

## **Assessment Policy**

### **1. Purpose**

This Policy describes the principles that underpin UNSW College (the College) approach to assessment for all programs.

The College is committed to delivering educational excellence in learning and teaching. Assessment is a fundamental academic activity and essential to the learning and teaching process. We achieve a high standard of education by ensuring that assessment includes:

- (a) design and specification of activities or tasks that students undertake to support and demonstrate their learning and progress (Assessment for Learning);
- (b) provision of feedback to provide guidance for students to reflect on their learning (Assessment of Learning) and to monitor their progress (Assessment as Learning);
- (c) moderation of assessment activities;
- (d) award of marks for assessment undertaken during Term; and
- (e) determination and award of result grades at the end of Term.

### **2. Scope**

The Policy applies to Academic Heads, Academic Managers (TNE), Professional Teaching Staff and College students.

### **3. Policy statement**

#### **3.1 Principles and Requirements**

- (a) The College provides learning and assessment to guide and enhance student learning. Students receive opportunities to demonstrate their achievement of the learning outcomes specified for the courses in which the student is enrolled.
- (b) Assessments are clearly aligned with the relevant course and program learning outcomes.
- (c) The assessment process is transparent and easy for students to understand. The process provides the student with a credible measure of their level of achievement.
- (d) Assessment is fair and achievable by all students who have engaged with the courses in which they are enrolled and have made genuine attempts to learn the course materials. Where reasonable, educational adjustments are offered to ensure accessibility in assessment.
- (e) Assessment tasks are designed to encourage and uphold the values of



academic integrity (honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage).

- (f) Timely feedback for assessment tasks completed within the teaching period is provided. This process enables students to make judgements about their learning, evaluate the work of a peer (group assessment), and determine how they can improve their learning growth and performance.
- (g) Assessment workloads in each course must be in keeping with the Units of Credit allocated to that course and its weighting towards the final grade.
- (h) No piece of assessment is to be worth more than 50% of the total marks available for each course.
- (i) Marking rubrics for each assessment item within each course will distinguish assigned levels of grading / student achievement.
- (j) Moderation of marking is undertaken to ensure consistency of assessment decisions in accordance with the criteria defined for the assessment item.
- (k) Each course will include a variety of assessment types, both formative and summative, to support different learning outcomes of the course.
- (l) There is no pre-determined distribution of grades or grade cut-offs for any assessment task or course. Course grade cut-offs may be varied by the College Assessment and Integrity Committee.
- (m) Each course will embed one 'low stakes' formative assessment prior to the census date to provide early feedback to students on their progress and assist the College in timely identification of 'at risk' students.

## **4. Communication of assessment requirements**

### **4.1 Hurdle requirements**

- (a) A hurdle requirement is a compulsory requirement for a course that must be met for a student to be eligible to receive a 'pass' grade for that course.
- (b) Any hurdle requirements for passing a course must be included in the Course Outline and/or Assessment Guide. For example, the requirement to submit all assessment tasks or pass all assessment tasks.

### **4.2 Assessment tasks and marking criteria**

- (a) Assessment tasks within each course, together with the due date, weighting towards the final grade, task description and method of submission must be included in each Course Outline and/or Assessment Guide.
- (b) Marking criteria for each assessment task must be detailed in the Course Outline or available through the Learning Management System (LMS) at the beginning of each teaching period.

### **4.3 Alignment with learning outcomes**



- (a) Different assessment types are used to ensure that appropriate assessment tools accurately evaluate course and program learning outcomes.
- (b) Course Outlines and/or Assessment Guides should identify the course learning outcome(s) to which each assessment task relates.

## 5. Submission of assessment tasks

- (a) Students must submit all assessment tasks by the due date. Normally, assessment tasks are due by 9 a.m. on a weekday. Students are responsible for submitting their assessment by the due date outlined in their Course Guideline/Assessment Guide.
- (b) No task may be re-submitted unless there are extenuating circumstances. An example of an extenuating circumstance might include:

Where a student is unable to complete their enrolled program of study because the student has failed a final assessment for a final course that will not be offered in the following academic term. Such a resubmission must be approved by the relevant Academic Head or delegate.

