

Assessment Policy

Section 1 - Overview

(1) Rigorous assessment is integral to the maintenance of academic standards at unit and course level. Assessment must be fair, equitable, reasonable, transparent and valid. In the aligned curriculum, learning outcomes are clear; learning experiences are designed to assist student achievement of the learning outcomes, and carefully designed assessment tasks allow students to demonstrate progress towards attaining these outcomes. Assessment is thus linked to unit level learning outcomes and graduate attributes, which in turn reflect subject and/or course level learning outcomes and graduate attributes.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This policy sets out broad parameters surrounding the assessment of student learning in undergraduate and postgraduate units of study at the University of New England. Procedures for the setting of assessment tasks, marking, grading and maintaining standards are outlined in the Procedures for Assessment.

(3) This policy provides advice about assessment to students, and to staff involved in unit planning, teaching and/or marking and grading of assessment tasks.

(4) Consistency of policy across the university is desirable because it minimises confusion for students. Where schools need to develop their own assessment policies to meet specific discipline and school needs, the policies must normally be consistent with this broader university policy. Documentation of such school-based or discipline-based policies shall be published on a school web page. A link from the online unit is mandatory where they have been established.

(5) This policy applies to UNE and to all institutions, domestic and international, with which UNE has a partnership arrangement under which UNE accepts responsibility for equity and quality of assessment.

(6) This policy should be read in conjunction with the Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct Coursework Rules; the Student Behavioural Misconduct Rules; Academic Quality Management Policy; and the Glossary of key terms relating to academic and administrative activities roles and structures at UNE.

Section 3 - Policy

Overview of Assessment

(7) Assessment provides an opportunity for students to undertake learning and constitutes the process of collecting evidence and making judgments as to how well students have achieved the intended learning outcomes of a unit or course. It is the means by which progress or achievement is evaluated.

(8) The University of New England encourages and values all valid and reliable forms of assessment. The Assessment Policy and the associated Guidelines for Assessment allow for diversity so as not to restrict academic staff to a single learning and teaching approach. Assessment methods may include inter alia assignments, examinations, project work, seminar papers, field and laboratory work, and tutorial participation. Assessment is a key part of the teaching and learning environment. In evaluating assessment, the university values ethical behaviour and does not tolerate

dishonesty.

(9) Assessment enables students to demonstrate progress towards attaining learning outcomes. Learning outcomes define what students are expected to know, understand or be able to do, to be successful in a unit. Unit learning outcomes describe something demonstrable and measurable. Learning outcomes are an essential section of the unit information or handbook. They should:

- a. clearly communicate the type and depth of learning students are expected to achieve
- b. provide a benchmark for assessing prior learning for awarding advanced standing
- c. clearly communicate graduates' skills to prospective employers, and
- d. indicate to students how they might organise their learning program.

(10) The design and form of assessment tasks is normally determined by the unit coordinator. The design of assessment tasks needs to be informed by an awareness of the larger context of the major or the course, and the unit coordinator must bear in mind both the requirements of the unit and the role of the unit in the major or the course as appropriate. This policy does not limit the form of assessment to any particular type, but this policy must be used by unit coordinators when designing assessment tasks. If the unit coordinator finds problems in adhering to the policy requirements, she or he must seek approval for any variation from the policy from the Head of School well in advance of the unit being presented. The Head of School must report variations to the Assessment Policy to the Teaching and Learning Committee of Academic Board.

Diagnostic, Evaluation, Formative and Summative Assessment

(11) To fulfil its varied purposes, assessment can be:

- a. diagnostic, to provide information on students' prior knowledge at the start of a unit;
- b. formative, meaning the collection of information, usually through the informal assessment components of a unit, in order to improve teaching and learning. Formative assessment provides specific feedback to students and teaching staff about student progress, and helps teaching staff diagnose learning needs and design, negotiate and modify learning activities for groups and individuals, in order to enhance teaching and learning, and/or
- c. summative, meaning the collection of information through the formal assessment components of a unit, in order to improve teaching and learning, but also to contribute to the calculation of a student's final grade. Information collected for summative purposes is based on assessment tasks that reflect the range of concepts, processes, skills and attributes, including graduate attributes, as set down in the desired learning outcomes of a unit, and
- d. evaluative, meaning the collection of information to provide an indication of the effectiveness of teaching and learning process(es) in a course.

(12) Assessment can also be informative and used for recording and reporting purposes, which provides information about students' performance across programs and forms the basis of deciding the overall award for the program.

Unit Requirements

(13) Unit information must be provided to students at the beginning of the teaching period detailing assessment details including topics, assessment criteria, weighting of the task and moderation processes.

