

GENERAL INFORMATION

ASSESSMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. INTRODUCTION

Student assessment is a vital part of the learning process. It is integral to students' formation and the development of graduates who are capable of making a significant contribution to society. Assessment is the process whereby student learning outcomes are determined, feedback is given to students on their progress and final result grades are awarded.

Accordingly, this Policy and Procedures²¹ document provides a guide for the assessment of student learning at Australian Catholic University (ACU National) and supports quality assessment practices, including conduct of examinations. It applies to all coursework units offered by ACU National, including off-shore units, and those coursework units completed as part of an honours or research degree. It does not apply to the examination of research theses²².

This Policy and Procedures reflects the values in the University's Mission Statement and the student-centred learning paradigm explicated in the University's *Revised Strategic Plan 1999 – 2008*. The Policy and Procedures sit within and relate to an existing policy framework, which includes the Academic Regulations and Academic Honesty Policy (see Appendix A for a list of links to related documents).

2. RATIONALE FOR ASSESSMENT

The three key objectives for quality in student assessment in higher education²³ are to:

- guide and encourage effective approaches to learning;
- validly and reliably measure expected learning outcomes, in particular the higher-order learning that characterises higher education; and
- define and protect academic standards.

The following general principles underpin the Assessment Policy and Procedures:

- (i) Assessment should be an aid to successful learning and should encourage students to apply their knowledge and skills in an analytical and critical manner;
- (ii) Modes of assessment should be specifically linked to the learning outcomes of a unit and course;
- (iii) Assessment requirements should be based on pre-determined and clearly articulated criteria that describe standards of knowledge, skills, competencies and/or capabilities;
- (iv) Students should receive feedback on their work in a timely manner that assists them to monitor their progress towards the achievement of specified learning outcomes and to improve the quality of their work;
- (v) Assessment should be inclusive and equitable for all students;
- (vi) Assessment should be valid and reliable;
- (vii) Students and staff should act in accordance with the Academic Regulations, the Academic Honesty Policy and the Assessment Policy and Procedures;
- (viii) Assessment should enable the University to certify that the grade awarded corresponds to the student's performance and that the student has met unit and course requirements;
- (ix) Assessment should involve reasonable workloads for both staff and students commensurate with the credit points allocated to a unit and the nature of the discipline. The requirements of each individual assessment task in a unit should also be commensurate with the proportion of marks allocated to that task;
- (x) Consistent with ACU National's Mission as a Catholic university, assessment processes and procedures should conform to the highest ethical and moral standards; and
- (xi) ACU National regards assessment as a confidential matter.²⁴ No person involved in the process should divulge to any unauthorised person any information related to an individual student's assessment or grades.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

²¹ This document is adapted in part from the 2002 Coursework Assessment Policy and Procedures Manual, University of Technology, Sydney: <http://www.uts.edu/div/publications/policies/select/assess.html>

²² For details on examination of postgraduate research theses see: http://www.acu.edu.au/research/Forms___Documents/index.cfm

²³ James, R., McInnis, C. & Devlin, M. (2002). *Assessing Learning in Australian Universities*. Parkville: Centre for the Study of Higher Education
The University of Melbourne for the Australian Universities Teaching Committee [refer www.cshe.unimelb.edu.au/assessinglearning]

²⁴ Privacy Statement

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The specific roles and responsibilities related to assessment presented below are complementary to those outlined in the Academic Honesty Policy.

3.1 Students

It is the responsibility of students to:

- (i) engage actively in the learning process and participate according to unit and assessment requirements;
- (ii) complete assessment tasks diligently and honestly to provide evidence of learning achievements in a unit;
- (iii) meet assessment requirements as specified in the unit outline, including submission of work by the due date;
- (iv) where relevant, consult the Disability Adviser as early as possible about any disability issues;
- (v) discuss any concerns they have regarding their progress in coursework and assessment as early as possible with relevant lecturers and/or the Course Co-ordinator and/or Student Services;
- (vi) consult with the Lecturer-in-Charge (in the first instance) and Course Co-ordinator, or with the Head of School as early as possible, if personal circumstances are affecting participation or performance in assessment (refer to Section 5.2);
- (vii) raise any concerns they may have regarding the marks for each assessment task promptly, rather than wait until the final grade is awarded in the unit;
- (viii) check that their name is on the unit list after classes commence and if not, to contact the Student Centre and/or their Course Co-ordinator;
- (ix) in the case of late enrolment, it is the responsibility of the student to obtain the unit outline from the Lecturer-in-Charge in the first week of attendance in the unit;
- (x) access and abide by all policies, procedures and regulations relating to assessment and seek clarification, where necessary.

