

Higher Education Assessment

Policy and Procedure

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Related Policies and Documents:	APAC Academic Honesty and Misconduct Policy and Procedure APAC Student Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure APAC Advanced Standing Policy and Procedure APAC Moderation Policy and Procedure APAC Privacy Policy and Procedure APAC Records Management Policy and Procedure APAC Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 TEQSA Guidance Note: Monitoring and Analysis of Student Performance 2020; Course Design (including Learning Outcomes and Assessment) TEQSA AI Toolkit and GenAI Knowledge Hub

Legislative and Regulatory Compliance

Assessment practices and processes at the Australian Performing Arts Conservatory (APAC) will be compliant with the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*, specifically Standards 1.4.1-1.4.5, 1.3.3, 3.1, 5.3, the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018*, and the *Australian Qualifications Framework 2013*.

Purpose

To set out an approach to assessment which supports academic quality and standards, ensures fairness and transparency, promotes student learning, and aligns with regulatory requirements and APAC's educational goals.

Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all students undertaking assessment and staff involved in the design, delivery, grading, moderation, and oversight of assessment.

Policy

- assessment promotes effective student learning through motivating engagement with discipline content and active participation in learning activities

- assessment is aligned with unit and course learning outcomes, graduate attributes, and reflect clearly defined standards of student performance
- assessment is designed to maintain professional and academic standards and is valid and reliable
- assessment and feedback on assessment are fair, equitable, transparent and inclusive
- assessment is designed and calibrated to reflect the credit value of the relevant unit and to ensure that student learning is not impeded by an overload of requirements
- a variety of assessment tasks is used in each unit, and includes both formative and summative assessment
- the purpose, expectations, requirements and grading criteria relating to each assessment tasks are made clear to students
- unit outlines must specify, for each assessment task, whether GenAI tools are permitted, and clearly identify the approved tools where applicable
- assessment and feedback on assessment are authentic, enabling students to improve future performance
- feedback and grades must be provided in a timely manner
- staff involved in assessment are appropriately qualified and practical assessments are evaluated by at least two qualified academic staff
- assessment is secure providing a verified measure of student performance. As academic integrity is key to an individual's intellectual and personal development, students learn how to uphold the value of integrity in their studies and assessment responses, and how to maintain ethical standards
- changes to assessment may only be made under exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the DoHE. Students are to be notified of the change immediately to minimise disadvantage.
- approval authority for changes to assessment is determined by the nature and scope of the proposed modification, as outlined in the Unit Change Matrix within the Course Development Policy and Procedure.
- assessment practices and processes will be regularly reviewed, including as part of comprehensive course reviews.

Procedure

Assessment at APAC is a critical component of student learning, designed to be rigorous, authentic, and aligned with course outcomes and employability goals. A standards-based approach ensures each assessment includes clearly defined criteria, level-specific performance descriptors, and differentiated standards to guide student understanding and self-assessment.

Pre-trimester

The Head of Discipline (HoD) is responsible for ensuring all assessment components and associated staff preparation are in place prior to each study period. This includes -

- the collaborative design of assessment tasks and the assessment schedule (the HoD and academic staff), in accordance with this policy.
- moderation and pre-validation of assessment tasks and marking guidelines using the Pre-Assessment Moderation Checklist.

- confirmation of moderation processes, teams and schedules.
- publication of all assessment details (rubrics, descriptors, weightings, and due dates) on the Learning Management System.
- facilitating the staff orientation and induction meetings, incorporating detailed discussions on assessment to ensure shared understanding of tasks and grading criteria.

Assessment design

Assessment design at APAC strategically aligns learning outcomes with academic integrity by embedding authentic, iterative tasks and explicit generative AI (AI) usage guidelines to promote ethical engagement and higher-order thinking. Security measures such as invigilation, controlled conditions, viva voce and incremental assessment, mitigate against AI misuse. In addition, dedicated teaching and learning resources engage students in exploring AI's ethical implications, privacy concerns, risk management strategies, and questions of ownership.

