Murdoch University

Assessment Policy

Purpose and Scope

High quality assessment is an essential component of good teaching and learning and this Policy describes the University's principles for achieving high quality assessment practice.

This policy applies to all coursework assessment at all locations except for units assessed solely by thesis or dissertation.

This policy applies to all staff, students, and the public.

Objectives:

To ensure that:

- the University provides assessment that advances and evaluates student learning.
- the University takes a consistent approach to assessment.
- assessment practices align with and reflect the Higher Education Standards Framework.

Policy

1. In this policy, the following words have the following meanings:

    1.1. "Academic Benchmarking" means assessments used to measure students against institution standards and learning goals. Benchmarking allows educators to identify students' strengths and weaknesses, which can then inform their future instruction.

    1.2. "Constructive Alignment" means the practice of ensuring that intended learning outcomes for a unit are effective, clear and purposeful and that learning activities, and assessment tasks are developed in alignment with these outcomes.

    1.3. "Feedback" means providing information to achieve improvement in student learning, continuously driving a student's current performance towards a current learning goal.

    1.4. "Formative Assessment" means assessment designed to identify, for both the student and assessor, the student's strengths, and any potential gaps in the knowledge, understanding and skills expected for successful completion of a unit; is "low stakes" in terms of the marks associated, if any, to assist students to learn more effectively.

1.5. "Learning Outcomes" means the statements that describe the knowledge or skills students should acquire by the end of a particular assignment, unit, or course, and help students understand why that knowledge and those skills will be useful to them.

1.6. "Life-long Learning" means the practice of continuing to learn throughout one's entire life, especially outside of or after the completion of formal education.

1.7. "Moderation" means a range of processes used to assure integrity of the task design and reliability of the marking approach in relation to pre-determined standards.

1.8. "Professional accreditation" means meeting the requirements of professional bodies to have courses professional accredited.

1.9. "Peer Assessment" means a structured learning process for students to critique and provide feedback to each other on their work.

1.10. "Summative assessment" means a task or activity used to gather evidence of student learning and to document a level of achievement at a point in time.

1.11. "Universal design for learning" means the design of curricula to be as accessible as possible, minimising the need for adjustments in response to the needs of individual students.

Defined in the Dictionary of Terms

1.12. "Assessment" means the means by which progress or achievement in a unit is evaluated. This can include assessment methods such as diagnostic assessment, assignments, examinations, project work, seminar papers and tutorial participation.

1.13. "Course" means a coherent and integrated sequence of study that conforms to the applicable AQF specification for type, outcomes and volume of learning. Courses are designed, governed and managed in accordance with the Coursework Regulations and Curriculum Policy.

Assessment at the University is underpinned by four pillars:

2. Fosters Learning Through Assessment

The University:

2.1. engages students in assessment as part of a productive and supportive learning environment.

2.2. is clear and transparent about assessment purpose, expectations, criteria and requirements.

2.3. includes formative and summative components in assessment to identify needs for additional support, foster student learning and engagement, and facilitate reflective teaching.

2.4. provides high quality and timely feedback that gives students an opportunity to actively improve their learning.

2.5. uses student feedback to inform improvement of assessment activities.

2.6. makes assessment efficient and sustainable for students and staff, reflecting an appropriate workload.

3. *Authentic and future focused assessment*

The University:

3.1. creates assessment experiences that anticipate, simulate, or replicate future work and life experiences.

3.2. exposes students to multiple perspectives that require free-thinking, higher order knowledge and skills application.

3.3. sets assessment in social and global contexts that challenge assumptions, broaden, and redefine students' understanding.

3.4. builds capacity for life-long learning by providing opportunities for students to independently judge and improve their performance.

3.5. incorporates relevant technologies into assessment to facilitate an authentic and future-oriented experience.

4. *Constructive alignment of assessment activities to intended learning outcomes.*

The University:

4.1. takes a whole-of-course approach to provide students with progressive, coordinated, and coherent opportunities to demonstrate achievement of all specified course learning outcomes.

4.2. provides assessment at the unit level that helps students to construct meaning from their learning to address specified learning outcomes.

4.3. provides assessment that is effective, appropriate, fit for purpose, and reflects the needs of student cohorts.

4.4. provides students with assessment experiences that require demonstration of learning using a variety of task types and contexts.

5. *Upholds professional and academic standards.*

The University:

5.1. conducts assessment in a manner that is fair, equitable, inclusive of all students.

5.2. draws on principles of universal design for learning to create flexible learning and assessment opportunities that minimise barriers for all learners.

