

PGDDS - Assessment and Learning Experience Manual

IIIT-B and upGrad Post-Graduate Diploma in Data Science

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IIIT-B Assessment Policy

As a general IIIT-B assessment policy, assessments are divided into two formats, namely, formative and summative, without too much emphasis on a single format. Hence, a variety of assessment formats are planned in order to mirror the workplace today and the global university standards. The list below describes the different assessment formats used in the program:

- Group **case studies** will assess the learners based on their ability to produce quality deliverables on large analytics projects as a team. This will help in building team-playing skills, which are considered invaluable by analytics recruiters in the 21st century workplace.
- In-module **Graded Questions**, individual **assignments** and **exams** will assess the participants based on conceptual clarity.
- **Class participation** will be encouraged via a **Discussion Forum**, which will enable the students to learn faster by answering peer doubts as well as accelerate the learning for the overall cohort.
- As per IIITB exam guidelines, exam question papers and answer keys will not be disclosed to maintain the academic integrity of exam questions

The Academic Committee deliberates regularly on the academic structure and grading elements of the program, and it holds the right to change any component of the same. Any change to the grading elements or the academic structure of the program will be communicated to the learners in advance.

It is recommended that the participants focus on learning as opposed to focusing solely on assessment scores. Given that it is a Post-Graduate program, the **participants are expected to do research on their own during the learning process, and deal with assessments having varied/multiple approaches to solve them.**

Assessment Structure

Assessment Components and Respective Weights

The Post-Graduate program comprises five assessment components. Their distribution and weightage are summarized in the table below.

Type of Assessment	Subset
Quizzes	Graded MCQs and coding questions (may include timed assessments)
Assignment	Individual assignments
Group Case Studies	Group submissions of case studies
Exam	<p>Three proctored online exams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First: A 90- min exam for course 1. Second: A 180- min exam with 90-min each for course 2 and 3. Third: A 90-min exam for course 4.
Class Participation	<p>Discussion forum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Points only for faculty/TA verifications on the Discussion Forum. - Penalty for inappropriate posts.

There may be viva for certain assessments.

**Two exam slots are offered per exam.*

Course	Weight Distribution in the Courses Weight Distribution in the Course(NLP/DL/Business Analyst /Data Analyst Track)				
	Assignment	Case Study	MCQ	Exam	Class Participation
Data Toolkit	20%	15%	20%	40%	5%
Machine Learning 1	20%	15%	20%	40%	5%
Course 3(Track)	20%	15%	20%	40%	5%
Course 4(Track)	20%	15%	20%	40%	5%
Capstone Project	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Course	Weight Distribution in the Courses (Data Engineering Track)				
	Assignment	Case Study	MCQ	Exam	Class Participation
Data Toolkit	20%	15%	20%	40%	5%
Machine Learning 1	20%	15%	20%	40%	5%
Course 3(Track)	35%	0%	20%	40%	5%
Course 4(Track)	35%	0%	20%	40%	5%
Capstone Project	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Let's take an example to understand this. Suppose you have scored the following marks in Course 1. Each component is mentioned with its respective weightage in parentheses:

1. Assignment (20%) - 200/300
2. Case Study (15%) - 120/150
3. Graded Questions (20%) - 325/600
4. Exam (40%) - 21/30
5. Class Participation (5%) - 80/100

Your final percentage score will be calculated as:

$$\{[0.2 \times (200/300)] + [0.15 \times (120/150)] + [0.20 \times (325/600)] + [0.4 \times (21/30)] + [0.05 \times (80/100)]\} \times 100$$

= **68.17%**

The final percentage scores of all the learners are calculated in this manner, and then the grades are assigned to the learners by the course faculty based on the relative scores of the cohort.

