parents and students via the WA Overview and the Class Test Schedule documents. Both documents will be put up on class Google Classroom for students' reference. Parents can also access these documents via links provided in Parents Gateway.

3. Conduct and Behaviour

3.1 Punctuality

The school takes a serious view on students' punctuality and attendance for all school assessments. Any student who is late will not be granted any time extension. Time extension will only be considered when there is a disruption in bus or train services or other valid reasons as stipulated by the school.

3.2 Attire and Appearance

Students are to be properly attired in prescribed school uniform for any assessment. This includes wearing predominantly white-based canvas shoes or track shoes with white laces (some blue or black components are accepted) and TMS/plain white socks (that cover the ankles). Students' hairstyle and length should be in accordance to the school rules as well.

3.3 **Malpractice and Dishonesty**

Malpractice refers to actions of students, either premeditated, or otherwise, which goes against the assessment rules and regulations and which affords students an advantage during any WA, or enables them to sabotage other students' performance. Examples of malpractice include:

- attempts to obtain or provide unfair assistance (e.g. intention to cheat, copying from other students or allowing answers to be copied);
- possession of books, notes or any other unauthorised materials;
- possession of electronic and communication devices capable of storing and transmitting information (e.g. smart phones/watches, unauthorised electronic dictionaries); and
- submission of another person's work as one's own (plagiarism).

3.4 **Misbehaviour**

Misbehaviour refers to students who are rude and verbally abusive during tests/examinations and those who do not maintain silence upon entering the test/examination venue.

3.5 **Consequences**

The following are the actions that can be taken by the Discipline Committee for malpractice, dishonesty and misbehaviour during the assessment (depending on the nature and severity of the offence):

The student may

- not be awarded any marks for the page/paper;
- have his/her offence recorded in the school cockpit;
- serve internal suspension;
- be prohibited from sitting for the paper, expelled from the venue, and/or refused entry for subsequent papers especially during examinations.

Parents will be informed of the malpractice and outcome. The student's conduct grade will be lowered.

4.0 Procedures for Absence from Class Tests

4.1 The table below details possible reasons for absence and the course of action for each circumstance:

Possible Reasons for Absence	Need for Approval from Principal for Absence from School	Student returns within 5 days from test date (e.g. Absent on Mon, Return latest by following Mon)	Student returns to school after 5 days from test date (e.g. Absent on Mon, Return only on following Tues)
Health reasons, absence is covered by Medical Certificate (MC)*	Not needed. MC should be submitted to FT within two school days upon return.	Student will sit for the test and the marks will be counted for WA as the test papers have yet to be returned to other students.	Student will sit for the test as a practice and a 'VR' (Absent with Valid Reason) will be indicated on the Progress Report for the particular test component.
Representing school/nation in external competitions	Not needed. Notification will be received from Teacher IC or relevant agencies.		
Demise of <u>immediate</u> family member	Not needed. Death certificate of deceased should be submitted to FT upon return.		
COVID-19 related reasons (e.g. Isolation order, SHN, MOH Health Protocols 1 or 2)	Not needed.		
Visiting family based overseas for weddings/ festive occasions/ religious ceremonies/ graduation	Needed. (See Clauses 4.8 & 4.9)	Absence from school for such reasons are strongly discouraged and are only approved in exceptional cases. If approval is not given and student is absent for the test, the student will sit for test as a practice and a zero mark will be given.	
Attending an external examination which is not administered by MOE			
Health reasons, absence covered by parent's letter	NA**	Student will sit for the test as a practice and a zero mark will be given.	

* Students who are unwell and have a **medical certificate to validate their absence (certifying that they are unfit for test/exam)** should not attend school to sit for their WA. They are expected to rest as recommended by the doctor and only return to school when the period of their medical certificate has ended.

**Parent's letters are not accepted. Only medical certificates from doctors registered with the Singapore Medical Council will be accepted as a valid reason for the missing of WA.

4.2 Upon returning to school, it is the student's responsibility to contact his/her respective teacher for the test(s) or project deadlines missed. Should the subject teacher be absent, the student should contact the HOD.

TMS Assessment Policy (updated as of Jan 2022)

Note that the above policy guidelines are in line with guidelines set by the Singapore Examination and Assessment Board (SEAB) and help to prepare our students for what is expected of them at the national examinations.

4.3 Students will be required to sit for the test within **five school days from the day the test was administered**. In the event there are multiple tests requiring make-up, students should alert their subject teachers involved. Priority should go to tests that were administered earlier. There should be no more than three make-up tests a day.

4.4 **In the event that a student is not able to complete the make-up tests within the stipulated 5 days**, VR will be indicated in the Progress Report for tests that are missed. This is only valid for students who have proactively approached their subject teachers to arrange for make-up tests.

4.5 Students should prioritise to sit for the tests before attending CCAs, remedials/consultations, detentions and pre-arranged programme. Students must notify their respective teacher-in-charge should they be turning up late for the above-mentioned.

4.6 Students who fail to approach their subject teachers within the five-day period will be awarded **zero marks** for that WA component. However, students are still expected to attempt the WA in their own time as practice.

