



ASSESSMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy outlines Sydney Met’s commitment to the design and delivery of assessment that facilitates achieving the specified learning outcomes of courses and units. It enables the development of rules and procedures that facilitate the management of student assessment and related activities. The policy specifies minimum requirements for design and delivery of assessments.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to describe the required methods to be adopted in managing an assessment submission and verifying the work as well as implementing assessment rules. It aims to ensure that academic staff set assessment tasks in each unit that help to promote learning, help assess student’s achievement of learning outcomes, and meet the required excellence in knowledge and skill.

3. SCOPE

All students and staff involved directly and indirectly with assessment.

4. DEFINITIONS

Assessment task: A learning activity that student submits for assessment as a part of the total marks obtained for a unit or for its completion.

Formative Assessment: Formative assessment (assessment for learning) means an assessment used primarily to monitor student learning and to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by lecturers to improve their teaching and by students to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses and target areas to improve their learning. Formative assessments are generally scheduled earlier in the trimester and are generally ‘lower stakes’ or zero-weighted meaning the assessment mark/grade value has a lower (or no impact) on the overall result.

Summative Assessment: Summative assessment (assessment of learning) means an assessment primarily designed to evaluate learning against ULOs. Summative assessments are often ‘high stakes’, meaning the assessment mark/grade value has a higher impact on the overall result.

Mark: A number from 0 to 100 that is awarded to reflect performance on a task against documented criteria.

Grade: A categorical descriptor that reflects student achievement . Please see Table 2 for the grades used at Sydney Met, along with their descriptors.

Moderation: Moderation of assessment is a form of quality assurance that is used to assure consistency/comparability, appropriateness, and fairness of assessment judgments and/or the validity and reliability of assessment tasks, criteria, and standards. Moderation of assessment is important to ensure that assessment criteria are applied consistently by markers.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

Students have the responsibility to submit assessments by the advertised due dates and to undertake tests and examinations at the time and place notified.

6. COMMUNICATION OF ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS TO STUDENTS

The Unit Outline and student information provided to students at the commencement of the trimester includes a description of assessments and the criteria to be used for grading assessments. Each assessment is aligned to one or more Unit Learning Outcomes (ULOs) so as to assure that students have achieved the ULOs. Each Unit Outline will specify the assessment tasks, length, and weighting, submission due dates, and rules for extension or change of due dates of assessment tasks.

7. SUBMISSION OF ASSESSMENTS

- Assessments are to be submitted electronically through the Learning Management System (LMS) unless otherwise advised.
- At the time that an assessment is submitted students are required to make a declaration that they acknowledge the requirements of the *Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure*. Students also declare that the assessment item is their own work, except where acknowledged, and has not been submitted for academic credit previously in whole or in part.
- Students understand and agree that assessments submitted to Sydney Met will be retained in the Turnitin database and may be used in evaluations of originality.
- It is the responsibility of the student to keep a copy of their work in case of loss of an assignment, and for checking that their submission is complete and accurate.
- Submissions via the LMS will be returned via the LMS with feedback within two weeks of submission.
- An assessment task is deemed late if it is submitted after the specified due date as set out in the Unit Outline. A late penalty of 5% of the total possible marks for the task is imposed for each day or part thereof the work is late. Weekends and public holidays are included in calculations determining lateness.
- Work submitted fourteen (14) days after the due date will be marked and feedback provided but no mark or grade will be recorded. Work submitted twenty-one (21) days after the due date will not be accepted for marking or feedback and will receive no mark or grade.
- Failure to submit a compulsory assessment task will result in a Fail (F) grade being awarded for the unit.
- Students who experience circumstances beyond their control and are unable to submit assessments by the due date are advised to apply for special consideration (see section 9).

8. LATE SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS

In the interests of fairness and equity all students are required to submit assessment tasks on specified due dates and penalties are applied for late submission of assessment tasks. Table 1 shows the penalties applied for late assessment submission. Penalties are applied in accordance with the information in Table 1 except where special consideration has been granted (see section 9).

Table 1. Penalties for late assessment submission without approved special consideration*.

Assessment Type	Days past the due date when the assessment is submitted	Penalty
Assignment	1 to 14 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5% of the total available marks per day, where weekends and public holidays are counted as days.
Assignment	15 to 21 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The assessment will be accepted, and feedback will be provided to support student learning, including the mark the student would have received had the assessment been submitted on time.• The student will receive a mark of zero for the assessment.• Where the assessment is compulsory and the student would have received a mark of ≥ 50, the student will be deemed to have met the compulsory requirement.
Assignment	≥ 21 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The assessment will not be accepted
Quiz/mid-trimester test/final exam	Did not attend the assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A mark of zero will be awarded

*Approved special consideration may be an extension, alternative assessment, or other action as appropriate (see section 9)

9. SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

Special consideration concerning assessments may be requested for serious/significant medical or health-related, personal, family, cultural, or employment- or work-related circumstances that significantly impact the student's ability to carry out an assessment. To be considered for the purpose of special consideration, the circumstances must be:

- unforeseen and unavoidable, where the student cannot have reasonably been expected to have controlled, anticipated, avoided, or otherwise guarded against the circumstance¹; and
- supported by evidence, such as a medical certificate, letter from a health professional, police report, or statement from an employer.