Grading Policy

Grade Point Average (GPA) Computation for a Course

The marks given for each assessment, scaled by the weight assigned to an assessment, add up to the overall score for a course. Grade Point Average (GPA) is awarded on a four-point scale based on the normalized course-level scores of the entire batch. **The faculty has autonomy to decide on the grading scale based on the relative scores of a batch.**

There are 10 letter grades: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, D, F and I. The relation between grades and points (on a four-point scale) is shown in the table below:

Letter Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	D	F
Grade Points	4	3.7	3.4	3	2.7	2.4	2	1	0

The grade 'I' does not carry any grade points and is interpreted as 'Incomplete.'

If a learner is unable to fulfil the requirements for a course due to a legitimate reason and is found to be eligible for a Grade Improvement Opportunity (GIO), then the Academic Committee may award the grade 'I' (Incomplete) to that student. An 'I' grade must be converted to a regular letter grade by appearing in a GIO exam, failing which it is converted to an 'F' grade automatically.

Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) Computation for the Program

The program has a total of 36 credits, which are distributed as follows:

Course	Credits
Data Toolkit	8
Machine Learning 1	7
Course 3 (Track)	7
Course 4 (Track)	7
Capstone Project	7

Post Course 2, The students would get an option to decide the track of their choice basis their career profile & academic interests. There are 5 tracks namely – Natural Language Processing (NLP)/Deep Learning (DL)/Business Analytics/Data Analytics/Data Engineering. Students will get appropriate guidance from the academic team to help decide the same.

The credits and program duration for all the tracks would remain the same. The GPA scores for each course weighted by the respective proportion of credit add up to the CGPA for the entire program. The GPA is truncated (and not rounded off) at two decimal places.

For instance, if the grade points awarded to a participant are, respectively, G1, G2, etc., in courses with the corresponding credits of U1, U2, etc., then the $CGPA = (U1 \cdot G1 + U2 \cdot G2 + \dots) / (U1 + U2 + \dots)$, wherein U1 and U2 refer to all the courses taken up until the time of computation of the CGPA.

A learner must pass each course by securing at least a D grade (1-grade point on a 4-point scale). However, to receive the PG Diploma certificate, the Cumulative Grade Point Average, or the CGPA, should be greater than 2.4. The learners will be awarded a **completion certificate** solely certified by upGrad on completion of the pre-preparatory course.

The learners are strongly recommended to invest all the effort to make sure they are meeting these criteria. In addition to that, each learner needs to score **at least 20% in each of the assessment elements** (Quizzes, Assignments, Group Case Study, Final exams) to pass a course. If a student secures a grade below D in any course or fails to score at least 20% in any of the assessment elements, then they will fail the course and will not be eligible for the PG Certificate.

The students will, however, have access to content just like their peers and will be given feedback on their submissions. They will be eligible for a letter of participation only if they have successfully consumed all the content of the program and have achieved a score of 40% and above in the graded questions (MCQs and the graded coding questions). The 40% score in the graded questions is at an overall level of the program weighted by each course's credit units and is not restricted to any course or module.

Eligibility to receive Program Certificate for learners in final/penultimate semester of graduation program

- Learners who are undergoing an undergraduate degree with any university or institute and who are in their final or penultimate semester shall be allowed to enrol for the Post Graduate Diploma Program.
- Please note that to get the final Post Graduate Diploma Certificate from IIIT-B, IIITB has an eligibility criteria that a learner must complete his graduation from his/her respective university or institution with minimum 50% as final graduation score.
- Such learners who are undergoing an undergraduate degree and in their final/ penultimate semester shall be required to sign an undertaking form which will be provided by upGrad stating that the learner shall be eligible for the Post Graduate Diploma Certificate from IIIT-B subject to submission of the final year transcripts and graduation certificate as per the timeline mentioned in the said undertaking.

Grade Improvement Opportunity (GIO)

We understand that in a rare scenario, a student may not be able to meet the criteria for passing a course due to unforeseen circumstances. We do not want our learners to become ineligible for receiving the PG certificate because of such circumstances.

