



Version	Approved by	Approval date	Effective date	Next review date
1.0	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education	9 December 2016	20 February 2017	February 2020
<b>Procedure Statement</b>				
<b>Purpose</b>	<p>To specify the processes and responsibilities for the design of assessment of student learning.</p> <p>This procedure should be read in conjunction with the <i>Assessment Implementation Procedure</i> which specifies the processes and responsibilities for implementation of assessment.</p>			
<b>Scope</b>	<p>The procedure applies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>assessment in all undergraduate, honours and postgraduate coursework programs, the coursework component of higher degree research programs and non-award courses offered by or on behalf of UNSW; and</li> <li>all students, staff and others associated with, or contracted by, UNSW who are responsible for assessment in these programs.</li> </ul>			
<b>Are Local Documents on this subject permitted?</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, subject to any areas specifically restricted within this Document			<input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Procedure Processes and Actions</b>				

## 1. Assessment is designed to guide and enhance student learning (Policy Principle 1)

### 1.1. Aligning assessment with learning outcomes

Assessment requirements for all UNSW's programs and courses will be designed to assess the attainment of program and/or course level learning outcomes consistent with the [Integrated Curriculum Framework](#).

The assessment requirements within programs and courses will include a variety of tasks determined by the range of learning outcomes.

No single assessment task, including examinations but excluding research- or project-based assessments and theses, will be weighted more than 60% of the overall course result. Assessment requirements of accreditation bodies are exempt from this limit.

Courses with project-based assessment tasks should stipulate the weighting of marks/grades related to each learning outcome assessed by the project.

Where assessment entails students working in groups to prepare and/or present a single product or performance, and for which the contributions of individual students are not assessed separately, the assessment will constitute no more than 30% of the overall course result.

Course outlines will include a statement of the assessment tasks noting their alignment to the course and program learning outcomes (if applicable) and the weighting of assessment tasks to the overall course result.

### 1.2. Assessment feedback

Feedback should provide meaningful information about the current level of performance relative to the expected standards of performance and constructive advice to guide future learning. The minimum expectation of feedback from a summative assessment task is a justification of a failed result.

Feedback on student performance from formative and summative assessment tasks will be provided to students in a timely manner. Assessment tasks within a course will be scheduled to give students the opportunity to reflect and act on the feedback provided to them. All semester-based courses will include an early assessment task prior to the census date or one-third into the course. Where the course has only a single assessment task, the task will provide an opportunity for early feedback on progress.

Assessment tasks completed within the teaching period of a course, other than a final assessment, will be assessed and students provided with feedback, with or without a provisional result, within 10 working days of submission, under normal circumstances. Feedback on continuous assessment tasks (e.g. laboratory and studio-based, workplace-based, weekly quizzes) will be provided prior to the midpoint of the course.

## **2. Student learning is assessed against learning outcomes and expected standards of performance (Policy Principle 2)**

### **2.1. Assessment criteria and performance descriptors**

Assessment criteria for an assessment task will explicitly describe what students are expected to demonstrate in the task and should be aligned to the course, stream and/or program learning outcome(s).

Depending on the nature of the assessment task, performance descriptors should distinguish the assigned levels of marking/grading for the task. Where applicable, rubrics will be used to explicitly link assessment criteria and performance descriptors.

Where students' participation in or contribution to classes constitutes a weighted component of the course assessment, this must be based on explicit assessment criteria and standards of performance, and these must be specified in the course outline.

Participation in an assessment task in itself is insufficient grounds for awarding marks or grades. Assessment marks will not be used to reward or penalise student behaviours that do not demonstrate student achievement in relation to learning outcomes. However, in accordance with the *Student Misconduct Procedure*, proven misconduct may result in reduction of marks or failure in the course.

### **2.2. Marks and grades**

Students' marks and/or grades will be determined in relation to the expected standards of performance. Marks and/or grades will not be determined primarily in relation to the performance of other students, nor to a predetermined distribution of grades.

Where all the assessment tasks in a course are numerically marked, the overall course result will be calculated from the marks of all summative assessment tasks. In courses where some or all assessment tasks are not numerically marked (e.g. graded Satisfactory), the overall course result will be determined by the awarded grades and relative weighting of the tasks. The method for determining the overall course result will be provided in the course outline.

Individual assessment task or tasks cannot determine the overall course outcome disproportionate to their weighting. Exceptions to this procedure are tasks that assess learning outcomes that must be mastered in a course including competencies stipulated by accreditation bodies and Work Health Safety requirements. Program directors are encouraged to monitor student performance in learning outcomes which have a low weighting in course assessments but are important program learning outcomes (e.g. writing skills).

