

ASSESSMENT POLICY

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1. Purpose

This policy describes the function and use of continuous assessment at the College. The objectives of this policy are to:

- define APIC’s approach to Criterion Referenced Assessment and its supporting principles;
- assure the integrity, validity, fairness, and transparency of all assessment practices at the College;
- identify the roles and responsibilities of all participants in assessment processes conducted at APIC;
- identify feedback principles and practice;
- establish the basis for the quality assurance of APIC assessment practices; and
- define the criteria for assessment appeals.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff and enrolled students participating in assessment of coursework units in all courses of study. This document should be read in conjunction with other related policies (see Related Documents).

3. Definitions

Item	Definition
<i>Academic Integrity</i>	<p>The following plain-English definition of academic integrity is provided by the Exemplary Academic Integrity Project at the University of South Australia, https://lo.unisa.edu.au/course/view.php?id=6751</p> <p>Academic integrity means acting with the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility in learning, teaching and research. It is important for students, teachers, researchers and all staff to act in an honest way, be responsible for their actions, and show fairness in every part of their work. Staff should be role models to students. Academic integrity is important for an individual’s and the College’s reputation.</p>
<i>Alternative assessment task</i>	<p>Refers to a reasonable variation to a prescribed assessment arrangement to accommodate a student with a substantiated disability, medical or psychological condition, or other significant factor not under their control.</p>
<i>AQF</i>	<p>The Australian Qualifications Framework, which describes the minimum standards and levels of Australian qualifications and award courses.</p>
<i>Assessment task</i>	<p>An activity that provides the basis for formally determining students’ progress in achieving the Course and Unit Learning Outcomes. Students may be directed to undertake an assessment task either individually or in collaboration with one or more other students. These include, but are not limited to: essays, examinations, plans, projects, presentations, reports, quizzes, web-based discussion, and vivas.</p>
<i>Criterion Referenced Assessment</i>	<p>Refers to the use of defined objective criteria against which student performance is measured. It is different to norm-referenced assessment which compares students in a cohort against each other and where marks are scaled.</p>

Item	Definition
<i>Deferred examination</i>	A postponed examination opportunity that may be applied for and granted on a discretionary basis where serious or extenuating circumstances prevent a student from sitting the exam on the scheduled date.
<i>Fair assessment</i>	Assessment that is appropriate for the AQF Level of the course, is reasonable for students' level of progression through the course, is marked according to published criteria and standards (i.e. is transparent) and provides timely and constructive feedback.
<i>Formative assessment task</i>	Ungraded assessment for the purpose of providing feedback to students that can then be incorporated into subsequent assessment tasks and learning activities.
<i>Learning outcome</i>	A specific and measurable statement of what knowledge and skills students are expected to acquire in a unit and/or course of study and to be able to demonstrate at its completion.
<i>Low risk assessment task</i>	A formative assessment, or summative assessment with a weighting of no more than 10% of the total marks /100 in a unit, designed for the purpose of determining students' understanding of key concepts in a unit and thereby assisting in identifying students at risk of underperforming in the unit.
<i>Mixed cohort</i>	Refers to where students enrolled in courses of different Levels (i.e. Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Masters) are being taught in the same unit in the same class.
<i>Moderation</i>	Regulating the marking of individual markers to achieve consistency in the application of Course and Unit Learning Outcomes, performance standards and marking criteria.
<i>Special Consideration</i>	A process to minimise the impact of serious or extenuating circumstances beyond a student's control that significantly impairs their ability to perform an assessment task or to make satisfactory academic progress.
<i>Summative assessment task</i>	Graded assessment for the purpose of measuring students' performance at the end of a specified learning event, resulting in a mark or grade.
<i>Supplementary assessment task</i>	An additional assessment opportunity provided on a discretionary basis to allow a student who would otherwise fail a unit to demonstrate that they have achieved the Unit Learning Outcomes.
<i>Unit of Study Guide</i>	A document in either hard copy or electronic format that defines content, learning and teaching approaches and assessment requirements for a unit of study.
<i>Valid assessment task</i>	Refers to the explicit and clear alignment between intended Course and Unit Learning Outcomes and the assessment methods used to measure student achievement of said outcomes.