Hence, in such cases, a Grade Improvement Opportunity (GIO) will be given to the learner to help them complete the program and be eligible for receiving the PG certificate. The list below shows the salient points of a GIO:

1. A learner can avail **a maximum of one GIO** in the entire program.
2. If a student scores less than 50% in a GIO exam or does not appear in the GIO exam, then they will fail the course and will become ineligible for the PG certificate.
3. The GIO will be decided by the Academic Committee and will be in form of an online proctored exam or any other mode of assessment as deemed fit by the Academic Committee.
4. If the marks scored by a student are less than 20% in any of the assessment components, that is, quizzes, assignments or case studies, then the usual exam for that course will be treated as a GIO exam.
5. If a student fails in more than one course, then they will not be eligible for the PG certificate as a GIO can be availed for only one course.
6. GIO is only a criterion to decide Pass/Fail status. The marks scored in the GIO Exam does not overwrite the marks scored in the first attempt of the exam (in case the GIO Exam is done separately)

Code of Conduct

1. Any learner's mis-behavior on an online or offline forum will not be tolerated, and will entail appropriate disciplinary action from the academic committee.
2. Strict adherence to behavioral policies must be maintained by all candidates. Provoking messages, threats, usage of derogatory words and demeaning connotations made on online or public forums (whatsapp, telegram, Discussion forum) against your mentor/ peers/ anyone representing the university/upGrad may lead to withholding of your enrolment into the program and may also result in strict disciplinary action.
3. Any dishonest behaviour including but not limited to plagiarism in any form for any graded component of the Program on any platform and/or discussion forum may lead to withholding of your enrolment into the program and may also result in strict disciplinary action.
4. Learners are not allowed to request, share or discuss solutions for any graded component of the Program on any platform and/or discussion forum. If any such act is done by the learner, he or she will be marked 'zero' (0) in that particular graded component. For any subsequent violation, disciplinary actions shall be taken at the sole discretion of IITB and upGrad and all such posts having answers to the graded questions shall be deleted by the Teaching Assistant (TA).

Student Mentor Support Guidelines:

- 1) Your student mentor will be proactively available to help you with any non-academic queries throughout your learning journey as per the business hours communicated by him/her in the welcome email. In case you are not able to reach out to your SM at the designated contact details, feel free to drop an email with your issue at customercare@upgrad.com / studentsupport@upgrad.com and we will reach you back.
- 2) Though your Student Mentor along with a gamut of multiple teams will be there to hand-hold you to excel in the program, your commitment to the program is of utmost importance and we suggest you imbibe the program schedule in your day to day life. For any help/mentoring required in planning your time better, please do not hesitate to connect with your student mentor.
- 3) In case your mentor is unable to provide you with a resolution to the issue within a TAT of 24hrs and you even do not receive an ETA on the same, please make use of the escalation matrix mentioned in the student manual to expedite the response.
- 4) Around your program completion, your mentor will connect you with the Career Coach to take the journey



ahead in the careers phase. You can always remain connected with upGrad in the alumni phase through customercare@upgrad.com. We will be happy to guide and assist

Assessment and Grading Timelines

Assessment Submission Timelines

The program is structured such that the entire cohort can experience a course together. The modules will be made available to the learners min. 3 weeks prior on a rolling basis. The participants will be given sufficient time to complete the modules, assignments and case studies.

A calendar with all the module, assignment, case study and exam deadlines for an upcoming course will be shared with the participants via email and will be visible on the platform calendar before the beginning of that course. **The deadlines for the respective assessments are non-negotiable.** All quizzes, assignments and case studies submitted after the stated deadline, but within one week after the deadline, will be graded on 70% of the total marks of the assessment (including Quizzes, Assignments, Case Studies, etc.). This second deadline is also termed the Hard deadline. Submissions received after the Hard deadline will be graded and will receive feedback but will attract a penalty of 100%. Feedback will be given so as not to hamper learning, but the marks would be considered zero for all official purposes.

