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Purpose

This procedure establishes the processes for assessment of coursework units at the University of Tasmania and assists University staff to undertake assessment that promotes student learning and measures student achievement in ways that are valid, reliable, fair, transparent and equitable.

This procedure also encompasses the assessment of Honours theses but not Higher Degree by Research theses.

Applicable governance instruments

Instrument	Section	Principles
<i>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 Cth</i>	1.4 Learning Outcomes and Assessment	N/A
<i>National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 Cth</i>	Standard 8 – Overseas Student Visa Requirements	N/A
<i>Student Participation and Attainment Ordinance</i>	Part 5 – Assessment and Results	N/A
<i>Assessment and Results Policy</i>	All	All
<i>Review and Appeal of Academic Decision Procedure</i>	All	N/A

Background

All students enrolled in a coursework unit at the University are required to complete assessment tasks as part of their unit. Units can include two types of assessment task:

- **Assignments:** Prepared, submitted and managed in accordance with section 2; and,
- **Exams:** Conducted and managed in accordance with section 1.3.

The final grade for a unit will be determined in accordance with the **University Grades Schedule A**. If a student encounters special circumstances that adversely affect their ability to meet assessment requirements, special arrangements may be made in accordance with section 5.

There may be **extraordinary** circumstances that necessitate exceptions to this procedure. These exceptions **must** be endorsed by the Associate Dean (Learning Teaching Performance) and approved by the Academic Executive Director. All exceptions will be reported to the University Course and Unit Proposal Committee (UCUPC) and clearly communicated to students in the Unit Outline.

Procedure

1. Assessment Design

1.1. Intended learning outcomes and constructive alignment

Course learning outcomes (CLOs) underpin the development of unit-level intended learning outcomes (ILOs). A holistic and programmatic approach to assessment design should be taken across all courses and majors. ILOs must communicate the core purpose of the unit and clearly state what students must demonstrate to successfully complete the unit. Assessment tasks must be constructively aligned to unit ILOs and support the achievement of the CLOs.

1.2. Types of assessment tasks

Units should be designed using multiple assessment types to provide students with the best opportunity to achieve the ILOs. Units should include early formative tasks or early lightly weighted assignments to promote student engagement and support progress.

Hurdle Tasks

A hurdle task is a task a student must successfully complete to pass the unit. Hurdle tasks may only be used for safety reasons or to assess threshold professional standards.

Hurdle tasks are either:

- a task that students **must** submit or undertake, but which does not contribute to the final mark for the unit; or
- an assessment task that students **must** pass to pass the unit; or
- a task that students **must** successfully complete prior to undertaking another learning activity.

Where practical, students who fail a hurdle task must be given a supplementary hurdle, which can either be a resubmission of the failed task or a new assessment task.

Attendance may not be used as a hurdle task.

1.3. Weighting, timing and setting due dates

The weighting and timing of an assessment task should be commensurate with the volume and complexity of the work required to complete the task. The maximum weighting for an assessment task is 50%. A major thesis may have a higher weighting if the student is provided feedback on the task throughout the semester.

Teaching staff must not assign 'bonus marks' in any circumstances. The **final** assessment task for a unit offering may be due in the exam study/preparation period only if the unit has no exam.

1.4. Using student peer review of assessment tasks

Student peer review of assignments can be used as a formative task. If peer review is used as an assessment task (i) teaching staff must ensure that students are equipped and trained to perform such peer review, and (ii) the result of the peer review must be moderated and checked prior to releasing any feedback, marks or grades to students.

1.5. Using group work in assessment

Group work can be used as a formative task. If group work is used as an assessment task teaching staff must ensure that students are equipped and trained to work in groups. For group work worth more than 10% of the unit grade, both the group as a whole and the individual student contribution must be graded independently. ePortfolios, peer evaluation and reflective tasks can be used to evidence an individual student's contribution to group work assignments.

1.6. Communicating assessment requirements to students

Where practical, all assessment resources **must** be made available within the learning management system. These resources must include the Unit Outline which must include details of assessment types, weightings and due dates.