The allocation of marks/grades should be periodically evaluated to ensure that awarded marks/grades align with the expected standards of performance.

## **3. Assessment provides credible information on student achievement (Policy Principle 3)**

### **3.1. Assessing student performance**

Assessment tasks and assessment criteria should be designed such that marks and/or grades reflect student performance in the related learning outcomes only.

Assessment tasks should be designed so that the task can be completed within the available time. Students should be familiar with any equipment or resources required for the assessment task.

Assessors will be provided with clear assessment criteria and descriptors of performance standards. Assessment tasks should be designed so that assessors can mark/grade within the available time. Practices, including calibration and moderation, that minimise the variability of assessor judgements of student performance should be included in the assessment process.

Moderation of marks and/or grades should be undertaken where it is evident that the assessment criteria and standards have not been consistently applied in an assessment task. In such cases, the rationale and processes for moderating marks and/or grades will be documented.

### **3.2. Academic integrity and security**

Assessment tasks will be designed to develop students' awareness of and capacity for academic integrity. Assessment products and data on performance will be regularly monitored to identify academic misconduct.

The design and development of assessment tasks will be managed securely. Assessment items that are re-used will be reviewed periodically to detect the impact of unauthorised release of items on student performance.

## **4. Assessment is fair and provides all students an impartial opportunity to demonstrate their learning (Policy Principle 4)**

### **4.1. Communicating assessment requirements**

Course assessment requirements will be clearly articulated and communicated to students prior to the closing date for enrolment in the course. The course outline will include a description of all the assessment tasks, and for each assessment task there will be a description of the assessment criteria and standards that will be used to assess student performance.

If a change to course assessment requirements becomes necessary after the commencement of the course, students should be consulted about the impact of the changes. Students will be promptly notified in writing of any changes.

### **4.2. Assessment workload**

The course assessment workload, including formative and summative assessments, will constitute an appropriate proportion of the total expected course workload.

A maximum of four summative assessment tasks is permitted in any one course with at least one of these being scheduled prior to the end-of-semester examination period. Continuous summative assessment tasks constitute a single task.

### **4.3. Equivalence, inclusivity and avoiding bias**

An assessment task that is delivered at different times or in different settings will be standardised to ensure comparable experiences. If alternative assessment tasks are required, the comparability of the different tasks for assessing the same outcome needs to be verified.

Assessment tasks will be designed as inclusively as is reasonably appropriate, so as to provide equal academic opportunities for all students, in accordance with the *UNSW Equity and Diversity Policy Statement*.

Assessment tasks should be designed to have a common understanding and application for all students regardless of age, gender, sexuality, culture and/or religion.

### **4.4. Reasonable adjustments**

Where an assessment task imposes additional difficulties for a student with a disability which can make it difficult for them to meet assessment requirements, Disability Services will recommend a reasonable adjustment to the assessment task to ensure the student can demonstrate their achievement.

## **5. Assessment develops students' abilities to evaluate their own and peer's work (Policy Principle 5)**

Within the collection of assessment tasks in a program, there should be opportunities for students to propose an assessment task, to assess their own and peers' work and to demonstrate action taken in response to previous feedback to improve performance.

Where the opportunity to propose an assessment task is provided, students will be informed of the process and timeline for approval by the end of the first week of the course. Aspects of the assessment task that may be proposed include the type of assessment, specific task requirements and the assessment criteria.

Where students are involved in the assessment process as peer or self-assessors, clear protocols and guidelines will be provided explaining how their assessment will be made. Where students' marks contribute to the grade, their marks will be moderated by the responsible staff member prior to a grade being determined.

## 6. Quality assurance and improvement of assessment

The University, Faculty and School governance structures will be responsible for quality assurance and improvement of assessment in accordance with the *Assessment Policy* and Procedures. Faculties will report on the quality of assessment as an integral part of an Academic Program Review.

## 7. Roles and responsibilities related to quality assurance and assessment design

The Academic Board and University Academic Quality Committee will oversee the quality of assessment practices in UNSW.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) will be responsible for the implementation of the *Assessment Policy* and Procedures and providing support and guidance for UNSW staff on assessment.

The Faculty Dean will ensure the Faculty has appropriate processes and resources in place to support, assure and improve the quality of assessment practices within the Faculty. Staff engaged in all aspects of assessment design and implementation should have sufficient knowledge and understanding about assessment to carry out their roles effectively and in compliance with the *Assessment Policy* and Procedures.