- (c) Penalties apply for late submission; these must be clearly stated in the Course Outline and or Assessment Guide. Penalties for Late Submission are described in the Assessment Procedure.
- (d) Word counts are a specific part of the discipline of academic writing. Where an assessment task exceeds or is lower than the prescribed word length, no penalty will be applied for the initial ten (10) percent excess. A penalty deduction will be applied where word count exceeds the ten (10) percent limit. Penalties for exceeding word limits must be included in the Course Outline and/or Assessment Guide.
- (e) Penalties for breaching word count are described in the Assessment Procedure.

## 6. Educational adjustments

- (a) Both the [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#) and the [Admissions Policy](#) support equity and diversity within the College student body and commit to practices designed to support equitable educational opportunities.
- (b) Students who have been admitted under the Access and Equity provisions of the [Admissions Policy](#), are entitled to receive reasonable adjustments that support their success in College studies but remain aligned with the stated Course Learning Outcomes.
- (c) Educational adjustments can apply to assessments, including assignments and examinations.
- (d) Educational adjustments can include providing enabling staff; providing alternative formats and/or assistive technology.



- (e) The UNSW Equitable Learning Service (ELS), together with the College Student Support team, determine adjustments and communicate these to the relevant academic and professional staff.
- (f) Any educational adjustments must not compromise the academic integrity of the course or program.

## 7. Special consideration for an assessment task, including a final exam

- (a) By undertaking or submitting an assessment on the scheduled assessment date, the student is declaring they are fit to do so and cannot later apply for Special Consideration.
- (b) Special Consideration is the process for assessing and addressing the impact of events beyond the control of the student that have affected performance in a specific assessment task or tasks. This includes any assessment scheduled within a term and the final examination.
- (c) The Special Consideration application process and criteria for eligibility are included in the [Assessment Procedure](#).
- (d) If the request for Special Consideration for a specific assessment task is approved, one of the following will be offered:
  - i. the deadline for the assessment may be extended; or
  - ii. A supplementary or alternative assessment may be offered, in which case, the mark awarded for the supplementary or alternative assessment task will be based solely on that assessment item.
- (e) If a student fails an assessment task in any course in the final Term of an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) award program but does not have an approved Special Consideration for that task, and this failed assessment results in a course failure which prevents the student from passing the course and completing the program, supplementary assessment may still be offered.

## 8. Review of results

- (a) If students wish to query their mark for a particular piece of assessment, they should discuss the matter with their lecturer at the time the marks are provided to the student. If the outcome is not to the satisfaction of the student, the next step is to undertake Stage 2 of the [Student Appeal Policy](#) within ten working days of the grade being released.
- (b) A student may request a review of their final grade by completing a [Stage 2 Formal Review Form](#) within ten (10) working days of the results being published and follow the steps outlined in the [Student Appeal Policy](#).

## 9. Quality assurance

- (a) Assessment tasks will be subject to peer review periodically to ensure they

effectively measure the learning outcomes for that course.

- (b) Quality assurance oversight by the Executive Director Academic or delegate, and the Assessment and Integrity Committee will ensure that the design of assessment tasks is appropriate and meets required standards.
- (c) Marking criteria for each assessment item informs levels of student achievement. Moderation of marking is undertaken to ensure consistency of assessment decisions in accordance with the defined marking criteria.
- (d) The Assessment and Integrity Committee approve final grades, on the recommendation of the Course Convenor and UNSW Quality Assurance and Review Consultant (QARC).

## 10. Roles, responsibilities, and delegations

Role	Responsibility
Academic Board	Ultimate responsibility for ensuring quality assurance for all academic areas including assessment.
Academic Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designing appropriate assessment tasks that allow students to demonstrate their level of learning.</li> <li>• Marking assessment tasks against the marking rubric provided to students or other relevant criteria.</li> <li>• Providing directed and timely feedback. This must be provided within two weeks of the submission of the assessment task.</li> <li>• Discussing with students any queries they may have regarding the grade allotted for any assessment task.</li> </ul>
Teaching and Learning Committee	Provides oversight of all course documents.
Assessment and Integrity Committee	Provides oversight of assessment quality and integrity.
Course Convenor	A Course Convenor has primary responsibility for the curriculum, learning outcomes and assessment for a course.
QARC	A UNSW Quality Assurance and Review Consultant (QARC) is responsible for providing advice and quality assurance for all College programs major course assessments.
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be familiar with and comply with assessment information, including policy, procedures, coursework, criteria, and standards of assessment.</li> <li>• Seek clarification about assessment requirements if</li> </ul>