4. Assessment Principles and Practice

The following principles and practice form the foundation for this policy and inform the design, development and implementation of assessment at APIC:

- assessment is fair and valid;
- assessment is criterion-referenced;
- assessment defines and maintains academic standards and integrity;
- assessment processes are timely to allow feedback for students to improve their understanding and subsequent performance; and
- assessment is designed to the appropriate AQF Level and assures students experience a variety of assessment methods.

Assessment in all units will be chosen from the list of available tasks as defined in the Standard Assessment Types and Definitions. (refer Appendix 1)

All units at APIC will include a low-risk early assessment task scheduled no later than Week 3 of the teaching semester to support early identification of at-risk students and to provide timely and constructive feedback.

The maximum weighting for an individual assessment task will not normally exceed 40% of a unit of study's total assessment weighting.

The total weighting across all group work assessment tasks in a unit of study will not normally exceed 70% of a unit of study's total assessment weighting.

Where a unit of study contains a mixed cohort of students, different assessment tasks may be used for the separate groups. These different assessment tasks will nonetheless still align with the Unit Learning Outcomes and the relevant Course Learning Outcomes.

A variety of different assessment types will be used across the entirety of a course of study to expose students to different tasks and give them opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts.

Feedback to students will:

- be timely;
- justify the mark given against the published assessment criteria; and
- identify what the students(s) could have been done to achieve a higher mark.

Where a unit of study is being taught across multiple campuses, all aspects of the assessment in the unit will be equivalent and in accordance with the published Unit of Study Guide for the unit.

Any variation to an assessment task(s) after the publication of the Unit of Study Guide, that affects all students in a unit of study, will only be made in exceptional circumstances. The Dean must approve any such variation, and all affected students will be formally and immediately notified in writing of the variation.

5. Moderation

Pre- and post-assessment moderation is a quality assurance process for ensuring appropriate assessment and the consistent marking and grading of student work. APIC does not define the proportion of marks and/ or grades that lie within pre-determined bands.

Moderation may occur:

- before marking individual assessment tasks (pre-assessment) to ensure markers have a shared understanding of the relevant criteria and standards; and
- after marking individual assessment tasks and before the release of marks to students (post-assessment) to ensure markers have applied the relevant criteria and standards consistently.

Mathematical scaling of marks for an individual assessment task is not permitted after students have received marks for that assessment task. However, in exceptional circumstances the final marks for a unit of study may be adjusted for the whole cohort.

The Board of Examiners has the authority to moderate final marks in a unit in accordance with the Board of Examiners Terms of Reference.

6. Student Responsibilities

APIC students are expected to:

- familiarise themselves with this and all related assessment procedures and policies;
- submit all prescribed assessment tasks in accordance with the requirements set out in the relevant Unit of Study Guide. Exceptions to this will be if the student has been authorised to submit an alternative assessment or if an alternative arrangement has been authorised via application for Special Consideration in advance of the assessment due date;
- notify all relevant academic and support staff prior to, or as soon as possible after, commencing the teaching semester of any special needs they have that may need require authorisation of an alternative assessment or Special Consideration;
- actively engage in their learning to assist them in preparing for assessment tasks;
- keep copies of all submitted assessment items for their personal record; and
- comply with APIC's Academic Integrity Policy and other related policies in all aspects of the assessment process.

7. Academic Staff Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Dean and Deputy Dean (Academic), supported by the Directors of Studies, to specifically ensure that:

- assessment methods and practice in all units of study comply with this and other related policies;
- where a unit of study is being taught across multiple campuses, all aspects of the assessment in the unit are equivalent; and
- assessment tasks are aligned with the relevant Course and Unit Learning Outcomes.

