

Assessment, Moderation and Student Progress Policy

Policy/Document Approval Body:	Academic Board
Date Created:	4 April 2013
Policy Custodian:	Dean of Engineering
Policy Contact:	Accreditation Manager
File Location:	W:\Data - ALL.Standard\Policies and Procedures\EIT Policies and Procedures
Location on EIT website:	http://www.eit.edu.au/organisation-policies
Review Period:	Three Years
Revision No:	3.1
Date of Revision:	20 July 2017
Date Approved:	21 September 2017
Date Commenced:	26 September 2017

1.0 Purpose

This policy provides a framework for assessment across EIT's higher education courses. Student assessment is integral to the quality of student learning.

This policy explicitly sets out the full range of stakeholder responsibilities and rights in relation to the conduct and management of assessment. This includes feedback to students regarding their learning achievements.

Assessment tasks and the decisions made on assessment need to be guided via clear policies and procedures, ensuring that any variation to assessment task design based on mode of delivery maintains equivalent student learning outcomes.

Therefore the management of assessment processes is essential to ensure consistency in the setting of criteria and decisions on assessment.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all staff undertaking teaching/assessment in EIT's higher education community, regardless of the tenure or delivery mode. It is related to other policies and procedures in the area of assessment of student progress at EIT.

EIT is a dual-sector provider and this policy applies only to higher education staff for the assessment of students undertaking a higher education course. It is acknowledged that students will come from a range of backgrounds and pathways.

3.0 Objectives

Assessment at EIT aims to determine whether its students are achieving the learning outcomes set for the courses and the underlying units. To achieve this, there are a range of

assessment methods which are used to assess student's work, such as written, oral, and practical.

EIT is committed to ensuring that assessment at every level will be based on clearly articulated criteria. Grades will be awarded based on the attainment (or otherwise) of those criteria at stated performance standards. The following principles underpin this policy.

1. Foundation

EIT is committed to ensure that assessment is a foundation element of teaching and learning.

2. Design

EIT will ensure that assessment is well designed. The key areas to take into account are to:

- Provide feedback to students on their progress
- Guide the development of meaningful learning
- Provide information for academic staff regarding the progress of students and the effectiveness of their teaching
- Ensure academic quality and standards are maintained, and to monitor and minimise plagiarism
- Utilise data on student progress and grades to inform decisions on graduation and awards, and to refine the design of assessment.
- Ensure that any variation to assessment task design based on mode of delivery maintains equivalent student learning outcomes

3. Equity and fairness

EIT promotes equitable, fair and transparent assessment practices. Assessment will clearly articulate the criteria for each piece of assessment so that there is transparency regarding the attainment of those criteria at the stated performance standards.

4.0 Implementation

4.1 Assessment

The principles outlined above are to be implemented for all higher education courses and units. The development of all assessment is to incorporate the criteria listed below and demonstrate that the underlying principles have been met.

Foundation

- There is a clear alignment between stated learning outcomes and the assessment tasks;
- There are clear explanations of the assessment tasks and the criteria against which students will be assessed;
- Assessment tasks incorporate a range of types or modes, and are designed to assess stated graduate attributes as well as unit-specific criteria;
- Assessment tasks promote critical thinking and analysis by assessing the capacity to understand, analyse and synthesise information and concepts; and not to merely recall information previously provided;
- Constructive feedback is provided to students in a timely manner, and allows students to benefit in the preparation of future assessment tasks.

Design

- Assessment supports student learning and tests their achievement;
- Students understand their progress against stated learning outcomes, criteria and performance;
- Assessment judgments are made against stated criteria and standards to ensure consistency, and incorporate moderation procedures.
- Assessment tasks are weighted to balance the developmental ('formative') and judgmental ('summative') roles of assessment.
- Plagiarism is minimised through careful design and education about academic integrity, and appropriate monitoring of academic honesty by academic staff.
- Students must take responsibility for academic honesty by ensuring that the assessment they submit is their own work and that they acknowledge the work of others appropriately.
- Different versions of assessment tasks will be developed and rotated through different student cohorts to minimize academic integrity issues that may arise regarding assignment submission and/or completion of exams by students in the different academic calendars and/or different delivery modes.
- Methods for ensuring equivalency across assessment tasks when there is a necessary variation to accommodate different delivery modes will depend on the nature of the assessment task and the discipline, and must include one of the following:
 - using the same assessor to mark all assignments;
 - using one assessor or assessment team for each assessment item across all modes, streams and locations;
 - second-marking by a different assessor of a selected sample of assessments, including borderline assignments/examinations (Pass/Fail, Credit/Distinction, etc) to validate assessment standards and interpretation of the marking guide across all modes and/or locations;
 - exchanging samples of graded items of assessment between assessors for the purpose of standardisation of marking.

