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.

This Assessment and Examination Information provides students with a summary of the policies that govern assessment and examinations. Students should consult the full policies for further clarification of this information.

2. RESPONSIBILITY OF STUDENTS (from Assessment Policy and Procedures)

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, the Course Coordinator and/or Student Services;

(vi) consult with the Lecturer-in-Charge (in the first instance) and Course Coordinator, or with the Head of School as early as possible, if personal circumstances are affecting participation or performance in assessment (see Section 5.2 of the Assessment Policy and Procedures);

(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 Coordinator;

(ix) access and abide by all policies, procedures and regulations relating to assessment and seek clarification, where necessary.

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.

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1 The information in this document is drawn from the University’s Academic Regulations, Assessment Policy and Procedures and Examination Policies.
3. **ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS** (from *Academic Regulations*)

3.1 **Designation of Lecturer-in-Charge**

A Lecturer-in-Charge will be appointed by the Head of School for each unit offered by that School. The Lecturer-in-Charge of the unit is responsible for coordinating the preparation of Unit Outlines and for coordinating results in accordance with University policy.

3.2 **Range of Assessment Methods**

Assessment may include a range of methods such as formal end of study period examination, continuous assessment throughout the study period, written assignments, essays, theses, practical assessments and field trips/projects. The Unit Outline will describe assessment methods to be used in a unit.

3.3 **Completion of Unit Requirements**

To complete the requirements for a unit a student must –

(a) comply with all University statutes, regulations and rules;
(b) pay all relevant fees and charges;
(c) complete all unit requirements as prescribed in the Unit Outline;
(d) gain a grade of Pass Conceded or higher in accordance with Academic Regulations.

*Examples of unit requirements include –*

- attending classes (e.g. lectures, tutorials, laboratory and practical classes)
- undertaking and submitting research and assignment work for assessment
- undertaking projects and/or group work
- undertaking examinations
- undertaking field work, industrial and/or practical placements or volunteer experience
- undertaking police checks or submitting declarations such as ‘prohibited person declarations’
- obtaining a current first aid or CPR certificate
- undergoing required immunisation.

3.4 **Unit Outline**

By the end of the first lecture week, the Lecturer-in-Charge of the unit will make a Unit Outline available to each student enrolled in that unit. The Unit Outline includes details of unit objectives, assessment tasks, percentage of marks allocated to assessment tasks, dates for the submission of assessment, and any special requirements of that unit.

3.5 **Attendance Requirements**

Attendance at scheduled lectures and classes is expected. It is compulsory to attend classes so designated in Unit Outlines.

4. **GROUP WORK AND COLLABORATIVE ASSESSMENT** (adapted from *Assessment Policy and Procedures*)

An assessment task in any unit may require group and/or collaborative work. Any such work will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements set out in the Unit Outline.

Any student who considers him/herself disadvantaged by the actions of other group members, over which he/she has no control, should notify the Lecturer-in-Charge in a timely manner and
provide substantiating documentation of any problems in relation to such group or collaborative work.

5. PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES AFFECTING ASSESSMENT (from Assessment Policy and Procedures)

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

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

5.3 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.

5.4 Applications for consideration must be submitted before the due date for the assessment task and 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;
- 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).

