

Assessment for Coursework Programs Policy

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OVERVIEW

Assessment is a core academic activity and an essential component of the learning process. Its main purposes are to encourage student learning, to make judgements about student achievements, and to monitor the effectiveness of the learning environment. This policy sets out the principles which underpin the University of Adelaide's approach to assessment, and the mandatory procedures which ensure that the principles are implemented.

SCOPE AND APPLICATION

This Policy applies in respect of all undergraduate, Honours and postgraduate coursework award programs offered by the University of Adelaide. All staff and title holders of the University must comply with this policy whenever they are engaged in an aspect of the assessment process. This Policy should be read in conjunction with the [Modified Arrangements for Coursework Assessment Policy](#) and the [Reasonable Adjustments to Teaching and Assessment for Students with a Disability Policy](#).

Implementation of this policy will be carried out in accordance with the University's Code of Conduct and the Academic Board Statement on Undue Influence. Any attempts to improperly exert pressure or influence actions or decisions made pursuant to this policy must be reported in accordance with the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy.

PRINCIPLES

The University's approach to assessment is based on the following principles, which must be observed within all Faculties. The policy acknowledges that types of assessment used throughout the University are diverse and vary according to the academic discipline.

	Principle		This principle is achieved when:
1.	Assessment must encourage and reinforce learning	a.	There is alignment between the stated course learning outcomes and assessment.
		b.	Meaningful and timely feedback is given.
		c.	Marks for all pieces of assessment and the overall grade for a course are decided by reference to pre-determined criteria and standards linked to the specified course learning outcomes.
		d.	Marks reflect the actual achievement of the student(s).

2.	Assessment must enable robust and fair judgements about student performance	a.	The range of assessment types is sufficiently extensive and varied to permit valid and reliable judgement of student performance.
		b.	Assessment practices must be conducted and undertaken ethically and with honesty and integrity by staff and students in accordance with the Academic Honesty Policy .
3.	Assessment practices must be fair and equitable to students and give them the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned.	a.	Students have an opportunity to access examples of previous assessment tasks.
		b.	Student workloads and the unit value of the course are taken into account in setting the assessment tasks.
		c.	Students are given timely information about assessment.
		d.	Without compromising the academic standards of the assessment, reasonable adjustments are made to cater for any disadvantages to a student that result from the student's disability, special needs or unforeseen circumstances in compliance with the Modified Arrangements for Coursework Assessment Policy and the Reasonable Adjustments to Teaching and Assessment for Students with a Disability Policy .
		e.	Gender, racial or cultural bias is avoided and inclusive language is used.
		f.	Students are given timely opportunities to discuss concerns about assessment outcomes with academic staff and to raise grievances about assessment in accord with the Student Grievance Resolution Process .
4.	Assessment must maintain academic standards	a.	Grades are applied consistently in accord with the University's approved Mark and Grade Schemes and Grade Descriptors .
		b.	Assessments are marked by appropriately qualified assessors.
		c.	Each Faculty has a process to review course assessment and certify outcomes, and a quality assurance system for moderation and monitoring assessment standards and consistency.
		d.	Courses offered at multiple locations have equivalent assessment.

PROCEDURES

For each of the mandatory procedures below, the number of the Principle to which it relates is identified. All assessment activity must be conducted in accord with the assessment Principles, whether or not there is a specific related Procedure.

1. Setting assessment types, tasks and weightings

	Procedure	Responsibility	Principle												
a.	<p>Ensure each course has a variety of types of summative and formative assessment (see Assessment Resources website for examples) in accord with the total course assessment limits specified below:</p> <table><tr><td>i</td><td>Group assessment activities</td><td>no more than 30%</td></tr><tr><td>ii</td><td>Active Participation</td><td>no more than 10%</td></tr><tr><td>iii</td><td>Self or peer assessment</td><td>no more than 10%</td></tr><tr><td>iv</td><td>Any single item of summative assessment</td><td>no more than 70%</td></tr></table> <p>This limit is indicative of the maximum only. Nothing in this policy precludes faculties from setting a lower upper limit for single items of assessment.</p> <p>Definitions</p>	i	Group assessment activities	no more than 30%	ii	Active Participation	no more than 10%	iii	Self or peer assessment	no more than 10%	iv	Any single item of summative assessment	no more than 70%	Course Coordinator	Principles 1b and 2a
i	Group assessment activities	no more than 30%													
ii	Active Participation	no more than 10%													
iii	Self or peer assessment	no more than 10%													
iv	Any single item of summative assessment	no more than 70%													