Equity and fairness

- Assessment criteria are made available to students for assessment tasks at the beginning of the teaching period. Assessment tasks are clear and provide consistent information to all students that allow students to achieve the required outcomes.
- Scheduling and design of assessment tasks takes into consideration student workloads;
- Processes include ensuring anonymity of student work where possible;
- Penalties for late submission of assessment are consistently applied according to policies that are made available to students;
- Moderation of grades is made consistently and according to policies that are readily available to students;

- There are clear and published processes available to students for the review of results;
- Alternative assessment methods will be made available, where required, to ensure equitable assessment practices and processes for students with a disability.

4.2 Moderation

The Academic Board and Board of Studies are responsible for oversight of moderation of assessment. The Dean is responsible for ensuring that moderation processes are implemented.

Operational responsibility will generally devolve to the Deputy Dean, unless the Deputy Dean is the single lecturer and assessor in the unit. The selection of assessors who will moderate within a unit must be approved by the Dean.

Moderation in an EIT context is a quality assurance strategy directed at ensuring the reliability and validity of assessment in units. It tests whether the standard of marking across particular assessment components is appropriate and consistent through the scrutiny or remarking of samples of assessments and the timely initiation of corrective action where deficiencies are discovered.

The skills base of any person assigned by EIT to perform moderation should be such that they are competent to detect errors or discrepancies in the assessment process of a particular unit.

Effective moderation requires:

- That the objectives of the assessment component, and the criteria on which marks will be awarded, are explicit and well justified, and are well explained to both students and assessors
- That clear, well-understood marking guides are used
- That there is a mutually agreed and timely process of feedback to ensure that corrections to marking strategies or levels of assessment (i.e. “soft” versus “hard” marking) can be appropriately applied

Under these circumstances, it is possible to analyse how significant inconsistencies or deviations from a standard arise, and to correct errors before students are misled on their performance by inappropriate, inadequate or missing feedback.

Moderation activities will occur each teaching period for all higher education units offered, and in the first year of offering, more collaborative activities will occur throughout each teaching period to ensure that effective and consistent assessment occurs.

4.3 Student Progress

The Dean is responsible for managing student progress in association with the Academic Board and the Board of Studies.

Students must maintain satisfactory student progress to achieve successful completion of their coursework studies by:

- Achieving a minimum of a Pass grade (50%) in all units
- Maintaining a cumulative GPA of 1.0
- Completing the course within the minimum timeframes specified for the course

EIT is committed to monitoring student progress and administering early identification and support mechanisms for students not meeting academic progress requirements. The following mechanisms are used:

- Providing fair entry processes
- Advising students of progress requirements
- Identifying students at risk
- Communicating any concerns to students regarding progress requirements
- Providing support and assistance to students
- Monitoring progress
- Transparent decision-making

EIT will collect data on student retention/attrition (enrolments and withdrawals) as well as course progression and completion including approved grades within and between courses and cohorts. This information will be collated and presented to the Academic Board bi-annually.

Students are responsible for committing to their own learning process and satisfactory academic progress. Students should utilise the assessment criteria and incorporate assessment feedback into their learning. Students should also participate in evaluation processes to provide academic staff with feedback to improve their teaching.

EIT will provide support to students and staff to enable the achievement of learning outcomes and satisfactory academic progress.

