

Student Assessment Guidelines

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1. Context These guidelines set out the processes, procedures and principles, which underpin Leaders Institute's (Leaders) approach to assessment.

2. Principles of Assessment

Assessment practices at Leaders are premised on the following three principles:

- All assessment must be fair and equitable to students.
- All assessment must provide students the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned.
- All assessment must maintain high academic standards.

3. Purpose of Assessment

Student assessment is an integral part of the learning process.

Assessment is the process of forming a judgment about the quality and extent of student achievement or performance. Effective assessment supports learning outcomes and student development. Assessment enables students to demonstrate they meet or exceed minimum academic learning outcomes and professional requirements and so allows Leaders to meet its responsibilities to the profession and industry.

Assessment should demonstrate the student has met all unit requirements in an approved manner. All assessment should:

- Be criterion referenced
- Measure achievement of learning outcomes
- Be relevant, fair and equitable
- Be appropriate to the learning outcomes of the unit and overall objectives of the course
- Have reasonable associated workloads
- Be marked against criteria made known in advance to students
- Provide useful and timely feedback to learners
- Include a range of assessment types, which may comprise individual or collaborative achievement or both

4. Aims of Assessment

Assessment as a core academic activity and essential component of the learning process and outcomes has as its major aim the enhancement and reinforcement of student learning. Further, assessment aims to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the learning process
- Indicate progress toward specified desired learning outcomes
- Improve ensuing learning through the provision of timely, clear, comprehensive feedback
- Certify outcomes for various internal and external audiences including Leaders Institute, accrediting bodies, employers and relevant professions

5. Quality Assurance of Assessment (including approaches to Moderation)

5.1 The Program Director is responsible for approving the unit for offer and ensuring the relationship between the assessment tasks and learning outcomes for the unit is evident.

5.2 Assessment topics/questions/tasks are to be regularly reviewed by the Learning, Teaching and Curriculum Committee, to minimise opportunities for student academic dishonesty.

5.3 Moderation of assessment is conducted for every offer of a unit to develop a common disciplinary understanding of the course standards that underpin comparability and ensure consistency of marking. All Moderation processes must be documented and forwarded to the *Learning, Teaching and Curriculum Committee* and *Examination Committee*.

5.4 Moderation may involve the Unit Coordinator and his/her teaching team or colleagues in that discipline conducting a review of the assessment plan to ensure the assessment is appropriate to the learning outcomes of the Unit.

5.5 Moderation may also include joint development of marking rubrics that specify predetermined criteria to ensure the bases for marking are consistent.

5.6 Moderation may also involve Unit Coordinators with the Program Director reviewing assessment exemplars across different grades at the conclusion of a Unit to assure consistency of assessment judgements.

5.7 Moderation may also involve professional colleagues external to the Institute providing review commentary about marks and/or grades awarded to assessment exemplars to assure comparability of course standards across like programs offered by other providers.

6. Assessment Types and Methods

6.1 Assessment types include:

- Summative – typically conducted after a specific point in instruction to measure students' understanding of a topic/module. Summative assessments usually take the form of tests, quizzes and/or examinations.
- Diagnostic – conducted to ascertain students' prior knowledge and understanding preceding instruction. A diagnostic assessment or pre-assessment often focuses on a single area or domain of knowledge.
- Formative – assessment tasks typically embedded within the instructional process aimed to provide regular feedback about student progress.

6.2 There are three principal methods of assessment commonly used at Leaders. A diversity of assessment methods should be used to encourage the development of a range of attributes and skills.

- Assignments (individual and group based): inclusive of written essays, reports, research-based papers, projects, wikis, YouTube videos, web page design, journal, poster, portfolio.
- Examinations inclusive of practical tests, oral exams, written constructed response examinations, multiple choice quizzes.
- Practice based work (individual and group based): inclusive of presentations, creation of a 'work', observation, performance, models.

7. Assessment Expectations and Requirements

Staff

7.1 Each unit must include an assessment plan that provides clear, relevant, comprehensive information about the relationship between the purpose of the assessment task and the intended learning outcomes, the assessment type, weighting, due date, word lengths and/or duration of tests and marking criteria.

