

ASSESSMENT Guidelines

Responsible officer	ACT Director of Teaching and Learning
Contact	TBA
Approved by	Coursework Committee
Responsible Body	Coursework Committee
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Superseded documents	none
Related documents	<i>Academic Misconduct Policy, Assessment Policy, Bibliographies Policy, Courses Policy, Extensions Policy, Grievance Resolution Policy, Late Penalties Policy, Learning Outcomes – Principles and Rules, Moderation Policy, Moderation Procedure, Units Policy,</i>
Student Lifecycle Stage/s	Applies to the whole student lifecycle

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of these Guidelines is to operationalise the Assessment Policy by setting out the ACT approach to assessment procedure, providing processes for designing and implementing assessment tasks, assessing the work of students and reporting student progress.

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

Anonymous marking is marking where the name of the student is not revealed to the person marking his/her work

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.

Criteria are specific performance attributes or characteristics that the assessor takes into account when making a judgment about the student response to the different elements of the assessment task.

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

Marker is a qualified person appointed to mark assessments by an affiliated college.

Marking Scale is a system by which marks will be awarded to assessments e.g.0-100.

Marking Scheme is a document which explains how student responses to assessment tasks will be evaluated. It identifies assessment criteria and articulates qualitative standards of achievement for each criterion.

Moderation instrument is the assessment instrument chosen to be moderated. It is usually the major assessment.

Second Marking is where an assessment is marked a second time by a different marker.

Standards are statements describing the level or quality of student performance in an assessment task.

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. PRINCIPLES

Assessment practice and decision-making must aim to be fair, equitable, consistent and transparent (CQU, 2019), requiring students to engage with key content and to practice or demonstrate acquisition of key skills, knowledge and values which will promote effective student learning. (Armstrong, Chan, Malfroy & Thompson, 2015; Bearman, M., P. Dawson, D. Boud, M. Hall, S. Bennett, E. Molloy and G. Joughin. 2014). Assessment must be continuous



and progressive (summative) throughout a unit.

4. PROCEDURE

4.1 ASSESSMENT TASKS

4.1A DESIGN:

An assessment task should be designed:

- a) to support the attainment of Course Outcomes and Graduate Attributes;
- b) to assist students to achieve the unit Learning Outcomes;
- c) to ensure that collectively all the Assessment Tasks for a unit measure all of that unit's learning outcomes;
- d) to assist students to avoid easily engaging in academic misconduct.
- e) to be fair to students giving equitable opportunities to demonstrate their learning (Lam, 1995).
- f) to be valid; having sufficient evidence to support the inferences and decisions it will make regarding students (Darr, 2005b).
- g) to be reliable; obtaining consistent results across time, task and markers (Darr, 2005a)
- h) to educate and promote the values and practice of academic integrity, and to discourage any form of academic dishonesty, intended or otherwise, such as plagiarism, cheating or collusion.

While the same assessment task type and same learning outcomes may be re-used within units, it is preferred that, in order to promote academic integrity, the elements/content of the assessment be sufficiently dissimilar to previous assessments. It is also recommended that re-used assessments be periodically reviewed and/or renewed.

4.1B INFORMATION

Assessment information should be provided either by hard copy or in electronic form by no later than the start date of a unit.

Assessment information should include the following:

- a) the particular type, details, conditions, and expectations of each Assessment Task;
- b) how each Assessment Task aligns with the unit Learning Outcomes;
- c) the due date (including the time) for submission of each Assessment Task;
- d) the examination method.
- e) criteria and standards.



- f) presentation requirements, such as footnoting and bibliographical referencing, font and layout options.

4.1.C ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Clear assessment criteria should:

- a) Keep descriptions of criteria as concise and neutral as possible.
- b) Use concrete verbs, preferably from the learning outcomes, that refer to observable behaviours which will signal more clearly to students what they should do.
- c) Where possible, separate criteria so that each deals with only one behaviour.
- d) Not include unnecessary detail.
- e) Contain specific criteria to assess prose style, layout and structure of student's written work, if these are to be assessed.
- f) Limit the number of criteria to a manageable number, considering how many behaviours students can competently demonstrate in an assessment task and how many criteria assessors can juggle when grading.