Please note that all the deadlines are in IST (UTC +5.5). Hence, if you are in a different time zone, then your deadline may vary according to the local time. The correct deadline will be visible on your learning portal. For example, if you are in London and following BST (British Summer Time), which is UTC +1, then for a deadline of 11:59:00 PM IST in India, the deadline for you in the local time would be 7:29:00 PM BST.

Deadline Extension Policy

As mentioned earlier, the deadlines are non-negotiable except under dire circumstances such as a major health issue, a work-related issue, etc. In such cases, you may be given an extension of up to 1 week. This means that you can submit your graded components after the deadline without the 30% penalty. However, no extension will be given beyond the Hard deadline (1 week after the actual deadline) as solutions are released the very next day. Here are the guidelines for the same:

1. A learner **can avail a maximum of two extensions** during the entire program period.
2. Extensions are allowed on individual assignments, group case study & graded MCQ deadlines.
3. No extensions will be given beyond the Hard deadline (1 week after the actual deadline) as solutions are usually released a day after the Hard deadline.
4. Learners must be very careful while uploading their submissions on the platform. Any wrong file extension request post the first (soft) deadline of an assignment/case study will attract a penalty of 30% on the revised submission. No wrong file extension requests will be entertained after the second (Hard) deadline.
5. To avail an extension for assignments and case study you can directly avail it from the platform (extension applicable on the submission). For modules you can avail the extension from each quiz. Please note that if the extension is taken for any quiz then it will automatically get applied to all the quizzes in the entire module as extension would be on a module level and not quiz level.
6. Learners should use the extensions judiciously & can apply directly from the Learning Platform.

Grading and Feedback Timelines

The timelines for release of solution, feedback and grades for various components are given below.

Assessment Component	Solution	Grades
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Graded Questions	Immediately after attempting	Within 2 weeks of the Hard deadline
Assignment	Within 1 week of the Hard deadline*	Within 2 weeks of the Hard deadline
Case study	Within 1 week of the Hard deadline	Within 2 weeks of the Hard deadline
Exam	Solution is not released	Within 3 weeks of the last exam
Class Participation	Not applicable	Within 3 weeks of the last exam
GPA	Not applicable	Within 3 weeks of the last exam

***Hard deadline:** It refers to the deadline 1 week after the actual deadline, during which 30% penalty is imposed on the submissions.

Once these scores are available, each participant can access them on their Individual Performance Profile on the platform.

The participants will receive immediate feedback for graded questions. Ideal solutions for assignments and the case study will be available for download within one week of the final submission deadline of an assessment. Qualitative feedback will be provided along with the scores only for the case study and assignments.

Guidelines for Re-evaluation

1. A re-evaluation request (if any) should be submitted within 3 days of declaration of the results. For example, if results were declared on 13/06/2018, then requests for re-evaluation made till 16/06/2018 (end of day) will be considered.
2. A learner will be able to request for a re-evaluation on the learning platform itself.
3. A learner may request a re-evaluation of their assignment by claiming discrepancy of marks when compared with the ideal solution. In such cases, the learner should clearly specify the particular portion (Q. No.) of the assignment that is required to be re-evaluated plus the remarks regarding the claimed discrepancy. Requests that do not have all of this information or are very generic/vague in nature will be flagged as invalid and will not be considered. **Note: If the claim for a discrepancy of marks holds invalid, then the concerned learner will be awarded a penalty of 15% points (of the total points).**
4. Re-evaluation requests claiming discrepancy of marks when compared with another learner's graded assignment are highly discouraged and will NOT be considered. **Note: If any such requests are made, then the concerned learner will be awarded a penalty of 15% points (of the total points).**
5. Re-evaluation requests for assignments that have been uploaded after the Hard deadline will not be considered and are highly discouraged.
6. All re-evaluation requests will receive a response any time up to 3 weeks after the re-evaluation deadline.