(14) The unit information or handbook must specify the following assessment details and criteria in an assessment brief for each assessment task:

- a. the type of task

- b. the topic of the task, which can only be changed if approved by the Head of School. Students must be notified of any such change in writing by email or letter. The precise wording of the topic has to be notified to students six weeks before the assignment due date or at the start of teaching period, whichever is the shorter period of time (see also Paragraph 22 Changes to Assessment tasks)
- c. the due date and submission time
- d. the number of marks for the assessment task and the weighting or percentage of the total marks achievable by completing the assessment
- e. the learning outcomes and graduate attributes to which the assessment relates, including, where relevant, the outcomes required by the external professional organisations (e.g. New South Wales Institute for Teachers Teaching Standards)
- f. the dimension or magnitude of the assessment as appropriate for the discipline (e.g. word length in the case of all written assignments; number of characters in character based languages, etc.)
- g. the criteria upon which the assessment will be marked
- h. the moderation processes in place for marking
- i. any special requirements.

(15) Unit requirements are also subject to General Rule 33.

Principles Underpinning Assessment Policy and Practices

(16) Assessment reflects unit learning outcomes.

(17) Assessment should be appropriate. There should be a match between each assessment task and:

- a. the nature and extent of concepts, thinking processes, skills and attributes, including graduate attributes, being assessed
- b. the level of the unit; the amount of assessment should reflect the unit's level (i.e. introductory or advanced and its online level)
- c. the mode of study (on campus, off campus).

(18) Assessment should provide students with feedback on their progress.

(19) Assessment should be fair, equitable, reasonable, transparent and valid, meaning that:

- a. All students are provided with adequate and appropriate learning opportunities throughout a unit to enable them to demonstrate their knowledge, thinking processes, skills and attributes, including graduate attributes through the set assessment tasks.
- b. All students are informed at the start of each teaching period about the assessment tasks associated with a unit, and the assessment criteria for each assessment item.
- c. When marking assessment tasks, all judgments about achievement are made against stated assessment criteria (criterion-referenced assessment).
- d. Moderation processes are an integral part of the assessment system for each unit where multiple markers are involved to ensure fair and equitable marking and grading of assessment tasks and maintenance of standards.

(20) Criterion-referenced assessment means that clear expectations are set out as to the expected level of achievement, skill or behavioural performance that will be taken to reflect a particular level of mark or grade. The standards of performance will be established on the basis of the professional judgment of the unit coordinator. There will be no pre-determined distribution of grade allocation (norm-referenced assessment) applied to assessments in university units.

(21) Processes and practices of the assessment system for any unit are transparent to teaching staff and the students.

(22) Unit assessment will be reviewed as part of regular unit reviews as mandated in the Academic Quality Management Policy.

(23) Changes to assessment tasks:

- a. Once the assessment requirements have been set down for a specific unit and either published on the web or distributed via unit materials (whichever occurs first), they may not be altered except in terms of delaying due dates and other minor details. In the event of such modifications, all affected students must be informed, in writing by email or letter, of the changes by the unit coordinator.
- b. Changes in the forms of assessment or in the number of assessment tasks are not permitted once the teaching period has commenced, except under the conditions highlighted in clause 72.
- c. Where the changes may cause students to incur extra costs, the students must be informed in writing.
- d. Changes to assessment other than those provided for in clause 72 are regarded as minor amendments.

(24) Emergency or Defence Force Personnel

(25) When advised of an unexpected deployment, the university will attempt to extend deadlines for submission of assignments for emergency or defence force personnel deployed as a result of national or international emergencies or disasters. Where extensions are possible, the maximum period of extension for completion of remaining work will be to the end of the next teaching period.

Timing of Assessments

(26) Due dates for assessment tasks may fall into any part of the teaching period. Dates must be chosen to allow feedback to be received by students before the next related assessment task is due and before the final examination.

(27) The timing of assessment tasks throughout a course should be managed so that students receive any necessary feedback before the next task and before the final examination (or equivalent tasks).

(28) Where possible, assessment tasks in units in highly structured degrees should be scheduled to avoid students having several assignments due in the same week.

Assessment Tasks

Non-examination tasks

(29) Assessment tasks designed for completion under non-examination conditions (e.g. periodic assignments throughout a teaching period of study, major papers due at the end of a teaching period, research reports, problem sets, laboratory or practicum reports, various types of construction, composition, or performance) provide maximal flexibility for student assessment. Each task should be considered for its appropriateness relative to the learning to be assessed, the feedback to be gained and clarity in structure, intent and expected response. Each task should be designed so that students lacking the opportunity to access key supplementary resources, unless access is a requirement of enrolling in the unit, are provided with alternatives of equal rigour.

- a. Formative and/or summative self-tests or progress check tasks, which may include online quizzes, allow for early and/or frequent feedback on progress towards achieving the learning outcomes. They are not mandatory components of a unit in that failure to take such a task will mean that the mark is forfeited but will not incur an NI result. A single summative self-test or progress check task shall normally constitute up to 5% of the final assessment. There can be more than one such task for a unit and the cumulative percentage for self-tests or progress checks (such as online quizzes) may be worth no more than a maximum of 20% of the total

assessment.

- b. Where a unit includes tests, either online or in class, they are mandatory components of a unit in that failure to take a test will mean that the mark is forfeited and will incur an NI result. An individual test shall constitute more than 5% and up to 20% of the final assessment for a unit and shall generally be of a lesser duration than an examination. There may be more than one test for a unit. Tests for internal students may be held only in normal teaching times. Tests for external students may be held during intensive schools. Students must be given due warning of any test that will count towards the final assessment.