4.7 Should the student be away on prolonged medical leave for five days or more, he/she should notify the Form Teacher of the duration. The student will be exempted from the test. It will be indicated in the Progress Report as VR (Absent with Valid Reason) for the particular test component. However, the student will sit for the missed papers as practice. No marks will be awarded for that test component.

4.8 In the event that a student is taken out of school without a medical reason, parents must write a letter addressed to the Principal at least two weeks in advance and the student needs to pass it to his/her Form Teacher. The letter should clearly state the duration and reasons for the child's absence.

4.9 The Principal will attend to each letter on a case-by-case basis and in consultation with the Form Teacher. **Approval is not a given**. The Form Teacher will then update the student if approval is given. Zero marks will be given to those who have not obtained the Principal's approval for their absence.

Note:

- When a VR status is given for a missed test component, the marks will not be included in the total calculation of the overall WA marks.
- The overall WA performance is based on the remaining tests taken and marks will be pro-rated accordingly.
- Students' absence from tests may affect their eligibility and the school's consideration for awards.

5.0 Submission Procedure for Graded Assignments/Projects

5.1 Students who are on MC or absent with valid reason on a deadline for a Graded Assignment/Project will be required to **submit their completed assignment** (digital or hard copy as prescribed in the assignment instructions) **to the teacher on the day of return to school**. If it is hard copy submission, students should not submit their hard copy work in their teacher's pigeon holes.

5.2 Valid reasons for submission beyond assignment deadline are as follow:

- 1) health reasons (covered by a MC)
- 2) COVID-19 related reasons (e.g. Isolation order, SHN, MOH Health Protocols 1 or 2)
- 3) representing school/nation in external competitions; and
- 4) demise of immediate family members.

5.3 Late submission of Graded Assignment/Project will incur penalties as follow:

- 1) **5% of total marks** will be deducted for every school day that the submission is late.
- 2) For submissions that are more than 3 school days late with no valid reason, zero marks will be awarded.

6.0 Procedures for Absence from Semestral Assessment (SA)

6.1 All dates for examinations will be updated on the school's website at the start of each semester. Students should not plan to attend any external examinations that will clash with the school examination dates.

6.2 Absence from examinations can only be validated (awarded VR for the paper missed) under the following circumstances:

- 1) health reasons (covered by a MC which states that the student is "unfit for test/exam");
- 2) COVID-19 related reasons (e.g. Isolation order, SHN, MOH Health Protocols 1 or 2);
- 3) representing school/nation in external competitions; and
- 4) demise of immediate family members.

Students will be given zero marks for all other absences. Parent's letters will not be accepted.

7.0 Policy on Retests/Make-up Examinations

7.1 The school currently does not conduct retests/make-up examinations for students who have missed examination papers, for the following reasons:

- 1) As part of our ongoing efforts to de-emphasise high stakes examinations that can lead to more academic stress for our students. Retests would drag out the examination time period, and could cause more stress for students. Our focus is more on mastery and learning, and less on marks per se. Hence, students who missed their papers will be given the question paper subsequently, and still have a chance to do the paper and receive feedback from their teacher after they have completed it. This ensures that the students do not miss out on feedback that helps them to learn, even if their paper is not scored/counted for examination.
- 2) To minimise the risk of leakage of questions, retests/make up examinations require a new set of papers to be set for each subject being retested. Examination papers and mark schemes undergo a rigorous process of setting, group vetting and calibration to ensure validity, reliability and fairness. This process begins many weeks in advance, and requires much time and hard work by the teachers. It would not be optimal for teachers to spend so much time and energy on the setting of multiple sets of papers for each examination. As the syllabus or coverage/sequence of topics may vary from year to year, it is also not feasible for the school to simply make use of past year papers for retests.

8.0 Benchmarking Approach to Derive Marks for Missed Papers during Final Term Examination

8.1 For the Final Term Examination, the school uses an established benchmarking process to derive the marks for examination papers that a student might miss due to valid reasons. This is similar to SEAB's approach for the PSLE. In general, the Relative Rank Position (RRP) of a student among his cohort can be determined based on the combined weighted average of the assessment scores for that subject taken throughout the year (for example, WA1, WA2/SA1, WA3, part of SA2).

8.2 This RRP should not change much during the Final Term Examination, especially if the student has been fairly consistent in the amount of effort that he puts into his learning throughout the year. This consistency is also a desirable mindset that we would like to encourage in our students. Under this approach, after the papers are marked, the student's score will be derived by being benchmarked to a score that corresponds to his RRP in the cohort.

8.3 While this process of benchmarking is established and well-accepted, the school is cognisant that these are, after all, marks derived from benchmarking and not the child's actual performance at the examination. There will also be instances where benchmarking is not feasible (for example, if the cohort size for the subject is too small, or there is a skew in the profile of students who missed the paper). In

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these cases, the student will be awarded a VR for the paper missed. This means that the student's marks for the subject for the year will be based only on the assessments that he/she has sat for (e.g. WA1, WA2/SA1 and WA3 will be added together and rebased to 100%).