3.2 Lecturers-in-Charge

It is the responsibility of Lecturers-in-Charge (in consultation with other relevant staff as appropriate) to:

- (i) design and specify the number and type of assessment tasks and their weightings;
- (ii) prepare the unit outline in accordance with the procedures (refer to Section 4.3) and provide an electronic copy to the School Office prior to the start of the study period;
- (iii) make the unit outline available electronically to all students enrolled in the unit during the first week of the study period²⁵;
- (iv) be available for student consultation on a regular basis, informing students of their availability for consultations (both with and without appointments);
- (v) in exceptional circumstances, where the need arises, seek approval of the Head of School to change assessment tasks or criteria for a unit after the first week of the study period²⁶. Such changes should not result in disadvantage to any student and all students must be advised, in writing by email, of approved changes;
- (vi) where compulsory attendance is specified in the unit outline for designated classes, maintain and collate records of attendance;
- (vii) following advice from a Disability Adviser, make appropriate learning and assessment adjustments for students with disabilities. Such adjustments shall be in accordance with the student's Education Inclusion Plan, where one has been approved;
- (viii) ensure that lecturers receive guidelines on how to provide appropriate adjustments for students with disabilities in School examinations and tests (refer to Section 6.2);
- (ix) submit examination requests, if required, by the due date and prepare and submit the examination paper(s) for central examinations by the due date;
- (x) prepare and arrange the conduct of all School-based assessment tasks for the unit and alternative/additional assessment tasks, as required;
- (xi) give consideration to and approve, if appropriate, applications for consideration of personal circumstances affecting assessment, eg applications for extensions for assessment (refer to Section 5.2);

²⁵ In the case of non-standard study periods, this must occur prior to the census date.

²⁶ In the case of non-standard study periods, this must occur prior to the census date.

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- (xii) liaise with the Course Co-ordinator, as required, with regard to applications for consideration of personal circumstances affecting assessment;
- (xiii) provide appropriate guidelines to lecturers and markers, where used, on assessment criteria, marking procedures, moderation and methods for calculating final results;
- (xiv) maintain and collate records of each student's marks for all assessment components in accordance with the assessment schedule in the unit outline. A secure record of each student's results, both electronically and in hard copy/writing (black pen), must be kept for at least one standard study period after the release of final results;
- (xv) allocate final result grades or interim results for ratification by the Head of School (by the date specified by the Head of School) and provide substantiation, when requested;
- (xvi) provide final result grades to replace any interim grades by the date specified in the Academic Regulations;
- (xvii) ensure that any necessary changes to grades are made within six months of the original allocation and approved by the Head of School;
- (xviii) where appropriate, eg for large classes, provide students with timely feedback on the range, mean and distribution of marks or grades for a given assessment task;
- (xix) if requested, provide clarification to students about a result for an assessment task or grade in a unit;
- (xx) communicate effectively with all staff teaching and/or marking in a unit to ensure quality of practice;
- (xxi) make recommendations to the Head of School regarding assessment policy, procedures and outcomes.

3.3 Lecturers

It is the responsibility of lecturers to:

- (i) participate in the assessment of students;
- (ii) liaise with the Lecturer-in-Charge to ensure that assessment practices are conducted in a consistent and coherent manner;
- (iii) be available for student consultation on a regular basis, informing students of their availability for student consultations (both with and without appointments);
- (iv) advise the Lecturer-in-Charge within a reasonable time of student progress and how effectively students are learning;
- (v) keep a secure record of each student's results, both electronically and in hard copy/writing (black pen), for at least one standard study period after the release of final results;
- (vi) provide data relating to results in assessment tasks and attendance, if required, to the Lecturer-in-Charge.

3.4 Markers

It is the responsibility of markers to mark assessment tasks accurately, consistently and fairly, as guided by the Lecturer-in-Charge.

