

Assessment Policy and Procedure

Policy Purpose

This policy establishes the Think: Colleges framework for quality assurance in the management of the assessment system, responsibilities and obligations for assessment, quality assurance, and procedures for the effective conduct of assessment practices.

Policy Scope

The scope of this policy includes assessment conducted in each of the Think: Colleges Vocational and Higher Education courses. This policy addresses matters related to:

1. Management of the Assessment System
2. The Responsibilities and Obligations of Assessment
3. Quality Assurance: Adjustment, Moderation, and Validation
4. Procedures: Recording, Extensions, Overdue Assessments, Re-submissions
5. Assessment Grading Criteria

Definitions

Refer to *Glossary of Terms*.

Policy Content

Think: Colleges develops and implements assessment strategies to facilitate student learning and to assess achievement against learning outcomes or competency aims. Assessment supports student-centred approaches to learning. Assessment practices include the provision of constructive and timely feedback to students to provide students with a measure of their progress against stated learning outcomes and assist in their preparation for future assessment. Each College endorses relevant and diverse forms of assessment.

Management of the Assessment System

The Teaching and Learning Committee oversees the management, review and monitoring of assessment systems and procedures. The *Terms of Reference* of the Teaching and Learning Committee in relation to assessment are listed in the *Academic Board Charter* and can be viewed on Think: Colleges website.

Responsibilities and Obligations of Assessment

The Teaching and Learning Committee of Think: Colleges is responsible for coordinating and monitoring the practice of assessment and to ensure that fair, effective, consistent and appropriate assessment practices are in place. The Teaching and Learning Committee will review the Assessment Overview Grid developed for each course and ensure the weighting and timings of assessments are fair, equitable and consistent with the specifications outlined in the accredited course documents or Training and Assessment Strategies. The Teaching and Learning Committee ascribes responsibility for conducting assessment to academic staff and assessor and ensures that assessment tasks are consistent with the aims, objectives and content of a course and/or unit of study.

Responsibilities of Head of College (or delegated nominee)

- Review and approve Assessment Overview Grid
- Conduct assessment validations and moderations
- Ensure all students and assessors are aware of their obligations during a study period
- Represent the College in Teaching and Learning Committee

- Manage the development and review of assessments to ensure students are given appropriate details such as: types of assessment, instructions, length (words/duration), weighting, and submission timeframes.
- Approve Reasonable Adjustments as per the *Access and Equity Policy and Procedure*

Responsibilities of Assessors

- Contribute to the development of an Assessment Overview Grid and Training and Assessment Strategy with the Program Director (or delegated nominee)
- Provide constructive and timely feedback on assessments submitted by students.
- Adhere to assessment strategies and their submission timeframes.
- Report on student progress and achievement in an honest, clear and objective manner and based only on relevant data.
- Report on assessment outcomes.
- Apply the *Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure* and the *Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure*.

Responsibilities of Students

- Be aware of all requirements to pass or deem competent in a unit of study.
- Be aware of mechanisms within the College for seeking assistance and advice, in particular in relation to problems in meeting assessment timeframes, withdrawal from a course and/or unit of study and special consideration due to illness or other misadventure.
- Practise academic integrity and avoid plagiarism, cheating or collusion.
- Accept fair, helpful and timely feedback on assessment tasks including evaluation of performance and progress in a unit of study.
- Be aware of the *Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure* and the *Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure* which includes the procedure for appealing academic decisions.

Quality Assurance: Adjustment, Moderation, and Validation

The Teaching and Learning Committee is responsible for the regular review of assessment practices and activities at each of the Think: Colleges. Think: Colleges has in place a variety of quality assurance systems and mechanisms to ensure that feedback and input from assessor, academic staff, students, and external advisers is collated, analysed and acted upon. Information received in relation to a course and/or unit of study is analysed and reported on each term. (Refer to *Stakeholder Surveying Policy and Procedure*)

Think: College employs internal and external monitoring and evaluation activities to inform the process of continual improvement of courses, delivery processes, and assessment strategies.

Adjustment: Assessment tasks may be subject to Reasonable Adjustment where a student has a specific disability or special need. Adjustments are measures or actions taken in order to provide substantive equality for students with a disability. The obligation on the College to implement any adjustments is subject to provision by the student, of timely and relevant advice of the student's individual requirements. In determining the reasonableness of an adjustment to assessment, the vocational and professional outcomes of the course must be considered in order to ensure assessment decisions are appropriate. (Refer to the *Access and Equity Policy and Procedure*)

Moderation: Assessment moderation is the review of assessment decision-making to ensure consistency in grading. A group of assessors will meet to discuss their assessment processes and tasks with a view to identify issues and making improvement. (Refer to the *Assessment Validation and Moderation Policy and Procedure*)

Validation: Assessment validation involves comparing, evaluating and reviewing assessment processes, methods and tools and the subsequent assessment decisions. (Refer to the *Assessment Validation and Moderation Policy and Procedure*)

Procedures for implementation

Recording: Assessors are required to make assessment decisions and formally record those decisions. Assessors complete an *Assessment Record Sheet* (ARS) for each unit of study. The ARS is submitted to the College Administrator at the conclusion of each study period. Once an assessment is marked and graded, it is returned to the student within 14 days. (Refer to the *Record Management Policy and Procedure*).