7.2 No student grade is to be determined solely by using a single summative piece of assessment or based on a single piece of assessment.

7.3 Assessment should normally be spread across the teaching period, to provide time for students to respond to feedback from early assessment items. Normally, the first piece of assessment would be due around weeks 3-5 of semester.

7.4 Assessment requirements cannot be changed during the teaching period except in exceptional cases. Any variation must be approved by the Academic Dean on the advice of the Program Director via the Unit Coordinator. In such cases, a variation of detail in the assessment plan of a unit may be made, as long as the relationship between the assessment methods and learning outcomes is maintained and students are not disadvantaged by the change or the timing of the change.

7.5 In any unit, group assessment activities must not account for more than 30% of the total mark and no single item of summative assessment is to equate to more than 50% of the total marks for a unit.

7.6 Group work must be assessed by means, which allow the real contribution of each member of the group to be determined.

7.7 All assessment items other than the last assessment task in a Unit is to be returned marked with feedback within three (3) weeks of the deadline for submission.

7.8 No Unit can include more than three (3) pieces of assessment.

Students

7.8 All assessment tasks must be submitted by students on time and in accord with the instructions provided by the Unit Coordinator for submission of assignments.

7.9 Where work is submitted late with no prior written application (at least 24 hours in

advance of the due date) for extension of time to complete the assessment; and an extension being granted by the Unit Coordinator, students will be penalised 5% of the total marks for each late day.

7.10 An assessment submitted more than five (5) working days after the deadline will have a mark of zero (0) recorded for that assessment.

7.11 In the event of compassionate and compelling circumstances a Unit Coordinator may permit a student to resubmit an assessment that has received a failing mark. In such cases, the only mark allowable for the resubmitted assignment will be the equivalent to 50%.

Refer also to sections 13, 15, 16 and 17 below.

7.12 Plagiarism and collusion are academic offences and are forms of cheating. Penalties are associated with such offences including cancellation of marks for a specific piece of assessment, or for a unit or even exclusion from the course. Students should refer to the *Student Academic Integrity Policy*.

8. Information to be provided to Students by Unit Coordinators

8.1 The Unit Coordinator is required to provide all students with the approved Unit Outline in the first week of semester of offer of the Unit.

8.2 The Unit Outline must include the assessment details in their entirety, including due dates of each assessment task, word lengths and/or duration of tests/exams, criteria against which the assessment tasks are to be judged and their relative weighting.

8.3 The Unit Outline must also specify how the individual assessment results are amalgamated to arrive at an overall grade.

8.4 Any change to the assessment plan must be provided to students in writing and must ensure students are not disadvantaged in any way by the change or the timing of the change.

8.5 Unit Coordinators are responsible for ensuring students receive feedback on their performance in assessment tasks (noting that Unit Coordinators may not necessarily be the marker for every piece of assessment for every student).

8.6 Unit Coordinators should give guidance to students about their work presented for assessment and be prepared to discuss with students their performance.

9. Examination Expectations

9.1 The Unit Coordinator is responsible for the preparation and review processes of the examination paper.

9.2 In a team teaching situation where different academics have contributed to assessment in a Unit, the Unit Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that appropriate moderation processes have taken place.

9.3 It is expected that the Unit Coordinator is present in the examination room 15 minutes prior to commencement of the examination and for the first 15 minutes of the examination. Where this is not possible, it is expected that the Unit Coordinator is available by telephone for the same time period.

9.4 The Unit Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that a final grade is recommended for all students enrolled in the Unit and in confirming there is no error in the aggregation of student marks.

9.5 The Unit Coordinator is responsible for recommending grades to the *Examination Committee*.

9.6 The Unit Coordinator is required to specify the resource materials that will be permitted in an examination. This information must be advised to students in writing prior to the examination. Notwithstanding these requirements, special arrangements may be made for students with disabilities.

Refer also to Section 17 below.

10. Awarding Of Overall Grades

10.1 Students are assigned a mark for each piece of assessed work as an indicator of the standard of the students' academic achievement in an individual assessment task.