Student self and peer assessment

(30) It is recognised that there may be units where, for pedagogical reasons, student self and/or peer assessments are sought as a valuable source of input into the unit assessment process. However, these self-assessments must always be obtained in conjunction with assessment judgments made by the unit coordinator. Under no circumstances should any individually based unit assessment, counting toward the aggregate mark for the unit, be placed entirely in the hands of the students themselves.

(31) Student self and peer assessment must not constitute the major assessment method used for an entire unit assessment program.

Examinations

(32) Examinations can be supervised, take home or online. They must conform to the Assessment by University Examination procedures (Annex B).

- a. Assessment tasks to be undertaken under formal examination conditions, whether university or school administered examinations, which are explicitly supervised, timed and controlled, must be designed to be completed within the time allotted. Examinations must be designed so that students have a realistic chance of completing them within the assigned time, because otherwise performance is confounded with reading speed and ability. Examination questions should address the learning outcomes to be achieved in the unit of study. Students must be informed of the format of the examination and of the link between the examination and the learning outcomes for the unit in the unit information or handbook. Assessment criteria for examinations, with the exception of multiple choice and other factual examinations, must be made available to students no later than two months before the start of the examination period.

Take home examination tasks

(33) Take home examinations are papers that students complete away from the university or examination venues. They are normally submitted through the university's originality detection software. The responsibility for administering such examinations lies with the school.

Online examinations

(34) Online examinations are examinations made available to students online for a limited period of a week or less. The responsibility for administering such examinations lies with the school. Online examinations are normally submitted through the university's originality detection software.

Amount of Assessment

(35) The Uniform Credit Point policy requires a six credit point unit to comprise a total of 150 hours of student workload (including study time, class contact hours, preparation and completion of assessment tasks). Assessment requirements must not place a study demand on an average student that would require the total of 150 hours of student effort to be exceeded.

(36) It is recognised that different disciplines and teaching philosophies may lead to different perceptions about what the appropriate amount of assessment should be for a specific unit of study. However, every unit must have at least one non-examination assessment task.

(37) For units in which the predominant type of assessment task is a written essay, or short paragraphs, the maximum word limit for a six credit point unit corresponds to the level of difficulty of the unit:

- a. 100 level units, 5000 words
- b. 200 or 300 or 400 level units, 6000 words
- c. 500 level and higher units, 7500 words

(38) A two-hour examination is deemed to be equivalent to 2000 words.

(39) These limits do not apply to assessment tasks in character-based languages, or tasks with equations and formulas or for online quizzes.

(40) Assessment by a single assessment task (unless the unit is a research dissertation unit, a special project unit, a reading unit, or a practical unit such as a teaching practicum or work experience unit) is not permitted, as it would place undue emphasis on a single event in time and therefore increase the risk of assessment inadequately reflecting the totality of a student's accomplishments in the unit.

(41) For units with one assessment task (see above), students must be informed in the unit outline about the drafting process involved and about how they will get feedback on their progress during the unit.

Weighting of Assessment Tasks

(42) In weighting assessment tasks, consideration must be given to the appropriate weighting to be given to each assessment task. In many cases, a simple average may be used, which means that each task carries equal weight. Alternatively, assessment tasks may be weighted in terms of their relative importance, expected word length, difficulty or complexity, or the amount of unit material expected to be covered. In these cases, the weighting system must be clearly explained in assessment documentation provided to students. For some units, a 'sliding weights' system may be employed where doing fewer optional assignments may be traded off against increasing weight on a formal final examination. All the unit's learning outcomes must still be addressed and any change in assessment tasks must be approved by the Head of School.

(43) A single examination must be weighted at least 30% and no more than 70% in the aggregate mark for any student.

Minimum Pass mark

(44) Where a specific minimum mark has to be achieved on an assessment component in order to pass a unit and/or where this mark may be other than 50%, the percentage value and rationale for this mark must be well justified.

Feedback on Assessment

(45) Feedback is any response made in relation to students' work such as an assessment task, a performance or product. Feedback is intended to inform students on the progress they have made towards achieving the learning outcomes of a unit. Feedback should be constructive, justify the mark and be related to the criteria. It should point students to ways in which they can improve their learning and achievement, and allow them to monitor and evaluate their progress against the unit's and/or course learning outcomes and graduate attributes. It can be given by a lecturer or tutor, an external assessor or a student peer.

(46) Feedback should be timely and developmental if the learner is to maximise their engagement with unit

requirements. Such feedback can fall into two broad categories:

- a. early in a unit, prior to any formal assessments, to ensure an awareness of course requirements and expectations
- b. after each assigned assessment task, but excluding invigilated examinations, so that students have sufficient opportunity to use feedback for improving subsequent performance, and
- c. feedback for international students shall be documented and provided on detection of a student as 'at risk' under the Early Intervention Strategy (Annex A).