	<p>Summative Assessment is an assessment the result of which is used to determine a final mark or grade.</p> <p>Formative Assessment monitors student progress against standards and provides them with feedback comparing their progress to the standards with a view to helping them to achieve the standards</p> <p>Active Participation in learning can include, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formal classroom or online discussions; • workshops, artistic performances, practical sessions or field trips; • small group discussions or written exercises; • class presentations, laboratory work, field trips, designs, role-playing, wikis, blogs and webinars; • thoughtful commenting on, reflecting on, or critiquing, content or presentations provided by staff or other students. <p>Attendance alone is not normally regarded as active participation.</p> <p>Clinical practice refers to learning activities, including the provision of health care under supervision, that relate directly to the diagnosis and management of disease, and the promotion of health.</p>		
b.	<p>A hurdle requirement is assigned to an assessment type and mandates a minimum level of performance as a requirement for passing the courses.</p> <p>An individual hurdle requirement may have a number of separate but related component activities / tasks within it.</p> <p>Ensure that any hurdle requirement is in accord with the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> not more than 3 separate assessment tasks with hurdle requirements per course (note that this precludes the bundling of different assessment tasks into a single hurdle), no hurdle requirement/s in assessment tasks weighted at less than 20% of the total assessment, and the sum of all hurdle requirements in a single course (except clinical practice) does not exceed 60% of the total assessment for the course. the consequences of not meeting a hurdle requirement are made explicit to students. where a required clinical or professional accreditation competency is being assessed as a hurdle requirement an NGP grade with 0 marks allocated may be used. In this case the NGP graded hurdle assessment should not contribute to the maximum number of three hurdles per course. <p><i>For further guidance on hurdle requirements, see Hurdle Requirements website.</i></p>	Course Coordinator	Principles 1a and 3b
c.	<p>Do not make attendance at lectures a condition of passing a course. Attendance at other structured learning activities may be mandatory provided the achievement of course learning outcomes is substantially dependent on the attendance, e.g. an orchestra/ensemble, placement, field trip, tutorial or seminar.</p>	Course Coordinator	Principle 4
d.	<p>Ensure every course contains at least one assessment task that is set, submitted, marked and returned with meaningful feedback to students by the mid-point of the teaching period of the course. For courses presented in intensive modes, or as clinical placements, where setting, submitting, marking and returning assessment tasks to students is impractical, there must be feedback to students in a timely period appropriate to the duration of the course.</p>	Course Coordinator	Principle 1b
e.	<p>Ensure that the deadlines for multiple assessment tasks in the same course do not coincide, if those assessment tasks together total more than 50% of the total assessment.</p>	Course Coordinator	Principle 3b
	<p>Note: Exemptions to 1.a, b, c, d and e may be approved by the Executive Dean, in writing, through the normal Faculty processes</p>		

	<i>provided they are satisfied there are sound pedagogical reasons for the exception. Exemptions must be approved and reported to the University Education Committee (updated if there is significant change to the course). Students are to be advised of exemptions in the Course Outline. See the Assessment for Coursework Programs Policy Exemption Guidelines for guidance.</i>		
f.	Ensure assessment tasks are aligned with and linked to the specified course learning outcomes. See Assessment website for guidance.	Course Coordinator	Principle 1a
g.	Ensure that each assessment task is given an appropriate weighting which reflects the importance of the course learning outcomes being tested by that task.	Course Coordinator	Principle 1a

2. Informing students

All assessment information referred to in Procedure 1, and any other assessment information relevant to students, must be included in the Course Outline, in accord with the timings specified for lodgement of the Course Outline.