3.5 Course Co-ordinators

It is the responsibility of Course Co-ordinators to:

- (i) give consideration to and approve, if appropriate, applications for consideration of personal circumstances affecting assessment and liaise with relevant staff, as required (refer to Section 5.2);
- (ii) determine applications for alternative assessments and/or adjustments to assessment tasks in consultation with the Lecturer-in-Charge and/or the Disability Adviser, where the application is by a student with a disability. In the latter case, reference should also be made to the Education Inclusion Plan, where one has been approved;
- (iii) overview students' progress and provide academic advice based on assessment outcomes and, if necessary, consider submissions from students to show cause why enrolment should not be terminated;
- (iv) monitor the conversion of interim grades to final grades by the relevant due date.

3.6 Heads of School

It is the responsibility of Heads of School to:

- (i) oversee all the units offered by that School;
- (ii) appoint Lecturers-in-Charge for each unit administered by their School;

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- (iii) evaluate and approve requests from Lecturers-in-Charge to change assessment tasks or criteria for a unit after the first week of the study period²⁷. Such changes should be made only in exceptional circumstances and not disadvantage any student;
- (iv) ensure that unit outlines are reviewed and accurate prior to publication;
- (v) ensure that examination papers are reviewed and accurate prior to submission, and are submitted by the relevant due date;
- (vi) give consideration to and approve, if appropriate, applications for consideration of personal circumstances affecting assessment and liaise with relevant staff, as required (refer to Section 5.2). Such approvals shall include Education Inclusion Plans developed for students with disabilities;
- (vii) ensure Lecturers-in-Charge receive appropriate guidelines on how to provide, in a manner that is compliant with the Disability Standards for Education of the Disability Discrimination Act, appropriate adjustments for students with disabilities in School examinations and tests. Such guidelines shall include information on how to employ disability support workers such as scribes and signing interpreters if required;
- (viii) consider recommendations from Lecturers-in-Charge for the allocation of final result grades in accordance with the Academic Regulations, seeking the advice of a School Assessment Review Committee [Note: The Head of School may nominate another staff member in the School to ratify grades];
- (ix) award Pass Conceded grades in exceptional circumstances;
- (x) review the performance of students undertaking units offered by the School, paying particular attention to results that are borderline between grades;
- (xi) monitor the appropriateness of allocation of grades in accordance with the Academic Regulations and the effectiveness of assessment practices in units administered by the School (with advice from the Assessment Review Committee);
- (xii) ensure all ratified grades are submitted by the due date;
- (xiii) consider reports from Lecturers-in-Charge about alleged breaches of academic honesty and determine in line with the Academic Honesty Policy;
- (xiv) ensure that University quality assurance processes for assessment, such as moderation of assessment in units, are followed;
- (xv) ensure the University Assessment Policy and Procedures and Academic Regulations are implemented;
- (xvi) consider requests for review of grade;
- (xvii) consider requests for review of termination of a student's enrolment;
- (xviii) oversee the status of interim grades and ensure their timely conversion to final grades.

3.7 Assessment Review Committees

An Assessment Review Committee will be established by a Head of School to review assessment outcomes for the School. The role and responsibilities of the Assessment Review Committee will be specified by the Head of School at the time of its establishment and should be reviewed annually. Responsibilities so delegated by the Head of School may include the following:

- (i) review the performance of students undertaking units offered by the School, paying particular attention to results that are borderline between grades;
- (ii) monitor the appropriateness of allocation of interim and final grades in accordance with the Academic Regulations. Evidence to substantiate recommendations regarding grades may be requested from Lecturers-in-Charge;
- (iii) advise the Head of School, who ratifies the final results prior to submission;
- (iv) monitor the effectiveness of assessment practices in units offered by the School using, amongst other means, statistics on grade distribution;
- (v) make recommendations to the Head of School regarding assessment policy, procedures and outcomes.

3.8 Deans

It is the responsibility of Deans to:

- (i) establish requirements for the evaluation and moderation of assessment practices within the Faculty;
- (ii) appoint Course Co-ordinators for each course administered by their Faculty;

²⁷ In the case of non-standard study periods, this must occur prior to the census date.

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- (iii) monitor assessment outcomes for the Faculty with regard to the distribution of grades;
- (iv) resolve reviews/appeals of a Head of School's decision regarding a grade in a unit or termination of a student's enrolment or refer them to the Faculty Appeals Committee;
- (v) consider and approve, where appropriate, waivers/special dispensation based on the Academic Regulations.