Unsatisfactory Progress

Unsatisfactory progress is defined as:

- Failing at least 50% of the credit points attempted in the study period; or
- Failing an enrolled unit twice;
- Failing a compulsory work experience unit;
- Failing four units or more during the course of study;
- Not able to complete the course within the maximum period of study timeframe;
- Failing to meet the required English proficiency levels for the course of study.
- Non-compliance with EIT policies and procedures

Students who meet one or more of the above criteria may have the following interventions imposed:

- Recommendations on improving their academic performance
- A written warning from the Dean or Deputy Dean
- A restriction on their study (such as a reduced workload)
- Exclusion from the course

Processes for assessing and making decisions on unsatisfactory progress must be fair and equitable, and take account of individual circumstances of the students. Student records and evidence outlining monitoring, communication and supports will be utilised. Additionally:

- Students must be involved in the process and provided with opportunities to present their case, and afforded natural justice.

- Students must be permitted to have student representatives with them at all meetings and stages of unsatisfactory progress proceedings.
- Review and appeal processes are available to students.

Students who have been identified as having unsatisfactory progress will be sent a letter outlining the unsatisfactory progress and asking the student to show cause regarding their academic performance.

Students may appeal a decision in accordance with the Students Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

CRICOS Student Appeals

If CRICOS students choose not to access the complaints and appeals processes within the 20 working day period, withdraw from the process, or the process is completed and results in a decision supporting EIT, then EIT will notify the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training through the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) as soon as possible regarding the student not achieving satisfactory course progress.

Copies of all outcomes and notifications related to the appeal process are kept on the student's file in accordance with the Student Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

5.0 Accountabilities

Responsibilities of EIT

EIT, through the Dean and the Academic Board will ensure that assessment and feedback practices are:

1. Explicit, fair, transparent, inclusive and consistent across the institution
2. Well managed and moderated at faculty level
3. Supported by resources that provide all staff with access to information and opportunities to increase their assessment literacy and their capability in the practice of assessment and feedback
4. Underpinned by a shared and explicit understanding of what is entailed in academic integrity in assessment and consistent application of the procedures and consequences of academic dishonesty
5. Supported by consistently applied policies and procedures to inform and manage requirements for students with disabilities or other special considerations in the case of illness and misadventure
6. Supported by appeal mechanisms that are widely publicised and consistently applied.
7. Benchmarked in accordance with EIT's Benchmarking Policy and Benchmarking Procedure.

EIT, through the Chair of the Governance Board and the Chair of the Academic Board, requires:

1. Faculty and department leaders, lecturers, managers and students to ensure that they are familiar with the implications of this policy and related documents

2. Faculty and department leaders to establish mechanisms and procedures to enable the implementation of this policy
3. Faculty and department staff to make every effort to ensure that they have established sound connections with their related professional and accrediting bodies and employer groups to establish clear and shared understandings of the standards of achievement implied in graduates' credentials received from the EIT
4. Students to comply with the systems, rules and expectations for academic honesty in all matters to do with assessment products and performances.

Responsibilities of EIT Administrative and Academic Staff

Individual members of the administrative and academic staff have responsibilities to:

1. Be familiar with EIT requirements for best practice in assessment design, communication, assessment and feedback
2. Ensure that all assessment design and practice is congruent with the objectives of the related unit of study and higher education program and will enable the development of EIT graduate attributes
3. Ensure that any variation to assessment task design based on mode of delivery maintains equivalent student learning outcomes
4. Communicate assessment expectations clearly and in a timely fashion to students to enable them to be well informed and gain access to required resources
5. Assess assumptions of students' entering knowledge, skills and capabilities, including their access to technology and skills to use it
6. Ensure students are familiar with the requirements for academic integrity in the discipline
7. Review and give timely and useful detailed feedback on work submitted
8. Keep and maintain adequate paper-based or electronic records of student achievement for the mandated period (administrative staff only due to confidentiality and the wide spread nature of the lecturers throughout the world)
9. Ensure records and reports on student learning are based only on relevant evidence
10. Maintain confidentiality regarding student results, disclosing them only to those with a legitimate right of access
11. Critically review assessment activities in order to anticipate any negative unintended consequences
12. Evaluate own performance against the principles, values and practices outlined in this policy and seek peer feedback
13. Seek external expert moderation of assessment design and grading practices to gain feedback on the academic and disciplinary standards they entail (centrally situated and trained administrative staff will support academic staff in achieving this objective)
14. Ensure any potential or actual conflict of interest in relation to assessment is resolved in line with the code of conduct for staff.