Complete details of assessment tasks, including marking rubrics with criteria and standards descriptors, **must** be made available within the learning management system **at least 15 business days** before the assessment task is due. Assessment tasks should be described using inclusive language.

In extraordinary circumstances an assessment task may need to be altered just prior to or during a teaching period. Any such change must be approved by the College Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching Performance), communicated to all students via the learning management system and reported to UCUPC.

1.7. Minimising opportunities for breaches of academic integrity

Assignments must be the student's own work or include the student's contribution to group work as required by the Unit Outline. Assessment tasks should be regularly reviewed to ensure quality and to minimise opportunities for intentional, or non-intentional academic integrity breaches. All written assignments must use plagiarism detection software.

Advice on designing assessment to minimise opportunities for breaches is available from the [Academic Integrity staff intranet site](#).

2. Exams

Exams must be explicitly aligned to ILOs. Exams are to be weighted no higher than 40%.

All time-limited assessments during the ordinary examination period are exams. Exams may be:

- **Invigilated:** Invigilated and with explicit restrictions on permitted materials
- **Non-invigilated:** Non-invigilated and without restrictions on permitted materials
- **Take-home:** Non-invigilated, without restrictions on permitted materials and open to students for more than 3 hours

Invigilated and non-invigilated exams will be no more than 3 hours in duration. Non-invigilated exams should be conducted online. Invigilated exams are preferably held on campus; however, online invigilated exams may be used for students studying remotely.

All exams within the ordinary examinations period will be scheduled centrally by the Examinations Office. On campus invigilated exams are administered by the Examinations and Results team. Take-home exams and online invigilated exams are administered by the Unit Coordinator via the LMS. Students requesting a deferral of an exam (in accordance with section 5.3) are required to follow the instructions in the [Student Portal](#).

3. Assignments

For the purposes of this procedure, the term 'assignment' refers to a response to any type of assessment task (excluding exams) whether in-class or online. Assignments may therefore be understood to include written assignments (such as essays), reflective pieces, participation, presentations, tests, quizzes and vivas (held outside of the exam period), exhibitions, artworks, performances and so on.

3.1. Assignment submission

Where practical, assignments should be submitted to an assignment submission folder in the learning management system. Students are to submit assignments by the due date or receive a penalty (unless an extension of time has been approved by the Unit Coordinator). Students submitting any assignment in hard copy or because of a practicum finalisation, must attach a student cover sheet and signed declaration for the submission to be accepted for marking.

The University is responsible for providing access to learning resources to enable students to have a reasonable time frame within which to complete assignments. Where access is not provided within a reasonable time the assignment due date must be adjusted.

A student may re-submit an assignment at any time up to the due date. A request to re-submit after the deadline is to be managed in accordance with section 5.

3.2. Providing feedback

Constructive feedback, including what was done well and areas for improvement, must be given for all assessment tasks. Feedback should be both generic and individual. Generic feedback should be used to provide students with insight into how the cohort has performed on the assessment task by identifying common strengths and errors. Individual feedback should be specific, personalised and future-focused to provide each student with insight into their performance on the assessment task and how to improve in future tasks (whether within or beyond the unit).

Generic feedback on exams should be made available once the results for the study period have been finalised. Individual feedback should be made available on request.

3.3. Return of assignments

Assignments submitted by the due date should be marked and returned to the student, together with appropriate feedback, within 15 business days of the due date. If one assessment task informs another assessment task, it must be returned at least five business days before the next assessment task is due. Students must raise any concerns over the grade or feedback with the Unit Coordinator within 10 business days of receipt of their marked assessment item.

3.4. Extensions for assignments

If students are aware that they will be unable to submit an assessment task by the due date, they should apply for an extension. Where possible, a request for an extension should first be discussed with the Unit Coordinator. A request for an extension needs to be submitted by the assessment due date, except where a student can provide evidence that it was not possible to do so (in accordance with section 5). Typically, an application for an extension will be supported by documentary evidence, however, it may not always be appropriate or possible for students to provide evidence in support of their request for an extension. It is important that in these circumstances, students are treated fairly and with compassion and empathy.

