

Student Assessment for Learning - Standards for Assessment Procedure (HE)

Section 1 - Purpose / Objectives

(1) The following standards set out the expectations that the University holds for assessment in higher education units and courses, and should be read in conjunction with the [Student Assessment for Learning Policy](#).

(2) The standards draw from expected good practice in institutions across Australia, as well as the work of scholars and researchers in this field. They are not intended to be exhaustive, but rather set the scene for good practice while providing scope for staff to engage in continuous improvement in assessment design.

Section 2 - Scope / Application

(3) These Standards apply to all Higher Education coursework units.

Section 3 - Definitions

(4) Nil

Section 4 - Policy Statement

(5) See Student Assessment for Learning policy

Section 5 - Procedures

Part A - Overview

(6) Assessment drives and shapes learning and it is one of the most important elements within the teaching and learning process for both teachers and students. Assessment also measures what students have learned and their knowledge and understanding of discipline specific information.

(7) Significant attention is paid by students to assessment activities, their criteria and weighting. The degree to which this information and the way in which assessment can guide and support learning is a critical aspect of ensuring that students are able to succeed through appropriate responses.

(8) The principles outlined in the [Student Assessment for Learning Policy](#) apply to all assessments and are supported by the following rules. Exceptions to these rules may be allowed where supported by an academic justification and approval of the senior Learning and Teaching manager in the relevant College and via the relevant Course Approvals processes.

Part B - Timing and weighting

(9) There are no less than two (2) and no more than four (4) formal (graded) assessments in any unit, excepting where progressive assessment involves more regular submission of contributions to a final portfolio or document.

(10) No single assessment item is weighted at more than 60% of the final grade for a unit, excepting where an externally assessed thesis is the primary assessment item.

(11) Unsupervised tests make up no more than 20% of the final grade in a unit.

(12) A first graded assessment weighted 25% or less of the final grade must take place within the first six weeks of semester, or first half of an intensive delivery period.

(13) Assessment details such as type, weighting and timing of assessment are provided to students in the learning management system, and wherever possible, discussed with students at the start of the unit.

Part C - Assessing for learning

(14) All in-semester assessments are formative or developmental in nature - providing students with an opportunity to apply feedback to subsequent assessment activities.

(15) Assessment encourages academic integrity through the use of progressive assessment (a cumulative series of activities) and/or in-class engagement with assessment activities.

(16) A list of criteria or a rubric is provided for each assessment task in a unit to provide students with clear expectations about the type and level of performance required to successfully complete the task.

(17) Exemplars of relevant completed assessments are provided to students wherever possible.

(18) Qualitative feedback is provided for all in-semester assessments within two weeks of submission. This may be peer-based, whole of group or individual feedback, depending on the nature of the assessment.

(19) Feedback links to supports or resources that facilitate further learning wherever possible.

Part D - Assessment of attendance

(20) All students enrolled in on-campus coursework units at VU are encouraged and expected to attend their classes as scheduled on the timetable in order to optimise their academic success. Except as in instances outlined below, attendance at scheduled activities is not compulsory and students will neither be awarded marks for attendance alone nor have marks deducted due to non-attendance.

(21) Units and/or courses may require mandatory attendance at specific activities due to professional or government accreditation requirements, where a unit learning outcome has a significant competency component or assessment is based around the placement of a student in a workplace or community setting.

(22) The following are examples where a mandatory attendance requirement may be appropriate:

- a. A student is assessed upon performance in a clinical, teaching or other placement over a defined period of time.
- b. A student is assessed on their artistic or sporting performance.
- c. A student is required to demonstrate their development of skills in a laboratory or similar environment.

(23) In units where mandatory attendance for specific activities is required the following must occur:

- a. This information must be provided in the accredited unit information under 'assessment'.
- b. Students must be advised at the commencement of the unit that specified minimum attendance at a particular activity or series of activities is required. This should be done in writing in the introduction section on the LMS and verbally or in writing at the commencement of the particular activity.
- c. Students must be advised under what circumstances and with what documentation a student is permitted to miss a session. These requirements must conform with the rules for special consideration ([see Adjustments to Assessment procedure](#)).
- d. Attendance records must be kept and students must be given access to their own attendance records upon request.
- e. Students must be notified at the commencement of the unit of options for completion if they fail to meet the attendance requirements, e.g. make-up sessions, alternative activities.

Part E - Hurdle task requirements

(24) Within a unit, it is expected that the unit learning outcomes will be assessed using a variety of assessment tasks. However, in certain instances it may not be possible to assess a particular learning outcome using more than one assessment task. Such a learning outcome may involve:

- a. the demonstration of a particular essential skill or activity where the level of competency can only be assessed through an actual demonstration
- b. the demonstration of a particular skill which is intrinsic to the student's ability to complete professional registration requirements

(25) If the learning outcome associated with this task is considered to be critical to the student's progression in this unit then it is appropriate that this assessment be a hurdle task for the unit.

(26) The following are examples of where a hurdle assessment task may be appropriate:

- a. A culminating artistic or sporting performance
- b. Demonstration of a critical laboratory skill
- c. Completion of a clinical, teaching or other placement that is required for practice

(27) Where online participation is established as a hurdle requirement, this must be clearly communicated to all students and must not cause disadvantage to students with restricted online access. Online participation can only be a hurdle requirement if it meets the criteria established above.

(28) In units that have a hurdle assessment task the following must occur:

- a. Students must be advised at the commencement of the unit that at a particular assessment is a hurdle task. This should be done in writing through the unit guide and verbally at the commencement of the unit.
- b. Students must be notified as to the reasons why the assessment is considered a hurdle requirement and the learning outcome or competency that is being assessed in the hurdle task.

Part F - Submission and resulting

(29) Assignments are submitted online within VU Collaborate wherever possible.

(30) All essay and report, or similar written assessments, are submitted for Turnitin review, and originality reports reviewed (by the assessor) prior to grading.

(31) Results for in-semester assessment are recorded in VU Collaborate for release to students as appropriate.

(32) Final unit grades, including examination and aggregate unit results are submitted for upload to VU Connect. These grades are not released within VU Collaborate. See also Management of Results Procedure [[link to procedure](#)].

(33) Students must be informed at the commencement of the unit of their options if they fail the hurdle task. Information on requirements for supplementary assessments and conceded passes in this case can be found in the [Supplementary Assessment and Conceded Pass Procedure](#).

Status and Details

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Responsible Officer	Deborah Tyler Director, Academic Quality and Standards +613 9919 4310
Enquiries Contact	Deborah Tyler Director, Academic Quality and Standards +613 9919 4310