

Assessment Guidelines

Section 1 - Overview & Scope

- (1) These Guidelines provide a framework for the design and administration of assessment tasks at the University of New England (UNE).
- (2) These Guidelines apply to all coursework programs of study offered by UNE. The Guidelines do not apply to higher degree by research courses.
- (3) Appeals against assessment processes and decisions are addressed in the [Assessment Appeals Guidelines](#).
- (4) Within these Guidelines:
- a. Part A covers the design of assessment tasks;
 - b. Part B covers the administration, submission and marking of assessment tasks;
 - c. Part C covers supervised examinations;
 - d. Part D covers special assessments; and
 - e. Part E covers final grading for units.

Part A - Design of assessment tasks

Purpose

(5) Assessment tasks at UNE provide students with opportunities to demonstrate achievement of course and unit learning outcomes. They are designed to maximise student learning through progressively building students' knowledge and skills, and may be formative or summative.

Design and approval

- (6) Within the parameters of these Guidelines, the Unit Coordinator has discretion in designing the type, content, number, volume, weighting and timing of assessment tasks and examinations.
- (7) Assessment tasks must enable the achievement of unit learning outcomes and each assessment task must have clear assessment criteria that enable students to meet the requirements of the task, demonstrate the related learning outcomes and understand the grading or marking structure and levels of achievement for each grade or mark.
- (8) With the exception of units with theses, each unit must include more than one assessment task to enable a comprehensive assessment of a student's performance. The timing of assessment tasks must be reasonable and consider factors that include, but are not limited to:
- a. providing students with feedback on one or more assessment tasks before the census date to allow consideration of progress;
 - b. the amount of work required in, and the weighting of, each assessment task within a unit;
 - c. any other course-related activities such as placements; and
 - d. allowing sufficient time for marking and providing feedback.

(9) Assessment tasks must be weighted according to the scaffolding of tasks within the unit, difficulty or level of challenge, and the amount of work expected of the student to meet task requirements. The following also applies to weighting:

- a. unless approved during the unit approval process (e.g. for thesis or special research units), a single assessment task must not exceed more than 60% of the final mark of the unit;
- b. where a unit has one supervised examination, the exam must account for at least 20% of the final mark of the unit and where a unit has multiple supervised examinations (such as supervised quizzes), each exam must account for at least 10% of the final mark of the unit;
- c. selected response assessment tasks (e.g. multiple-choice and true/false questions) should generally not exceed 50% of the final mark of the unit;
- d. any assessment task where it is compulsory to achieve a specified minimum mark to pass the unit must account for at least 10% of the final mark of the unit;
- e. Honours theses or equivalent must account for a minimum of 25% of the final mark for the Honours degree;
- f. any peer assessment must not exceed 10% of the final mark of the unit; and
- g. any assessed class or online participation must not exceed 15% of the final mark of the unit (participation must have clear criteria and cannot be simply attendance in person or online).

(10) The following applies to the volume of assessment:

- a. The maximum word limits for a six credit point unit where the assessment tasks are predominately written are:
 - i. 100 level units – 5000 words;
 - ii. 200, 300 or 400 level units – 6000 words; and
 - iii. 500 level and higher units – 7500 words.
- b. A two hour examination is equivalent to 2000 words.
- c. A different limit may be approved through the unit approval process in the [Course and Unit Design and Approval Guidelines](#).
- d. These limits do not apply to assessment tasks for discipline-specific tasks (e.g. language proficiency, music notation or mathematics).

(11) The following also apply to the design of assessment tasks:

- a. where completion of an assessment task is non-mandatory, it is recommended that these tasks occur early in the teaching period (preferably before census date), not solely achieve unit-level learning outcomes and that each task should account for a small weighting (less than 15%);
- b. the types and volume of assessment, and style and quantum of feedback, may vary considerably throughout the University to reflect different discipline and professional standards;
- c. assessment tasks may vary within units where the units are offered in different modes or locations though equivalent learning outcomes and expectations on students are required;
- d. for split-level units, the assessment criteria for the tasks at each level must align to the learning outcomes of each level; and
- e. for specialised units such as special topics, the type, content, number, weighting and timing of assessment tasks will be negotiated and agreed between the Unit Coordinator and the student. This requirement will be outlined in the unit information in the UNE Course Handbook. If the assessment tasks are not agreed, the student will not be able to undertake the unit.