	Procedure	Responsibility	Principle
a.	Where assessment requirements are negotiated with students, ensure information about this process, as well as approved exemptions to this Policy, is included in the Course Outline.	Course Coordinator	Principle 3c
b.	If hurdle requirements are utilised, ensure that students are informed: i. how their attainment of the hurdle requirement/s will be monitored, and ii. how they will be informed of the consequences of their failure to attain the requirements, and iii. of their entitlements under the Modified Arrangements for Coursework Assessment Policy .	Course Coordinator	Principles 1b and 3b
c.	If students are to be given opportunities to enhance any mark other than a fail for any assessment task, ensure they are informed of the exact nature and number of these opportunities. <i>Note: For information about redemption of a fail mark for an assessment task or a fail grade for a course, refer to the Modified Arrangements for Coursework Assessment Policy.</i>	Course Coordinator	Principle 3c
d.	Do not change assessment tasks and weightings after the commencement of teaching (or, where assessment requirements are negotiated with students, the date of agreement with students), except with the prior written approval of the Head of School. Ensure all students in the course are notified individually and promptly of any changes.	Course Coordinator	Principle 3c
e.	Ensure that students have adequate access to exemplars or examples of previous relevant assessment tasks and the standards expected. Where significantly new forms of assessment have been introduced, ensure students have access to an exemplar of the new form of assessment. If, during the Faculty course approval process, it is recognised that it is not possible to provide an exemplar or example, a suitable description of the task and expected standard must be provided to students.	Course Coordinator	Principle 4a
f.	Ensure that students are informed about the standards associated with evidence-based academic writing and relevant scholarly conventions in the course discipline, and their obligations under the Academic Honesty Policy .	Course Coordinator	Principle 2b
g.	Ensure that students are informed how to complete the mandatory requirements to certify that the work is their own and that all cited works have been acknowledged, in accordance with the Academic Honesty Policy .	Course Coordinator	Principle 2b

3. Examinations

	Procedure	Responsibility	Principle
a.	Apply the Examination Procedures for Staff [<i>under development</i>] to the preparation of examination papers and administration of examinations.	All staff involved in examinations	

4. Assignment extensions and adjustments

	Procedure	Responsibility	Principle
a.	Ensure there is a clear statement on the availability of extensions to specified assessment deadlines, either for each course or for all courses within a School or Faculty, in the Course Outline template. Note that all local practices on extensions must comply with the Modified Arrangements for Coursework Assessment Policy .	Head of School, with Course Coordinator	Principle 3d
b.	Make determinations in accord with the relevant extensions statement in a fair, reasonable and consistent way.	Course Coordinator	Principle 3d
c.	Apply the Reasonable Adjustments for Teaching and Assessment for Students with a Disability Policy where appropriate.	Course Coordinator	Principle 3d

5. Marking assessments

	Procedure	Responsibility	Principle
a.	Ensure all markers are appropriately qualified.	Head of School, with Course Coordinator	Principle 4b
b.	Ensure an individual student's marks are determined by reference to their performance against pre-determined criteria and standards linked to the specified course learning outcomes and not by ranking against the performance of the student cohort in the course.	Head of School, with Course Coordinator	Principles 1c, 1d
c.	Ensure the Conflict of Interests Policy and Guidelines are applied.	Course Coordinator	Principle 2b
d.	Where there is more than one marker, ensure that appropriate marking guidelines and cross-marking moderation processes across markers are in place.	Course Coordinator	Principles 1c, 2b, 4a, 4b
e.	Take all reasonable steps to detect academic dishonesty, and apply the Academic Honesty Policy when academic dishonesty is suspected.	Course Coordinator and all staff engaged in assessment marking	Principle 2b
f.	Apply the University's approved Mark and Grade Scheme or, for Honours, the approved Mark or Grade Scheme for Honours. GS8 NGP may be used for clinical placement courses. <i>The Executive Dean may approve, in writing, the use of an approved Grade Scheme, instead of a Mark Scheme, provided they are satisfied there are exceptional pedagogical grounds for the exception. The exceptions must be reported to the University Education Committee.</i> Apply the University's Grade Descriptors when determining marks.	Course Coordinator all staff engaged in assessment marking	Principle 4a
g.	Recommend final results for each student in the course to the relevant assessment review committee, and provide such other information as is requested by that committee.	Course Coordinator	Principle 4

6. Giving feedback to students

	Procedure	Responsibility	Principle
a.	Ensure constructive feedback on how a student or students can improve is provided after each assessment task except possibly the last one in a course.	Course Coordinator and all staff engaged in	Principle 3b

	Refer to Assessment Resources website on methods for giving feedback, including group discussion, written comments, model answers, lists of common mistakes.	assessment marking	
b.	i. Ensure all assessment, other than the last assessment task in a course, is returned within 4 weeks of the deadline for submission, or such earlier period as is specified by the relevant School. ii. Students should be informed that they have the right to access their examination scripts. Schools must retain scripts for 12 months to allow for possible appeals and re-marking, after which time they may be disposed of in confidential waste. Students may access their examination scripts for discussions with academics if they place their request in writing to the examiner within 28 days of the issue of the official results.	Course Coordinator and all staff engaged in assessment marking	Principle 3b

7. Assessment complaints

	Procedure	Responsibility	Principle
a.	Ensure assessment complaints are dealt with in accord with the Student Grievance Resolution Process .	Head of School	Principle 3e