A whole of course approach is taken to assessment design. The HoD maps assessments across year levels and the course to ensure task variety, balanced workload, and progressive skill development aligned with learning outcomes. Key consideration include the following:

- all summative assessments must address the learning outcomes listed in the unit outline and will be used to determine the final grade for the course.
- a unit has a maximum of (4), and a minimum of (3), summative tasks (excluding progressive tasks), including any examinations.
- no assessment task will be weighted at more than 60 percent of the overall assessment for the unit.
- *Postgraduate assessment*: provided all unit learning outcomes are demonstrably addressed and that assessment is valid, reliable, and fair, units offered at AQF Level 8 or above may differ from those at lower AQF levels in the number, weighting, and structure of summative assessment tasks. Reflecting the higher cognitive demands of postgraduate study, these units commonly use fewer but larger integrative assessments that require students to demonstrate synthesis, innovation, and independent judgment.
- all first trimester units must have one early-feedback task before census. This can be summative or formative and the results must be reported to the DoHE.
- the examination timetable must ensure that no student is scheduled to sit more than two exams in a single day.
- no single examination is worth more than 50 percent of the final mark.
- formative tasks are formalised in teaching and learning schedules, are not graded but provide feedback.
- group summative assessments must be weighted at no more than 35 percent of the total marks for a unit and must include individual assessment components. Students must be informed in advance of how their individual marks will be determined.
- Tutorial Participation: attendance isn't marked but students are expected to actively attend and participate in all tutorials. Engagement/participation may be marked.

Academic Integrity

APAC enforces zero tolerance for plagiarism, cheating, or unauthorised use of AI.

- the HoD is responsible for approving or declining the use of generative AI in assessments

- the HoD is responsible for ensuring clear and consistent disclosure regarding the inclusion or exclusion of generative AI in assessments in unit content documents and assessment task sheets.
- teaching staff must hold timely, in-depth discussions with students about assessment practices, emphasising academic integrity and clarifying AI-use rules for each task including if students are required to authenticate artefacts (drafts/prompts/logs).
- students are responsible for ensuring their assessments reflect original, individual effort or clearly defined group roles and they must acknowledge all sources used in assessment including generative AI.
- APAC expects that all sources used in an assignment are acknowledged. Failure to provide such acknowledgment is plagiarism. Work that is not completed by a student yet submitted as that student's work is cheating.
- unauthorised or undisclosed use of AI tools to create assessable content is considered academic misconduct and will be managed according to APAC's Academic Honesty and Misconduct Policy and Procedure.
- submission on Moodle includes a required academic honesty declaration.
- See also APAC's Academic Honesty Policy and Procedure.

Submission and Referencing Requirements

- all assessments must be submitted in the specified format with cover page as identified in unit outlines.
- APA referencing is required for all sources, including generative AI tools.
- students must retain a copy of submitted assessments.

Feedback

- feedback must be timely, constructive, aligned with criteria and improve learning outcomes.
- feedback on summative tasks must be returned within 10 working days and before the next assessment due date.

Assessment Rules

- *Due Dates:* Submissions must be made by 11:59pm (Brisbane time) on the due date unless an extension has been granted.
 - *Late Submissions:* Without an extension, a 5% deduction per day applies. Submissions that are 14 days late may receive no more than 50%.
 - *Extensions:* Must be requested at least 24 hours in advance of the due date using the official form. The HoD approves extension of up to one week. Beyond one-week, the HoD will consult with the Director of Higher Education (DoHE).
- *Absences from Practical or In-Class Assessments:* Must be communicated at least 48 hours in advance. If not, the student must show cause within 48 hours to avoid failure.
- *Exams:* Students must attend unless valid documentation is provided. Deferred exams require written request and DoHE approval.
- *Special Consideration:* Requires documented evidence (e.g., medical certificate).

- *Grades*: final grades are ratified by the Grades Ratification Committee before release
Students may appeal grades via the *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

Grades

Grade codes and notations are listed in the table below. The meaning of each is given and, where applicable, is correlated with an assessment result expressed as a percentage.

