



ASSESSMENT POLICY

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Approved by	Coursework Committee
Responsible Body	Coursework Committee
Approval date	04 October 2019
Effective date	04 October 2019
Review date	04 October 2021
Superseded documents	none
Related documents	<i>Courses Policy, Learning Outcomes – Principles and Rules, Units Policy, ACT Strategic Plan</i>
Student Lifecycle Stage/s	Applies to the whole student lifecycle

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set out the ACT approach to effective assessment as an integral component of the Learning and Teaching environment.

2. DEFINITIONS

Academic Quality Committee The committee of the ACT which oversees the quality assurance of academic coursework

ACT The Australian College of Theology Ltd

Affiliated College an institution approved to offer an accredited higher education award of the ACT

AQF The Australian Qualifications Framework. Every accredited course in the Australian higher education sector must comply with the requirements of the AQF

Assessment is the evaluation and measurement of student performance.

Assessment instrument is an essay, exam or other exercise used to assess student performance.

Assessment scheme is the planned assessment for a unit of study.

Capabilities The capacities which determine how people respond to new, complex and changing circumstances

Course A program of study made up of units that lead to an award of the ACT.

Coursework Committee The ACT committee with the oversight of coursework awards and units of study

Competencies are abilities to do something successfully or effectively.

Feedback is information about students' performance intended as a basis for encouragement and improvement.

Formative Assessment is assessment *for* learning. It refers to assessment procedures conducted during the learning process in order to diagnose the effectiveness of teaching and



learning with a view to modifying teaching and learning practice to improve student attainment.

Graduate Attributes The generic qualities and capacities developed in students by taking a course of study

HESF The Higher Education Standards Framework established by TEQSA in 2015

Summative Assessment is assessment *of* learning. It refers to assessment procedures that evaluate and measure student performance and achievement against established benchmarks with a view to assigning grades.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all ACT undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate coursework awards. It provides a framework for assessment and feedback practice at both course and unit level. It is relevant to all academic leaders, teaching staff and students.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

The Australian College of Theology has a responsibility to provide a quality assured learning environment in accordance with its Strategic Plan and broader legislative and regulatory requirements, especially the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF, 2015), 1.4.1-4. In fulfilment of this responsibility the ACT will require affiliated colleges to establish assessment practices that are open, program based, consistent and fair. The ACT will support the colleges by providing benchmarking, moderation, professional development and other relevant resources. The ACT will formulate guidelines to enable the affiliated colleges to provide assessment tasks and feedback that direct and enhance student learning and provide credible information about student achievement.

Assessment is a systematic process for facilitating and evaluating student learning. The process includes the design, development and implementation of assessment tasks, and the judgment and reporting of student performance. The purpose of assessment is to facilitate, measure and certify the achievement of specified course and unit learning outcomes and progress towards developing the Graduate Attributes.

Assessment is integral to the curriculum as it determines the competencies and capabilities that are developed in ACT courses. Assessment is designed to guide and enhance student learning. Assessment is recognised as a distinct learning activity.

Assessment tasks and processes perform four functions in student learning:

- They facilitate student capacity to meet learning outcomes (formative)
- They provide evidence of achievement of learning outcomes (summative)
- They provide through feedback opportunity for individualising the student learning experience
- They develop student capacity to become confident self-evaluators as a basic component of reflective practice and lifelong learning.



Assessment tasks and processes contribute to course quality assurance by ensuring the integrity of teaching and student learning.

5. PRINCIPLES

Assessment and Learning

- 5.1 Assessment will be designed to engage students in the learning process and to facilitate their learning.
- 5.2 **In accordance with HESF (2015), 1.3.3, in category A (foundational) units, and wherever pedagogically appropriate¹ in category B and C units**, formative assessment will be provided to identify needs for additional support to students.
- 5.3 Students will be expected to engage with assessment tasks, allocate sufficient time for their completion and submit assigned work on time.
- 5.4 In accordance with HES (2015), 1.3.3, timely feedback will accompany formative assessment tasks and inform students about their current level of achievement and guide future learning, **including targeted support programs as required**.

Assessment as fit for purpose

- 5.5 Assessment tasks will be designed so that student learning is directed to the course and unit content and learning outcomes.
- 5.6 Assessment across a course will be sufficient to measure achievement of all unit and course learning outcomes.
- 5.7 Assessment will be course-based to provide a coherent and holistic program of learning that leads to the achievement of course learning outcomes.
- 5.8 Assessment practices will make optimal use of technological affordances.
- 5.9 Academic staff with responsibility for assessment will develop knowledge and skills in contemporary assessment methods and design assessment tasks which are varied, authentic, **and, where pedagogically appropriate, seek to be innovative**.