(12) The number, type, volume, weighting and unit learning outcomes in assessment tasks in a unit are considered and approved in the processes outlined in the [Course and Unit Design and Approval Guidelines](#).

Part B - Administration, submission and marking of assessment tasks

Information to students

(13) An outline of the type of assessment tasks (including any examination) for a unit will be available on the UNE Course Handbook. With the exception of specialised units and assessment tasks arranged through Student Access and Inclusion, the Unit Coordinator will, at least one week prior to the start of the relevant teaching period, ensure that the following information is provided on the unit site in the Learning Management System:

- a. the type, length and weighting of assessment tasks, including any examination options;
- b. the learning outcomes being assessed;
- c. due dates, times and required process for submission;
- d. details of any referencing style to be used;
- e. any additional requirements of the tasks, including whether they are mandatory and the mark required to pass the task; and
- f. advice around the granting of extensions and penalties for late submission.

(14) Assessment tasks cannot be modified after they have been published in the Learning Management System, except in exceptional circumstances with the approval of the Head of School. The Unit Coordinator is responsible for notifying students of any changes through the Learning Management System.

Submission

(15) When completing assessment tasks, students must comply with all stated requirements and abide by the principles of academic integrity as outlined in the [Student Coursework Academic Misconduct Rule](#). Students must complete the academic integrity module prior to the submission of their first assessment task in their first teaching period of enrolment.

(16) Where the assessment type allows, students must submit assessment tasks through UNE's originality measurement software unless granted an exemption by the relevant Head of School.

(17) Students must submit assessment tasks by the specified due date and time unless they have received an approved extension. The Head of School, in consultation with the School Education Committee or equivalent, will determine each School's process for receiving and responding to extension requests but the following provisions apply across UNE:

- a. Extension requests should be made as early as possible and before the due date and time of the assessment task. Requests submitted after the due date and time will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.
- b. The normal maximum extension is up to seven (7) calendar days and may be granted for reasons including personal health issues, unexpected work or family commitments or other extenuating circumstances. While generally requests will be granted without supporting evidence, a Unit Coordinator or School representative may request supporting documentation such as a medical certificate, a signed letter from an employer or a statutory declaration.
- c. Extensions longer than seven (7) calendar days may be granted for more serious personal health issues, unexpected work or family commitments or other extenuating circumstances that impact the student's capacity to complete the assessment task within an additional seven (7) days of the original due date. Requests for these extensions will require supporting documentation.
- d. If an extension is required beyond the final day of the relevant teaching period, students must apply for a special extension of time through the process outlined in Part D.
- e. If an extension for a student allows submission after the release of marks and feedback for the assessment task

to other students, the Unit Coordinator may, at their discretion, require the student to complete a suitable alternative assessment task.

(18) Assessment tasks submitted after the due date and time without an approved extension will incur a late submission penalty. The following provisions apply:

- a. A deduction of 5% of the total marks for the assessment task for each calendar day or part day after the due date will be applied. The relevant Associate Dean Teaching and Learning, considering disciplinary and professional standards, may approve a lower penalty for individual units. The Unit Coordinator will advise students of the lower penalty through the Learning Management System.
- b. An assessment task received more than ten (10) calendar days after the due date without an approved extension will receive 0% for the task. The relevant Associate Dean Teaching and Learning, considering disciplinary and professional standards, may approve an alternative penalty for individual units.
- c. Where a task is mandatory to submit in order to complete a unit, a task received more than ten (10) calendar days after the due date but within the relevant teaching period will be deemed as having been submitted.
- d. The Unit Coordinator will inform affected students when late submission penalties are applied.

Marking and feedback

(19) The Head of School (or delegate) is responsible for ensuring that all marking of assessment tasks is undertaken by appropriately qualified academic staff. Marking staff must assess the task against the pre-determined assessment criteria, and identify and report on cases of possible academic misconduct to the Unit Coordinator (see [Student Coursework Academic Misconduct Rule](#)).