Unit Coordinators must notify the student of the outcome of an extension request within three working days of receiving the request. If the request is approved a new due date for the assessment task must be adjusted in the learning management system. Unless otherwise defined in the Unit Outline, the submission due date may be extended by at most five business days. A student requiring a longer extension must submit a request in accordance with section 5. If the request extends the due date into the immediately following teaching period, this may result in an Assessment Ongoing (AO) grade.

3.5. Late submissions and late penalties

Assignments submitted after the deadline will receive a late penalty of 5% (of the original available mark) for each business day or part day the assignment is late.

3.6. Review of a mark for an assignment

Students are entitled to ask for a review of the marking and grading of their assessment task if there is an irregularity in the marking **standards** or an error in the **process** for determining the outcome of an assessment. Details on how to request a review of a mark for an assignment are outlined in the *Review and Appeal of Academic Decision Procedure*.

4. Marking, Grading and Academic Results Review

4.1. Using rubrics and Gradebook

Marking is to be fair and equitable, and based on student performance against clear assessment criteria outlined in the marking rubric. Markers must be briefed on the details of the assessment requirements, and trained in using marking criteria, identifying academic integrity breaches, and providing students with constructive feedback. All assessment marks must be recorded using the Gradebook tool in the learning management system, in line with the University's threshold [Online Delivery Standards](#).

4.2. Grades of pass

To achieve an overall pass a student must pass all hurdles (if used in the unit) and achieve a final unit grade of 50% or greater. Students who fail a hurdle task will be given a HN (Hurdle Failed). For HN grades the numerical mark should be either the total for all assessments or (if the total is over 50%) the mark given should be 49%. The way in which final grades are determined must be made clear and transparent to students.

4.3. Academic Results Review

The Academic Results Review provides an opportunity for the Discipline /School to review results to ensure marks and grades for units are fair and accurate. Prior to the Academic Results Review, a Unit Coordinator must ensure that the unit results presented for review are accurate for each student.

An Academic Results Review may be convened as either:

- a. a meeting of the relevant Course or major Coordinator with an individual Unit Coordinator to ensure the accuracy of results and to provide oversight across the course by unit; or
- b. a collective meeting of the relevant academic unit (School, Institute or Discipline) to ensure the accuracy of results and to provide oversight of those results across the academic unit.

To ensure that marking is fair and equitable, when there is more than one marker, multiple locations or different delivery approaches, marks for an assessment task should be moderated by the Unit Coordinator.

Any conflicts of interest must be identified and declared to the Chair of the Academic Results Review.

At the Academic Results Review, results are discussed and:

- a. grade distributions are reviewed by unit to ensure accuracy and appropriateness of marks and grades awarded;
- b. grade distributions are compared with previous offerings of the unit to identify any significant change; and
- c. grade distributions are compared with other relevant units in that cohort year.

Marks are not to be changed at the Academic Results Review to align to a normal or other predetermined distribution for either individuals or cohorts; namely, no scaling or other marks adjustment is permitted. Marks sitting near a grade boundary should always be reviewed before releasing grades to students.

4.4. Granting supplementary assessment tasks

A student who has been awarded a result of 45%-49% within a unit will be awarded a NS grade and granted a supplementary assessment task. The supplementary task may be a resubmission of a previously failed task or a new task.

Supplementary assessment tasks are to be finalised within three weeks of the final results being released. Supplementary assessment tasks will be managed internally by the Unit Coordinator and can be issued immediately after unit results are released to students.

Students should be encouraged to progress with their studies while awaiting the outcome of the supplementary assessment task.

Students who successfully complete the supplementary assessment task will be awarded a grade of 50% PP.