3.9 Chair, Academic Board

A student may appeal to the Chair of Academic Board in relation to the outcome of an appeal to the Dean regarding a review of a decision regarding a grade in a unit or termination of a student's enrolment (only on the basis of failure by the University to comply with the relevant Academic Regulation). The Chair of Academic Board will deal with the appeal at his or her discretion in accordance with the Academic Regulations.

3.10 Student Services

Academic Skills Advisers, Campus Ministers, Counsellors and Disability Advisers offer assistance to students in regard to their performance at University and/or their academic progress.

They receive information in confidence from students and may reveal information to Lecturers-in-Charge, Course Co-ordinators or Heads of School about a student's circumstances only to the extent authorised by the student.

Disability Advisers determine and coordinate requests for learning and assessment arrangements from students who have permanent or temporary disabilities.

Disability Advisers may recommend a range of inclusive strategies, including:

- adjustments to teaching, learning and assessment, including alternative assessment; and
- consideration for factors affecting assessment performance.

3.11 Student Administration

Student Administration is responsible for the administrative procedures associated with the assessment and progression of all students in undergraduate and postgraduate coursework award, non-award and cross-institutional programs. It is the responsibility of Student Administration to:

- (i) apply, as appropriate, the rules, regulations, policies and procedures of the University relating to students and give effect to academic decisions relating to assessment, progression, exclusion and termination of enrolments;
- (ii) arrange the conduct of central examinations for units which are taught in Australia in standard study periods and which are notified to Student Administration within the required timelines as requiring a central examination;
- (iii) arrange the conduct of deferred examinations;
- (iv) provide advice to Schools relating to the requirements for submission of results;
- (v) ensure the efficient and timely publication of results and notification to students.

4. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

4.1 Assessment Tasks

Assessment tasks are the single components of an assessment schedule and should be of different types to address students' differing learning styles. Within any one assessment task, there may be several aspects of assessment.

Assessment should be both formative and summative. The assessment tasks should be appropriate to the discipline and explicitly reflect the learning outcomes for the unit and related generic skills (refer to Table 1). Assessment tasks should be designed to minimise the risk of plagiarism.

Assessment and/or other learning tasks in coursework units that involve students and/or lecturers in projects with human participants require ethics clearance in advance. The *Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans* application form and guidelines are available on the Research Services website at:

http://www.acu.edu.au/research/Forms_Documents/index.cfm.

4.2 Assessment Schedules

The learning outcomes in a unit should be assessed through a variety of tasks so students have a number of opportunities to demonstrate their learning. A recommended assessment schedule for any one unit would include two or three assessment tasks, none of which is worth more than 65 percent of the total marks: for example, an essay, seminar and a formal examination each worth between 30-40 percent. Learning contracts, projects or similar assessment tasks may in total be

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worth more than 65 percent but, in these instances, it is recommended that the assessment task be managed so that students receive feedback on successive stages of the task. The number of unweighted assessment tasks (hurdle requirements) for a unit must be taken into account in relation to assessment load for the unit.

For units with a final examination in the central examination period, assessments should not be due in study week or at any time during the central examination period²⁸. The scope of in-class tests or School examinations should be related to the scheduling of the assessment. Class time used for in-class tests or examinations should be justified in relation to pedagogy not on scheduling issues.

In courses where students follow a fairly common curriculum, Course Co-ordinators (or Assessment Review Committees) should liaise with Lecturers-in-Charge when planning assessment schedules to ensure the workload for students is distributed equitably across the study period.

4.3 Unit Outlines

A unit outline is an official document that represents the formal understanding between the University and the students in relation to the unit in that study period. It is based on the original Academic Board approved unit outline and prepared by the Lecture in Charge of the unit. Teaching and assessment tasks in the unit must be conducted as specified in the unit outline provided to students.

The assessment schedule may not normally be changed after distribution to students, except under exceptional circumstances as approved by the Head of School. A written revised schedule should then be made available to students either in class, via an online noticeboard or by mail, according to the mode of delivery of the unit.

Based on the Academic Board-approved requirements, the unit outline provided to students contains such of the following as are appropriate for the unit:

ACU National logo

School

Campus

Semester/study period and Year

Unit code – as in current Handbook

Unit title – as in current Handbook

Credit points

Prerequisites, co-requisites and/or incompatible units

Lecturer-in-Charge

The Lecturer-in-Charge and all staff teaching in the unit should be listed with appropriate contact details. Unit outlines should indicate how students may contact all staff teaching in the unit – in person or by telephone, fax or email.