¹ For example, being involved in a traffic accident is a circumstance that is unforeseen and unavoidable. However, ordinary, expected, work responsibilities, family commitments, social engagements, and recreational travel are not unforeseen and/or unavoidable and are not grounds for special consideration. However, special consideration may be granted for significant religious and cultural circumstances which may be foreseeable, but not avoidable, where appropriate.

To apply for special consideration, the student must:

- complete the *Special Consideration Form* available through the LMS. The form can also be obtained from the Student Support Officer by contacting support@sydney.net.edu.au.
- Submit a complete application to support@sydney.net.edu.au at least three days prior to the due date of the assessment. To be assessed as complete, an application must (a) include a description of the circumstances that explains how they were unforeseen and unavoidable, and the impact they had on preparation for the assessment; (b) be accompanied by evidence. In cases where the special circumstances mean that it is not possible for the student to submit the application three days prior to the assessment due date the application must be submitted within seven after the due date of the assessment.
- Each application will be assessed and a response will be provided to the applicant via email within three working days. This response will indicate: (a) whether or not the application was successful; and (b) if successful, the nature of the special consideration to be awarded (e.g., extension to the due date; alternative assessment).

Decisions about award of Special Consideration will ordinarily be made by the Unit Co-ordinator.

Appeals concerning award of Special Consideration are to be made in writing using the process outlined in the Complaints Policy and Procedure.

Extensions through Special Consideration will usually only be granted for a maximum of two weeks from the original submission date.

Academic staff cannot grant extensions without an approved special consideration application.

10. PASS REQUIREMENT

In order to pass a unit, student must obtain an aggregate mark of 50%. Individual units may have additional requirements, which will be noted in the Unit Outline and explained by the Unit Co-ordinator.

11. SIMILARITY RATE FOR ASSESSMENTS

Similarity rates are analysed carefully at the College.

Copy detection software (Turnitin) is used in the course, and work found to be in contravention of the copying and plagiarism rules will be investigated. Penalties apply in the case of proven instances of copying, plagiarism, or academic dishonesty.

Turnitin similarity scores are interpreted considering a range of factors, including the number of references included, the use of standardised cover sheets and tables, and the overall length of the assessment. Students and staff are provided with guidance in interpreting Turnitin similarity scores as part of an educative approach to ensuring academic integrity.

12. ASSESSMENT OF COURSEWORK

Assessment is undertaken for staff to monitor student progress for the purpose of identifying and addressing student learning needs and to provide feedback to students so that they can monitor their own progress and take responsibility for their own learning. It is also conducted to ensure that students have met the Unit Learning Outcomes (ULO's).

The following principles and processes are applied to the design and delivery of assessments, and to the marking and release of final grades at Sydney Met.

Assessment Design

- All assessment tasks are aligned to ULOs and are designed according to principles of validity, reliability, and fairness.
- Each unit will generally have three (3) assessments, including, where appropriate, a final exam.
- Each unit will include one or more authentic assessments.
- The design of each assessment is consistent with the AQF level of the unit in which it is included.
- Where students have been granted reasonable adjustments assessment tasks are modified as appropriate (see the *Disability Policy and Procedure*).
- Assessments are distributed across the trimester so that students can receive and act on feedback from earlier assessments to support their learning.
- Both formative and summative assessments will generally be included in each unit.
- Where a final exam is used, the duration of the exam will generally be between one and three hours.
- In cases where there is a required minimum pass grade above 50 for an assessment, such as professional units where there may be minimum competency requirements, this will be clearly advised to students prior to enrolling in the unit.

Assessment Delivery

- The details of each assessment task, including the required outcomes, method of response, marking criteria/rubric, due date, length, and any other relevant details are provided to students through the LMS at the beginning of each trimester.
- Assessments will be returned with feedback within two weeks of assignment submission.
- Feedback on all assessments will be designed to support student learning and will be fair, balanced, clear, valid, reliable, and transparent.

Assessment Marking

- Assessors mark all assessments using predetermined marking criteria in the form of a marking guide (written exams) or rubric (other assessment types).
- All within trimester assessments will be marked and returned to students with feedback within two (2) weeks of the date the assessment is due, except for online quizzes where feedback is provided in one (1) week. Late assessments will be accepted for marking up to fourteen days from the original due date and will be subject to late submission penalties (see Table 1). Final exams will not be returned to students, and the feedback provided will be general rather than individual.
- Marking of all assessments that require human judgement are moderated.

