

STUDENT ASSESSMENT POLICY (Postgraduate)

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1 Purpose

It is the policy of TOP Education Institute to regard assessment as integral to the maintenance of Academic standards at unit and course level. Assessment must be fair, equitable, reasonable, transparent and valid. In the unit outlines learning outcomes are clear and carefully designed assessment tasks allow students to demonstrate progress towards attaining these outcomes.

2 Scope

All postgraduate students of TOP Education Institute.

3 Definitions

Students of TOP Education Institute include both domestic (onshore) and international (offshore).

Assessment gives feedback to students on their learning and provides a basis for the assessment and certification of their academic achievements.

Types of Assessment

Assessments can be of three main types:

- **Diagnostic:** to provide information on students' prior knowledge at the start of a unit.
- **Formative:** this is a type of assessment that takes place over a period of learning. The major purpose of formative assessment is to provide frequent feedback on how a student is progressing. It also helps teaching staff to diagnose learning needs, and to design, negotiate and modify learning activities.
- **Summative:** this is the assessment of performance at the end of a period of learning. It is the collection of information through the formal assessment components of a unit, in order to improve teaching and learning, but also to contribute to the calculation of a student's final grade.
- In Top's Postgraduate units all types of assessments are used as well as research assignments and practical experience.

4 Procedures

4.1 Assessment and feedback procedures must be:

- (i) implemented using standards-based assessment
- (ii) well managed to provide efficiency and accountability to all stakeholders
- (iii) reviewed regularly for effectiveness in achieving desired outcomes and quality assurance procedures
- (iv) based on a culture of academic integrity that is supported across the Institute

(vi) designed to promote purposeful, higher order learning skills of analysis, synthesis and validation.

4.2 Unit Requirements

A unit outline must be provided to students at the beginning of a teaching period detailing assessment details including the type of task, the due date and submission time, the weighting of the task and the purpose of the task in terms of learning outcomes.

4.3 Examinations

4.3.1 Procedures for the conduct and supervision of invigilated examinations during Top Education's designated examination periods are detailed in the Institute's Rules. Before examinations each Unit Assessor is expected to:

- (i) review the examination paper for purposes of quality assurance
- (ii) provide detailed information to students about the type, length, format and syllabus areas to be examined
- (iii) provide wherever practicable, access to past examination papers or other opportunities to permit students to prepare for and practise their examination performance
- (iv) provide feedback to students on their performance if requested

4.3.2 **Confidentiality and security.** Principles of privacy, confidentiality and security are to be maintained throughout the administration of student assessment especially relating to examination papers and student scripts; the confidentiality of assessment results and access to grades and authority to disclose grades to students.

4.4 Marking Policy and Procedures

4.4.1 All assessment tasks should be submitted on time, or else students must approach lecturers for extensions. Only in cases of proven hardship or illness will students be granted extensions of time. In all other cases where work is submitted late, there will be a penalty of 5% deduction per day from the total mark that would have been awarded for the assessment task if it had been submitted on time.

4.4.2 Plagiarism is a serious offence. Students will be severely penalised in any proven case. Lecturers should make this explicit to students when addressing assessments at the beginning of each unit and throughout the course. Please refer to the Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct Policy for more information.

4.4.3 Assessment tasks should be presented appropriately as outlined by the lecturer at the beginning of the unit. If tasks such as essays are not presented in this manner, lecturers will request that students re-submit their tasks within one week. Accordingly, 10% of marks will be deducted in these cases from the total mark that would have been awarded for the task if it had been presented appropriately in the first instance.

4.4.4 When assessment is made on the work submitted as a member of a Group, the Group membership will not exceed five students.

4.4.5 Students must pass the final examination in order to pass the unit. The pass mark in every subject is 50%. Students must achieve 50% in the final examination to pass the unit.

4.4.6 If a student does not attend a scheduled examination and no valid reason is given, the student will be graded as 'fail' in that subject. If a student has a valid reason such as illness or hardship, the student may be permitted to apply for special consideration. Please refer to section 4.14 Special Assessment Policy below.

