WOLLONGONG HIGH SCHOOL
of the Performing Arts

‘N’ Determination
Policy and Procedures
Rationale

Wollongong High School of the Performing Arts (WHSPA) expects each student to do their best in each assessment task and complete all courses undertaken. Satisfactory completion of a course requires evidence that the student has:

- followed the course developed or endorsed by the Board
- applied themselves with diligence and sustained effort to the tasks and experiences provided in the course; and
- achieved some or all of the course outcomes

Absences will be regarded seriously by the Principal who may determine that as a result of continual absence the course completion criteria may not have been met.

In general, successful completion of Record of School Achievement (ROSA) courses is a prerequisite for entry into the Preliminary Course. Similarly, completion of the Preliminary Course is a prerequisite for entry into the corresponding Higher School Certificate (HSC).

NSW Board of Studies Regulatory Framework

Staff at WHSPA undertake to increase understanding of both the ROSA and HSC requirements by

a) Regular year meetings
b) Student and caregivers being provided with information sessions-
   I. HSC information night session in October
   II. Regular parent/teacher meetings
   III. Year 10 into Year 11 information session in July
   IV. Year 10 information session in February
c) Provision of information booklets containing the scheduling, weightings and dates of all assessment tasks.
d) Publishing of assessment schedules and tasks on the school website

A. Purpose and effectiveness of ‘N’ Warning Letters

A.1 Board of Studies (BOS) ‘N’ Warning Letters are not a punitive instrument. The issuing of such should not be a feature of a faculty discipline policy or practice. The school policy developed in this regard is supportive and aimed at ensuring that students attain our school goal of academic achievement.

A.2 If the work requested for completion is completed, the warning letter is satisfied. According to the dictates of the BOS and in terms of natural justice, we must be seen to be providing students with the opportunity to fairly redeem the situation
A.3 ‘N’ Warning Letters are for work related matters only. They are not punitive instrument for a part of or a whole class. They are not a cure for classroom discipline or a deeper classroom learning concern. Reflection, by the teacher and the Head Teacher, before a group of letters is issued must consider, within the broad context of the quality teaching framework, the effectiveness of the learning experiences offered within the classroom.

A.4 In any ROSA, Preliminary or HSC assessment schedule there must be a manageable number of tasks assigned. Schedules will comprise 3-5 tasks with the exception of English which will have 5.

A.5 ‘N’ Warning Letters will only be issued in Year 9 in regard to mandatory components of a Year 9 course (eg the Student Research Project in Science)

A.6 Each ‘N’ Warning Letter must observe the following:

   a. List the precise task to be completed and attach a copy of the task to the letter.
   b. List the date the task was initially due and a new completion date. Allow a minimum of two weeks – the term ASAP is not to be used.
   c. Only significant pieces of work are to be listed for the student to complete. Precise tasks are to be listed or additional sheets attached.
   d. Work can insisted upon but cannot be attached to other demands. Discipline or attendance matters sit along side ‘N’-Determinations and must be dealt with separately. OASIS attendance data will form part of the school’s evidence to the BOS if deemed applicable by the Principal.
   e. The original letter, signed by the Head Teacher is to be countersigned by the Principal. A copy is to be placed in the student’s file.
   f. The signed parent tear-off slip is to be retrieved by the faculty issuing the letter.

A.7 There are legal restraints on using the prescribed BOS letter format. Any changes to the recommended format would jeopardise any positive court interpretation as to its validity. That being the case it is imperative that parents be contacted and that the implications and work requirements contained within the letter be fully explained.

B. Procedures for issuing ‘N’ Warning Letters

B.1 ‘N’ Warning Letters are issued for two main reasons:

   a. Failure to complete an assessment task
   b. Lack of diligence and sustained effort, which is usually associated with attendance issues

B.2 The issuing of ‘N’ Warning Letters should follow a different process depending on the reason for the letter as follows:

   1. Non completion of an Assessment Task – Appendix 1 Flowchart

      a. Teacher speaks to the student about the non-submission of the task and establishes agreement that the task has not been submitted and that a zero mark will be awarded.
      b. Teacher negotiates a plan to complete the task with the student, eg during a lunch time or period 4 on Monday and a new date that the task has to be submitted. The student should be told that an ‘N’ Warning Letter will be issued if the plan is not adhered to.
c. Parents are contacted (writing, phone call, text message or email) and:
   - Informed about the situation
   - Told about the plans to rectify the problem
   - Informed of the consequences of non completion of the task (ie an ‘N’ Warning letter will be issued)
   - The teacher keeps a record of all intervention
d. The teacher continues to keep a record of all contacts, negotiations and interventions.
e. Teacher discusses the situation with the Head Teacher and an ‘N’ Warning Letter is issued
f. The Head Teacher informs the Year Head Teacher (Middle or Senior)

2. Attendance and/or diligence and sustained effort – Appendix 2 Flowchart

a. Teacher interviews student regarding reasons for unauthorised absences or disconnection/non completion of class-work. A plan for improvement is negotiated. Student is told that an ‘N’ Warning Letter will be issued if there is no improvement.
b. Teacher contacts the parent to inform them of the concern. Parents told that an ‘N’ Warning Letter will be issued should there be no improvement. Contact is recorded on Starts.
c. If situation does not improve in the subsequent 2 weeks the teacher issues an ‘N’ Warning Letter
d. Teacher informs the DP in charge of that year as well as the Head Teacher of that year. The Deputy Principals and Head Teachers interview the student to rectify the situation and parents are notified.
e. If the situation still does not improve a further ‘N’ Warning Letter is issued and the student is interviewed by the Principal.

Diane Trist

November 2012
Appendix 1

A. Non Completion of an Assessment Task

(a) Teacher communicates with student and establishes agreement that the task has not been submitted

(b) Plan negotiated to have the task completed within two weeks but with zero marks. Student informed that warning letter will be issued if task not completed according to negotiated.

(c) Parents contacted (letter, phone, email, text) and informed of the plan and the consequences of non-compliance (ie ‘N’ Warning Letter).

(d) Task not completed. Teacher advises Head Teacher – ‘N’ Warning Letter issued.

(d) Task completed. Marked and a zero mark awarded. Teacher updates Starts.

(e) Head Teacher Middle or Senior School notified by Head Teacher.

(f) Principal interviews all second HSC warning letter recipients.
   Principal interviews all second ROSA warning letters recipients.
   Principal contacts parent via phone or text message.
Appendix 2

B. Attendance and/or Diligence and Sustained Effort

(a) Teacher interviews student in regard to:
   - Recorded absences on Starts
   - Disconnection with class work
   A plan for improvement is negotiated. Student told that ‘N’ Warning Letter will be issued if no improvement.

(b) Teacher contacts parents regarding concerns (letter, text, email or phone). Told that ‘N’ Warning Letter will be issued if no improvement. Contact recorded on Starts.

(c) If situation doesn’t improve (within 2 weeks) an ‘N’ Warning Letter is issued.

(d) Head Teacher/teacher informs DP about ‘N’ Warning Letter. Student interviewed by DP and the Head Teacher Middle or Senior Schools. Recorded as an interview on Starts.

A period of 2 weeks is allowed for remediation

- Attendance and/or application to course work improves. No further action required. Starts updated.

- Attendance and/or application to course work does not improve.

(e) A further ‘N’ Warning Letter is issued.

(f) Principal interviews all seconde HSC, Preliminary and ROSA ‘N’ Warning Letter recipients. Principal will also contact parents via phone or text message.