# Assessment Policy

## 1 Purpose

To set out the principles that underpin Assessment at the University.

To find the version of the Assessment Policy (and associated instruments) in force up to and including 13 February 2022, click here.

## 2 Scope

This Policy applies to all:

- Employees engaged in any aspect of Assessment in Award and Non-Award Coursework Courses (including higher degree Courses) delivered by or on behalf of the University; and
- Students engaged in any aspect of Assessment in Award and Non-Award Coursework Courses (including higher degree Courses) delivered by or on behalf of the University.

This policy does not apply to the Assessment of the Research components of Higher Degree by Research (HDR) programs. Those details can be located in the Higher Doctorates Procedure.

## 3 Policy Statement

Assessment is an integral part of Student learning that supports Students to develop as confident, capable and self-motivated life-long and life-wide learners. Assessment provides both an avenue for Students to learn, and a mechanism to demonstrate learning. Effective Assessment practices encourage a critical and reflective approach to learning that improves Student Learning Outcomes, supports development of professional identity, and encourages a strategic approach to future learning. Assessment is an enabler of Student success at University and beyond.

This Policy aligns with the:

- *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021:* Standard 1.4 Learning Outcomes and Assessment

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# 4 Principles

## 4.1 Introduction to the principles

The University is committed to high quality Assessment practices. The principles set out below form the basis for Assessment culture and practice across the University. They guide the process of Assessment design, implementation, evaluation and improvement.

The principles are informed by the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standard) 2021*, which is made under the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011*, and represent evidence-based sector good practice, while acknowledging the University context.

## 4.2 Application of the principles

Assessment design begins at the Academic Program level to ensure a deep understanding of the concepts required within a program of learning as a whole. As such, the principles are intended to be applied at the Academic Program level. The Assessment principles apply equally and should be read jointly. They do not stand alone, but must be considered within the overall Curriculum Design and be supported by effective teaching and learning strategies. Disciplinary norms and standards will inform the way the principles are applied.

Academic staff members are supported to apply the Assessment principles and engage in effective Assessment practices.

## 4.3 Assessment principles

### 4.3.1 Assessment measures Students' attainment of Course Learning Outcomes

Assessment is the process of making informed and consistent judgements about the quality and extent of a Students' knowledge, skills and abilities. These judgements are made based on Students' achievement or performance in completing specific tasks that are designed to Assess attainment of Course Learning Outcomes.

### 4.3.2 Assessment engages Students in learning

Assessment is intellectually challenging and engages Students in the learning process, allowing them to build on and apply knowledge and skills attained in Courses. Assessment practices are developmental and sustainable, with an emphasis on fostering self-regulated learning.

### 4.3.3 Assessment is fit for purpose, valid and reliable

Assessment supports the learning and development of Students as they progress through the Academic Program according to their level of study. This is achieved by ensuring Assessment tasks are clearly linked to, and appropriately designed to assess Course Learning Outcomes, and that Students have the opportunity to engage with a variety of Assessment types.

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Assessment design is informed by learning and teaching theories, accepted discipline specific practices, and accrediting and regulatory body requirements.

### 4.3.4 Assessment processes are fair and transparent

All processes associated with Assessment are transparent, characterised by clear communication and consistent application of Policy Instruments. The University uses criterion-referenced Assessment.

### 4.3.5 Assessment connects theory with practice

Assessment connects theory with practice, building transferable knowledge and skills that Students can apply in their chosen profession, future workplace, and as engaged citizens.

### 4.3.6 Assessment encourages critical application of skills and knowledge

Assessment develops Students' capability to engage critically with disciplinary knowledge as they progress through their study. Where appropriate, Assessment develops Students' critical and analytical thinking and problem-solving capability.

### 4.3.7 Assessment is designed to be inclusive and accessible

Assessment is designed and delivered with an awareness of equity and access, recognising that different approaches may be appropriate for different study modes.

### 4.3.8 Feedback is focused on improving Student learning

Feedback is timely, constructive, specific, and supports the future development of Student work and achievement of Course Learning Outcomes within and across Courses. Students have opportunities to develop their capability to evaluate feedback and apply it to their current and future Assessment. Through feedback processes, Students are enabled to improve their learning and develop the capability to critically evaluate, monitor and improve the quality of their own work.