5.5 Possible outcomes and associated application procedures are set out in Table 1. 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 1 – Outcomes of Applications for Special Consideration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible Outcomes</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extension of the submission or completion date for the assessment</td>
<td>Application for an Extension form, Application for Special Consideration (SC) form with Professional Authority, if needed</td>
<td>If requesting an extension on or before the due date use the current standard EX Application for an Extension form. Students requesting an extension after the due date for an assessment or for multiple extensions in the same semester period should use the SC form with Professional Authority.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred Central Examination</td>
<td>Deferred Examination (DE) Form with Professional Authority</td>
<td>Submit application (DE form) to Student Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred School-based Examination</td>
<td>Deferred Examination Form with Professional Authority</td>
<td>Submit application (DE form) to the Lecturer-in-Charge (LIC). If applying for both types of deferred exams submit a copy of the form to the LIC with copy of evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjustments to examination procedures</td>
<td>Adjusted and recommended by the Disability Adviser</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forms: Education Inclusion Plan (EIP)</td>
<td>Application for Special Adjustments (SA form) to examinations, due to unexpected temporary medical conditions form.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Permanent&quot; adjustments to examination procedures (for students with long term conditions) Approved by the Head of School, via inclusion of the recommended adjustments on the Education Inclusion Plan. Covers the full range of reasonable adjustments, the most common being additional time.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Updates to &quot;Permanent&quot; adjustments to examination procedures (for students with fluctuating conditions eg impacted by phases of treatment) Update of the recommended adjustments for Central Examinations on the Education Inclusion Plan is approved by the Disability Officer and communicated to Examinations via Banner. Covers the full range of reasonable adjustments, the most common being additional time. No further authorisation required. Disability Adviser communicates directly with the LIC for School Examinations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjustments to a grade for a unit</th>
<th>Application for Special Consideration form with Professional Authority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Withdraw from a unit without academic penalty</td>
<td>Submit application to the Head of School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake alternative assessment</td>
<td>Submit application to the Course Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake additional assessment</td>
<td>Submit to the Lecturer-in-Charge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

6. SUBMISSION, COLLECTION AND RETENTION OF ASSESSMENT TASKS (from Academic Regulations)

6.1 Students must submit and collect all assessment tasks in accordance with the procedures set out in the Unit Outline.

6.2 Assignments submitted after the due or extended date will incur a 10% penalty of the maximum marks available for that assignment. Assignments received more than three calendar days after the due or extended date will not be allocated a mark. Honours theses submitted after the due or extended date will incur a penalty of 10% of the maximum marks available for that thesis.
6.3 A student will complete the assessment requirements for all relevant units no later than the end of the examination period for the relevant study period.

7. CHEATING, PLAGIARISM, COLLUSION AND RECYCLING

Students need to be aware that any allegation of cheating, plagiarism, collusion or recycling will be investigated and resolved in accordance with the Academic Honesty Policy, so it is important that students are familiar with this policy as well as academic conventions such as referencing.

8. EXAMINATIONS

Examinations will be conducted in accordance with the Policy and Procedures for Central Examinations and the Policy and Procedures for Deferred Examinations. Those Policies and Procedures will normally also apply, so far as they are relevant, to any examinations or tests conducted by Schools.

9. MARKING AND FEEDBACK (from Assessment Policy and Procedures)

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.

Students will be provided with timely feedback on assessment tasks prior to the commencement of the relevant central examination(s), with the exception of items submitted within the last two weeks of semester.

Feedback will be in the quantitative form of scores or grades and qualitative form such as comments or suggested readings for each assessment task.

Students may discuss, with an appropriate member of academic staff, their performance in an assessment task and the feedback received.

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.

10. ALLOCATION OF GRADES (from Assessment Policy and Procedures)

10.1 Each student’s aggregate marks or grades for a unit are allocated a final result grade according to the descriptors for each grade as listed in Table 2 and recorded according to the respective codes. Final result grades in a unit are recommended by the Lecturer-in-Charge and are considered by the School Assessment Review Committee and ratified by the Head of School or nominee prior to submission to Student Administration.
Table 2 – Grading Descriptors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Final Result Grade</th>
<th>Range Guide (%)</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Distinction HD</td>
<td>85-100</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinction DI</td>
<td>75-84</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit Cr</td>
<td>65-74</td>
<td>Sound attainment of some major learning outcomes, with good understanding of unit content and development of relevant skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass Pa</td>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>Satisfactory attainment of a range of learning outcomes, with basic understanding of unit content and development of relevant skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass Conceded PC</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Some attainment of learning outcomes with basic understanding of some unit content and some skill development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail NN</td>
<td>0-49</td>
<td>Little or no attainment of learning outcomes, with limited understanding of course content or skill development.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*A student may be awarded a Pass Conceded grade by the Head of School in exceptional circumstances. A Pass Conceded grade does not meet prerequisite requirements for enrolment in units requiring a minimum of a Pass grade. A Pass Conceded grade may only be redeemable upon the student re-enrolling in the unit in a subsequent semester and attaining a grade of Pass or better. A pass degree student may not accumulate a Pass Conceded grade in units amounting to more than 15% of the total credit points required for completion of the award. A unit in which a Pass Conceded grade has been awarded may not be counted towards the requirements of an Honours year or postgraduate program.