Remarking and resubmission or previewing of assessments

Remarking of assessment tasks

(47) Students may request that an assessment task be remarked, in its original form, in circumstances where the student presents a case arguing that the original marking was unfair or inconsistent with marking guidelines. This request must be directly addressed to the unit coordinator, with a copy to the Head of School, by the student within ten working days of receipt of the original marked assessment task. It will be the unit coordinator's responsibility to arrange for the remarking to be done. Only a single remark will be permitted, and the result of the remark will be recorded as the final mark for that assessment task, irrespective of its position relative to the original mark. If the student remains dissatisfied with the outcome, then normal faculty procedures for handling appeals will be followed.

Assessment preview

(48) Students shall be advised that asking unit coordinators for preliminary reviews of any assessment tasks prior to formal submission is inappropriate and unfair to other students without that opportunity, unless the unit coordinator has clearly established, in writing, such a practice for all students enrolled in the unit.

Integrity of Assessment and Quality Assurance

(49) Regardless of the nature of the assessment task, students need to be provided with guidelines that define the scope of responses to the task. These guidelines can be in the form of specific criteria to be addressed and/or standards to be achieved.

(50) Moderation processes will be implemented to ensure that the integrity of criteria and/or standards developed by unit coordinators will be preserved across different markers. It is required where there is an element of subjectivity in the evaluation. It is not necessary for multiple choice assessment tasks or other tasks in which there is no interpretative response by the student. For the purposes of moderation:

- a. Criteria are the elements by which the quality of student work is to be judged.
- b. Standards describe the levels of achievement to be attained.
- c. Moderation processes are those processes that ensure a students' work can be judged consistently regardless of who marks the task. They will include pre-marking standardisation of criteria based on a sample of assignments. The sample size should 10% or ten assignments, whichever is the lesser figure.

(51) Where an assignment task is deemed to have failed by 5% or less of the marks for that task, the unit coordinator will arrange for it to be marked by a second marker. This does not apply to online quizzes, practical and multiple choice assessment tasks, theatre and music performances, and oral presentations and examinations.

(52) If an inconsistency is identified in the remarking process, the Head of School or nominee is responsible for adjusting the mark.

(53) Students will be informed in the unit information or handbook of the moderation processes that are implemented

for the assessment of student work.

Detection Tools for Plagiarism or other Academic Misconduct

(54) The university uses electronic and other methods to detect plagiarism or other academic misconduct and specifies conditions for the submission of assessment items to facilitate this. Conditions may be specified for courses, units, cohorts of students or for individual students. Obligations of academic staff to examine assessment items for plagiarism are set out in the Student Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct Policy.

Submission of Assessment

(55) Assessment items, including take home examinations and online examinations, will be submitted in electronic format through the university's originality measurement software except where:

- a. the Head of School advises the Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean, and he/she agrees, that in the case of a particular unit or particular assessment item electronic submission is not practical (assignments in languages other than English, Botany collections, fieldwork reports, etc.), or
- b. an individual student applies through Student Assist to the Head of School for an exemption on equity grounds. In consideration of equity, due consideration will be given to the student's special needs status, the requirements of the university's Communication Policy and General Rule 6.1.

(56) Students shall submit the required assessment tasks (e.g. online quizzes, tests, take home examinations, written and spoken assignments, and practical work) by the date specified by the school concerned. The date specified shall be no later than:

- a. in the case of units extending over two teaching periods or teaching periods which are formally examined, the day before the examination period for the second teaching period commences;
- b. in the case of units extending over one teaching period or teaching period, whether formally examined or not, and units extending over two teaching periods or teaching periods which are not formally examined, the day before the beginning of the examination period concerned.

(57) In special circumstances, the Head of School may grant an extension to a student beyond the date specified in (a) and (b), provided that such an extension does not prevent the School from submitting a result for that student to the Examinations and Results Unit at the appropriate time.

Staff and Student Responsibilities

(58) It is the responsibility of students to plan and organise their studies in order to meet the assessment commitments required of their units.

(59) It is the responsibility of the unit coordinator to ensure that assessment tasks are well designed allowing students to demonstrate that they have achieved the unit's learning outcomes and the graduate attributes.

(60) It is the responsibility of the course coordinator to ensure that students are not disadvantaged, or that there is minimal impact on assessment tasks and their marking, as a consequence of university-related activities, such as a teaching practicum, that may result in prolonged absences for students.

(61) Ultimate responsibility for the production and verification of individual student grades rests with the unit coordinator and the Chair of the Examiners Meeting.

Unit coordinator and other teaching staff

(62) It is the responsibility of the Head of School and unit coordinators to ensure that all unit assessment is conducted

fairly, competently, effectively, and in accord with learning outcomes. The unit coordinator must have active oversight of all aspects of assessment including the production of the final aggregate marks for each student and maintenance of appropriate records of each student's assessment task results.

Casual and other marking support

(63) Unit coordinators may enlist, with the agreement of the Head of School, competent casual support for marking assessment tasks as may be required to cope with the marking load for a unit. Students shall be informed if their assessment tasks are likely to be marked by someone other than the members of the teaching team and shall be advised of the moderation arrangements in place to ensure marking competence, fairness and consistency.

(64) Staff and tutors must declare a conflict of interest if they are tutoring students privately and may not mark in the unit that the students are undertaking.