(20) Other than theses and dissertations, assessment tasks will be marked and marks provided to students within twenty-one (21) calendar days after either the submission due date or the actual submission date (if after the submission due date). Examinations should be marked and marks provided to students prior to final grades being released. If marking is delayed for any reason, the Unit Coordinator will ensure students are informed of the delay and an expected timeframe for completion.

(21) The Unit Coordinator will organise moderation of marks where there is subjectivity in the marking of an assessment task and more than one marker is involved. Students should be informed if multiple markers are involved in the unit.

(22) Unit Coordinators must ensure that students are provided with actionable feedback about their academic performance to enable development in knowledge and skills. Feedback will be constructive, justify the mark and relate to the assessment criteria. For assessment tasks such as selected-response or auto-marking tasks, generic feedback can be the sole source of feedback. For units with only one assessment task (e.g. an honours thesis), students must be provided with formative feedback during the unit.

(23) In relation to learning assessed through a student placement, the provisions of the [Work Integrated Learning Rule](#) and [Work Integrate Learning Procedure](#) apply.

(24) In relation to thesis or dissertation marking:

- a. the Head of School will establish a process for the selection of examiners and moderation of marks;
- b. a thesis or dissertation must be examined by at least two examiners, who may be internal or external to UNE; and
- c. a supervisor cannot be an examiner of their student's thesis or dissertation.

Part C - Supervised examinations

(25) Supervised examinations at UNE are timed activities that provide students with adequate time to reasonably comprehend and respond to set questions and demonstrate achievement of relevant learning outcomes. Supervision must ensure that students do not have access to unauthorised resources and are unable to communicate with third parties during the examination.

(26) Examinations at UNE will normally be provided online. The Examinations Office is responsible for managing supervised examinations.

Development of examinations

(27) The maximum length of any single examination will be three (3) hours in duration (exemptions may be granted through Study Access Plans).

(28) Unit Coordinators must ensure there are assessment criteria for each examination.

(29) Examination questions must be provided in the appropriate format and submission mode by the dates set by the Examinations Office. Permission to make changes to examinations once submitted must be sought from the Manager Examinations.

General provisions for examinations

(30) The Examinations Office will inform students of the examination timetable or availability window at least four (4) weeks before the examination.

(31) Failure to attend the examination will result in a mark of 0% being awarded for the examination. If there are reasonable circumstances for missing the exam, a student may apply for special assessment (see Part D).

(32) At the beginning of each examination, students must make available to exam supervisors either their valid UNE identification card or a Government issued photo identification such as a driver's license or passport.

(33) Access to aids or additional materials are not permitted during examinations unless indicated in the instructions in the examination document or agreed beforehand with the Unit Coordinator and advised to the Examinations Office. The Unit Coordinator will notify students of any allowable aids or additional materials in advance of the examination.

(34) During the examination, students are required to:

- a. follow any instructions indicated on the examination document;
- b. follow any reasonable instructions from invigilators or Examinations Office staff; and
- c. abide by the principles of academic integrity as outlined in the [Student Coursework Academic Misconduct Rule](#).

(35) Failure to follow reasonable instructions may constitute academic misconduct under the [Student Coursework Academic Misconduct Rule](#) and/or [Student Behavioural Misconduct Rules](#).

(36) Following the examination, students will be able to view their responses if they place their request in writing to the Unit Coordinator within twenty (20) working days of the final results for the unit being made available to the student.

Additional requirements for online examinations

(37) UNE will set an examination availability window of at least twenty-four (24) hours for each online examination (a shorter time period requires approval from the relevant Dean) and notify students of the window through the Learning

(38) Students are required to book an exam time within the availability window and sit the examination at the selected time. A student who can demonstrate that they cannot sit the examination during the availability window can request an alternative availability window through the special assessment process in Part D.

(39) During the availability window, if a student misses their selected time due to unavoidable reasons, they can contact the Examinations Office and subject to availability, an alternative time to sit the examination within the availability window may be organised.

(40) To undertake an online exam, students must meet certain requirements around their identification, computer, webcam, and physical space which involves the collection of personal information. This is required to:

- a. confirm a student's identity when undertaking the examination;
- b. ensure the student's computer has the system capability to complete the examination; and
- c. ensure the security and integrity of the exam conditions at the student's location.