Description

As in current Handbook.

Learning outcomes

As listed in the Academic Board-approved unit outline.

Content

A brief statement of the content of the unit and/or a weekly summary of topics.

Teaching organisation

Duration: the number of contact hours per week over 12 weeks or equivalent.

Mode: e.g. lectures, tutorials, workshops, laboratory sessions, etc.

Assessment procedures including:

- the nature and weighting of each assessment task with evident links between the descriptions of assessment tasks and the learning outcomes for the unit and related generic skills (as per Table 1);

²⁸ This includes an extension of time granted for submission of assessment tasks.

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- due dates for each assessment task;
- word limits for each assessment task or equivalent requirements or restrictions;
- presentation requirements;
- the nature and extent of group work or collaboration required or permitted (refer to Section 5.1) and any related documentation;
- specific marking criteria and weightings for each assessment task (other than examinations), including referencing requirements;
- clear details of any minimum essential requirements, such as compulsory attendance or compulsory completion of some or all of the assessment tasks (refer to Section 4.4);
- instructions on how, where and/or to whom students should submit their assessment tasks and whether a cover sheet is required; and
- reference to policies, procedures and regulations concerning late submission; applications for consideration of personal factors affecting assessment; plagiarism, collusion and recycling; and processes for allocating final result grades.

Other unit requirements

Particular rules governing the conduct of a unit, including attendance (refer to Section 4.4) or safety requirements that are specific to a discipline, must be clearly stated in the unit outline together with the consequences for non-compliance.

Support for student learning

Information on support for student learning that is available from the staff teaching in the unit and Student Services should be listed, including a web link.

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Table 1 – Development of generic skills/outcomes

| Generic skill/outcome | Developed in the unit (Y/N) | Encompassed in assessment | | |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | | Assessment Task 1 | Assessment Task 2 | Assessment Task 3 |
| Written communication skills | | | | |
| Oral communication skills | | | | |
| Interpersonal skills * | | | | |
| Teamwork | | | | |
| Analytical and problem-solving skills | | | | |
| Critical thinking | | | | |
| Organisational skills | | | | |
| Understanding of appropriate professional and ethical standards | | | | |
| Understanding of values consistent with the University Mission | | | | |
| Spirit of community engagement | | | | |
| Information literacy | | | | |

* particularly in relation to students/future clients/patients etc.

Reference list

All references listed in current unit outlines are to be organised into the categories, as applicable, according to Table 2. The references listed in the unit outline for “cross-campus” units are normally the same.

Table 2 – Guidelines for Reference Lists

| Category | Availability | Comments |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Text(s) | <p><u>For on-campus units</u></p> <p>Must be available electronically or in the library at each campus where the unit is offered.</p> <p><u>For online units</u></p> <p>Must be readily available electronically or for purchase in a timely manner by students. If not available electronically, one copy must be available in at least one campus library.</p> | Students are encouraged to purchase a personal copy of a commercial text or a Book of Readings or Workshop Manual produced for the unit unless it is available electronically. |
| Recommended References | <p><u>For on-campus units</u></p> <p>Must be available electronically or in the library at each campus where the unit is offered.</p> <p><u>For online units</u></p> <p>Must be available</p> | Lecturers must verify that electronic resources are available through the Copyright Database or are freely available from the Internet. |

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| | | |
|--------------------|---|--|
| | electronically. | |
| Further References | Available through the University Library. | Titles are available in one or more campus libraries, but not necessarily at all campuses where the unit is offered. |
| Extended Reading | May only be available through libraries and collections outside ACU National. | |

4.4 Minimum Essential Requirements in a Unit

4.4.1 Attendance requirements

Marks are not to be awarded for attendance.

If there are specific attendance requirements for a unit, such requirements must be clearly stated in the unit outline, along with consequences for not meeting the requirements.

Thus, students cannot be failed for non-attendance unless the unit outline clearly stipulates that failure is the consequence of not meeting specified minimum attendance requirements and/or attending particular compulsory classes.

The Lecturer-in-Charge must keep attendance records for all classes in units with a minimum attendance requirement or for specified compulsory classes.

4.4.2 Assessment tasks

Students are not usually required to pass individual assessment tasks in a unit unless the task is related to required discipline specific competency standards. The weighting of such tasks must reflect their significance.