(65) It is the responsibility of unit coordinators to ensure that assessment tasks are marked within the turnaround time specified in the unit information or handbook, and to ensure that feedback is given to students in a timely fashion. If marking is delayed because of malfunctions in university processes (e.g. the LMS or e-submission malfunctions), students shall be informed of the delay in writing by email or letter.

(66) A school committee will review and approve the grades submitted by unit coordinators for all units offered within a teaching period.

(67) After confirmation of results for a teaching period, any change to a confirmed result can only be made through the university's change of result process and requires the recommendation of the unit coordinator and the approval of the Head of School.

Match Between Assessment, Students and Units

Assessing on-campus and off-campus students

(68) Assessment tasks should be constructed with the resource needs of students in mind. Normally, all students will be expected to undertake the same assessment tasks in the same unit, regardless of their status as on-campus or off-campus students. There may be circumstances where, for sound pedagogical or resource-access reasons, different assessment tasks need to be set for on-campus and off-campus students. In such cases, the assessment must address the same learning outcomes, and overall workload and coverage of unit content associated with assessment tasks must be equivalent between on-campus and off-campus students. Additionally, a core of assessment amounting to 55% of the total marks must be identical unless the unit has been exempted from this requirement by the Head of School and the exemption approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean. Moderation must take place to ensure that the variable assessment tasks are marked consistently across cohorts.

Assessing students with Special Needs

(69) For students with a Special Need declared to UNE Student Assist, unit coordinators may be requested to provide alternative assessment methods. The university is obliged under government legislation to assist in the provision of alternative assessment methods that allow these students to be assessed against the unit outcomes. Alternative assessment methods must be arranged with the advice and support of UNE Student Assist to ensure their accordance with UNE policy for students with a disability. The alternative assessment tasks must be negotiated directly between the student and the unit coordinator with due consideration for equity and assessment validity. The agreed arrangements must be signed by both parties, with a copy lodged in the student's record.

Assessment in split-level and other non-standard units

(70) The same unit offered at two or more levels will have differing assessment requirements at each level even if the unit topics and materials are the same. These requirements may include for higher-level students: more rigorous

assessment tasks; more analytical depth and/or wider research or responses.

(71) For specialised individually tailored units such as Special Topics, generally undertaken by students at a more advanced level, the required assessment tasks shall be negotiated individually with each student and set out in written form. Assessment tasks in such units may not take the form of a formal examination administered by the university because of the administrative costs involved. However, if the Special Topic unit comprises completion of an undergraduate level unit, the assessment tasks for that undergraduate level unit may apply, including any formal examination administered by the university. The Head of School is responsible for notifying the Examinations and Results Unit about any such students.

Supplementary and alternative assessment

(72) There may be special circumstances, outside the provisions of special consideration and deferred assessment, where arrangements must be made for assessment tasks for particular students.

- a. Alternative assessment may, for example, be necessary if teaching resources such as prescribed texts are not available at short notice.
- b. Special individual arrangements may need to be made for additional assessment tasks to be set for students for whom the carrying out of a specific assessment task, as originally set out, is not possible (such as unanticipated resource access problems). These special arrangements must be directly negotiated between the student and the unit coordinator with due consideration given to issues of equity and assessment validity. The agreed arrangements must be signed by both parties, with a copy lodged in the student's record. Supplementary and alternative assessment arrangements shall only be considered for students with genuine documented hardship claims.

Assessment Extensions and Penalties for Late Submission Penalties Without an Extension

(73) It is recognised that unforeseeable events can disrupt students' study plans and in addition to formal extensions some flexibility will be granted to accommodate these events. Students must appreciate that the university also has a responsibility to provide swift and accurate feedback on assessments and delayed submissions can adversely affect the larger student body that submitted on time. Accordingly, the flexibility to accept late assignments is often limited. Students must also understand that late submission may impact adversely on their ability to benefit from feedback given to other students.

(74) Decisions on assignment extensions are made by the Head of School or his/her nominee in accordance with the university Extension Procedures at Annex D of this policy.

(75) All extensions in excess of the maximum extension period of 30 consecutive days for the assignment will require submission of a case under the Special Assessment Annex to this policy (Annex C).

(76) An assessment item that is submitted late without an extension will be penalised according to the school policy. The school policy must be clearly set out in the unit information or handbook and made available to students at the beginning of the teaching period. A school can only have one policy.

(77) The late assignment policy that shall be applied to an individual unit or within a particular school shall be the one published in the unit information or handbook, and as agreed by the school. In setting a unit or school-level policy, the Head of School shall be responsible for ensuring equity and consistency in its application.

(78) The following circumstances are unacceptable grounds for extensions:

- a. inability to have an assignment word processed by the due date
- b. other assignments due on or about the due date

- c. disk or ICT failure² unless publicly documented (ICT failure at the UNE server is treated at a global unit level by the school)
- d. foreseeable work commitments.

Assessment Criteria

(79) Every unit assessment item should have assessment criteria. These are essential elements of preparing a unit for offering in a teaching period. Assessment criteria for examinations should be prepared together with examination papers.