Criteria should not contain information about quality of performance; for example descriptor words such as 'effectively', 'well', 'satisfactorily' should be avoided.

4.1.D ASSESSMENT STANDARDS

Standards for assessments:

- a) should clearly communicate to students in advance how judgments will be made about the quality of their work
- b) should provide sufficient information about the expected quality and level of student performance for obtaining a specific grade.
- c) can be holistic, relating to the whole of the student's performance in the assessment or analytic, relating specifically to individual criteria.

4.1.E STUDENT COOPERATION AND COLLABORATION IN ASSESSMENT

An assessment task may include requirements for a group of students to work in collaboration to prepare, conduct, submit, or evaluate an assessment task. This may include group work, peer assessment, or self-evaluation. In such cases, the assessment information must include detailed instructions that clearly explain what is required of participants as well as how marks will be allocated to the students for the assessment task.

4.1.F ASSESSMENTS BASED ON STUDENT PARTICIPATION

- a) The assessment must be based on one or more of the unit learning outcomes.
- b) There must be clear criteria for discriminating student performance. Marks must not be awarded only for attending or being present for a learning activity.



- c) The criteria must be included with the UQAF to allow review by the unit field moderator.
- d) The criteria must be communicated to students in advance of the assessment and the activities on which the assessment is based must be explicitly identified.
- e) Feedback on performance against the criteria must be available to students.
- f) The assessment and marking criteria must be equitable, giving students equal opportunity to demonstrate the assessment outcomes.
- g) A maximum of 15% of the total marks for the unit may be awarded for an assessment based on participation.

4.1G TIMING

- a) Assessment deadlines should be timed to take account other academic demands on student time wherever possible (e.g. other assessments in the unit, requirements of other units).
- b) Students should be given reasonable time to submit an assessment task, taking into consideration availability of materials and reference texts and practical or technical difficulties likely to be/that may be encountered.

4.1H EARLY FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

For each category A unit, an assessment task should be completed, marked and returned, with formative feedback, as early as possible in the unit. This early formative assessment and feedback is intended to promote student learning by giving feedback on progress towards the achievement of learning outcomes, identify 'at risk' students and provide further academic support if required.

In category B & C units, in which students make a significant transition (eg. the first units in a new field of study), one assessment task should be completed, marked, and returned, with feedback, early in the unit.

4.2 ASSESSMENT SUBMISSION

Assessments should be submitted by the due date.

Assessments should be submitted via the college's LMS or through Turnitin. Assessments which are unable to be submitted electronically, due to sensitive or personal content, or assessments which include a physical piece of work (such as a hand-written journals or artwork) may submitted in hard-copy. This should be noted on the UQAF and approved by the moderator.

For extensions or late submission penalties, please refer to the *Extensions Policy* and the *Late Penalties Policy*.

4.3 ASSESSMENT MARKING

- a) A marking scale should be identified and indicated for each assessment.
- b) A marking scheme should be provided to markers.
- c) Where possible, marking should be anonymous.
- d) A degree of second marking should occur:



- i) By an experienced academic for markers who are within their first two semesters of teaching within the ACT, including tutors and guest lecturers who are responsible for marking an assessment instrument.
- ii) Where an assessment instrument will have multiple markers.
- iii) Where an assessment item is the most heavily weighted in a non-moderated unit.

4.4 ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK

- a) Feedback should be prompt, with assessments returned to students within 4 weeks.
- b) Feedback should be based on the marking scheme but may contain additional comments.
- c) Feedback should contain constructive guidance relating to the unit learning outcomes.
- d) Feedback should be relevant and offer suggestions for improvement.

4.5 REPORTING RESULTS

Assessment results should be recorded in the ACT's Paradigm system before the end of semester, following the user guide.

5. RELATED LEGISLATION

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

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

6. REFERENCES

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7. VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Changes made
1	Coursework Committee	21/02/20	25/02/20	New policy
2	Coursework Committee	02/10/20	01/01/21	Added section 4.1F

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