All APIC academic staff are expected to:

- ensure that all Unit of Study Guides contain accurate, comprehensive and current information commensurate with APIC's Unit of Study Guide template;
- implement learning, teaching and assessment strategies that promote development of the relevant Course and Unit Learning Outcomes;
- design assessment tasks that mitigate the possible incidence of student academic misconduct;

- identify, monitor and support students at risk of poor academic performance, and ensure that all students are informed of available academic support services;
- assess students' work objectively against the criteria and standards as published in the marking rubric for each unit of study;
- normally release numerical marks for individual assessments tasks within ten working days of the assessment due date;
- provide timely and meaningful assessment feedback to students to allow them opportunities to improve their performance in subsequent assessment tasks;
- contribute to regularly scheduled curriculum and assessment review and evaluation processes; and
- provide opportunities for consultation with students according to a published schedule.

8. Academic Integrity

APIC will take proactive steps to detect and eliminate all forms of academic misconduct. These steps may include, and are not limited to, manual searches of resources, as well as the use of electronic text matching software (e.g. Turnitin) to compare student work submitted for assessment against electronic text on the publicly accessible internet, in published works, on commercial databases, and in student assignments previously submitted.

All written assignments must be submitted with a signed Assessment Cover Sheet, which incorporates the Academic Integrity Declaration (refer Academic Integrity Policy). When assessment tasks are submitted electronically, the Assessment Cover Sheet will include the student's name or e-signature in lieu of a written signature in the 'Signed' field.

Refer to the Academic Integrity Policy and related documents for more detail on APIC's approach to academic integrity.

9. Equity and Disability

APIC recognises that some students will have a substantiated disability, ongoing medical or psychological condition, or other significant factor beyond their control that will necessitate 'reasonable adjustments' or academic strategies to support them to complete their studies while managing their symptoms.

Students with substantiated ongoing and/or permanent special needs of the type described above may be eligible to submit Alternative Assessments for all formative and summative assessment tasks for the duration of their course (refer 10. Alternative Assessment)

Applications for Alternative Assessment should be made to the Student Learning Support Officer located on each campus.

10. Alternative Assessment

Alternative Assessment refers to any reasonable variation to a prescribed assessment task in order to accommodate a student with a substantiated disability, ongoing medical or psychological condition, or other significant factor beyond their control. The manner of the variation(s) will, as far as possible, maintain the integrity of the original assessment task and ensure parity with other students completing the original assessment task, i.e. the alternative assessment task allows students the opportunity to demonstrate the same learning outcomes as those corresponding to the original assessment task.

11. Special Consideration

APIC recognises that there will be circumstances beyond a student's control that may impact adversely on their performance. A student whose academic work is impacted by significant documented illness, hardship, or other adverse circumstances beyond their control may make an application for Special Consideration. Special Consideration may also be granted on compassionate grounds or other compelling circumstances.

Special consideration may be granted for a single assessment task or, in the case of substantiated disability, ongoing medical or psychological condition, or other significant factor beyond the student's control, for a defined period of time up to and including the maximum time to completion of their course (refer Academic and Course Progress Policy).

Applications for Special Consideration may be based on the fact that:

- the student's studies have been impeded by the adverse circumstances in question;
- the adverse circumstances in question have prevented the student from preparing for or completing all or part of an assessment task; or
- the student was negatively affected by the adverse circumstances in question to a substantial degree during the performance of the assessment task.

Adverse circumstances beyond the student's control can include:

- medical conditions (physical and/or psychological);
- severe financial hardship;
- substantial disruption to employment and/or living arrangements; or
- other compassionate and/or compelling grounds.

Routine demands and circumstances including:

- regular academic workload;
- regular employment;
- recreational travel; or
- planned personal, sporting and social events (e.g. weddings)

will not normally be considered as grounds for Special Consideration.

Outcomes of a successful application for Special Consideration can include:

- extension of assessment due date; or
- Deferred Examination. (refer [Examination Policy](#))

Applications for Special Consideration must be made to the relevant Director of Studies using the Special Consideration Application Form as soon as feasibly possible, although normally within two business days, of the occurrence of the adverse circumstance.

Applications for Special Consideration must be accompanied by the appropriate supporting documentary evidence, which in the case of illness shall include a medical certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner or medical authorities.

12. Extension of Assessment Due Date

Extensions of an assessment due date can only be approved as the outcome of a successful application for Special Consideration (refer 11. Special Consideration).