5.3. enables students to demonstrate intended learning outcomes irrespective of the mode of participation or delivery.

5.4. promotes academic integrity and enhances student capability in ethical practices.

5.5. assesses learning using credible methods, criteria, and standards to elicit high-quality, trustworthy evidence of student performance.

5.6. engages in moderation, Peer Assessment, and benchmarking activities to ensure the University makes consistent and appropriate judgements, including regularly comparing assessment methods and grading of students' achievement against comparable external courses.

5.7. issues grades that reflect the level of attainment.

5.8. retains up-to-date records of assessment.

5.9. meets requirements set by the:

    5.9.1. Higher Education Standards Framework.

    5.9.2. Australian Qualifications Framework.

    5.9.3. professional accreditation authorities.

    5.9.4. national and discipline-specific academic standards.

Governance

Approval Authority	Academic Council
Owner	President Academic Council
Legislation mandating compliance	
Category	Primarily academic
Related University Legislation and Policy Documents	*Assessment Procedure* *Assessment Accommodations Procedure* *Assessment Guidelines (to be drafted)* *Coursework Regulations* *Curriculum Policy* *Fee Rules* *Grades Policy* *Grades Procedure* *Honours Policy* *Results Procedure* *Recording Grades on Academic Transcripts for Non-Award (Including DEST Enabling) Courses Procedure* *Student Appeals Policy* *Student Disability Policy* *Student Integrity Regulations* *Supplementary Assessment Procedure* *Work Integrated Learning Policy*
Date effective	08/08/2023
Review date	23/11/2025

References:

The Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021

Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)

Disability Discrimination Act 1992

Racial Discrimination Act 1975

Revision History

Approved/Amended	Date Approved	Resolution No. (if applicable)
Administrative Amendment	08/08/2023	
Administrative Amendment	18/09/2023	
Approved	19/01/2023	AC/115/2022
Administrative Amendment	16/01/2023	
Administrative Amendment	09/01/2023	
Approved	23/11/2022	AC/115/2022((i)
Rescinded	23/11/2022	AC/115/2022(ii)
Approved	21/07/2022	
Approved	16/06/2021	AC/47/2021(v)(b)
Approved	17/03/2021	AC/18/2021(i)(ii)
Approved	24/01/2018	AC/03/2018
Additional Amendments approved by PAC	28/03/2019	AC/16/2019(ii)
Approved by AC	12/03/2019	AC/16/2019(ii)
Approved version clarification	03/05/2017	AC/62/2017
Approved	02/11/2016	AC/130/2016(i)
Administrative Amendment	18/09/2023	
Approved	19/01/2023	AC/115/2022
Rescinded AC/81/2016(i)	02/11/2016	AC/130/2016(ii)
Approved	22/06/2016	AC/81/2016(i)
Rescinded AC/120/2015(ii)	22/06/2016	AC/81/2016(ii)
Amended	27/01/2016	AC/09/2016
Approved	16/09/2015	AC/120/2015(ii)
Rescinded AC/156/2013(i)	16/09/2015	AC/120/2015(iii)
Recommended	15/07/2015	LTC/28/2015(ii)

to AC by LTC		
Administrative Amendment	04/09/2014	
Recommended to UniSec by LTC	04/09/2014	LTC/40/2014(ii)
Approved	18/09/2013	AC/156/2013(i)
Rescinded AC/23/2011	18/09/2013	AC/156/2013(ii)
Recommended to AC by LTC	05/09/2013	LTC/30/2013(i)
Administrative Amendment	27/01/2011	AC/23/2011
Approved	10/11/2010	AC/171/2010(i)
Rescinded AC/61/2010(ii)	10/11/2010	AC/171/2010(ii)
Approved	14/04/2010	AC/61/2010(i)
Rescinded AC/133/2009(ii)	14/04/2010	AC/61/2010(ii)
Approved	24/09/2009	AC/133/2009(i)
Rescinded	24/09/2009	AC/133/2009(ii)
Administrative Amendment	18/09/2023	
Approved AC/78/2009(i)	19/01/2023	AC/115/2022
Approved	13/05/2009	AC/78/2009(i)
Rescinded AC/155/2008(i)	13/05/2009	AC/78/2009(ii)
Approved	05/11/2008	AC/155/2008(i)
Amended	05/03/2008	AC/37/2008
Approved	31/10/2007	AC/140/2007(i)
Rescinded AC/76/2007(i)	31/10/2007	AC/140/2007(ii)
Approved	20/06/2007	AC/76/2007(i)
Rescinded AC/169/2005(ii)	20/06/2007	AC/76/2007(ii)
Approved	02/11/2005	AC/169/2005(i)
Rescinded AC/117/2005	02/11/2005	AC/169/2005(ii)
Amended	20/07/2005	AC/117/2005
Approved	02/02/2005	AC/16/2005(i)

Superseded AC/122/2005(i)	02/02/2005	AC/16/2006(i)
Approved	21/07/2004	AC/122/2004(i)
Approved Examination Rules	17/09/2003	AC/141/2003(i)
Amended	17/09/2003	AC/132/2003(iii,iv,v)

Attachments

ATTACHMENT 1

ASSESSMENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS AND STAFF:

This list should be read in accordance with the *Assessment Policy*.