Rights of Administrative and Academic Staff

Administrative and Academic staff require:

1. Students to be focused on learning rather than merely the achievement of grades

2. Students to make the effort to be informed of the rules and requirements for progression in their higher education program
3. Students to be aware of, and abide by, the EIT's policies and procedures including those concerned with academic honesty and the consequences for acts of dishonesty that include cheating, collusion, plagiarism and fraud
4. Students to seek assistance from the department, faculty and/or institution if they so require it
5. Students to behave ethically and responsibly in their conduct of assessment tasks
6. Students to use assessment to engage in critical self evaluation in terms of their progress towards the espoused learning expectations
7. Students to submit work on time that is their own, except when shared ownership is part of the task
8. Notification from the student as soon as possible if difficulties arise with timing, attendance/participation, availability of resources or other requirements of the course
9. Notification from the student as soon as possible if difficulties arise in terms of substantial absences and submission of a Special Consideration application with the appropriate medical and/or other certificates
10. Students to utilise the mechanisms for appeal if the need arises.

Student Responsibilities

Students have the responsibility to:

1. Be aware that the major objective of assessment is to aid learning rather than the achievement of grades
2. Be informed of the rules and requirements for progression in the higher education program, ensuring that they are fully aware of the advice implications of discontinuation or withdrawal from a unit of study
3. Be aware of, and abide by, EIT's policies and procedures including those concerned with academic honesty and the consequences for acts of dishonesty that include cheating, collusion, plagiarism and fraud
4. Be aware of the means for seeking assistance
5. Behave ethically and responsibly in their conduct of assessment tasks and avoid any action that would unfairly disadvantage or advantage another student
6. Use assessment to engage in critical self evaluation in terms of their progress towards the espoused learning expectations
7. Submit work on time, ensuring that it is their own, except when shared ownership is part of the task
8. Notify staff as soon as possible if difficulties arise with timing, attendance/participation, availability of resources or other requirements of the course
9. Notify staff as soon as possible if difficulties arise in terms of substantial absences and submit an application for Special Consideration with the appropriate medical and/or other certificates
10. Be aware of mechanisms for appeal

Student Rights

Students have the right to:

1. Be informed about all aspects of this policy and practices in each unit of study including criteria, standards and procedures to be met and penalties for breaches
2. Consistent application of policies, procedures and penalties
3. Timely return of results with feedback to enable improved performance
4. Information that allows them to calibrate their own performance against the expected performance standards
5. Review their examination scripts and other forms of summative assessment (except in the case of reuse) for the duration of the mandated script retention period
6. Have access to their student file and other documents related to their assessment via Moodle (Learning Management System)
7. Be informed of the mechanisms for appeal
8. Appeal against academic decisions in accordance with EIT's policies and procedures

Rights and Responsibilities of Professional and Accrediting Associations and Employer Groups

These external stakeholders have the right to:

1. Have access to information that will provide a clear explanation of the procedure and standards used to assess student capabilities
2. Have their opinion respected in EIT contexts related to discussion of desirable graduate attributes
3. Engage in peer-to-peer negotiations with related EIT academic areas in any process used to identify desirable graduate attributes and in articulating the standards against which student performances are judged
4. Be assured of the accuracy, consistency and representativeness regarding student achievement contained in documentation produced by the EIT and released to them by students and graduates
5. Experience some measure of mutual benefit when they provide opportunities for students to work in their organisations in order to learn

These external stakeholders have a responsibility to:

1. Recognise and respect the pedagogical dimension of disciplinary expertise held by academic staff, namely how a particular subject area is learned
2. Contribute to the EIT process for developing shared comprehensive and validated conceptions of desirable graduate capabilities and how they are recognised in the workplace, profession and/or community
3. Provide opportunities for students to carry out some part of their EIT study program in real world contexts as learners, not just observers or unpaid workers
4. Provide meaningful feedback to assist students to improve their performance when they are placed and assessed in their respective organisations



The Academic Board is responsible for review and approval of this policy.