4.4.7 In cases where a student fails an examination, the student can request a re-mark of his or her examination and an interview with the Teaching, Learning & Examination Committee (see item Assessment Appeals Procedure).

4.4.8 All unit examinations must be attempted before the course end date.

4.4.9 Students who do not submit assessment tasks without a valid reason approved by the Director of Program will not be allowed to sit the final examination.

4.4.10 Cheating in examinations may lead to an offending student receiving a mark of 0 for the examination.

4.4.11 Students are normally unable to repeat a failed subject more than twice (see Student Progression, Exclusion and Graduation Policy). When an international student does not meet satisfactory academic performance he/she will be reported to DIAC as soon as practicable after this has been ascertained. This is in accordance with the National Code of Practice 2007.

4.4.12 Marking will take place within one week of the final examination. Where there is any discrepancy, the Director of Program will be consulted. Students may follow the assessment appeals process if they are dissatisfied with their results. Results will be posted within fourteen days after the final examination.

4.4.13 All marking is conducted internally. Five percent of the papers will be moderated by the Director of Program. Should the Director of Program be the Unit Co-coordinator they will have 5% of their units moderated under the supervision of the Provost who will appoint a suitable moderator such as the Director of Research and Curriculum Development.

4.4.14 The roles and responsibilities of students are detailed in the Student Handbook.

4.4.15 Lecturers are responsible for the marking of all assessment tasks and examinations. If possible, lecturers will mark the examination papers of another class of students studying the same unit. However, at any time where there is only one class per unit, the class Lecturer will be responsible for the marking of their own students' papers.

4.4.16 Marks and grades awarded to students are to be based solely on merit in relation to prescribed academic standards.

4.4.17 Examination questions for each unit will be set by the unit lecturer(s), in consultation with the Director of Program two weeks before the conclusion of each subject.

4.4.18 If there is any grievance regarding the results, students will follow the assessment appeals process. As stated in this policy, there will be a re-mark of examination papers and if necessary an external expert in the subject area may be consulted.

4.5 Feedback on Assessment

Feedback is any response made in relation to students' work such as an assessment task, a performance or product. Feedback is intended to inform students on the progress they have made towards achieving the learning outcomes of a unit. It should be constructive and it should point students to ways in which they can improve their learning and achievement. It can be given by a lecturer or tutor, an Academic Director or a student peer.

4.6 Determining Academic Status

4.6.1 At the end of each study period the Academic Board assesses the academic status of each student enrolled in an award course in accordance with the following criteria:

(i) **Good standing:** making satisfactory progress and permitted to continue

(ii) **Conditional:** at academic risk of not achieving satisfactory course progress i.e. has failed 50% or more of the units in which they were enrolled. Permitted to re-enrol under conditions imposed by the Director of Programs.

(iii) **Terminated:** student has not made satisfactory course progress and is not permitted to continue without approval from the Provost.

4.7 Termination should only occur after the student has been placed on Conditional status during the course and should not be based on the results achieved in a single study period.

4.7.1 A decision to terminate a student must be based on unsatisfactory academic performance in three study periods.

4.7.2 A student will not normally be terminated on academic performance grounds on the basis of their results in their first and second study periods alone. This recognises that some students have difficulty adapting to the requirements of higher education study and may not achieve satisfactory results in their first year.

4.8 Recording and Publishing of Marks and Grades

Students shall be given a numerical mark as well as a grade for each assessment task and for their final result. The Director of Program and the Administration & Finance Manager are jointly responsible for the accuracy of the uploaded marks and grades.