	<p>uncertain.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage in assessment processes to support and enhance learning and progress, including reflecting on and actioning feedback.</li> </ul>
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## 11. Definitions

Definitions and Acronyms	
Academic Staff	Academic staff refers to any staff member who teaches in a course.
Assessment	Assessment evaluates each student's performance against the prescribed learning outcomes for a course.
AQF Award Program	<p>Award programs include programs that are Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) awards, such as AQF Level 5 diplomas.</p> <p>Non-award courses like ELICOS and Foundation Studies courses are not included.</p>
Cut-off grade	A cut-off grade refers to the minimum grade a student must achieve to successfully "pass" or demonstrate proficiency.
Distribution of grades	Grade distribution is the representation and allocation of grades, across students, for a specific cohort for a course and/or program of study.
Educational adjustment	Measures or actions taken to assist a student with a disability to participate in education, on the same basis as other students. Adjustments may be made in relation to teaching, learning and assessment that assist a student to access course content and assessments.
Extenuating Circumstance	An extenuating circumstance is an issue beyond the control of a student, where health or personal issues impact upon a student's ability to complete their study. Such issues may be grounds for educational adjustment or special consideration.
Formative assessment	Formative assessment refers to an assessment conducted throughout a course that provides information to support and guide students' further learning.
Hurdle Assessment	A hurdle assessment refers to a compulsory course requirement, where a student must complete a set task or demonstrate a level of performance as a condition of passing a course.



Learning Outcomes	Learning outcomes set out the knowledge and skills a student has acquired because of the learning in a course. The expected learning outcomes will be specified in each unit outline.
Low stakes assessment	A “low stakes” assessment refers to an early form of student evaluation that has minimal impact on a student’s course grade. The purpose of this assessment is to 1) determine a student’s requirements for early intervention; and 2) guide and enhance a student’s performance.
Marking Rubric	A marking rubric is a table that itemises all aspects (e.g., criteria and descriptors) of an assessment task on which a student is graded. The rubric helps to communicate levels of achievement (standards) that a student can attain.
Moderation	Moderation is a quality assurance process used to check that assessment practices are applied equitably to all students in the same program or course. Moderation includes processes put in place prior to marking and grading to ensure assessors understand assessment criteria and performance standards and those put in place subsequently to ensure consistency in their application. Moderation ensures that marks or grades are awarded appropriately and consistently.
Recess Period	A period of time in which active study, work experience or practicum is temporarily stopped.
Student	A student refers in this policy to both domestic and international students.
Study Week	A one-week study period at the end of an academic term.
Summative Assessment	Refers to an assessment that evaluates how much a student has learnt in a unit or course and typically contributes to a course result.
Supplementary assessment	A supplementary assessment is an additional assessment (resit) that is provided to a student who has failed or was unable to complete an initial assessment.

Related Policy Documents and Supporting Documents	
Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Cth)</u></a></li> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Australian Qualifications Framework</u></a></li> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Foundation Program Standards 2021</u></a></li> <li>• <a href="#"><u>National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Cth)</u></a></li> </ul>

Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Quality Assurance Framework</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Student Grievances and Complaints Policy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Student Appeal Policy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Academic Progression and Exclusion Policy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Academic Integrity Policy</a></li> </ul>
Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Assessment Procedure</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Examinations Procedure</a></li> </ul>
Forms	<a href="#">Request for Special Consideration</a>

## 12. Policy Governance

Assessment Policy	
Category/Business Group	Academic Programs
Published Externally (Yes/No)	Yes
Approver	Academic Board
Responsible Officer	Executive Director Academic
Contact Officer	Director, Academic Programs
Effective Date	25 July 2024
Next Review Date	25 July 2027
Version	2.0

## Revision History

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Effective date	Sections modified
2.0	Academic Board	25 July 2024	25 July 2024	Amendments made to Sections 2, 3.1, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5, 10, 11.
1	Academic Board	08 August 2023	17 August 2023	N/A

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