Implementation is to be carried out by all administrative and academic staff.

The policy is to be implemented via induction, regular biweekly staff meetings and training of staff and distribution to students and EIT's community via the EIT website and other publications.

EIT will regularly seek feedback from students, staff and stakeholders on the effectiveness of this policy via evaluations of courses, academic staff and other supports. Effectiveness of this policy can also be measured by:

- The extent of standards- based criterion-referenced assessment in units;
- Monitoring of student complaints with regard to assessment.

Performance will be monitored against the following:

- Student retention rates
- Course pass/fail rates

EIT will develop other metrics such as:

- Student progression (including progress questionnaires during the course)
- Student satisfaction (progress and post-course questionnaires)
- Employer satisfaction (post-course questionnaire at end of first cohort graduation and continuing)

6.0 Related Documents

The following policies and procedures are related to this policy:

- Assessment, Moderation and Student Progress Procedure
- Academic Honesty and Misconduct Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Teaching and Learning Plan
- Students at Risk Policy
- Students at Risk Procedure
- Student Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Policy
- Student Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Procedure
- Information Literacy and Resource Access Policy

7.0 Definitions

Assessment: is a process used to determine student's achievement of expected learning outcomes and may include a range of written, oral and practical methods. It also includes gathering information from multiple and diverse sources in order to develop a deep understanding of what students know, understand, and can do with their knowledge as a result of educational experiences; and it culminates when assessment results are used to improve student learning.

Assessment criteria: Specific student learning outcomes that are expected to be demonstrated in any particular assessment task.

Course: A course or other set of units, units of study or other defined work requirements, the completion of which makes the student eligible for the granting of an Award or other formal record of achievement by the EIT.

CRICOS Student: A student studying in Australia and holding an Australian student visa

Equivalence: The underlying principle for credit transfer is the assessment of equivalence with due regard to the similarity or difference of the education processes involved (including processes of delivery, teaching methodology and assessment).

Moderation: A process of independent checking or verification by a properly qualified person or committee.

Natural Justice Principles: The principles of *natural justice* that decision makers under this policy must follow can be broadly summarized as follows:

(a) All parties to the matter(s) in dispute, including respondent(s), shall have a right to be heard before a decision is made, including the right to respond to any statements or evidence that may prejudice their case.

(b) All relevant submissions, information and evidence to be considered by the decision-maker should be disclosed, where requested, to all parties to the complaint prior to the hearing. Matters that are not relevant shall not be taken into account by the decision-maker.

(c) The decision maker/s shall not be biased or appear to be biased (by a reasonable and informed bystander) nor have a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter being considered.

(d) In addition to these principles of *natural justice*, there should be no undue delay in responding to complaints or appeals and all parties to such matters under this policy shall have the right to a representative of their choice, other than a currently practicing solicitor or barrister (except in extraordinary circumstances at a hearing with the prior leave of the Chair)

On-Campus delivery mode: Physical face-to-face, classroom based delivery, with students based on-campus.

Online delivery mode: Online delivery using various technologies and live stream lectures.

Performance Standard/Criteria: A clearly articulated description of the level of attainment that acts as a stable reference point or recognised measure for the purposes of reaching a decision on the quality of a student's work.

Special Consideration: Special consideration provisions in these procedures may allow a student to apply for supplementary assessment or some other form of consideration including a conceded pass in situations where it can be demonstrated that assessment has been affected by some situation or circumstance beyond the student's control.

Teaching Period: A scheduled duration within an academic year. EIT generally refer to teaching periods as Terms or Semesters. An EIT term (used for online courses) = 12 weeks, an EIT semester (used for on-campus courses) = 15 weeks.

Unit (subject is interchangeably used here): A unit of study or other similar component of a *course* that has an allocated identification code and is given a result which appears in a student's record. The subdivision of the unit is referred to as 'Weeks' – essentially this is focussing on a specific topic.



Unsatisfactory Progress: Where a student fails to meet defined required minimum standards for progression in a *course* or fails to comply with a valid conditional enrolment agreement or other requirement, progress may be deemed to be unsatisfactory. Information on minimum standards for progression in courses is contained in associated Procedures.