Class Participation - Discussion Forum Process

Class Participation marks will be calculated using the Discussion Forum scores. This is designed for the participants to help create a strong learning community. The participants are encouraged to respond to peer questions as it will also help reinforce their learning.

Participants are requested to post only academic questions on the Discussion Forum. Faculty and teaching associates (TAs) will act only in response to questions related directly to the program content and assessments. On the Discussion Forum, they will either verify participant answers or respond to questions posted within 24 hours of a question being posted.

Faculty and TAs will not take any action on general posts that are meant to facilitate discussion among peers. **Inappropriate posts that are of no learning value will be deleted and the students concerned will be**



penalized.



Points are awarded **only** based on quality of posts, which is measured by peer upvotes and faculty/TA verifications on the verified answers, not on the basis of quantity of posts. No points are awarded for simply

posting questions or answers. Note that the faculty and TAs can verify multiple answers to the same question. Also, the students must note that the points on the Discussion Forum do not equal the direct marks awarded in peer-peer participation. Faculty will award marks to participants based on the overall performance of the batch. Please go through the community guidelines that have been shared with you already. Any attempts to misuse the scoring mechanism will be penalized.

Please note that no verification will be done to any learners answer, once the TA has provided the answer to any post/query on the platform, as the answer is already revealed on the platform and answers by learners can be plagiarised from the TAs answer.

Faculty and Industry Live Lectures

As part of the program, all participants can expect access to multiple live sessions per course, which will be delivered by a mix of industry professionals and academicians. However, the mix can vary by course. Details about these live sessions will be updated on the participant calendar on the platform or the students will be informed via email. These live sessions are an integral part of the overall learning experience, and we highly encourage the participants to attend and actively participate in all these sessions.

Apart from the live sessions, offline sessions called BaseCamps will be conducted to increase peer-to-peer interaction across cohorts and networking among the students, and to help in connecting with industry experts. There will be two such BaseCamps in the duration of the program and they will be hosted in metro cities based on the number of learners living in the vicinity of the metros. Details of each session, such as timing, venue and topic, will be communicated to the learners well in advance. All costs relating to the travel, stay and attendance for the basecamp shall be borne solely by the learners. In case of exceptional circumstances, the Academic Committee holds the right to increase or decrease the no. of offline events conducted during the phase of the program.

As an incentive to perform well in the program, additional delight elements will be provided to the top performers in select assessment components (including Discussion Forum) or to participants who complete the modules and submit their assignments by adhering to the recommended deadlines.

Deferral Policy

If a learner is facing severe issues in dedicating time to a course or if he wishes to change the track in which he is initially enrolled*, then we provide them an opportunity to defer to another batch. A learner can request for deferral ONLY ONCE and to one of the next four scheduled cohorts of the same program within 1 year of the start of the program. The learner will be required to pay a deferral fee, which is 10% of the program fee**. The deferral request will be approved once the deferral fee is paid. Till this step is completed, the learner will be assumed to be continuing in the same cohort. The learner will start learning on the new cohort from the point of leaving the deferred cohort. If, however, the deferral request is raised before the issue of login to the upGrad learn platform, then the 10% deferral fee will not be charged and the learner will be deferred to the next scheduled cohort. **A learner will not be allowed to defer if they are failing or bound to fail in a course.** Since all the grades till the time of deferral are carried over to the batch that a student defers to, the deferring will not help the student complete the program.

After course 2 ends and before we begin with course 3, we would provide learners with a 5 specialisation option to select from basis their profile, interest & goals;

1. Business Intelligence/Data Analytics

2. Business Analytics
3. Data Engineering
4. Data Science - DL
5. Data Science – NLP

In case you wish to defer to any other cohorts -

- If you want to resume from Course 1, 2 then there will be no issues as content is common
 - If you want to resume from Course 3, you will have to opt in to one of the 5 available tracks provided
 - If you want to resume from course 4 onwards, you will have to continue in the same track as selected in your previous cohort
 - In case you wish to change the track while deferring, you will have to start from Course 3 onwards in the new cohort, as the content changes if the track changes
- You can reach out to your Student Mentor to understand which cohort you will be mapped with in case you choose to defer anytime during your learning journey.