4.9 Assessment Components

Assessment Components	Maximum Percentage of final mark
Concepts Assignment	30%
Analytical Assignments	30%
Class Presentation	25%
Group Simulation Games	40%
Final Examination	65%

4.10 The Grading System

Students are assessed for each unit on the following basis:

Grade	Mark %
High Distinction	85-100
Distinction	75-84
Credit	65-74
Pass	50-64
Pass Conceded	45-49
Fail	0-45

Grade	Descriptions
High Distinction 85% - 100%	An outstanding level of achievement. The student has an extensive knowledge and understanding of the unit material and unit objectives beyond the normal expectations of the course; very high level of competence.
Distinction	A high level of achievement. The student exhibits a comprehensive

75% - 84%	understanding of the unit content and unit objectives and can readily apply this knowledge; high level of competence.
Credit 65% - 74%	Substantial level of achievement. The student has a thorough knowledge and understanding of the unit content and unit objectives and is competent in the processes and skills of the course; reasonable level of competence.
Pass 50% - 64%	Satisfactory achievement. The student has demonstrated an acceptable level of knowledge and understanding of the unit content and unit objectives and has achieved a basic level of competence in the processes, skills and knowledge of this unit; adequate level of competence.
Pass Conceded 45-49%	Unsatisfactory achievement. Students who are awarded a PC grade: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are not eligible to enrol in a unit which has this subject as a prerequisite. • must have achieved an overall mark of 50% in the other units they are enrolled in that semester • are not permitted to graduate with more than 20% of their total units at the PC grade.
Fail 0 – 44%	Limited achievement in the unit. The student has some knowledge and understanding of the unit content and unit objectives but has not been able to demonstrate a satisfactory level of knowledge, competence or skills; inadequate level of competence.

4.11 Allocation of Final Grades

All students must pass all the subjects of any award courses to receive a successful final grade.

4.12 Academic Transcripts

All students will receive an official Academic Transcript containing the following information: Year; Unit Code; Credit Points; Unit Name; Grade; Credit Points Gained; and Grade Point Average.

4.13 Special Assessment Policy

4.13.1 A student who has been prevented through illness or other unavoidable and unforeseen circumstances from satisfying the normal assessment requirements for a unit may apply for special treatment of his/her assessment. The student must apply to the Teaching, Learning & Examination Committee if they want to receive special consideration. Students must apply by filling in the 'Request for Special Consideration' form and supply the necessary documentation.

4.13.2 As stated above only students with extenuating and compelling circumstances can re-sit the examination. Extenuating and compelling circumstances may or may not include:

- (i) Illness (supported by medical certificates)
- (ii) Family trauma (supported by evidence such as a death certificate)
- (iii) Other Emotional Issues (Supported by a letter from the Student Services Manager).

4.13.3 The Teaching, Learning & Examination Committee will convene to consider applications for special consideration and this may include an interview.

4.13.4 Where a re-examination is authorised, students may be required to pay a \$400 fee for each subject/unit re-examination.

4.13.5 A retake is available to those students who achieve a mark of 30 to 49% in a unit provide that they have passed all other assessment tasks in that unit. The retake can consist of one or more of the following:

- Participate in an intensive schedule of study
- Resubmit an assignment
- Submit a replacement assignment on a different topic
- Sit for an examination in the inter semester break but prior to the commencement of the next semester.

5. Procedure for Managing adherence to the Assessment Policy

The Provost will be responsible for ensuring that the Assessment Policy is adhered to.

- The Provost will require the Director of Program to report at the commencement of the teaching period details of assessments and dates of such assessments for each Unit on offer.
- An audit will be conducted at Week 8 of the teaching period to check adherence to the Assessment Policy.
- At the end of the teaching period a second Audit will be undertaken by the Provost to check adherence. This Audit will be conducted following moderation results becoming available and before the Teaching, learning and Examination Committee (TLEC) meets to ratify the grades awarded for the Unit.
- The Provost will be present in an ex-officio capacity at the TLEC meeting where they will report on the second Audit prior to the students marks are discussed and grades awarded.
- The Provost will report to the Academic Board the results of the Examiners meeting and action of required to rectify any non-adherence to the Assessment Policy.

6 Related Documents

- i. Plagiarism Policy
- ii. Application for Special Assessment
- iii. Assessment Appeals Process
- iv. Application for Grade Appeals