QUALITY ASSURANCE

1. Setting assessment tasks and weightings

	Procedure	Responsibility	Principle
a.	Ensure assessment topics/questions are regularly reviewed to minimise opportunities for academic dishonesty. See Academic Honesty & Plagiarism Information for Staff website re assessment design.	Course Coordinator	Principle 2b

2. Assessment review committees

	Procedure	Responsibility	Principle
	Composition		
a.	Establish (an) assessment review committee(s) and allocate every course to such (a) committee(s). These committees may be at Faculty, School, Discipline, year or program level, as determined for each Faculty. <i>Each committee may have other roles and duties additional to those listed below; and may have a name that reflects its overall role.</i>	Executive Dean	Principle 4c
b.	Appoint the chair of each committee, having regard to the desirability of the chair having a degree of independence from the committee's business.		
c.	Appoint the membership for each committee: minimum 5 academic staff for committees covering multiple Disciplines, or 3 academic staff members for a single Discipline, no maximum. <i>A Student Representative may be included at the committee's discretion.</i>		
	Course Coordinators and academic staff who have set assessments are likely to be members of assessment review committees. All assessment review committees with the minimum number of members specified above must contain at least one member who has not been involved in the particular assessments to be certified at that meeting.		
	Duties		
d.	Meet at a time or times after the end of the teaching and assessment period for every course.	Chair of assessment review committee	Principle 4c

e.	Review the results in each course by: i. scrutinising result recommendations from Course Coordinators to ensure comparability of standards and consistency ii. seeking advice from Course Coordinators about any concerns. The committee may consider the performance of current students against past cohorts, or the performance of individual students across a range of courses.	Assessment review committee	
f.	Certify results for each course on the recommendation of an assessment review committee for release to students. The Executive Dean may seek clarification from the committee of any issue related to the final results.	Chair of assessment review committee and Executive Dean	Principle 4c
g.	Provide a report to the Faculty Board that may provide advice including recommendations for changes to assessment practices in future course offerings and other advice relating to assessment practices. Conduct other monitoring and exercise other authorities as specified by the Executive Dean.		

3. Faculty quality assurance process

	Procedure	Responsibility	Principle
a.	Ensure the Faculty has an Assessment Quality Assurance Process which includes: i. a process for review and approval of course assessment types and weightings ii. a process for reviewing approvals to use the University Grade Scheme in lieu of the Mark Scheme iii. a documented cross-marking moderation process in each School to ensure consistency of marking, when there is more than one assessor of the same assessment task iv. giving students an opportunity to provide constructive feedback on the assessment process and tasks through the application of course and program SELTs .	Executive Dean	Principle 4c

AUTHORITIES

Key	Authority Category	Authority	Delegation Holder	Limits	Policy ref
Academic	Assessment	Determine applications for assignment extensions in accord with Course/School Extensions Statement and consistent with the <i>Modified Arrangements for Coursework Assessment Policy</i> .	Course Coordinator	-	Proc 4.b.
Academic	Assessment	Approve annual exemptions to Procedures 1.a.-e. and 5.b.	Executive Dean	Report exemptions annually to UEC	Proc 1.e.Note
Academic	Assessment	Approve application of Grade Scheme, rather than Mark Scheme, to course results	Executive Dean	Report use of Grade Scheme annually to UEC	Proc.5.f.
Academic	Assessment	Certify final results for all courses within the Faculty/School, on advice of relevant assessment review committee	Executive Dean	-	QA Proc.2.f.

RMO File/Document Number	2014/2717
Policy Custodian	Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Vice-President (Academic)
Responsible Officer	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience)
Endorsed by	Academic Board on 7 October 2015

(Academic Board or VCC)	
Approved by	Vice-Chancellor and President on 13 October 2015
Related Documents and Policies <i>(to be completed when all new academic policies approved)</i>	University Mark and Grade Schemes Grade Descriptors Grade Point Average calculation guide QEC Guidelines on Hurdle Requirements Academic Honesty and Assessment Obligations for Coursework Students Policy and Academic Dishonesty Procedures (under development) Modified Arrangements for Coursework Assessment Policy Reasonable Adjustments to Teaching and Assessment for Students with a Disability Policy Student Grievance Resolution Process Conflict of Interests Policy
Superseded Policies	Good Practice Guidelines on Assessment for Staff and Students
Date Effective	13 October 2015
Next Review Date	12 October 2018
Contact for queries about the Policy	lgseducumpliance@adelaide.edu.au