*In case a student wishes to change the track in which he was initially enrolled (post Course 2), he would need to defer and repeat from course 3 onwards in the new track. Standard Deferral process & fees would be applicable in such cases.

**The deferral fee is defined as 10% of the TOTAL program fee. This is irrespective of the discount/scholarship that a student would have received. The deferral fee is payable based on the program fee at the time of enrolment of a student. The policy also states that if the price has been increased and if a student is deferring to a cohort with increased price, then they need to pay the differential fee for the new cohort along with the deferral fee.

Note (Only for Master's Students)– This manual and its policies apply to IIIT- B's PG Diploma Program. Once you have received the Diploma certificate, you will be enrolled for the Master's in Data Science program by LJMU, and the manual for that program will be shared with you subsequently. We hope you will make the most of this platform and contribute to the learning of the rest of the cohort as well.

Telegram policy

1. In order to provide easier access to course related updates in addition to emails and calls, a telegram channel will be created by your student mentor to keep you notified on the upcoming deadlines and course related updates. We will be creating an **Official Telegram Channel** where only the Student Mentor will be allowed to post notifications.
2. To manage this effort effectively and efficiently, all members must be aware of the following guidelines:
3. The channel will be used only by the Student Mentor for sharing important notifications related to the program, course content, live sessions, exams, events, etc.
4. Should you have any concerns with upGrad, University partner or your peers, you will be required to direct such communication to upGrad ONLY via email or reach out to your student mentor over call.
5. upGrad will NOT be collecting any personal information via this channel and shall not be responsible for any misuse of personal information by other members of the channel. However, we will provide you with all reasonable assistance to take action against any other student who has misused such information.
6. Telegram should not be considered as a medium for official query resolution. For any such queries, please reach out to the Student Mentor via email or by using the chat function available on the learning platform. The Student Mentor is not liable to answer any/all queries over telegram.
7. In addition to this channel, the SGC groups will also be created on telegram to share session invites and agenda.
8. You are requested to keep the notifications turned on, on your Telegram app to receive uninterrupted



updates during the program.



Hope you make the most of this platform and keep yourself updated about the course and the platform.

Escalation Matrix for grievance redressal

upGrad believes in adopting a transparent approach with all its learners, and in order to match our learners' expectations in terms of grievance redressal, we have created an Escalation Matrix. Based on the kind of queries we receive from our learners, we have defined the levels of the Escalation Matrix. We request you to refer to the same in case you ever find the need to escalate an issue.

Type of Query	Point of Contact
Non-academic queries (For example, live sessions, program structure related queries)	Your Student Mentor
Content-related issues/queries (If you find any issues with or have queries pertaining to the content on a session page)	Click on the "Report an Error" button on the bottom left corner of the session page.
Referral refund / fee receipts-related queries	refunds@upgrad.com - Put your Student Mentor on CC
Not satisfied with the resolution provided by your Student Mentor? Write to:	dsescalations@upgrad.com

Guidelines for MSDS (Master's in Data Science with IITB and LJM U)

1. A learner can articulate to MSML program (upGrad + LJM U) after successfully completing the diploma.
2. If you are already enrolled in a full master's program (upGrad +LJM U) the above instructions are applied for the initial 12 months of diploma phase.
3. The instruction manual for masters phase will be provided to you after successfully completing the diploma.
4. No Refund would be processed once the learner begins with the PGD phase of the program, even if the Masters phase has not yet begun.
5. Moreover, No Refund will be processed if a learner fails to meet the eligibility criteria for the Masters phase, by failing in the PGD phase.