5. COMPLETION OF ASSESSMENT TASKS

5.1 Group Work and Collaborative Assessment

Group and/or collaborative work should account for no more than 30 percent of the total assessment in a unit, unless specific learning outcomes for the unit require collaborative work; in such case, no more than 50 percent is permissible unless justified and approved by the Dean or nominee.

The responsibilities of each individual group member in completing each such assessment task and the degree of collaboration required should be clearly stated in the unit outline.

The assessment task should allow for the recognition of individual contribution (such as learning journals).

Students should notify the Lecturer-in-Charge in a timely manner and provide substantiating documentation of any problems in relation to group work. Students should not be penalised or disadvantaged by the actions of other group members over whom they have no control.

5.2 Personal Circumstances Affecting Assessment

Students may apply for consideration of circumstances, which significantly hamper their participation or performance in an assessment. These circumstances include temporary or permanent disability or exceptional and unforeseen circumstances.

Students are required to follow prescribed procedures in applying for such consideration. Students with a disability are required to consult a Disability Adviser.

Students may also be required to provide documentary evidence of their circumstances in a report, using the appropriate application form and prepared by a healthcare or other appropriate professional able to comment on the circumstances and their impact.

Applications for consideration should be submitted before the due date for the assessment task but will normally be accepted no more than five calendar days after the relevant assignment submission date or examination date for the unit for which consideration is sought.

Examples of exceptional and unforeseen circumstances which may constitute grounds for such consideration include:

- a serious illness or psychological condition, such as hospital admission, serious injury or illness, severe anxiety or depression;
- ongoing life threatening illness of a close family member or partner;
- loss or bereavement, such as death of a close family member, or family/relationship breakdown;

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- hardship/trauma, such as being a victim of crime, sudden loss of income or employment, or severe disruption to domestic arrangements;
- an unforeseen event that prevents a student from sitting an exam or seriously hampers their preparation for examination or submitting assignments;
- a combination of less severe circumstances (e.g. mild medical condition plus death of relative outside immediate family).

Possible outcomes and associated application procedures are set out in Table 3. It is the student's responsibility to contact the relevant person to find out what action has been taken and to obtain details of any required or special arrangements made for learning and assessment.

Table 3 – Applications relating to Special Circumstances

| Possible Outcomes | Application | Submit request to/ Approved by |
|---|--|---|
| Extension of the submission or completion date for the assessment | Application for an Extension form, Application for Special Consideration form with Professional Authority, if needed | Lecturer-in-Charge |
| Deferred Central Examination | Deferred Examination Form, Application for Special Consideration form with Professional Authority | Student Administration |
| Deferred School-based Examination | Deferred Examination Form, Application for Special Consideration form with Professional Authority | Lecturer-in-Charge |
| Adjustments to examination procedures | Assessed and recommended by the Disability Adviser Forms: - Education Inclusion Plan (EIP) - Application for Special Adjustments (SA Form) for temporary medical conditions | "Permanent" adjustments (for students with long-term conditions) approved by the Head of School or delegate. "Temporary" adjustments approved by Disability Adviser. Submit SA form at the Student Centre for adjustment to Central Examinations and/or to the Lecturer-in-Charge for School-based Examinations. |
| Adjustments to a grade for a unit | Application for Special Consideration form with Professional Authority | Head of School |
| Withdraw from a unit without academic penalty | Application for Special Consideration form with Professional Authority | Course Co-ordinator |
| Undertake alternative assessment | Application for Special Consideration form with Professional Authority or Disability Adviser recommendation | Lecturer-in-Charge or Course Co-ordinator or Head of School (for permanent recommendation regarding disability) |
| Undertake additional assessment | Application for Special Consideration form with Professional Authority | Lecturer-in-Charge in consultation with the Head of School |

Applications will be assessed taking into account a student's individual circumstances and how they may affect academic progress.

5.3 Submission, Collection and Retention of Assessment Tasks

Unit outlines should include a statement regarding students' responsibility for submission and collection of assessment tasks, including instructions on how, where, when and to whom tasks are to be submitted and whether faxed, emailed or posted assignments are acceptable; and collection

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of assignments, e.g. during class, from a secure location such as the School Office, by email or other specified arrangements.

Students are required to use the ACU National coversheet when submitting assessments, ensuring they have signed the statement that the work is original.