(41) The requirements are outlined in further detail on the Examinations website and are provided to students in advance of each examination period.

(42) If a student encounters technical issues when commencing or during the online exam, the invigilator will attempt to resolve the issue. If the invigilator cannot resolve the issue, it will be escalated to the Examinations Office for resolution and advice. If the Examinations Office cannot resolve this issue, another opportunity to sit the examination will be provided.

(43) Unless approved by the Examinations Office or Student Access and Inclusion, students must not be absent from the view of the exam supervisor for any reason and for any period during the examination. Any unauthorised absence will be reported to the Examinations Office and may be escalated for investigation under the [Student Coursework Academic Misconduct Rule](#).

Alternative assessments to online examinations

(44) If a student has considered the requirements for online examinations in clauses 40 and 41 and is unable to meet the systems or conditions requirements or does not consent to the collection of personal information, the student must apply for an alternative assessment through the UNE website within four (4) weeks of the commencement of the teaching period. If an examination is scheduled within the first four weeks of the teaching period, the application must be made at least one (1) week before the examination.

(45) Subject to any inherent requirements and the requirements of any accrediting body, the Unit Coordinator will provide an alternative assessment for completion within the relevant teaching period. As with all assessment tasks, alternative assessments must be designed in accordance with the provisions of Part A of these Guidelines and must enable the student to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes assessed through the online examination. Unless specified by an accrediting body, the alternative assessment is not required to be a supervised examination.

(46) If a Unit Coordinator (for reasons such as accrediting body requirements) wishes to provide a supervised paper-based examination as an alternative assessment, a request (approved by the relevant Associate Dean Teaching & Learning) must be made to the Examinations Office before the commencement of the relevant teaching period for decision by the Executive Principal Education Futures.

(47) If a paper-based examination can logistically be accommodated and is approved, the Examinations Office will inform the student of the date, time and location of their examination.

- a. For on-campus students, examinations will be in Armidale.

- b. For online students within Australia, travel of up to 200 kilometres to an examination centre may be required.
- c. For online students outside Australia, travel of up to 300 kilometres to an examination centre may be required. Students wishing to sit an exam outside Australia must contact the Examinations Office to discuss arrangements and a fee (published on the UNE website) will be payable.

Part D - Special Assessments

(48) Due to personal health issues, unforeseen technical issues, unexpected work or family commitments or other extenuating circumstances, a student may:

- a. have an adverse performance in an assessment task or examination; or
- b. be unable to sit an examination or complete an assessment task within the relevant teaching period.

(49) If any of the situations in clause 48 occur, a student may wish to apply for special assessment, and provide any supporting evidence, through the UNE website. Applications for special assessment must be made within five (5) working days of the examination date or assessment task due date. Late applications may be accepted at the discretion of the Course Coordinator (or delegate).

(50) The Examinations Office will process applications and provide to the Course Coordinator (or delegate) who will consider the application on its merits.

(51) The Course Coordinator (or delegate) can decide to grant:

- a. resubmission of the assessment task: some assessment tasks such as group assessments or tasks with a short marking and feedback period may be unsuitable for resubmission;
- b. deferred examination;
- c. special consideration up to a maximum of three (3) percentage points on top of the student's current total unit (not individual assessment) mark;
- d. special extension of time: the maximum amount of extension allowable is the last day of the equivalent teaching period immediately following the teaching period in which the student was enrolled in the unit or for completion of compulsory practical experience/practicum/praxis, is the last day of the third teaching period after the original enrolment;
- e. a passing grade for the unit if the student has satisfactorily completed assessment tasks worth at least two thirds of the marks for a unit and has achieved all relevant learning outcomes; or
- f. withdrawal without failure.

