Unit of Study Monitoring and Grade Ratification Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Policy supports the assurance, enhancement and improvement of the quality, integrity and relevance of the University's suite of units of study ('units').

(2) This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

a. Unit of Study Review Policy ;
b. Assessment Policy and Assessment Procedure; and
c. Student Survey Policy

Scope

(3) This Policy applies to all units that are available for credit, including:

a. units within all undergraduate (including undergraduate certificate and diploma) and postgraduate courses of study;
b. units within the Bachelor of Philosophy/Master of Research; and
c. Standard Foundation, Intensive and Masters Qualifying programs offered through the Macquarie University College.

(4) The Policy does not apply to:

a. Master of Philosophy (MPhil) or Doctor of Philosophy (PhD);
b. Microcredentials; and
c. units, subjects or modules within non award programs not specified in clause 3.

Section 2 - Policy

(5) Unit of study monitoring and grade ratification assists the University to meet its commitment to providing students with an exceptional academic experience that meets their needs and those of the course.

(6) Unit of study monitoring and grade ratification is designed to ensure that all units offered for credit:

a. are subject to regular and rigorous review;
b. remain fit for purpose;
c. continue to meet required levels of quality and standards; and
d. can undergo targeted intervention if a risk to the quality of the unit is identified.

(7) Grade ratification ensures that all units offered for credit:

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a. produce final student Results that are fair, transparent, and objective;
b. are subject to systematic, rigorous, and reliable inspection and finalisation of Grades; and
c. produce reporting that can assist the Faculty/College Board in ratifying Results with high levels of confidence.

(8) Unit monitoring and grade ratification is informed by:

a. transparent and coherent institutional processes;
b. a risk-based approach to decision making and escalation of action;
c. feedback from students;
d. the judgements of academic staff; and
e. the Assessment Policy, and adheres to the principles of assessment expressed in that Policy.

(9) Approval for shared teaching proposals across units of study that are at different levels as outlined in the Curriculum Architecture Policy must be obtained from the Academic Senate Curriculum Subcommittee to ensure that each unit of study is able to meet the distinct standard for the relevant level through the shared teaching model being applied.

(10) Shared teaching of units at the same unit of study level can be approved by the relevant Faculty/College Board/s.

(11) A unit will be subject to monitoring and grade ratification after every offering.

Section 3 - Procedures

Part A - Unit Monitoring and Grade Ratification Process

(12) Part A outlines the Unit Monitoring and grade ratification process for all units offered for credit with the exception of units within Year 2 of the Bachelor of Philosophy/Master of Research, which is specified in Part B of this Policy.

(13) The Unit Monitoring and grade ratification process will be conducted through approved University processes including, where applicable, application of the approved templates and proformas.

(14) The Unit Convenor will finalise their Grades in the approved University system, examine performance data, student feedback and engagement data, and complete the Unit Monitoring and Grade Ratification Report (Form A) identifying any issues which may require further action.

(15) The Faculty/College Board will monitor the progress of actions planned to improve units with identified issues.

(16) Faculty or the College Authorities are responsible for ensuring adequate monitoring of units and review of Grades is undertaken at the end of every study period in which units are offered, through a meeting or schedule of meetings. If a unit was not offered in a prescribed study period, this process should be scheduled at the earliest opportunity.

(17) The final Grades for all units will be reviewed during these meetings and recommended to the Faculty/College Board (as relevant) for ratification.

(18) Where required to support the monitoring of a group of units within a course, course component or other appropriate grouping, the relevant authority, as determined by the Faculty or College Authority will complete the Unit Group Monitoring Report (Form B) and submit it to the Faculty/College Board (as relevant).

(19) The Faculty/College Board will review the Results and reports and ratify the final Grades, including any holding Grades as identified in the Assessment Procedure as those Grades where a mark is not given.

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(20) In exceptional circumstances the Faculty/College Board may consider whether a cohort of students or all students have been disadvantaged by a unit's assessment-based moderation activities or another external factor and approve an adjustment to the marks tabled at the review meeting.

(21) Where holding Grades are awarded within a unit, the Faculty/College Authority (as relevant) will determine whether final Grades, once established, will require a review meeting to be held prior to grade ratification.

(22) Where there are a significant number of holding Grades within a unit noted at the time of initial Grade ratification, the Faculty/College Board may request that an updated Form A, Unit Monitoring Report be submitted to it (as relevant) for approval once a sufficient number of final marks have been established and assessment Grades awarded.

(23) Faculty/College Authorities will complete the Faculty Unit Monitoring Report (Form C) and submit to the Academic Senate Education Committee (ASEC) for consideration.

Part B - Unit Monitoring Process for Research Assessment Components – Year 2 Bachelor Philosophy/Master of Research

(24) The unit convenor (MRes Advisor) of Year 2 of the Bachelor of Philosophy/Master of Research will provide the Results of compulsory assessment Results, excluding externally marked theses, in a report to the MRes Director twice a year.

(25) The MRes Director will collate and complete a Faculty report on the compulsory assessment Results, excluding externally marked theses, of Year 2 of the degree for submission to the Candidature Coordinator (Graduate Research).