The length of the extension will be at the discretion of the relevant Director of Studies, who will take into account all the relevant circumstances. The nominated due date must however be prior to the end of the teaching Semester in which the assessment task would normally be due.

13. Late Submission of Assessments

Except where an extension of the assessment due date has been approved by the relevant Director of Studies (refer 12. Extension of Assessment Due Date), or where an extension of the due date has been granted as an outcome of a successful application for Special Consideration, a student who submits an assessment task after the due date will be penalised by 10% per business day up to ten days for each business day the assessment is late up to ten business days. Gazetted public holidays, Saturday and Sunday do not count as business days.

Late assessment submissions will not be accepted after the marked assessment has been returned to students who submitted the assessment by the due date.

14. Supplementary Assessment

Supplementary Assessment is approved at the discretion of the Board of Examiners and may be granted where a student has gained a final mark in a unit of study of 45-49%.

All details of the Supplementary Assessment, including type of assessment, length and/or duration, and due date will be determined by the Board of Examiners.

If the student achieves a passing grade in an approved Supplementary Assessment task, the Final mark and grade for the unit of study in question will be 50% Pass – Supplementary Assessment (refer to Award of Grades Policy).

If the student fails to achieve a passing grade in an approved Supplementary Assessment task, the original Fail mark and grade for the unit of study in question will stand.

An individual student may be granted Supplementary Assessments for a maximum of two failed units in a two-year course of study, or three failed units in a three-year course of study.

15. Assessment Appeals

APIC uses a process of pre-assessment moderation to ensure that markers have a shared understanding of the relevant criteria and standards for each assessment task before marking (refer [Assessment Policy](#) Section 5. Moderation).

Appeals against the mark(s) awarded for an assessment task in a unit of study can be made in writing to the relevant Director of Studies no later than ten working days following the release of marks for the assessment task.

Appeals against the mark(s) awarded for an assessment task will only be considered on the grounds that:

- a Unit of Study Guide was not provided for the unit;
- the assessment requirements as specified in the Unit of Study Guide were varied without the approval of the Dean and without written notification to students;

- assessment requirements specified in the Unit of Study Guide were unreasonably or prejudicially applied to the student;
- the student believes that a clerical error has occurred in the computation of the mark; or
- due regard has not been paid to an approved application for Special Consideration. (refer [Assessment Policy](#))

The Director of Studies will, within ten working days of receiving the appeal letter, notify the student in writing and via email of the determination on their assessment appeal.

If the student is satisfied that their assessment appeal has been resolved they must confirm their agreement directly in writing with the Director of Studies within ten working days of receipt of the resolution.

If the student is not satisfied that their assessment appeal has been resolved by the Director of Studies, they may request the matter be referred to the Dean for resolution. If their assessment appeal remains unresolved following consideration by the Dean, the student may request review through an external independent mediator. (refer [Student Grievance and Appeals Policy](#))

The College shall maintain a student's enrolment while their assessment appeal is being investigated through both internal and external process as set out in this policy.

All assessment appeal outcomes must be fully documented and recorded on the Student Management System and the Student Grievances Register.

16. Appeals Against a Final Grade

Students may appeal a final grade, provided that they have completed all the assessment requirements for the unit as prescribed in the relevant Unit of Study Guide.

Appeals against the final grade awarded in a unit of study can be made in writing to the relevant Director of Studies no later than ten working days following the release of final grades on RTO Manager.

Appeals against a final grade will only be considered on the grounds that:

- a Unit of Study Guide was not provided for the unit;
- the assessment requirements as specified in the Unit of Study Guide were varied without the approval of the Dean and without written notification to students;
- the student believes that a clerical error has occurred in the computation of the final grade; or
- due regard has not been paid to an approved application for Special Consideration. (refer [Assessment Policy](#))

Appeals against a final grade cannot be made in the case where the final grade awarded is the outcome of a finding under the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

The Director of Studies will, within ten working days of receiving the appeal letter, notify the student in writing and via email of the determination on their appeal.