10.2 A grade is the result that students receive for completion of a Unit through the process of aggregation and weighting of the marks achieved in individual assessment tasks. It signifies the student's overall performance in that Unit.

10.3 Students' grades in units are recorded using the following:

High Distinction (80 – 100%) – when a student has demonstrated an exceptionally high quality of performance and/or standard of learning achievement.

Distinction (70 – 79%) – when a student has demonstrated a high quality of performance and/or standard of learning achievement.

Credit (60 – 69%) - when a student has demonstrated a good quality of performance and/or standard of learning achievement.

Pass (50 – 59%) – when a student has demonstrated a satisfactory quality of performance and/or standard of learning achievement.

Fail (0 – 49%) – when a student has demonstrated an unsatisfactory quality of performance and/or standard of learning achievement, insufficient to pass.

10.4 Students' grades in courses may also be recorded using the *Non-graded Pass* (NGP) grading form of Pass/Not Pass where successful completion of a course is assessed on a pass/fail basis.

10.5 Other grades that may be awarded are:

Fail No Assessment Submitted (FNS) – when a student did not present any work for assessment.

10.6 A student's *Grade Point Average (GPA)* for a course is based on the average of the numerical value of all final grades obtained. Units for which exemptions were granted are not included in the calculation of a GPA, but Units transferred for credit are included.

11. Notification of Grades

11.1 Unit Coordinators are responsible for recording the marks of all students enrolled in a unit for each assessment task.

11.2 Students' marks for all assessment tasks are to be made available to students.

11.3 Marks for individual assessment tasks will not be posted in public places (i.e. hallways, on office doors or non-secure websites).

11.4 Any publication of marks must not occur in a manner that allows a student's name to be associated with a mark, other than by the student concerned.

11.5 Following approval of grades by the Academic Dean, students are notified of their final grades.

11.6 Grades that are not finalised or unavailable at the time of the general release of grades must be finalised by commencement of the following semester.

11.7 Where there is a reason (e.g. illness, accident, disability or other compassionate circumstances) for the grade remaining 'not finalised' beyond the applicable date, the Academic Dean may give approval for the finalisation of the grade to be held over to a specified later date. If the grade cannot be finalised by the date specified by the Academic Dean, the unfinalised grade converts to a Fail grade and no further extension of time is allowed.

11.8 A final grade cannot be changed except to correct an error. Students are notified in writing of a change of grade and the reason for the change.

11.9 Results can be withheld if a student has a debt to Leaders including overdue tuition fees, unpaid Library fines and/or overdue equipment loans. An administrative grade of RW (Result Withheld) is then used. Any results or Testamurs withheld in accord with these procedures will be transmitted to students after outstanding payment of all debts is made.

12. Appeal of Final Grade

12.1 Where a student believes that an error has been made in respect of the calculation of the grade awarded for a unit, the student may request a review of the grade.

12.2 Students must first consult with the Unit Coordinator to obtain an explanation of how their grade was awarded as soon as practicable after receiving notification of their grade.

12.3 If the student remains dissatisfied the student may request in writing, within 5 working days of receipt of their grade, a review of the grade. This request must clearly state the grounds for the review.

12.4 Requests for review of grade are dealt with by the *Examination Committee* and students will normally be notified of the outcome of the requested review of grade within 10 working days of receipt of the request.

13. Resubmission of Assessment

13.1 Resubmission is defined as a student being provided permission to make substantial changes to a nominated assessment task which they have failed, within a specified timeframe for re-examination by the original examiner to achieve a mark no greater than the minimum for a pass standard for the assessment task.

13.2 The Program Director in consult with the Unit Coordinator is responsible for providing students the opportunity to resubmit an assessment task. Students are advised of this decision on return of the assessment task.

13.3 The student has five (5) working days from return of the assessment task to resubmit for re-examination.

13.4 Only one opportunity to resubmit an assessment task will be provided.

14. Supplementary Assessment

14.1 Supplementary assessment is defined as a *new item of assessment* intended to provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate successful achievement of the learning outcomes of the unit.