### 4.3.9 Assessment practices promote Academic Integrity

Students demonstrate Academic Integrity in their Assessment practices by engaging honestly and ethically with Assessment tasks. Students are provided the opportunity to develop their understanding of good practice with regard to Academic Integrity.

## 5 References

Nil.

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## 6 Schedules

This policy must be read in conjunction with its subordinate schedules as provided in the table below.

## 7 Policy Information

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| **Accountable Officer** | Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students and Education) |
| **Responsible Officer** | Dean (Learning and Teaching Futures) |
| **Policy Type** | Academic Quality Policy |
| **Policy Suite** | Assessment and Grades - Roles and Responsibilities Schedule<br><br>Assessment of Special Circumstances Procedure<br><br>Assessment Pattern Schedule<br><br>Assessment Procedure<br><br>Assessment Types Schedule<br><br>Class of Honours Schedule<br><br>Grades Procedure |
| **Subordinate Schedules** | |
| **Approved Date** | 2/1/2026 |
| **Effective Date** | 2/1/2026 |
| **Review Date** | 14/2/2027 |
| **Relevant Legislation** | *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (TEQSA)*<br><br>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 |
| **Policy Exceptions** | Policy Exceptions Register |
| **Related Policies** | Code of Conduct Policy<br><br>Learning and Teaching Policy<br><br>Student Academic Integrity Policy<br><br>Student General Conduct Policy |

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| | Work Integrated Learning Activities Policy |
| **Related Procedures** | Higher Doctorates Procedure |
| **Related forms, publications and websites** | |
| **Definitions** | **Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary** |

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity means acting with the values of honesty, trust, fairness and respect in learning, teaching and Research. It is important for Students, academics, 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 an institution's reputation (EAIP, 2013).

Academic Program

An approved Higher Education Award of the University, consisting of a combination of Courses the successful completion of an offering of which, together with any credit transfers and Exemptions in accordance with the relevant requirements, will fulfil the prescribed requirements for that particular Award.

Assess

The process used to determine Student's achievement of expected Learning Outcomes and may include a range of written and oral methods and practice or demonstration.

Assessment

The process of evaluating the extent to which Students have achieved the Learning Outcomes of a Course.

Assessment Item

An individual Assessment task as outlined in the Assessment schedule for a Course. Assessment Items may be formal, informal, Formative or Summative in nature.

Award Course

The term used prior to 2002 to describe an Academic Program.

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Course

A discrete element of a program, normally undertaken over a single Study Period, in which the Student enrols, and on completion of which the Student is awarded a grade.

Course Learning Outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes are the expression of the set of knowledge, skills and the application of the knowledge and skills a person has acquired and is able to demonstrate as a result of completing a Course.

Coursework Course

A subject of study, defined by a Course Specification, for which Students may be awarded a Final Grade where the method of teaching and learning that leads to the acquisition of skills and knowledge and does not include a major research component.

Curriculum Design

The process of intentionally crafting the architecture of the entire suite of learning activities and experiences that a student will undertake in order to successfully complete a program, courses or study component to achieve the stated learning outcomes.

Higher Degree by Research (HDR)

A Research Doctorate or Research Masters program for which at least two-thirds of the Student load for the program is required as research work.

Policy

A high level strategic directive that establishes a principle based approach on a subject. Policy is operationalised through Procedures that give instructions and set out processes to implement a Policy.

Policy Instrument

A Policy Instrument refers to an instrument that is governed by the Policy framework. These include Policies, Procedures and Schedules.

Procedure

An operational instruction that sets out the process to operationalise a

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| | Policy.<br><br>Research<br><br>Research is the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings. This could include the synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative.<br><br>Student<br><br>A person who is enrolled in a UniSQ Upskill Course or who is admitted to an Award Program or Non-Award Program offered by the University and is: currently enrolled in one or more Courses or study units; or not currently enrolled but is on an approved Leave of Absence or whose admission has not been cancelled.<br><br>University<br><br>The term 'University' or 'UniSQ' means the University of Southern Queensland. |
| | **Definitions that relate to this policy only** |
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| **Keywords** | Coursework Courses, Assessment Principles, Learning Outcomes, Student Engagement, Student Learning, Feedback |
| **Record No** | 13/57PL |

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