5. Final Unit Grades

5.1. Determination of final unit grades

A student's final result for a unit is determined by combining the student's marks for each assessment task in accordance with the Unit Outline as a percentage. The percentage mark is then converted to a final grade in accordance with **Schedule A**. A student's Grade Point Average (GPA) is calculated from final grades in completed units according to **Schedule B**.

5.2. Review of a final unit grade

After the release of final unit grades, students are entitled to ask for the final grade for a unit to be reviewed on the grounds of procedural error in the determination of the final grade. A review of final grade may result in no change to the grade or change to a higher or lower grade. Each review of a final grade is determined on its own merits. Details on how to request a review of a final grade are outlined in the *Review and Appeal of Academic Decision Procedure*.

6. Special Circumstances and Deferred Assessment

6.1. Special circumstances

Students experiencing special circumstances may apply for consideration in relation to attendance and assessment requirements. Any changes to an assessment task due to special circumstances (for example, to task requirements or due date) must be requested prior to the due date of the assessment task. Requests are submitted by the student to the Unit Coordinator.

Special circumstances will usually be

- a. outside of a student's control;
- b. have a significant impact; and,
- c. be unanticipated.

Students with approved reasonable adjustments due to disability are eligible to apply for consideration due to special circumstances and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Students who experience disability or an ongoing health condition are encouraged to contact [Disability Services](#) to develop a Learning Access Plan (LAP) which details the specialist services, study and assessment adjustments that they may require, based on the implications of their health condition or disability.

Special circumstances can include, but are not limited to:

- d. medical illness or injury, whether existing or new, including physical injury or serious illness and episodes of mental illness or cognitive function impairment
- e. family violence
- f. sad news/sorry business, death of a close relative or close friend
- g. adverse experience, including witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, family violence or sexual assault
- h. sudden change in domestic arrangements (e.g., homelessness, eviction), unexpected serious financial difficulties or hospitalisation of a family member
- i. major upheaval or natural disaster affecting the student's place of residence or in the student's home country or town that has impacted the student's close relatives and which requires the student to undertake immediate emergency travel
- j. employment related reasons such as an employer unexpectedly increasing a student's working hours or an employer-directed transfer of a student to a new location or redeployment to a different position
- k. an unexpected sporting commitment at the state, national or international representative level;
- l. religious observances
- m. active Defence Force member, compulsory Defence Reservist or other emergency services mobilisation
- n. legal commitments such as court appearances or jury selection
- o. constraints outside of a student's control arising from involvement with the justice system.

In accordance with the [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 \(Cth\)](#) additional special circumstances for international students may include, but are not limited to:

- a. inability to begin study in a course on the agreed starting date due to a delay in receiving an international student visa

- b. circumstances where the student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) needs to be extended because the student has failed occasional units throughout a course but where these failures have not affected the student's academic standing.

6.2. Supporting documentation

Applications for consideration due to special circumstances must be supported by a declaration from the student which includes the circumstances, the duration of those circumstances, and explains the impact of the circumstances on their study progress, wellbeing, or ability to meet a submission deadline or sit an exam.

6.3. Deferred assessment

Deferred assessment will be offered to a student when the adjusted due date of an assessment item, excluding an examination, is beyond the final teaching day of a teaching period.

Any deferred assessment items must be based on the ILOs and content of the unit at the time of the student's enrolment in the unit.

Students who have been offered and complete a deferred assessment item are eligible for the full range of grades available for that unit.

Deferred assessment will be the only option available to students who are unable to complete an examination, or an assessment item with a due date during the examination period.

Applications to defer a formal examination must be made within three University business days of the date of the formal examination, using the approved [University form](#).

Applications to defer a formal examination may be rejected if there is reason to believe that the student is seeking an unfair advantage as might be suggested by a pattern of repeated deferred assessment applications. Applications will be checked for any previous history of requesting deferral of assessment items.

The student will be notified as soon as possible of the outcome of the request to defer a formal examination. If the supporting documentation is not available at the time the request is lodged, any deferral granted is provisional until supporting evidence of the extenuating circumstance is provided.