14.2 The supplementary assessment item must assure achievement of the same areas of knowledge, understanding and/or skill development as the original assessment item/s.

14.3 Supplementary assessment may be awarded by the Dean or his/her delegate, to a student, who having submitted all the assessment requirements of the course:

- Receives an overall percentage between 45 and 49%; or
- Has not achieved a pass or required minimum mark in one or more mandatory pass components of the Unit; and
- Has not undertaken supplementary assessment in normally no more than four (4) units in a three-year degree course.

14.4 A student is allowed only one attempt at each supplementary assessment item.

14.5 To achieve a Pass grade for the unit, students must achieve a pass mark for the supplementary assessment.

14.6 Students attempting a supplementary exam will receive email notification from Student Administration and be advised about the timing and location of the exam.

15. Special Consideration

15.1 The Unit Coordinator may extend special consideration to a student in their unit and in respect of any assessment item in that unit.

15.2 Students may apply for special consideration if their performance in an assessment item was seriously affected, or they were seriously disadvantaged when the assessment item was attempted, on the grounds of illness, accident, disability, bereavement or other compassionate circumstances.

15.3 An application for special consideration is applicable only where the assessment item or examination has been attempted.

15.4 A request for special consideration must be accompanied by appropriate documentary evidence (such as a bereavement notice, letter from employer, practitioner or professional statutory declaration) and must be submitted no later than three (3) working days after the date of the final examination or assessment item.

15.5 Students applying for special consideration on medical grounds must submit a Medical Certificate, completed by a registered medical practitioner.

15.6 The Unit Coordinator may take one or more of the following options in response to an application for special consideration:

- Take no action
- Grant an extension of time in which to complete the assessment item
- Recommend a final grade on the basis of the student's performance across the unit
- Provide another assessment task - either an alternative assessment task or a replacement assessment task.
- Recommend that the student be granted withdrawal without failure on compassionate grounds.

16. Deferred Assessment

16.1 Where a student is unable to attempt an assessment item or examination, the student may apply for deferred assessment or an extension of time to submit an assignment.

16.2 Requests for deferred assessment must be submitted to Leaders Administration Office accompanied by appropriate documentary evidence (such as a bereavement notice, letter from employer, practitioner or professional statutory declaration), no later than three (3) working days after the date pertinent to the assessment item.

16.3 The following would generally be considered acceptable grounds for approval of a deferred assessment: illness, accident, temporary disability, bereavement, sporting or cultural commitment at state, national or international representative level, or other compassionate circumstances (for example, death of a family member or close relative, serious illness of a family member or close relative).

16.4 The following would generally be considered unacceptable grounds to approve a deferred examination: misreading an examination timetable, applications submitted after the 3 working days deadline, holiday arrangements - including for international travel, sporting or cultural commitment, other than at state, national or international representative level.

16.5 Application for all deferred assessment will be approved or rejected by the Unit Coordinator.

16.6 Students applying for deferred assessment on medical grounds must submit a Medical Certificate, completed by a registered medical practitioner.

16.7 Further deferment of deferred assessments is NOT possible. Students who are still unable to sit their deferred examination because of exceptional circumstances may apply to withdraw due to special circumstances.

17. Special Arrangements for Students with a Disability

17.1 The Unit Coordinator in consultation with the individual student and the Student Support Unit, should make appropriate provision, in terms of resources and timing, for students with disabilities and/or special needs.

17.2 Students with a disability may be provided with the following as requested and required.

- Time extensions during examinations to accommodate reading, writing and comprehension for a student with a learning disability or visual impairment, or time-out to facilitate the demands of managing the disability during the examination.
- Access to assistive technology such as an ergonomic chair or sloping table to enable students to complete an examination or assessment task.
- Ready access to food or drink or medication if recommended by a medical specialist.
- Separate supervision arrangements for students to undertake exams in a separate, quiet room with individual supervision.

Reference should also be made to the following documents

- Student Academic Integrity Policy
- Assessment Moderation Policy
- Student Grievance and Appeals Policy

Note – Policy reviewed against HESF (Threshold Standards) 2021 – Section 1.4 Learning Outcomes and Assessment.