- Students will be provided with a grade and, where appropriate, a mark, for each assessment task and for their final result. Within trimester, results are made available for students through the LMS.
- All subjects in which a student remains enrolled after census date are required to have a final grade result. The grades used at Sydney Met are set out in Table 2. The grades in Table 2 are used for final grades, and for all assessments that contribute to final grades.
- The principle of documented evidence is applied to all assessments. Assessments submitted through the LMS are archived there, and assessments not submitted through the LMS, such as final exams, are scanned and archived for at least one year.

Table 2. Grade Table

Grade	Description	Aggregate result/ marks (%)
HD (High Distinction)	Awarded when (a) all compulsory assessment components of a unit were completed; and (b) achievement measured against the assessment criteria for the ULOs is exceptionally high compared to the expected standard	85-100
DN (Distinction)	Awarded when (a) all compulsory assessment components of a unit were completed; and (b) achievement measured against the assessment criteria for the ULOs is very high compared to the expected standard	75-84
CR (Credit)	Awarded when (a) all compulsory assessment components of a unit were completed; and (b) achievement measured against the assessment criteria for the unit learning outcomes is high compared to the expected standard.	65-74
PS (Pass)	Awarded when (a) all compulsory assessment components of a unit were completed; and (b) achievement measured against the assessment criteria for the unit learning outcomes meets the expected standard.	50-64
FL (Fail)	Awarded when (a) all compulsory assessment components of a unit were completed; and (b) achievement measured against the assessment criteria for the unit learning outcomes does not meet the expected standard.	0-49
UP (Ungraded Pass)	Awarded for units assessing key professional skills where marks are not used and students must demonstrate proficiency to be allowed to progress and the only possible outcomes are pass or fail.	No mark

UF (Ungraded Fail)	Awarded for units assessing key professional skills where marks are not used and students must demonstrate proficiency to be allowed to progress and the only possible outcomes are pass or fail.	No mark
AS (Advanced Standing)	Awarded in cases where a student has been awarded credit for the unit based on credit transfer or recognition of prior learning	No mark
RP (Result Pending)	Interim grade awarded when a student's grade and mark in a unit have not been finalised at the time of the release of grades for the study period.	No mark
FI (Fail Incomplete)	Awarded when at least one, but fewer than all, of the compulsory requirements or assessment components of the unit were not completed/submitted.	No mark
FN (Fail No Submission)	Administrative grade awarded in cases where a student is enrolled in a unit but does not submit any assessments.	No mark
WF (Withdrawn Fail)	Administrative grade awarded in cases where a student has withdrawn from a unit after the census date with academic penalty.	No mark
WN (Withdrawn)	Administrative grade awarded in cases where a student's unit enrolment has been withdrawn after the census date without academic penalty.	No mark

Review, Approval, and Release of Final Grades

- Review, approval, and authorisation of release of trimester results is the responsibility of the Teaching and Learning Committee under delegated authority from the Academic Board.
- The Teaching and Learning Committee carries out this work through its Board of Examiners which is oversighted by the Teaching and Learning Committee.
- The membership of the Board of Examiners is as follows:
 - Executive Dean (or nominee; Chair
 - Registrar
 - Heads/Acting Heads of Departments
- The Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee reports to the Academic Board on behalf of the Board of Examiners.
- The Board of Examiners meets each trimester in accordance with the dates for release of results to:
 - review and interrogate assessment and examination results and final grades for each unit;
 - approve the release of final results to candidates; and
 - identify opportunities for improvement in the assessment processes and/or results processing processes.

13. SUPPLEMENTARY ASSESSMENT

Supplementary assessment refers to additional assessment carried out to verify a mark and grade. In cases where a student has failed a unit with a grade between 45% and 49%

the College may offer supplementary assessment. The maximum mark and grade following supplementary assessment in these cases is 50 Pass. Student cannot request Supplementary Assessment.

Where there are documented special circumstances beyond the student's control that have negatively affected a student's performance the College may offer supplementary assessment for students with final marks lower than 45%. Supplementary assessment will usually be applied to final assessments in a unit and, except in the case of special circumstances, fees may apply for undertaking supplementary assessment.

If offered, the College will inform students about the availability of the supplementary assessment. Supplementary assessments cannot be deferred unless there are documented special circumstances.

15. GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA) SYSTEM

The College adopts a Grade Point Average (GPA) system, which is calculated by allocating values to grades as follows, and then calculating the average of the units completed, noting that UF/UP and AS grades are not included in GPA calculations.

Fail	Pass	Credit	Distinction	High Distinction
0.0	1.0	2.0	3.0	4.0

The maximum possible GPA is 4.00.

16. RETENTION AND DISPOSAL OF ASSESSMENT ITEMS

Students are required to keep copies of any assessment task submitted to the College until the final results for each unit are published. The College keeps all assessment items for at least twelve (12) months from the date that the results are published. After that time all materials are destroyed unless they are the unit of a grade appeal.

17. APPEALS AND REVIEWS

Students may apply for a review of a grade and/or appeal against academic decisions. Assessment appeals should be submitted in accordance with the *Complaint Policy and Procedure*.