Grade	Description	Result	Grade
High Distinction (HD)	Exceptional standard demonstrating comprehensive and high-level, insightful understanding of academic concepts and/or the application of artistry. Outstanding work demonstrating originality, with thought-provoking attention-to-detail in performative context, and no shortcomings in terms of imagination, innovation, creativity, and aptitude. Assiduous adherence to the principles of academic writing.	85%>	7
Distinction (D)	Excellent standard demonstrating broad and advanced-level, insightful understanding of academic concepts and overall excellent work demonstrating some originality, well-considered attention to detail in performative context, and limited shortcomings in terms of imagination, innovation, creativity and aptitude.	75 – 84%	6
Credit (C)	Good standard demonstrating broad and sound understanding of academic concepts, and overall good work demonstrating limited originality, attention to detail in performative context, but with noticeable shortcomings in terms of imagination, innovation, creativity and aptitude.	65 – 74%	5
Pass (P)	Satisfactory standard demonstrating sufficient understanding of academic concepts, and overall satisfactory work demonstrating little or no originality, limited attention to detail in performative context, with numerous shortcomings in terms of imagination, innovation, creativity and aptitude.	50 – 64%	4
Pass Conceded (PC)*	Unsatisfactory standard, failing to demonstrate a basic understanding in relation to all learning outcomes but demonstrating a basic understanding in relation to some.	47-49%	3
Fail (F)	Unsatisfactory standard, failing to demonstrate a basic level of understanding and achievement.	<50%	0
Fail Non-submission (FNS) **	Fails to satisfy the requirements of the unit by not attempting all assessment tasks.	N/A	0
Withdrawn (W)	Withdrawn from the unit after the census date and up to the final date for withdrawal without academic penalty.	N/A	N/A
Academic Credit (AC)	Indicates that credit has been given for a unit or part of a course based on prior formal learning. ***		-
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)***	Indicates that Advanced Standing has been given for a unit or part of a course on the basis of prior informal or non-formal learning.		-

* No more than 20 credit points of PC grades may be counted towards completion of an AQF level 7 bachelor degree; no more than 10 credit points of PC grades may be received at the highest unit level of the course. No PC grade will be offered if any of these limits would be breached. A PC grade is deemed to satisfy prerequisites for higher-level units.

** A requirement for a passing grade in any unit is submission of all assessment tasks.

***See the Advanced Standing Policy and Procedure.

Responsibilities

The Board of Directors

- assures itself that there is an effective system for assessment in place which is compliant with mandated standards, and which exemplifies good practice.

The Academic Board

- monitors the implementation of this Policy and Procedure
- ensures that APAC's approach to assessment supports academic standards and academic quality
- approves requirements in relation to assessment; and
- considers review findings regarding assessment and taking appropriate actions.

Teaching and Learning Working Group

- is responsible for ensuring assessments, marking and moderation aligns with APAC policies and procedures.
- makes recommendations to the Academic Board regarding assessment, including on the basis of review findings.

Grades Ratification Committee

- approves grades, late grades, changes of grades, review of marks, review of grades, moderation of units and ratification of executive decisions in relation to student grades.
- monitors and reports on methods of assessment, ensuring they are consistent with the learning outcomes being assessed and are capable of confirming that all specified learning outcomes are achieved, and that grades awarded reflect the level of student attainment.
- provides a report to the Academic Board following each meeting of the Grades Ratification Committee.

The Director of Higher Education

- implements this Policy and Procedure.

Heads of Discipline

- communicates assessment requirements to staff and students and monitors assessment practices.
- ensures academic staff understand and follow APAC assessment and moderation policies and procedures.

- Ensures the timely upload of grades to APAC’s learning management system.

Staff

- act in accordance with this Policy and Procedure; and
- seek advice as required on matters to do with assessment.

Students

- act in accordance with this Policy and Procedure.

Definitions

- **Course** is an approved sequence of study leading to the conferral of a higher education award.
- **Census Date** is the effective final enrolment date and charges liability date for a course or units, after which a student cannot withdraw without significant academic or financial penalties.
- **Formative Assessment** is an assessment used to provide students with feedback about their progress throughout a study period but is used to calculate the final unit grade.
- **Reasonable Adjustment** a measure or action that has the effect of assisting a student with a disability on the same basis as a student without a disability, and may include an aid, a facility, or a service that the student requires because of their disability. An adjustment is reasonable if it achieves this purpose while taking into account the student’s learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with the disability, the education provider, staff and other students.
- **Summative Assessment** is an assessment used to evaluate student learning, skill acquisition, and academic achievement, and used to calculate the final unit grade.
- **Unit** is a discrete unit of study with its own name, code and value that makes up part of a course.

Version Control and Document Owner

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1.0	APAC	New document.	11 April 2016	11 April 2016
1.1	APAC	Minor changes.	11 December 2019	11 December 2019
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2.1	APAC	Minor changes.		
3.0	APAC	Approved.	23 July 2021	
4.0	DVE Business Solutions Pty Ltd	Review and update of policy and procedure.	18 November 2022	
4.1	DVE Business Solutions Pty Ltd	Minor administrative changes to section 1.2 scope, section 3.1 Procedures and section 6 Definitions.		6 June 2023
5.0	APAC	Update to section 3.3 relating to use of AI tools Update to section 3.2 xi relating to acknowledgement of AI technology in citations and references.	05 January 2024	05 January 2024
6.0	APAC	Update of format and generative AI information	12 November 2025	12 November 2025