10.2 A guide as to the typical proportion of grades assigned across a unit is provided in the Academic Regulations. Assessment tasks in all units will be developed so that typically the following proportions of students will achieve the stated final grades:

(a) Distinction (DI) or better – 20%
(b) Credit (CR) – 30 %
(c) Fail (NN) or Pass Conceded (PC) – no more than 10%.

Where the final grades in a unit significantly deviate from these standards, the Lecturer-in-Charge will provide to the School Assessment Review Committee relevant evidence to substantiate the decision.

10.3 A student's final result grade in a unit may be changed only within six months of the original allocation of final grade and then only with the approval of the relevant Head of School, or as provided under the relevant Academic Regulation.

10.4 Frequently Asked Questions about Grading

The following frequently asked questions (FAQs questions) have been developed to assist students to understand the revised Academic Regulation and the Assessment Policy and Procedures on allocating final result grades.

Question 1
Do the grades allocated by the lecturer have to be exactly the same as the ‘typical’ distribution in the regulation?
Answer: No, small variations around these targets are not only permitted but are expected.

Question 2
Does the Regulation mean that 10 percent of students have to fail a unit?

Answer: No, the Regulation allows a Lecturer-in-Charge to pass all the students in a unit if they have all satisfactorily achieved the stated outcomes of the unit.

Question 3
If the standard of students’ work is expected to improve over the years of their course, why is this not reflected in the policy with different proportions of results expected for each level?

Answer: The standards of students learning outcomes are expected to improve over the duration of a course. This is why units are coded according to whether they are first, second, third or fourth year or postgraduate, and the learning outcomes for units are set at a higher level for each year, i.e. the level of expectation is raised higher each year. The grading descriptors refer to students’ achievement of learning outcomes, so you would expect a similar variation in the level of students’ performance in all years of their degree.

Question 4
Shouldn’t there be allowances for greater variations in the distribution of grades for small classes and postgraduate students?

Answer: No, even for small groups it is important for the Lecturer-in-Charge to be able to demonstrate that students' grades reflect the relevant academic standards. Reviewing the distribution of grades is a means of monitoring standards. Also refer to the Answer to Question 3.

Question 5
Why is there a guide for the percentage range for each of the Final Result Grades?

Answer: The Academic Regulation on the typical distribution of grades sets expectations of academic standards, however this does not mean that ACU supports the rigid application of a ‘bell curve’ that requires automatic adjustment of students’ grades. The University does need to ensure that standards are maintained and that excellence is rewarded appropriately. This may mean that a student's final result grade does not reflect the exact total percentage calculated by adding marks for each assessment task in a unit. The percentage range for allocation of the final grade is a guide, and descriptors are also used to inform decisions in relation to final result grades.

Question 6
If the distribution of grades in a unit varies from the guidelines do grades have to be scaled or adjusted to fit the guide?

Answer: Not necessarily. An atypical distribution of grades does not automatically mean that the results must be scaled or adjusted to fit the distribution in the guide. In principle, scaling should only be applied in exceptional circumstances as assessment procedures in a unit should ensure that the University’s academic standards are maintained. There is a stronger emphasis on criterion-based assessment strategies that discriminate the levels of students’ performance in each assessment task, rather than scaling cumulative marks at the end of semester. Further, it is important to provide students with a fair indication of their standing in the unit during the semester.

Question 7
What can students do if their final result grade is not what expected it to be?
Students have the right to clarify their results. According to Academic Regulation 8.3, in the first instance students should apply to the Head of School responsible for the relevant unit for review of the final grade awarded in that unit. The request must be in writing and must be received within 10 working days of the publication of the final grade on Student Connect. A review may only be requested on grounds that the published University regulations or procedures have not been observed.