1. Students have a right to:

1.1.1. Be provided with advice on the following:

- The University policy on the use of non-discriminatory language.

- Formal procedures to be followed when a variation is sought from the assessment requirements for the unit on the basis of conscientious objection.

- How to request explanations of grades allocated for work completed during the standard teaching period, and of final grades and appeal procedures.

- Units available on the Learning Management System (LMS) will have this information automatically generated on the Unit page.

1.1.2. Clearly written unit learning objectives which are written as outcomes statements.

1.1.3. Assessment that measures achievement of the learning objectives specified for each unit.

1.1.4. Reasonable access to resources (e.g., library databases), which will support them in achieving the assessment.

1.1.5. Assessments that allow them to demonstrate the level of achievement in unit objectives.

1.1.6. Information regarding assessment (type, teacher expectations, marking criteria, assessment component percentage, other special features) at the beginning of each unit.

1.1.7. Be informed well in advance (specify) regarding assessment dates or venue, and any changes to assessment dates or venue.

1.1.8. Fair assessment.

1.1.9. View and discuss assessment results with a member of teaching staff.

1.1.10. Receive feedback on assessed work in sufficient time that allows students to modify learning strategies.

1.1.11. Appeal grades awarded through the specified, publicly available processes.

1.1.12. A range of assessment strategies capable of suiting a range of differing learning styles throughout their enrolled course.

1.1.13. Confidentiality of assessment grades.

1.1.14. Request a re-mark subject to the appropriate conditions and procedures.

1.2. Students have the responsibility to:

1.2.1. Seek all information available well before assessments are due – this may be available online, or in printed material specified for the course.

1.2.2. Submit assessed work by the due date and in the specified process.

1.2.3. Work in a manner that does not constitute misconduct, dishonesty, or plagiarism.

1.2.4. Behave in a manner which does not interfere with other student's rights.

1.2.5. Seek advice and feedback at times specified by the Unit Coordinator.

1.2.6. Consult appropriate Policies prior to lodging an appeal.

1.2.7. Retain a copy of all submitted work, in its original form, at least until expiration of the appeal period.

1.3. Teaching Staff have the right to:

1.3.1. Determine the most appropriate type and frequency of assessment for their unit, providing it complies with the *Assessment Policy*.

1.3.2. Specify times when they will be available for student consultation regarding assessment results and feedback.

1.3.3. Determine the academic standards specified in objectives and marking schedules.

1.3.4. Determine the learning objectives and the level of achievement required to complete assessments tasks successfully.

1.4. Teaching Staff have the responsibility to:

1.4.1. Comply with the *Assessment Policy*.

1.4.2. Provide students with clear statements of assessments, due dates, weightings and teacher expectations regarding standards and the process for requesting a re-mark prior to the commencement of the teaching.

1.4.3. Inform all enrolled students in writing if there is a change in assessment or due date. This advice should be given as soon as practicable following the change.

1.4.4. Provide appropriate strategies to assess whether a student has achieved the stated learning objectives.

1.4.5. Mark assessed work conducted within the designated teaching period within a time frame that allows students to modify learning strategies.

1.4.6. If any portion of a Unit is assessed by casual staff, the Unit Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the casual staff member is provided with the Assessment Policy and Assessment Guidelines, and that the casual staff member's attention is particularly drawn to the Murdoch Grading System.

1.4.7. Mark work fairly.

1.4.8. Maintain confidentiality of students' submitted work and grades.

1.4.9. Have an understanding of assessment strategies used in other.

1.4.10. In units where multiple staff undertake assessment, the Unit Coordinator should ensure clear marking criterion are provided.

1.4.11. Provide grades and marks on assessed work.

1.4.12. Structure unit assessment and feedback so students obtain benefit from feedback on their performance. In short period or n on-standard units this may require special attention.

1.4.13. Maintain clear records of student grades and outcomes and provide these to the appropriate University offices in the format and by the dates required.