(80) Assessment criteria will generally take the form of an assessment framework designed to address the learning outcomes associated with the unit assessment.

(81) The assessment criteria for assessment tasks including take home and online examinations but not necessarily supervised examinations must be made public in the unit information or handbook when teaching begins.

(82) The assessment criteria must be distributed to all markers prior to moderation of marking.

(83) Assessment must reflect the learning outcomes of the unit. Consequently, marks for participation must be based on the quality of the contribution in relation to the learning outcomes.

(84) Heads of school are responsible for the quality assurance mechanisms used to ensure that assessment criteria are appropriate for each unit and are adhered to.

Return of Assessment

(85) This section does not apply to a unit wholly assessed by thesis or dissertation.

(86) Returnable assessment items (other than scripts from supervised examinations) should be marked and returned to students within 30 consecutive days after the final date for submission or extension date.

(87) All assessment items returned to students will have feedback that relates to assessment criteria. Feedback will be timely and pertinent to the criteria.

(88) Students may seek feedback on their performance in invigilated examinations by contacting the unit coordinator within 30 days of the final results for the unit being made public.

(89) The Head of School is responsible for ensuring that feedback is timely and in accordance with this policy.

(90) Marks are confidential and are to be disclosed only to the student concerned.

Recording and Publishing of Marks and Grades

(91) Students shall be given a numerical mark as well as a grade for each assessment task and for their final result. Chairs of examiners meetings and unit coordinators are jointly responsible for the accuracy of the uploaded marks and grades.

(92) An Examiners Meeting comprising appropriate course and unit coordinators will be convened by the Head of School and chaired by a member of academic staff nominated by the Head of School.

(93) The Examiners Meeting shall validate all final results (including any special examination application decisions) and the Chair of the Examiners Meeting and/or other nominee may be authorised by the meeting to validate late results and/or special examination applications.

University Grading System

(94) The university uses the following primary unit grading system:

HD High Distinction—equivalent to Honours Class I (H1) in intent, 7 on the GPA scale

(95) Excellent performance indicating complete and comprehensive understanding and/or application of the subject matter; achieves all basic and higher order intended unit objectives and graduate attributes linked to the assessment tasks; minimal or no errors of fact, omission and/or application present; clear and unambiguous evidence of possession of a very high level of required skills; demonstrated very high level of interpretive and/or analytical ability and intellectual initiative; very high level of competence. (Numerical conversion: scores and/or aggregate marks of 85% or above.)

D Distinction—equivalent to Honours Class II, Division 1 (H2A) in intent, 6 on the GPA scale

(96) Very good performance indicating reasonably complete and comprehensive understanding and/or application of the subject matter; achieves all basic and most higher-order unit objectives and graduate attributes linked to the assessment tasks; some minor flaws; clear and unambiguous evidence of possession of a high level of required skills; demonstrated high level of interpretive and/or analytical ability and intellectual initiative; high level of competence. (Numerical conversion: scores and/or aggregate marks between 75% and 84%.)

C Credit—equivalent to Honours Class II, Division 2 (H2B) in intent, 5 on the GPA scale

(97) Good performance indicating reasonable and well-rounded understanding and/or application of the subject matter; achieves all basic but only a few higher-order intended unit objectives and graduate attributes linked to the tasks; a few more serious flaws or several minor ones; clear and unambiguous evidence of possession of a reasonable level of most required skills; demonstrated reasonable level of interpretive and/or analytical ability and intellectual initiative; reasonable level of competence. (Numerical conversion: scores and/or aggregate marks between 65% and 74%.)

P Pass—equivalent to Honours Class III (H3) in intent, 4 on the GPA scale

(98) Satisfactory performance indicating adequate but incomplete or less well- rounded understanding and/or application of the subject matter; achieves many basic but very few or none of the higher-order intended unit objectives and graduate attributes linked to the assessment tasks; several serious flaws or many minor ones; clear and unambiguous evidence of possession of an adequate level of an acceptable number of required skills; demonstrated adequate level of interpretive and/or analytical ability and intellectual initiative; adequate level of competence. (Numerical conversion: scores and/or aggregate marks between 50% to 64%.)

N Fail—0 on the GPA scale

(99) Unsatisfactory performance indicating inadequate and insufficient understanding and/or application of the subject matter; achieves few or none of the basic and higher-order intended unit objectives and graduate attributes linked to the assessment tasks; numerous substantive errors of fact, omission and/or application present; clear and unambiguous evidence of non-possession of most or all required skills; insufficiently demonstrated level of interpretive and/or analytical ability and intellectual initiative; fails to address the specific criteria; inadequate level of competence. (Numerical conversion: scores and/or aggregate marks of less than 50%.)

NC Compulsory Fail—failed an assessment component that must be passed in order to pass the unit

(100) This grade is used when an assessment task, such as a final examination, that must be passed in order to pass the unit (as detailed in the Unit Requirements) has not been passed (resulting in a fail in the unit), but where the overall mark is 50% or higher.

