



Document: Student Assessment Policy and Procedure		
Approved by: Academic Board	Version: 2.2	Date: 21.9.2015

1. Overview

The purpose of this policy is to outline the process of collecting relevant evidence and making informed judgements to evaluate student learning outcomes.

The Wentworth Institute ("WIN") has designed this policy to ensure that all student assessment procedures are:

- a) Consistent with TEQSA standards, specifically:

TEQSA Provider Course Accreditation Standard 5.1:

Assessment tasks for the course of study and its units provide opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement of the expected student learning outcomes for the course of study.

TEQSA Provider Course Accreditation Standard 5.2:

Timely, adequate feedback is provided to students on their assessed work.

TEQSA Provider Course Accreditation Standard 5.3:

Course management and coordination, including moderation procedures, ensure consistent and appropriate assessment.

- b) Consistent with WIN's internal subject and curriculum review procedures
- c) *Clearly stated and published in the Subject Outlines* developed for each course delivered by WIN.

2. Rationale for assessment

The rationale for assessment is:

- to promote, enhance, and improve the quality of student learning through feedback that is clear, informative, timely, constructive and relevant to the needs of the student;
- to measure and confirm the standard of student performance and achievement in relation to a subject's defined learning objectives;
- to reward student effort and achievement with an appropriate grade;
- to provide relevant information in order to continuously evaluate and improve the quality of the curriculum and the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process.

3. Forms of assessment

Normally, assessment of a subject will involve a number of different forms of assessment. Some assessment is formative; it is specifically intended to assist students to identify weaknesses in their understanding, so that they may improve their understanding and enhance their learning. Other assessment is summative; its objective is primarily to pass judgment on the quality of a student's learning, generally in terms of assigned marks and grades. Furthermore, critical reflection on the outcomes of assessment tasks, both formative and summative, can inform lecturers and students, not only about the quality of student learning but also about the effectiveness of teaching. The forms of assessment to be utilised for each subject will be clearly set out in the documentation given to students at the commencement of each subject.

Forms of assessment may include:

- **Written exams** - may take the form of short answer questions, multiple-choice questions and essays, where appropriate.
- **Written assignments** - may take the form of essays, literature reviews, reports, work logs, portfolios, etc.
- **Seminars/presentations** - normally based around formal discussion groups where students will be delegated particular topics for research and will be required to present their findings at subsequent seminars. Marks are allocated according to the standard of these presentations.
- **Practical assignments** - students may be required to complete a series of practical assignments designed to test students' abilities under 'real world' conditions.
- **Participation** – student participation and engagement in class, seminar, tutorial and studio activities to be assessed via levels of engagement, quality of inputs and completion of tasks.

4. Notification of assessment

A fundamental aspect of developing a subject is the specification of the prescribed assessment tasks in a way that relates them directly to the subject objectives (including expected learning outcomes), the course structure, the teaching methods to be used, and the learning strategies to be fostered. Lecturers should ensure that students are fully informed, in writing, by the end of the first week of the of the study period, about subject objectives and expectations, including the assessment requirements. The details of all assessment tasks should be stated clearly in the *Subject Outline* and include a statement of the objectives of the subject; its assessment plan, including weights allocated to each assessable component and related submission dates; deadlines, sanctions and penalties; and the objectives of the subject in a way that is appropriate to the academic level of the students.

5. Timing and weight of assessments

Students are expected to reach the objectives of a subject progressively throughout the course of the subject. They should be set tasks during the study period that allow their progress to be evaluated against established criteria. Such tasks should contribute to the final assessment in a subject.

All subjects have incorporated a compulsory assignment type referred to as 'Participation'. For participation, the student is required to consistently attend class/tutorial/seminar/studio activities and to actively participate in the set dynamic. The student should demonstrate a range of behaviours and attitudes that enhance their technical/theoretical/skill development and their level of engagement with the subject material and fellow classmates. These behaviours and attitudes may be measured subjectively as well as objectively through quick quizzes such as short answer questions, multiple choice and/or problem solving tasks. An objective measure or task of no more than 30 minutes duration should be set on at least 50% of sessions on a random basis.

Assessment tasks should be designed carefully, first, to keep in proportion student time commitment and the weight of the assessment task in the overall assessment, and second, to reflect, as far as possible, the importance of each task in determining the effectiveness of students' having met the subject objectives. This might mean

that an important task, such as a final examination, is weighted heavily. Care should be taken to avoid the imposition of a heavy imbalance of assessment load toward the second half of the study period.

Usually, one or more assessment tasks should be set, submitted, marked and returned to students by the mid-point of a subject. Although students need regular feedback on their progress, set assessment tasks should be kept to the minimum that is sufficient to enable students to make judgements about their progress. Due dates for assessment tasks should be well separated in time so as to give students periods of time for reflective learning that are free from the pressure engendered by a looming deadline.