Extensions: Students who require an extension of time to complete an assessment must seek approval from the Program Director and assessor. The Program Director and assessor must sign the appropriate section of the *Assignment Cover Sheet* indicating the extension date. Extension can only be granted due to compassionate or compelling circumstances that are generally those beyond the control of the student and which have an impact upon the student's course progress or wellbeing. These could include, but are not limited to:

- serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes;
- bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (Where possible a death certificate should be provided);
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the student's studies; or
- a traumatic experience which could include:
 - involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; or
 - witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime,

and this has impacted on the student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports)

Overdue Assessments: An assessment is 'overdue' when it is not submitted by the due date or by the agreed extension date. Should the student fail to submit an assessment by the agreed date 10% of the maximum mark for each day may be deducted and it will be recorded on the Assessment Record Sheet as an overdue assessment. An overdue assessment submitted beyond the extension period of one week or a newly agreed extension period, automatically receives a grading of Incomplete or Not Yet Competent.

Re-submission or Re-assessment: Should a student fail to pass an assessment during a study period and obtain a grade of 45 to 49% for an assessment task, then a student may re-submit the assessment. Only one re-submission or re-assessment is permitted per assessment. The student and the assessor must negotiate a specific timeframe for the re-submission of the assessment task and note and sign the re-submission timeframe on the *Assignment Cover Sheet*. A student may only be awarded a Pass for a successful re-submission or re-assessment result.

Supplementary Assessment: Should a student fail a unit of study and obtain a cumulative grade between 40 to 44% a student may be awarded a supplementary assessment. This may only be awarded at the discretion of the Examination Committee. A student may only be awarded a Pass for a successful supplementary result.

Appealing an Assessment Result: If a student is dissatisfied with the assessment result, the student must approach the Program Director in the first instance to discuss and/or request review of that assessment. In case of review, the student must present a case in writing arguing that the original marking was unfair or inconsistent with marking guidelines. The request for a review must be made within 10 working days of the release of the academic result. If the student remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the review the student can lodge an appeal in writing to the Head of College within 20 working days after receiving the notification of the review outcome. (*Refer to the Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure*)

Assessment Grading Criteria – Higher Education Courses

Assessments for Higher Education courses – All Higher Education unit of study assessed within each course are graded according to the following criteria and grading scales:

High Distinction	HD	85-100	High Distinction is awarded for work of outstanding quality in achieving all learning outcomes together with outstanding integration and understanding of theory and application of skills. Evidence of in-depth research, reading, analysis, original and creative thought is demonstrated. A consistent academic referencing system is used and sources are appropriately acknowledged.
Distinction	D	75-84	Distinction is awarded for work of superior quality in achieving all learning outcomes and a superior integration and understanding of theory and application of skills. Evidence of in-depth research, reading, analysis and evaluation is demonstrated. A consistent academic referencing system is used and sources are appropriately acknowledged.
Credit	C	65-74	Credit is awarded for work showing a more than satisfactory achievement of all learning outcomes and a more than adequate understanding of theory and application of skills. A consistent academic referencing system is used and sources are appropriately acknowledged.
Pass	P	50-64	Pass is awarded for work showing a satisfactory achievement of all learning outcomes and an adequate understanding of theory and application of skills. A consistent academic referencing system is used and sources are appropriately acknowledged.
Fail	F	49 or less	The grade will be awarded if a student is unable to demonstrate satisfactory academic performance in the subject or has failed to complete required assessment points in accordance with the subjects required assessment points.
Conceded Pass	CP	45-49	Conceded Passes are only awarded if the result is the final outstanding unit before a student is eligible to graduate. The student must show the potential to satisfy the achievement of course learning outcomes and an understanding of theory and skill application.

Incomplete	I		Incomplete refers to a variety of circumstances that are currently affecting the recording of marks against the specified assessment criteria in a unit of study/competency.
Withdrawn - Failed	WDF		Withdrawn Failed refers to the withdrawal of the student from a unit/subject of study or an entire course after the census date.
Withdrawn - Not Failed	WDNF		Withdrawn Not Failed refers to the withdrawal of the student from a unit/subject of study or an entire course before the census date.
Course Credit	CC		Course Credit relates to the credit or exemption received by a student in a unit of study/competency through recognition of an individual's formal and informal prior learning.

Assessment Grading Criteria - Vocational Education Courses

Assessments for all Vocational Programs are assessments according to the rules outlined in each of the Training Package and accredited course unit of study. Each unit of study is allocated a result as follows:

Competent	C	Competent is awarded to student who has achieved all of the learning outcomes specified for that unit/module to the specified standard.
Not Yet Competent	NYC	Not Yet Competent is awarded to student who failed to achieve all of the learning outcomes specified for that unit/module to the specified standard.

If grading for units of study is utilised, then this must be provided on a separate resulting sheet, and not appear on the official transcript of the student.

Record keeping and confidentiality

Records of assessment results are stored electronically in HERMES and archived for a period of at least 30 years in line with the State or Territory Registering Body requirement.

Publication

These procedures are to be published for students and staffs in Student Handbook, Staff Handbook and Think: Colleges website to ensure current and prospective students and staffs has up to date and accurate information publicly available to them.

Responsibility	Head of College and Academic Director
Record Management	HERMES Assessment Overview Grid Assessment Record Sheet Assignment Cover Sheet Training and Assessment Strategy
Reference	Teaching and Learning Committee Terms of Reference Stakeholder Surveying Policy and Procedure Assessment Validation and Moderation Policy and Procedure Course Review Policy and Procedure Record Management Policy and Procedure Access and Equity Policy and Procedure Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure Glossary of Terms
Policy Developed By	Academic Director
Policy Endorsed By	Academic Board
Policy Complies with	AUQA and AQTF 2007 - Element 1.5
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