(52) The Examinations Office will aim to notify students of the decision within ten (10) working days of receipt of the application. If a special assessment is granted, the following apply:

- a. resubmission of the assessment task: the Unit Coordinator will determine and inform the student of the due date of the resubmitted assessment. The final mark awarded will be the higher mark between the original or resubmitted mark.
- b. deferred examination: the Examinations Office will organise a suitable date for an examination with the student. The examination will be comparable to the original examination. If the student sits the deferred examination, the final mark awarded will be the higher mark between the original or resubmitted mark.
- c. special consideration: the Unit Coordinator will apply the amount of special consideration granted by the Course Coordinator.
- d. special extension of time: the Examinations Office will inform the student of the new due date. The Unit Coordinator may at their discretion require the student to complete the original task or a suitable alternative if the integrity of the original task could be compromised. A special extension of time may prevent a student

progressing to other units if completion of the unit for which the extension was granted is a prerequisite for the other units.

(53) If the application is rejected, the student will be informed of the reason for the decision and information on the appeals process (see [Assessment Appeals Guidelines](#)).

Supplementary assessment

(54) The relevant Unit Coordinator must offer a supplementary assessment to a student who is in their final teaching period before graduation and because of the following circumstances is unable to graduate:

- a. has an aggregate result between 45% and less than 50% in a unit; or
- b. has a mark of between 45% and less than 50% in any assessment item where a mark of 50% or higher is mandatory to pass the unit.

(55) The student will not be eligible for a supplementary assessment if it has been determined that they engaged in academic misconduct in the unit.

(56) The Unit Coordinator must:

- a. ensure the supplementary assessment is comparable in type and content to at least one of the original assessment tasks in the unit and allows the student to demonstrate achievement of the unit learning outcomes not achieved;
- b. provide a due date for the supplementary assessment that provides sufficient time for the student to demonstrate achievement.

(57) In order to pass the unit, the student must achieve a mark of 50% or higher in the supplementary assessment. If achieved, the student will receive a maximum mark of 50% for the unit.

Reasonable adjustments for students with additional needs or particular educational requirements

(58) Students with health conditions or personal circumstances who require adjustments to be made to assessment tasks or examinations should contact Student Access and Inclusion (before the commencement of the teaching period where possible). Student Access and Inclusion will work with the student (or representative) and relevant staff members to arrange reasonable adjustments or an alternative form of assessment task. Alternative assessment methods must be arranged with the advice and support of Student Access and Inclusion to ensure accordance with the Disability Standards for Education 2005, under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth).

Part E - Final grading

(59) The grades used by UNE are outlined in the University's [Grading System](#).

(60) Each School must have a Board of Examiners, chaired by the Head of School or nominee, which reviews and approves final results for all units in each teaching period. Students should note that results are not final until approved by the Board of Examiners and released.

(61) The Board of Examiners can:

- a. authorise the Chair to approve late changes to results after the Board of Examiners' meeting and prior to the release of final results; and
- b. identify units in which the assessment outcomes are unsatisfactory and refer these to the Head of School.

(62) The Examinations Office is responsible for coordinating the release of final results to students. After final results are confirmed, any changes can only be approved by the Head of School (or delegate).

Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

Executive Principal Education Futures	Decides on requests to hold paper-based examinations. Regularly monitors and provides an annual report to Teaching and Learning Committee and Academic Board on the operation of, and compliance with, these Guidelines.
Dean	Decides on requests for examination availability windows shorter than the UNE standard.
Associate Dean Teaching and Learning	Decides on requests for alternative late submission penalties for individual units. Considers supporting requests to hold paper-based examinations.
Head of School	Decides on requests to change published assessment tasks. Determines School's process for receiving and responding to extension requests. Ensures marking of assessment tasks is undertaken by appropriately qualified academic staff. Establishes School's process for selection of examiners and moderation of marks for theses or dissertations. Approves late changes to final results.
Board of Examiners	Reviews and ratifies final results for units within relevant School in each teaching period
Course Coordinator	Decides on requests for special assessment
Unit Coordinator	Design assessment tasks in accordance with these Guidelines. Provides information on unit assessment tasks on the Learning Management System at least one week prior to the start of the relevant teaching period. Notifies students of any changes to published assessment tasks. Manages extension process (if required by School process). Informs impacted students of any late submission penalties applied. Ensures assessment tasks are marked and marks returned to students within 21 calendar days. Notifies students of any delay to marking timeframes. Organises moderation of marks where required. Ensures students are provided with actionable feedback. Informs Examinations Office of required examination information, including allowable aids or additional material. Provides alternative assessments to online examinations as required. Actions decisions of Course Coordinator on special assessment. Offers supplementary assessments to students where required.
Examinations Office	Responsible for centrally managed supervised examinations, including informing students of examination timetables, assisting with requests for alternative times, assisting with technical issues, and escalating potential academic misconduct. Processes requests for special assessment, and notifies students of outcomes. Coordinates release of final results to students.
Assessment markers	Mark assessments against pre-determined assessment criteria. Report on possible academic misconduct to the Unit Coordinator.
Student Access and Inclusion	Works with students and relevant staff to arrange adjustments to assessment tasks or examinations.
Education Enterprise	Provides support and advice to staff in designing assessment tasks.
Students	Complete and submit assessment tasks and examinations in accordance with these Guidelines and abide by principles of academic integrity. Lodge any requests for extensions, alternative assessments or special assessment as soon as possible (or within required timeframes) and provide supporting evidence as required.