NI Fail—did not satisfy unit requirements (0 on the GPA scale)

(101) One or more mandatory requirements for the completion of the unit (as detailed in the unit requirements) were not fulfilled.

S or US Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory (S = 4, US = 0 on the GPA scale)

(102) In some units, the grading system is organised on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory (pass/fail) basis. When this grading system is used the appropriate interpretive descriptors to apply will be those for the grade of at least Pass or Fail.

W Withdrawn

(103) The student withdrew from the unit without academic penalty.

(104) Honours grades: H1 (First Class Honours); H2A (Second class Honours Division 1); H2B (Second Class Honours Division 2); H3 (Third Class Honours).

(105) The university also uses a variety of grades to indicate administrative actions⁵ that are separate from academic assessment: YR (Result Next Teaching Period); WA (Withdrawn by Administration); WBF (Withdrawn by Faculty); RY (Result Next Teaching Period or Next Year—generally thesis or dissertation units); RU (Result Temporarily Unavailable); SR (Satisfied Requirements); RNS (Requirements Not Satisfied); SPE (Special Examination granted; arranged by Student Centre); SPS (Special Exam granted; arranged by School); SET (Special

(106) Extension of Time granted); AOS (Approved Overseas Study); I (Result Unavailable); WN (Withdrew after the date prescribed in the Principal dates and Deemed to have Failed); WFN (Withdrawn by Faculty and Deemed to have Failed); WUN (Withdrawn by University and Deemed to have Failed); UP (Ungraded Pass). Details of these grades are listed on the university's official academic transcripts and from the Examinations and Assessment Group of the Student Centre.

Grade point Scale

(107) University grades have a corresponding grade point according to the following table. Grade Point average (GPA) is used to chart a student's progression. The GPA is calculated using the following numerical values for the corresponding grades:

Grade	(109) Grade Point	(110) Percentage (%)
HD	7	85+
D	6	75-84
C	5	65-74
P	4	50-64
S	4	
N	0	0-49
NC	0	50+
NI	0	
US	0	
WN	0	
WFN	0	

WUN	0	
SR	No numerical score	
RNS	No numerical score	

Grade Point Average

(108) The grade point average (GPA) is a numerical score that summarises the student's academic performance in a course over the duration of the student's enrolment in the course. The GPA is generated by the Student System and may be viewed by a student through the student portal and may also be recorded on the Academic Record.

(109) The GPA is refreshed after each teaching period based on the student's results in that teaching period.

Calculating the grade point average

(110) The GPA is a numerical score that is the sum of the points deriving from the grade point scale achieved in each unit multiplied by the credit point value of the corresponding unit and divided by the total credit points attempted. Only units taken after the introduction of the seven-point grade point scale are included in the calculation. Units with the result of Satisfied Requirements (SR) are not included. There will be no course GPA for students whose studies span the introduction of GPA calculations.

Monitoring Progression of Students

(111) The university monitors the progression and performance of international students in accordance with the Early Intervention Strategy.

Minimum Course Progression

(112) Students enrolled in Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas, Degrees of Bachelor, Graduate Certificates, Graduate Diplomas and degrees of Master by Coursework must make adequate progress in their course. Adequate progress means maintaining a Grade Point Average (GPA) greater than 3.

(113) A student who does not make adequate progress in a course must be:

- a. warned by the course coordinator if his/her GPA is 3 or less
- b. enrolled subject to conditions set by the course coordinator if his/her GPA is 3 or less
- c. excluded by the course coordinator from the course for a stated period if his/her GPA is 2 or less after two teaching periods in which he/she enrolls.

(114) If a student asked to show cause why they should not be excluded or their enrolment terminated provides a satisfactory explanation, they may be permitted to continue their enrolment but may be subject to conditions.

(115) Before setting conditions or exclusion or termination the university will give the student an opportunity to show cause why such action should not be taken. If the student does not respond to the opportunity within the time granted then the university may take such action as it deems appropriate.

(116) If the university decides to set conditions or exclude or terminate, it will inform the student of the conditions and of its reason for taking that action.

(117) A student, who has not taken an opportunity to show cause or has served at least two teaching periods under exclusion, may seek leave to appeal for reinstatement to the course coordinator, whose decision shall be final. A student who has shown cause and has had conditions set, or been excluded, may not appeal for lifting of the

conditions or exclusion until two teaching periods have passed.

(118) If a student has been excluded twice, their enrolment will be terminated.

(119) If a student is enrolled in more than one course, and if any one (or more) of the current course GPAs is below the minimum GPA requirements, the university may at its discretion take any of the actions of warning, setting conditions, exclusion or termination in respect of any or all of the student's courses.

Effects of Unforeseeable Circumstances of Unit Completion

(120) A student whose studies and/or assessments are interrupted by unforeseeable circumstances may apply for special assessment. In exceptional cases, applications for special assessment may be accepted after the unit grades are published.

(121) Alternatively, a student may voluntarily withdraw from a unit at any time or seek special leave under the special assessment procedures (Annex C) for withdrawal after the results are published.

(122) Withdrawal from a unit is subject to General Rule 34.