In some disciplines, students are expected to practise skill development continuously. To evaluate students' ability to perform such on-going tasks, consideration should be given to strategies for self-assessment. In this way, students can obtain evidence concerning their level of understanding of the work, while avoiding the stress of frequent formal appraisal by an examiner.

Apart from examination scripts, all assessed work should be returned to the student, preferably in a class context where the student has the right to query the assessment result for clarification either then or at a later time.

Subject Outlines should advise students at the beginning of a subject how all assessment results are to be combined to produce an overall mark for the subject. In particular, the subject outline should make expressly clear:

- the weight of each task in contributing to the overall mark;
- the formulas or rules used to determine the overall mark;
- minimum standards that are applied to specific assessment tasks, and the consequences if such standards are not met (including failure to submit particular tasks);
- rules regarding penalties applied to late submissions; and
- precise details of what is expected in terms of presentation of work for assessment.

The *Subject Outline* should also make clear to students that the aggregated mark for the subject will be moderated. Moderation may result, in some cases, in a variation of the final grade awarded to the student for the subject which is inconsistent with the individual marks awarded to the student for individual assessment items.

Emphasis should be placed on appropriate referencing conventions and requirements, on the degree of cooperation permitted between students, and on what constitutes academic dishonesty and the consequences of committing it as outlined in the *Academic Integrity and Honesty Policy and Procedure*.

6. Submission of assessment items

Students are required to submit assessment items at the time and date specified in the *Subject Outline*. Assessment items submitted after the due date will be subject to a penalty unless the Lecturer or Course Coordinator has given prior approval in writing for an extension of time to submit that item.

Assessments should be submitted in the form specified in the subject outline or as notified by the Lecturer. Where assessment items are submitted electronically, the date and time the email was received will be considered the date and time of submission. Written papers or other physical submissions are to be time and date stamped as a record of receipt.

7. Penalties for late submission

An assessment item submitted after the assessment due date, without an approved extension or without approved mitigating circumstance, will be penalised. The standard penalty is the reduction of the mark allocated to the assessment item by 10% of the total mark applicable for the assessment item, for each day or part day that the item is late (a 'day' for this purpose is defined as any day on which campus administration is open). Assessment items submitted more than ten days after the assessment due date are awarded zero marks.

Extensions to assignment deadlines based on mitigating circumstances shall be at the discretion of the Course Coordinator, and should be granted in writing. Mitigating circumstances are circumstances outside of the student's control that have had an adverse affect on the student's work or ability to work.

8. Special consideration

Students whose ability to submit or attend an assessment item is affected by sickness, misadventure or other circumstances beyond their control, may be eligible for special consideration. No consideration is given when the condition or event is unrelated to the student's performance in a component of the assessment, or when it is considered not to be serious.

Students must apply in writing to the Course Coordinator for special consideration within three days of the due date of the assessment item or exam.

When considering the application for special consideration, the Course Coordinator may take into account one or more of the following:

- the student's performance in other assessment in tasks in the subject;
- the severity of the event;
- the student's academic standing in other subjects and in the course; and
- any history of previous applications for special consideration, except where they indicate a chronic problem.

If an application for special consideration is accepted, any one of the following outcomes may be appropriate:

- no action is taken;
 - additional assessment or a supplementary examination is undertaken. Additional assessment may take a different form from the original assessment. If a student is granted additional assessment, the original assessment may be ignored at the discretion of the Course Coordinator. Consequently, a revised mark based on additional assessment may be greater or less than the original mark;
 - marks obtained for the completed assessment tasks are aggregated or averaged to achieve a percentage result;
 - the deadline for assessment is extended;
- the student is allowed to discontinue from the subject without failure. This is unlikely to occur after an examination or final assessment has taken place

9. Moderation procedures

To ensure consistent and appropriate feedback to students, WIN will implement one or more of the following moderation procedures:

- Multiple marking of the same assessment task by the same assessor or two different assessors (Internal moderation using assessment criteria);
- The use of external examiners and assessors for 20-50% of student assessment tasks (External moderation using assessment criteria)
- Model answers for exams and multiple choice tests;
- Blind marking of assessment tasks via student number instead of student name.

10. Assessment feedback

To minimise the number of requests for reviews of an assessment decision, WIN will provide students with feedback which enables them to understand the reason for their results.

11. Students deemed 'at risk'

The Course Coordinator will contact each student who is deemed to be 'at risk' and arrange an appointment for an academic counselling session. The student will also be advised of the possibility that conditions may be placed on their enrolment.

During the academic counselling session the Course Coordinator and student will determine what additional support will be provided to the student and an intervention strategy will be put in place. This may include, but is not limited to, the student:

- attending academic skills programmes;
- attending tutorial or study groups;
- receiving individual case management;
- attending counselling;
- receiving assistance with personal issues which are influencing progress;
- receiving mentoring; or
- a combination of the above and a reduction in course load.

A record of the academic counselling session will be signed by the Course Coordinator and the student and placed on the student's file.

12. Reasonable adjustment

Students with a disability may request reasonable adjustment to an assessment task to accommodate their disability. Adjustments to assessment must take into account the special characteristics of the student. Any adjustments made must be 'reasonable' so that they do not impose an unjustifiable hardship upon WIN.