Section 2 - Authority and Compliance

(63) The Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer, consistent with the [Functions of the Vice-Chancellor Rule](#), makes these Guidelines.

(64) These Guidelines have the effect of a Policy and UNE Representatives and students must observe these Guidelines.

(65) These Guidelines are consistent with the requirements for assessment under the [Higher Education Standards Framework](#) and the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#).

(66) The following records must be kept:

- a. evidence of the design and approval of assessment tasks (see [Course and Unit Design and Approval Guidelines](#)).
- b. decisions relating to extension requests, late submission requests, special assessments, supplementary assessments and adjustments to assessment tasks or examinations for a minimum of twenty (20) days from the release of final results for each teaching period where no appeal has been lodged. If an appeal has been lodged, the relevant decision must be kept until the end of any internal or external appeal period.
- c. marked assessment task and examinations for a minimum of twenty (20) days (or longer for accreditation or pedagogical reasons) from the release of final results for each teaching period where no appeal has been lodged. If an appeal has been lodged, the relevant assessment task must be kept until the end of any internal or external appeal period.

(67) These Guidelines operate as and from the Effective Date. With the exception of the following clauses, the Effective Date of these Guidelines is the first day of the teaching period for Trimester 1 2021:

- a. Clause 9: Effective Date is the first day of the teaching period for Trimester 2 2021. While units are encouraged to adopt this clause as soon as practicable, weightings of assessment tasks that do not align with these Guidelines can remain until the effective date.
- b. Clause 26: Effective Date is the first day of the teaching period for Trimester 2 2021. While units are encouraged to adopt this clause as soon as practicable, examination lengths that do not align with these Guidelines can remain until the effective date.

(68) Previous procedures on assessment are replaced and have no further operation from the Effective Date of these new Guidelines.

(69) Notwithstanding other provisions of these Guidelines, the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer may approve an exception to these Guidelines where the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer determines the application of these Guidelines would otherwise lead to an unfair, unreasonable or absurd outcome. Approvals by the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer under this clause must be documented in writing and must state the reason for the exception.

Section 3 - Quality Assurance

(70) The implementation of these Guidelines will be supported through:

- a. support in the design of assessment tasks through Education Enterprise; and
- b. the Executive Principal Education Futures regularly monitoring and providing an annual report to the Teaching and Learning Committee and Academic Board on the operation of, and compliance with, these Guidelines.

Section 4 - Definitions

(71) Teaching period: the time period (including examination period) in which a unit is being offered.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	28th February 2021
Review Date	28th February 2022
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer
Approval Date	9th December 2020
Expiry Date	11th August 2021
Unit Head	Steven Warburton Pro-Vice Chancellor Academic Innovation Acting
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"School" - Is an organisational unit comprising academic staff in related fields of study who are responsible for teaching and research in those academic fields together with support staff. Each School also has lead management for the design and delivery of the courses within its responsibility.

"Board of Examiners" - Reviews and ratifies the final marks, grades and grade distributions for all units offered by the School in the teaching period.

"Course Coordinator" - Is an academic member of staff with responsibility for the leading and managing of a course.