Section 4 - DEFINITIONS

(123) Aggregate mark means the final numerical mark computed for any student on the basis of combining the outcomes from two or more distinct assessment tasks. Aggregate combining rules may be based on either a simple averaging principle (all tasks counting equally) or a weighted averaging principle (where tasks are differentially weighted — see Assessment Weighting). Some form of mark standardisation or scaling process may precede the aggregation process.

(124) Assessment is the deliberate process of making judgments about how well a student has achieved the desired learning outcomes of a unit of study. This process provides feedback to both students and teaching staff about student learning needs and the appropriateness and effectiveness of teaching support. Assessment can be for diagnostic, formative or summative purposes.

(125) Assessment criteria are the statements that express in explicit terms how performance of desired learning outcomes might be demonstrated.

(126) Assessment system means the processes and practices involved in planning assessment, implementing assessment through teaching and learning, marking and grading assessment tasks, and reviewing and evaluating assessment.

(127) Assessment tasks are compulsory or optional activities or exercises, which have an explicit intent to assess student progress or learning achievement in a unit of study. Assessment tasks can be designed for formative or summative purposes.

(128) Assessment weighting means the percentage of emphasis placed on each assessment task to be combined to form the aggregate mark for a student. For example, a unit may specify differential assessment weights such that an individual essay assignment will be worth 30%, a group-based project worth 25% and a final examination worth 45%. Alternatively, a unit may specify equal assessment weights such that two individual essay assignments will each be worth 25%, a group-based project worth 20% and a final examination worth 30%. Weighting should reflect relative demands on the student.

(129) Criterion-referenced assessment is the specific approach to assessment adopted by UNE. This approach involves the assessment of the extent to which a student has achieved the learning outcomes of a unit, measured against

previously specified assessment criteria.

(130) Formative assessment means the collection of information, usually through the informal assessment components of a unit, in order to improve teaching and learning. Formative assessment provides specific feedback to students and teaching staff about student progress, helps teaching staff to diagnose learning needs, and to design, negotiate and modify learning activities for groups and individuals, in order to enhance teaching and learning.

(131) Grade means the final letter conversion of the aggregate mark attained by a student undertaking a unit. The letter conversions translate the numerical aggregate mark into a statement of level of achievement. The interpretation of a grade shall be clearly taken to represent a summary of the student's academic achievement in a unit. Letter conversions that indicate special outcomes from a unit of study, such as Failed Incomplete, various types of withdrawal and unavailability of results are not considered as grades in the context of this policy.

(132) Head of School, in this policy, refers to Head of School or nominee

(133) Minimum pass mark means the aggregate mark, which, for any unit, is 50%. It is possible to establish a minimum pass mark greater than 50% for any specific assessment task. This means that a student must pass that task, at the required level, in order to pass the entire unit, irrespective of the magnitude of the student's final aggregate mark.

(134) Moderation is the process of ensuring that assessment criteria are consistently applied by different markers and that grades are allocated consistently with reference to how well the stipulated criteria are met. Moderation involves teaching staff and markers discussing and reaching agreement about how the criteria are demonstrated at different standards for each assessment task (e.g. through the establishment of a marking scheme). Samples of students' assessed work are then checked to verify that assessment criteria have been consistently applied.

(135) Norm-referenced assessment is assessment that expresses scores in rank order, based on a distribution of scores. It is comparative, indicating one student's performance against another's, and usually represented on a bell-shaped curve. Norm-referenced assessment is not an acceptable approach at UNE.

(136) Reliable assessment is independent of which assessor is involved (inter-assessor reliability) and independent of where and when a particular assessor marks students' work (intra-assessor reliability). Reliability is synonymous with consistency, fairness, and (as far as can be achieved) lack of subjectivity.

(137) Summative assessment means the collection of information through the formal assessment components of a unit, in order to improve teaching and learning, but also to contribute to the calculation of a student's final grade. Information collected for summative purposes is based on assessment tasks that reflect the range of concepts, processes, skills and attributes, including graduate attributes, as set down in the desired learning outcomes of a unit.

(138) Transparent assessment is assessment that clearly defines the standards that students are expected to attain to gain particular awards, and the nature of the evidence that they will need to furnish to demonstrate their achievement of the published intended learning outcomes.

(139) Valid assessment demonstrably measures that which it sets out to measure, that is, students' achievement of the published learning outcomes of their unit. Principally, this means that assessment tasks have content validity. Content validity means that the content, skills and expectations of learning incorporated into an assessment task cover the intended learning outcomes and correlate with the extent and depth of learning required, given the emphasis on and coverage of the subject matter in the unit. Content validity is not something measured after the fact, it is a quality designed into assessment tasks from the start. Another important facet of content validity is the appropriate weighting of assessment tasks through a unit of study, to match the emphasis on and coverage of the subject matter. From a student perspective, content validity ensures there is congruence between the assessment tasks and expectations about the learning that the student has to display.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	27th July 2015
Review Date	7th December 2017
Approval Authority	Council
Approval Date	7th December 2012
Expiry Date	21st February 2016
Unit Head	Richard Dobek Executive Principal Student Experience
Enquiries Contact	Student Experience +61 2 6773 1795