If the student is satisfied that their appeal against a final grade has been resolved they must confirm their agreement directly in writing with the Director of Studies within ten working days of receipt of the resolution.

If the student is not satisfied that their appeal against a final grade has been resolved by the Director of Studies, they may request the matter be referred to the Dean for resolution. If their appeal against a final grade remains unresolved following consideration by the Dean, the student may request review through an external independent mediator. (refer [Student Grievance and Appeals Policy](#))

The College shall maintain a student’s enrolment while their appeal against a final grade is being investigated through both internal and external process as set out in this policy.

All appeal against final grade outcomes must be fully documented and recorded on the Student Management System and the Student Grievances Register.

17. Policy Suspensions

These Guidelines supersede the following:

Document ID	Approval Date
Asia Pacific International College General Regulations Section 6. Assessment, clauses: 6.1 Assessment Principles 6.2 Assessment Policy 6.3 Responsibilities of the Students 6.4 Extension of Time 6.5 Keeping Duplicate Copies 6.7 Group Assessment 6.8 Re-marking 6.9 Re-submission of Works 6.22 Assessment Appeals 6.23 Appeals Against Study Abroad Grades	27 April, 2016
Asia Pacific International College Quality Management System Sections: ‘Assessment’, pp. 50-52; ‘Assessment and Moderation in Undergraduate Courses’, pp. 52-53; ‘Moderation Procedures in Graduate Courses’, pp. 53-54; ‘Excerpts from the College’s General Regulations’, pp.54-55; ‘Unit of Study Guide Table of Contents (Sample)’ (extract): p.41, paragraphs 2-4;	27 April, 2016
Assessment Policy and Practice	3 March, 2015
Assessment Appeals Policy	31 January, 2013
Guidelines – Award of Conceded and Terminating Pass	10 October, 2014

18. Document Change Control

Version	Change Description	Date	Author
1.6	Sections 15 and 17. administrative amendments to improve clarity around escalation of appeals.	21 July, 2017	Craig Ellis

Appendix 1, Standard Assessment Types and Definitions

ASSESSMENT TYPE	DEFINITION
Applied project	A written document completed over a whole teaching session and comprising various parts, including a proposal, literature review, methodology, and final report.
Case study	A written description and/or analysis of a real-life situation or problem.
Critical review	A written constructive criticism or judgement on a given topic based on specified criteria.
Debate	An argument for and against a specific topic, often in teams and according to certain rules.
Essay	An extended written response to a question, problem, or issue.
Examination	An invigilated assessment that occurs at the end of a teaching semester during the formal examination period.
Formative assessment	Ungraded assessment for the purpose of providing feedback to students that can then be incorporated into subsequent assessment tasks and learning activities.
Learning and development plan	A written document used to plan learning for an individual student over the course of a whole teaching session.
Log/Workbook	A record of observations, activities or goals that have been met/not met, presented in chronological order.
Low-risk assessment	A formative assessment, or summative assessment with a weighting of no more than 10% of the total marks /100 in a unit, designed for the purpose of determining students' understanding of key concepts in a unit and thereby assisting in identifying students at risk of underperforming in the unit.
Mid-semester test	An invigilated assessment that occurs during a teaching semester. (lower weight than exam)
Portfolio	A student compilation of work with a coherent structure and common theme, collected over a period of time.
Poster	A representational work printed on card, canvas or similar medium for designed public display containing text and graphic elements.
Presentation	The process of showing and/or explaining content to an audience of peers.
Proposal	A written plan for potential future work, often with justification.
Quiz	A non-invigilated assessment that occurs during a teaching semester.
Reflection	A self-evaluation of student's own learning that includes narrative and critical/analytical thinking.
Report	A structured and analytical written account of a project, investigation or process.
Summative assessment	Graded assessment for the purpose of measuring students' performance at the end of a specified learning event, resulting in a mark or grade.
Unit project Part A	Major assessment Part A (e.g. proposal and literature review).
Unit project Part B	Major assessment Part B (e.g. data and methodology).
Unit project Part C	Major assessment Part C (e.g. final report).
Viva Voce	A verbal explanation or account of a topic, problem or task to an academic panel.