Deferred examinations will normally be held in the next deferred examination period. A student's final grade will be finalised as soon as possible and no later than the census date of the subsequent teaching period.

Students will not be offered a deferred formal examination if the student will fail the unit irrespective of the outcome of the deferred formal examination.

6.4. Special consideration for formal examinations

If a student is affected by special circumstances during a formal examination, they may subsequently apply for special consideration if:

- a) they attended the formal examination but due to extenuating circumstances (such as physical illness) were unfit to complete it
- b) they completed the formal examination but believe their performance was significantly impaired by illness or other incident during the examination itself to the extent that they could not properly demonstrate their level of achievement of the learning outcomes of the unit.

A Special Consideration Application Form must be submitted by the student to the Course Coordinator no later than three University business days after the date of the formal examination and must include the details of the relevant circumstances and supporting documentation. The relevant circumstances giving rise to the request must also be verified via an incident report lodged by the Formal Examination Supervisor. Applications unable to be verified against an Examination Supervisor's report will be rejected.

The Course Coordinator will determine the application following consultation with the Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching Performance). Decisions on special consideration applications are reported to the Academic Review.

Schedule A: University Grades Schedule

Grades awarded and aligned numerical range in award units:

HD – High Distinction	80–100%
DN – Distinction	70–79%
CR – Credit	60–69%
PP – Pass	50–59%

Grades awarded below 50% with an NN or AN:

If the student has had the opportunity to demonstrate achievement of all ILOs in the assessment completed and has a mark less than 50%, an NN (fail) grade will be awarded.

If the student has not taken the opportunity to submit assessment task(s) aligned to the ILOs an AN (absent deemed failed) grade will be awarded without a mark (e.g., a student has not attempted enough assessment tasks to complete the unit).

Grades awarded in approved ungraded (pass/fail) units:

UP – Ungraded pass	Performance against ILOs is satisfactory
NN – Fail	Minimum standards have not been achieved
AN – Absent deemed failed	Insufficient assessment tasks attempted

Other grades awarded:

WT	Results withheld due to extension, academic integrity investigation, marking delay, or for students who have a debt to the University
AO	Assessment ongoing, assessment for a unit covers more than one semester

Grades awarded (and aligned numerical ranges) for Honours:

HF – Honours First Class	80 – 100%
HU – Honours Second Class – Upper Division	70 – 79%
HL – Honours Second Class – Lower Division	60 – 69%
HT – Honours Third Class	50–59%
HN – Honours Failure	0 – 49%
XX – Results in another unit, may be used for Honours sub-unit results	
IC – Result for a unit that is a part of a series of units where the result is not available until the final unit is completed, such as thesis A unit	

Schedule B: Calculating Grade Point Averages

The Grade Point Average (GPA) summarises the final results of the units completed in a student's course into one single figure. The maximum GPA achievable is 7.0. The GPA grading scheme is as follows:

7	HD/HF (High Distinction/Honours First Class)
6	DN/HU Distinction/Honours - second class upper division)
5	CR/HL (Credit/Honours - second class lower division)
4	PP/HT (Pass/Honours - third class)

0	NN/HN (Fail/Honours - failure)
0	AN (Absent deemed failed)
0	0 - WN (Withdrawn deemed failed)

The GPA is calculated by multiplying the grade for each of the units by the number of credit points of the unit (for example, 6 x 12.5 for a Distinction in a standard 12.5 credit point unit) to give a 'grade point'. The GPA for the course is then the sum of grade points divided by the total credit points attempted

Failed units are taken into account in the GPA calculation even if the student later passes the same unit.

Credited units do not contribute to the GPA calculation. However, if the units were credited from another UTAS course, they will contribute to the GPA of the original course.

Ungraded passes (UP), or units with withheld results will not be included in GPA calculations.

Units for which exemptions have been granted are not to be included in the calculation of a GPA, but units transferred with their grade are to be included. Non-contributory units are not to be included in the calculation of a GPA.

Glossary of Terms

To be developed