Assessment Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Policy specifies the principles that underpin assessment across the University.

(2) Diverse forms of assessment are used throughout the University and vary according to the discipline. This Policy therefore aims to provide flexibility whilst ensuring that all assessments meet an agreed set of standards.

(3) This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Assessment Procedure, Appendix A: Holding Grades, Appendix B: WAM and GPA Calculations, Appendix C: Requirements for Unit Guide System, and Appendix D: Record of Exceptions.

Scope

(4) This Policy applies to all coursework unit offerings in which Macquarie certifies attainment of learning outcomes.

(5) This Policy applies to all students undertaking coursework units.

(6) This Policy applies to all staff involved in the development, administration, and teaching of coursework units and all staff involved in the support of students undertaking coursework units.

(7) This Policy does not apply to the preparation, submission or examination of HDR theses, which is governed by the Graduate Research Thesis Preparation, Submission and Examination Policy; and does not apply to ELICOS or non-award English Language programs.

Section 2 - Policy

(8) Assessment at the University is aligned with the standards set by the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021.

(9) All assessment tasks must comply with the requirements specified in this Policy and the Assessment Procedure.

(10) Assessment is designed and implemented in reference to set criteria and standards to assure learning. The criteria and standards cascade from the learning outcomes and grade descriptors; are known to students; and guide the grading of student performance.

(11) Assessment is underpinned by the following five (5) principles which all apply equally.

a. **Assessment is shared, authentic, transparent and equitable:**

    i. Assessment is a shared responsibility between staff and students.
    ii. Authentic assessment tasks should be diverse and designed to engage, encourage, and support students in the learning process. Authentic assessment includes industry and / or profession-based tasks that support and assure learning by enabling students to demonstrate the application of relevant and essential knowledge and skills.

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iii. Ongoing opportunities for feedback will be provided, and students can seek further guidance if required.
iv. Assessment tasks will have a clear purpose and will be designed to be inclusive and accessible. It will be transparent to students how and on what criteria they will be assessed.

b. **Assessment is reliable, and assures learning:**

i. To be reliable, assessment must accurately and consistently measure student performance against learning outcomes.
ii. Assessment design must ensure that there is an explicit and logical alignment between learning outcomes, assessment tasks, task criteria, feedback, and the grades associated with different levels or standards of performance.

c. **Assessment design promotes academic integrity:**

i. Design and review of assessment tasks will promote academic integrity while ensuring that the values of honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage are clearly communicated and supported. Students and staff are responsible for actioning and upholding these values, as specified in the Academic Integrity Policy.

d. **Assessment is standards-based:**

i. Assessment is designed and implemented with reference to set criteria and standards. The criteria are drawn from the learning outcomes, are made available to students, and guide the grading of student performance. The standards reflect the level of attainment of the criteria in line with the grade descriptors defined in the Assessment Procedure. Standards are moderated throughout the assessment lifecycle.

e. **Assessment is designed to enable a course-based approach:**

i. The connection between assessment tasks and course learning outcomes should be evident to students where relevant. In particular, the suite of assessment tasks in core units must be mapped to the course learning outcomes to form a coherent course of study. There must be a logical progression with increasing complexity in the assessment tasks that are appropriate to the level and stage of the course. Course learning outcomes are then measured, where possible, across multiple units of study through a variety of suitable assessment task types. Elective units, where available, provide an opportunity for disciplinary breadth and / or maturity.

Section 3 - Procedures

(12) Refer to the Assessment Procedure.

Section 4 - Guidelines

(13) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

(14) The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Policy:

a. Assessment Task means a task that requires students to demonstrate their capabilities against learning outcomes. Common task types include, but are not limited to: essays, presentations, class tests, quizzes, laboratory reports, performances and examinations. A unit may include multiple tasks of the same type (e.g., a unit may include more than one quiz).
b. Examination means a time-limited formal test of knowledge and / or skills.
c. Feedback means information provided to students on the quality of their work, in order to improve it. This information can take various forms including verbal, written, directed to an individual or to a cohort. Feedback may also refer to information provided to staff from students relating to assessment tasks.
d. Grade means a letter descriptor of a student's performance in meeting the requirements for a task or for a unit. Examples include High Distinction (HD); Distinction (D); Credit (Cr); Pass (P); Fail (F).
e. Learning outcomes means a statement of what students will be able to do, know, or understand at the completion of a class, unit, or course.

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