Students are required to retain both hard and electronic copies (where appropriate) of all work submitted for assessment, except in the case of tests and/or examinations.

On-campus students are normally expected to collect their assignments but, in exceptional circumstances, can delegate such authority to another person, provided that they give that person written authority to do so. Schools should keep a copy of any authority submitted.

Under no circumstances should marked assessments be left at an unsupervised collection point as the confidentiality of results and the security of the assignments may be compromised.

Assessment tasks that are not normally returned to students (e.g. examination scripts, multiple-choice answer sheets) and marked tasks that students have failed to retrieve are retained by the School for at least one standard semester after release of final results.

5.4 Resubmission of Assessment Tasks

Submission of work in progress in order to gain feedback to improve that work is acceptable and appropriate when that process is clearly provided for in the description of an assessment task in a unit outline and is equally available to all students in that unit.

In other instances, after an assessment task is submitted, there will be no provision for a student to improve his or her standing in the unit by attempting to improve the quality of the work and then resubmitting it, unless allowed by other policies.

6. EXAMINATIONS

6.1 Central and Deferred Examinations

Central examinations are conducted by Student Administration in the central examination period (refer to Policy and Procedures for Central Examinations).

A student who, through illness or other exceptional cause beyond their control, is unable to attend an examination may lodge an application to sit a deferred examination with Student Administration, not later than five working days after the day of the examination (refer to Section 5.2; refer also to Policy and Procedures for Deferred Examinations).

Examination scripts from central or deferred examinations are collected from Student Administration by the Lecturer-in-Charge for marking. Sessional staff must make prior arrangements to collect the scripts.

Lecturers-in-Charge are required to provide past examination papers (other than multiple choice examinations and examinations involving practical work, computer exercises or those with unresolved copyright implications) to the Library as soon as possible after the examination. The authorised past examination papers will be made available on a 'Past Examination Papers Collection' web page four weeks after the examination period designated on the examination paper.

6.2. School Examinations

Schools may conduct examinations and class tests. Unless the Lecturer-in-Charge otherwise determines and notifies students via the unit outline, the procedures contained in the Policy and Procedures for Central Examinations from Section 2.2 - 7 and for Deferred Examinations from Sections 2 - 5 will apply to the extent appropriate to School Examinations.

7. MARKING

Marking is the process of assigning an assessment score or grade and/or comments to a piece of work produced, performed or submitted by a student according to criteria for that assessment task.

7.1 Responsibilities for Marking

Lecturers-in-Charge must ensure that:

- marking is fair and consistent across the student cohort, particularly in units where more than one marker is used (including a moderation process);
- marking is not be delegated to any other member of staff, except to academic staff contracted to mark assessment, without the approval of the Head of School;
- where other markers are employed, specific information is provided by the Lecturer-in-Charge as to what is to be marked, the marking scheme, how many pieces of work are involved, and the date by which assessed work must be returned to the Lecturer-in-Charge;

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- comments on the assessment tasks submitted by the student are made on the exercise/assignment or on a marking sheet that is returned to the student with the assignment.

7.2 Feedback

Before they begin their final assessment, students will receive timely and constructive feedback related to achievement of learning outcomes on all assessment tasks completed during the semester, with the exception of items submitted within the last two weeks of semester. Timely feedback is within three weeks of submission or, in the case of weekly assignments, at least two working days before a related assessment is due for submission.

Feedback on a student's progress in a unit should be both in a quantified form, such as scores or grades, and a qualitative form such as comments, model answers or suggested readings.

Marks for assessment tasks in large classes may be posted on a noticeboard to indicate the group mean and distribution of marks or grades. Student numbers only must be used in any such posting to preserve confidentiality.

The Lecturer-in-Charge will provide students with the opportunity to discuss their performance and the feedback received, personally or with another appropriate academic staff member.

Students may apply to the Lecturer-in-Charge to view their final examination script after the official release of results.

Lecturers-in-Charge may discuss final result grades, including final examination results, with students after the official release of results.

7.3 Conflict of Interest

Lecturers-in-Charge, or other staff appointed to mark assessment items, have a responsibility to assess students' work fairly, objectively and consistently across the student cohort in a unit. Academic staff who consider that they may be or be perceived to be affected by a conflict of interest must bring this to the attention of their Head of School (refer to Staff Code of Conduct).