Assessment and Performance

- 5.10 Assessment is to be fair with student learning measured against learning outcomes and expected standards of performance.
- 5.11 Judgments about student learning will be made by reference to course and unit learning outcomes and pre-determined performance standards.
- 5.12 Assessment criteria for specific assessment tasks will reflect what students are expected to learn.
- 5.13 Performance criteria will reflect the expected standards of performance for the assessment criteria.
- 5.14 Information about assessment requirements, expectations of performance and

¹ Where 'pedagogically appropriate' is to be understood as *at least* whenever students are making a significant transition in their courses (eg. the first units in a new field of study).



criteria for evaluation will be clear and made known no later than the point at which tasks are assigned.

- 5.15 The assessment process will provide trustworthy information by which to judge and report student performance.
- 5.16 Grades awarded to students will be based on the extent to which they fulfil the pre-determined criteria and attain stated performance standards.

Assessment and fairness

- 5.17 Assessment practices will safeguard against contract cheating.
- 5.18 Administrative processes will assure the security, equity and integrity of assessment and results.
- 5.19 The assessment load will be manageable for students, teachers and administrators.

Assessment and evaluation skills

- 5.20 Assessment should develop students' abilities to evaluate their own and peers' work
- 5.21 Students themselves need to develop the capacity to make judgments about their own work and that of others in order to become effective continuing learners and reflective practitioners.
- 5.22 Through engagement with the assessment process degree level students will develop peer and self-evaluation skills and take responsibility for their learning as they progress through a course.

Implementation of this policy

- 5.23 The Assessment Policy will be operationalised by *Assessment Guidelines* under the direction of the Coursework Committee supported by the Academic Quality Committee.
- 5.24 This policy will be supported by professional development of ACT faculty as required.

6. RELATED LEGISLATION

Australian Qualifications Framework, <https://aqf.edu.au>

Higher Education Standards Framework, 2015, <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/higher-education-standards-framework-2015>

7. REFERENCES

Geoff Scott, 'Flipcurric', accessible at www.flipcurric.edu.au.

TEQSA Guidance Note, *Course Design (including Learning Outcomes and Assessment)*, <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/guidance-note-course-design-learning-outcomes-and-assessment-v1-3.pdf?v=1507852642>

8. VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Changes made
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Australian College
of Theology

1	Coursework Committee	04 October 2019	04 October 2019	New policy
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Any hard copy of this electronic document may not be current as the ACT regularly reviews its policies. The latest version can be found online at (link to be inserted on approval).



Attachment 2: Higher Education Standards (2105), Standard 1.1.3 and TEQSA's Commentary on Domain 1 of the HESF Framework

1. HESF (2015) Standard 1.1.3

1.3 Orientation and Progression

1. Successful transition into courses of study is achieved through orientation programs that are tailored to the needs of student cohorts and include specific consideration for international students adjusting to living and studying in Australia.
2. Specific strategies support transition, including:
 - a. assessing the needs and preparedness of individual students and cohorts
 - b. undertaking early assessment or review that provides formative feedback on academic progress and is able to identify needs for additional support, and
 - c. providing access to informed advice and timely referral to academic or other support.
3. Methods of assessment or monitoring that determine progress within or between units of study or in research training validly assess progress and, in the case of formative assessment, provide students with timely feedback that assists in their achievement of Federal Register of Legislative Instruments F2015L01639 *Higher Education Standards Framework: 2015 Page 4 of 22* learning outcomes.
4. Processes that identify students at risk of unsatisfactory progress and provide specific support are implemented across all courses of study.
5. Trends in rates of retention, progression and completion of student cohorts through courses of study are monitored to enable review and improvement.
6. Students have equivalent opportunities for successful transition into and progression through their course of study, irrespective of their educational background, entry pathway, mode or place of study.

2. Information and TEQSA's Commentary on Domain 1 of the HESF Framework (<https://www.teqsa.gov.au/higher-education-standards-framework-2015>)

1.3 Orientation and Progression

TEQSA expects a provider to be able to demonstrate that students are not only assisted in their transition into their course of study but also that the arrangements for transition are sensitive to the needs of particular cohorts of students, including:

- students enrolled in different modes of participation (for example, online-only)
- students with special needs
- international students, where applicable.

Early assessment of progress, early detection of students at risk of poor progress and targeted support programs are given high priority by the Standards for all courses of study (this includes research training where offered).



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