A request for reasonable adjustment is made by the student in writing to the Lecturer for the subject affected.

Making a reasonable adjustment will involve varying the procedures for conducting an assessment, for example:

- allowing additional time for the completion of an assessment;
- extending deadlines for an assessment;
- varying question and response modalities for an assessment;
- providing or allowing additional resources in examinations.

13. Requirements for successful completion of a subject

Students must pass the final exam (if applicable) and achieve at least 50% of the total marks for the subject to pass the subject.

14. Resubmission

Where a student marginally fails a subject (i.e. has achieved a score of 46-49%) the Course Coordinator may recommend that the student be offered the option of completing additional assessable work which, if completed at the prescribed standard, will result in the student passing the subject. The grade awarded after the additional assessment is finalised is limited to P or F. If the student does not take up the opportunity to complete additional assessment work the grade remains as an F.

15. Grades

During each subject, students will be provided with an evaluation of their individual performance with reference to the criteria for each assessment task. Student performance in individual subjects of study shall be graded in accordance with the following guidelines:

Grade	Definition
High Distinction (outstanding performance) Code: HD Mark range: 85% and above	Complete and comprehensive understanding of the subject content; development of relevant skills to an outstanding level; demonstration of an extremely high level of interpretive and analytical ability and intellectual initiative; and excellent achievement of all major and minor objectives of the subject.
Distinction (very high level of performance) Code: D Mark range: 75-84%	Very high level of understanding of the subject content; development of relevant skills to a very high level; demonstration of a very high level of interpretive and analytical ability and intellectual initiative; and comprehensive achievement of all major and minor objectives of the subject.
Credit (high level of performance) Code: C Mark range: 65-74%	High level of understanding of the subject content; development of relevant skills to a high level; demonstration of a high level of interpretive and analytical ability and achievement of all major objectives of the subject; some minor objectives not fully achieved.
Pass (competent level of performance) Code: P Mark range: 50-64%	Adequate understanding of most of the basic subject content; development of relevant skills to a satisfactory level; adequate interpretive and analytical ability and achievement of all major objectives of the subject; some minor objectives not achieved.

Grade	Definition
Incomplete Grade (Not all work submitted) Code: I	Work has been of passing quality but is incomplete. See #16 for further explanation.
Non-graded Pass Code: NGP	Successful completion of a subject assessed on a pass/fail basis, indicating satisfactory understanding of subject content; satisfactory development of relevant skills; satisfactory interpretive and analytical ability and achievement in all major objectives of the subject.
Fail (unsatisfactory performance) Code: F Mark range: below 50%	Inadequate understanding of the basic subject content; failure to develop relevant skills; insufficient evidence of interpretive and analytical ability; and failure to achieve some or all major and minor objectives of the subject.
Fail (non-attempted assessments) Code: Z Mark range: below 50%	Failure to attempt 2 or more assessments, thus identifying a non-genuine attempt to engage in a subject.
Withdraw Without Failure Code: WD	Cancelled enrolment in the subject after the final date for withdrawal without failure (the census date).
Advanced Standing Code: AS	Credit has been granted for the subject following an application and its approval for Advanced Standing.

16. Incomplete Grade

This option is available to first semester students who did not submit a final assessment due to higher education adjustment problems. The highest grade that can be issued (if a student avails themselves of submitting an assessment after being awarded an Incomplete Grade) is a 50% pass. Students may only submit the final assessment for up to 2 weeks after the commencement of the next semester.

17. Publication of results

All grades must be reviewed and properly approved before publication. The Teaching and Learning Committee will nominate three of its members to sit at the end of each study period as the Review Committee to approve results prior to publication. At least one of the members of the Review Committee will be an independent member of the Teaching and Learning Committee. The student representative is not permitted to be a member of the Review Committee.

Once grades have been approved the Dean will ensure that the approved grade is recorded in the student database against the relevant subject.

Students will be notified their results at the end of each study period.

18. Review of an assessment decision

A student may request a review of an assessment decision. In the first instance, students should approach the Lecturer, where appropriate, to discuss their concerns about the assessment decision. Where the issue regarding the assessment decision is unable to be resolved at this level, a request for a review may be made in writing and lodged with the Course Coordinator within five working days of formal notification of the assessment result.

The grounds upon which the student may request a review of an assessment are:

- that the student believes that an error has occurred in the calculation of the grade; and /or
- a demonstration that the assessment decision is inconsistent with the published assessment requirements or assessment criteria.

Students should note that each review against an assessment decision is determined on its own merits without reference to other applications.

The Course Coordinator will normally respond to the request for a review of an assessment decision in writing within ten working days and may confirm or vary the original decision. All decisions relating to reviews of assessment decisions are sent to the Dean who compiles an annual report for review by the Teaching and Learning Committee.

If a student remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the review of an assessment decision they may utilise WIN's grievance handling procedures.