(26) The Research Degree Subcommittee (RDSC) will review the compulsory assessment result reports, in addition to the thesis result reports, for each Faculty offering of Year 2 of the Bachelor of Philosophy/Master of Research, once a year or more often as needed. Review recommendations for Year 2 of the Bachelor of Philosophy/Master of Research will be submitted to the Academic Senate Research Committee (ASRC) as an annual course report. In accordance with the Master of Research Thesis Preparation, Submission and Examination Procedure, individual compulsory assessment marks will be reviewed at the same time as individual thesis marks, on a rolling basis to determine an individual student's final Grade.

(27) The Results of compulsory assessment and thesis components, as well as the final Grades of individual students will be recommended to the ASRC for ratification on a rolling basis.

(28) The ASRC will consider recommendations from the RDSC based on the annual course report. Upon approval or emendation by the ASRC, the Academic Director, Graduate Research or Course Authority will compile a report for Faculty Boards and the ASEC outlining the recommendations.

(29) The ASEC will annually consider RDSC and ASRC recommendations to ensure institutional consistency and identify any issues that may be deserving of recommendation to the Academic Senate for thematic review.

Part C - Responsibilities

(30) Responsibilities related to these Procedures are as follows:

a. Business Intelligence and Reporting is responsible for finalisation of Results data and maintenance of data sources, including dashboards utilised in the Unit Monitoring and ratification process.
b. the Unit Convenor is responsible for:
    i. finalising Results; and
    ii. completing the Unit Monitoring and Grade Ratification Report (Form A).

c. the Unit Convenor (MRes Advisor) of Year 2 of the Bachelor of Philosophy/Master of Research is responsible for providing the Results of compulsory assessments, excluding the externally marked thesis Results, in a report to the MRes Director twice a year.
d. the MRes Director is responsible for collating and completing a Faculty report on the compulsory assessment Results, excluding the externally marked thesis Results, of Year 2 of the degree and submitting this to the Candidature Coordinator (Graduate Research).
e. the Course Authority is responsible for:
    i. chairing Unit Monitoring and Grade Ratification meetings;
    ii. completing the Unit Group Monitoring Report (Form B) and submitting it to Faculty/College Board (as relevant); and
    iii. making recommendations to Faculty/College Board.
f. the Unit Monitoring and Grade Ratification meeting is responsible for:
    i. endorsing final Grades for the units within its jurisdiction;
    ii. conducting a cohort grade investigation, if required; and
    iii. examining all Unit Monitoring and grade ratification Reports.
g. the relevant Faculty/College Authority is responsible for completing the Faculty Unit Monitoring Report (Form C) and submitting to the ASEC.
h. the Faculty/College Board or other approving authority is responsible for:
    i. endorsing the Unit Group Monitoring Report (Form B);
    ii. ratifying final Results from ratified Grades;
    iii. providing reports to the ASEC and the RDSC; and
    iv. monitoring the progress of actions taken to improve units with identified issues.
i. the Research Degree Subcommittee (RDSC) is responsible for:
    i. reviewing the compulsory assessment result reports for each Faculty offering of Year 2 of the Bachelor of Philosophy/Master of Research once a year or, more often as needed; and
    ii. submitting review recommendations to the ASRC as an annual report.
j. the Academic Senate Research Committee (ASRC) is responsible for:
    i. considering and approving or emendating recommendations from the RDSC based on the annual course report; and
    ii. providing a report to the ASEC on matters arising from its consideration of the Bachelor of Philosophy / Master of Research to ensure institutional consistency and to identify any issues that may be deserving of recommendation to the Academic Senate for thematic review.
k. the Academic Director, Graduate Research or Course Authority is responsible for compiling the Unit Group Monitoring Report (Form B) for their relevant Faculty/College Board and the ASEC outlining the recommendations from the annual course report for the Bachelor of Philosophy/Master of Research (following approval by the ASRC).
l. the Academic Senate Education Committee is responsible for:
    i. receiving and considering the Faculty Unit Monitoring Report (Form C) supplied by the Faculties and the Macquarie University College; and
    ii. receiving and considering RDSC and ASRC recommendations relevant to the Bachelor of Philosophy / Master of Research to ensure institutional consistency and to identify any issues that may be deserving of recommendation to the Academic Senate for thematic review.

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Section 4 - Guidelines

(31) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

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

a. Course Authority is the person assigned by a Faculty or equivalent to perform certain roles within the Curriculum Lifecycle processes at a course level, for example Course Director, Head of Department, Program Director.
b. Faculty/College Authority is the person assigned by a Faculty or equivalent, to perform certain roles within the Curriculum Lifecycle processes at a Senior Leadership level, for example: Deputy Dean, Associate Dean, Associate Director.
c. Grades are the ratified statement of a student's overall performance in meeting the learning outcomes of a unit.
d. Results are the collective name for a unit’s grades as ratified by the Faculty Board or other approving authority.
e. Shared Teaching refers to a formal arrangement by which students in one unit of study share learning activities with students in a different unit of study.
f. Unit Monitoring means the process through which the performance of a unit is assessed at the conclusion of each study period.

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