The Faculty Academic Committee, or equivalent, will:

- Oversee the quality of assessment within the Faculty and its compliance with the *Assessment Policy* and Procedures;
- Approve assessment requirements in new and revised program and course proposals.

The Faculty Associate Dean Education/Academic will:

- Support Faculty governance and management in the development of strategies to ensure the maintenance of assessment standards consistent with the *Assessment Policy* and Procedures; and
- Advise the Faculty on measures to develop assessment literacy amongst all stakeholders, including new academic and sessional teaching staff.

The Program Director/Authority will be responsible for the overall approach to assessment in the program ensuring that the suite of assessment tasks within the program is adequate for assuring students are addressing the program learning outcomes.

The Course Convenor/Authority will be responsible for course assessments and will ensure that the following tasks are completed:

- Specification of assessment tasks and their relative weighting;
- Communication to students and staff about assessment requirements;
- Formulation of assessment criteria and performance level descriptors (as required);
- Tasks related to assessment implementation as listed in the *Assessment Implementation Procedure*.

For roles and responsibilities related to assessment implementation see the *Assessment Implementation Procedure*.

<b>Accountabilities</b>	
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)
<b>Supporting Information</b>	
<b>Legislative Compliance</b>	This Procedure supports the University's compliance with the following legislation: <i>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011</i> (Cth) Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015
<b>Parent Document (Policy)</b>	Assessment Policy
<b>Supporting Documents</b>	Nil
<b>Related Documents</b>	Assessment Implementation Procedure

<b>Superseded Documents</b>	Nil
<b>File Number</b>	2016/36810
<b>Definitions and Acronyms</b>	
<b>Alternative assessment</b>	An alternative assessment refers to either an assessment task that is rescheduled or a different assessment task that is provided to a student who is unable to meet the requirements of an assessment.
<b>Assessment</b>	Assessment is a systematic process for evaluating student learning. The purpose of assessment is both to facilitate and certify student learning outcomes including UNSW's Graduate Capabilities. The process includes the design, development and implementation of assessment tasks, and the judgement and reporting of student performance.
<b>Assessment criteria</b>	For an assessment task, the assessment criteria describe the specific elements of the student's performance in the task that align to the learning outcomes.
<b>Assessment methods</b>	An assessment method refers to the type of assessment which may include written, oral and performance-based formats.
<b>Assessment settings</b>	<p>Assessment settings refer to the circumstances under which an assessment task is completed.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Open; there is no direct human supervision of the assessment and no means of authenticating the identity of the test-taker. This includes online tests without any requirement for registration.</li> <li>2. Controlled; there is no direct human supervision of the assessment but the assessment is made available only to known students. This includes online tests that require test-takers to logon.</li> <li>3. Supervised; there is a level of direct human supervision and the identity of the test-taker can be authenticated. This includes online tests that require a student to logon and an invigilator to confirm the identity of the student.</li> <li>4. Managed; there is a high level of human supervision and control (time, place etc.) over the assessment. This includes online tests that are delivered in a supervised physical space.</li> </ol>
<b>Assessment task</b>	An assessment task refers to a specific activity relating to any method of assessment that requires students to demonstrate their learning towards an intended learning outcome.
<b>Educational adjustments</b>	Educational adjustments are measures or actions taken to assist a student with a disability to participate in education and training 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.
<b>Formative and summative assessment</b>	<p>Formative assessment refers to the purpose of the assessment to provide information that supports and guides student's further learning.</p> <p>Summative assessment refers to the purpose of the assessment to provide information that contributes to a course result.</p> <p>The distinction relates to the purpose of the assessment and not the nature of the assessment task. An assessment task can serve either or both purposes.</p>
<b>Learning outcomes</b>	Learning outcomes describe the knowledge, skills and capabilities that students are expected to develop during a course or program of study.
<b>Moderation</b>	<p>Moderation is a quality assurance process that is used to check that assessment practices are applied equitably to all students in the same program or course.</p> <p>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.</p>

<b>Performance descriptors</b>	Performance descriptors describe the different levels of student performance for each assessment criteria.			
<b>Performance standards</b>	Performance standards describe different levels of learning achievement in relation to learning outcomes.			
<b>Standards-based assessment</b>	Standards-based assessment is the judgement and reporting of student learning achievement based on predefined learning outcomes and performance standards. Standards-based assessment can apply at the level of the program, course or assessment task.			
<b>Supplementary assessment</b>	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.			
<b>Revision History</b>				
<b>Version</b>	<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Approval date</b>	<b>Effective date</b>	<b>Sections modified</b>
1.0	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education	9 December 2016	20 February 2017	New procedure

Archived Document