7.4 Allocating Final Result Grades

Lecturers-in-Charge are responsible for collating and recording the results for all assessment tasks and recommending a final result grade or interim result for each student in a unit. Each student's aggregate marks for a unit are allocated a grade according to the descriptors for each grade as listed in Table 4.

A guide as to the typical proportion of grades assigned across a unit is provided in the Academic Regulations. Where the final grades in a unit significantly deviate from the standards listed, the Lecturer-in-Charge will provide to the School Assessment Review Committee, relevant evidence to substantiate the decision. This will normally reflect the Lecturer's confidence in the efficacy of assessment procedures in equitably determining the standard to which students have achieved expected learning outcomes and characteristics of the student cohort. The Head of School or nominee ratifies the final grade results.

Using peer-reviewed, tested examination questions, marking criteria that clearly differentiate standards of performance, and transparent moderation processes are examples of strategies that contribute to confidence in assessment procedures.

Final result grades are not provided to students until results have been officially released by the University.

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Table 4 – Grading Descriptors

| Final Result Grade | Notation | Range Guide (%)²⁹ | Descriptor¹⁰ |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| High Distinction | HD | 85-100 | Clear attainment of all learning outcomes, with complete and comprehensive understanding of the unit content, development of relevant skills and intellectual initiative to an extremely high level. |
| Distinction | DI | 75-84 | Substantial attainment of most learning outcomes, with a high level of understanding of the unit content and development of relevant analytical and interpretative skills to a high level. |
| Credit | CR | 65-74 | Sound attainment of some major learning outcomes, with good understanding of unit content and development of relevant skills. |
| Pass | PA | 50-64 | Satisfactory attainment of a range of learning outcomes, with basic understanding of unit content and development of relevant skills. |
| Pass Conceded | PC | * | Some attainment of learning outcomes with basic understanding of some unit content and some skill development. |
| Pass (ungraded) | PS | | Attainment of the learning outcomes as per the unit outline. |
| Fail | NN | 0-49 | Little or no attainment of learning outcomes, with limited understanding of course content or skill development. |

*Note: This grade is awarded by Heads of School only in exceptional circumstances. See Academic Regulations.

²⁹ The percentage range for final results is a guide and should be interpreted in conjunction with the descriptors.

¹⁰ Adapted from Sadler, D. R. (2005). Interpretations of criteria based assessment and grading in higher education. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 30:2, 175-194.

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Appendix A

RELATED DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

- **Academic Honesty Policy**

<http://my.acu.edu.au/53186>

- **Academic Regulations**

<http://my.acu.edu.au/51686>

- **Code of Ethics in Teaching**

<http://my.acu.edu.au/38271>

- **Continuing Education**

<http://my.acu.edu.au/38271>

- **Cultural Diversity Policy**

<http://my.acu.edu.au/38271>

- **Disability Policy**

<http://my.acu.edu.au/43926>

- **Language and Literacy Policy**

<http://my.acu.edu.au/38271>

- **Mission Statement**

<http://my.acu.edu.au/51848>

- **Policy on Quality Teaching and Learning**

<http://my.acu.edu.au/53153>

- **Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning**

<http://inet.acu.edu.au/48476>

- **Staff Code of Conduct**

<http://my.acu.edu.au/14777>

- **Statute 10 Student Conduct and Discipline**

<http://my.acu.edu.au/51700>

- **University Teaching and Learning Plan 2006 - 2008**

<http://my.acu.edu.au/38295>

- **Policy on Honours Programs**

<http://my.acu.edu.au/38271>

- **Policy on Elite Athlete Support**

<http://my.acu.edu.au/53140>

- myACU – Resources – Knowledge Manager (Staff)

- Timetabling, Examinations and Results Section - Examination Supervisors' Handbook

- myACU – Resources – Knowledge Manager (Staff)

- Timetabling, Examinations and Results Section - Examination Procedures for Academic Staff

- myACU – Resources – Knowledge Manager (Staff)

- Timelines - Examinations

- myACU – Resources – Knowledge Manager (Staff)

- Course Co-ordinators' Manual - Examinations

- myACU – Resources – Knowledge Manager (Staff)

- BANNER – BANNER Reports – Timetabling, Examinations and Results

- myACU – Resources – Knowledge Manager (Staff)

- Staff Only Forms – Examinations Forms