

ASSESSMENT POLICY

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Related Documents	APIC Constitution, APIC Governance Charter		
Version	Change description	Approved	Effective Date
1.2 & 1.3		21 July 2017	July 2017
2.0	Updated to include online delivery	Academic Board 18 October 2018	30 October 2018
2.1	Updated to modify the proportion of group work and remove Appendix 1 (Examination Moderation Report Form)	Academic Board 13 August 2019	15 August 2019
2.2	Extension of Validity	Academic Board 29 May 2020	5 June 2020
2.3	Minor change to the procedure for high weighted assessment (s4.2.2) and renumbering	Chair Academic Board 11 September 2021	12 October 2021
2.4	Change to appeals policy and process (s 15)	Academic Board	25 March 2022

1. Purpose

This Policy describes the function and use of formative and summative assessment at the Asia Pacific International College (APIC). The objectives of this Policy are to:

- assure the integrity, validity, fairness, and transparency of all assessment practices at the College;
- identify the roles and responsibilities associated with assessment processes conducted at APIC;
- describe 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 formative and summative assessment of coursework units in all courses of study at APIC.

3. Definitions

Item	Definition
<i>Academic Integrity</i>	Actions aligned with values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility in learning, teaching, and research.
<i>Active participation mark</i>	An assessment in which marks are allocated for active participation in class or during online or out-of-class activities. Examples include but are not limited to participation in formal discussions, workshops or webinars, class presentations, role plays, peer assessment, and other reflective and collaborative activities. Marks are not awarded for attendance without active engagement.
<i>Alternative assessment task</i>	A reasonable variation to a prescribed assessment implemented to accommodate a student unable to undertake the standard assessment task for reasons not under 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 so that the alternative assessment allows students to demonstrate the same learning outcomes as those completing the original assessment task.
<i>Assessment task</i>	An activity that provides the basis for formally determining students' progress in achieving the Course and Unit Learning Outcomes. Assessment tasks may require students to work individually or with one or more other students.
<i>Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)</i>	The minimum standards and levels specified for Australian qualifications and award courses.
<i>Closed book examination</i>	An examination during which students are not permitted access to any materials such as notes, books, reference materials, or electronic devices other than those specifically noted in examination instructions.
<i>Criterion-Referenced Assessment</i>	The use of defined objective criteria against which student performance is measured.
<i>Deferred examination</i>	An alternative assessment is granted on a discretionary basis where serious or extenuating circumstances prevent a student from undertaking an examination on the scheduled date.
<i>Examination</i>	A time-limited assessment of a student's knowledge and/or skill in a unit of study.
<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>Final examination</i>	An examination scheduled after the end of a teaching period.
<i>Formative assessment task</i>	An ungraded assessment for the purpose of supporting students' learning and providing feedback on their progress.
<i>Invigilated examination</i>	An examination conducted under supervision.
<i>Learning outcome</i>	A specific and measurable statement of what knowledge and skills students are expected to acquire in a unit/course and be able to demonstrate at the completion of the unit/course.

Item	Definition
<i>Low stake assessment task</i>	An ungraded formative assessment, or a summative assessment worth $\leq 10\%$ of the total marks for a unit, that is scheduled early in a study period and used to assess understanding of key concepts. The low stake assessment is used to identify students at risk of poor performance so that additional support can be provided for these students.
<i>Mid-semester test</i>	An invigilated examination scheduled during the teaching period.
<i>Mixed cohort</i>	A situation that occurs when students enrolled in courses of different AQF Levels, such as Graduate Certificate (AQF 8) and Masters (AQF 9) are taught in a common unit and in the same class.
<i>Moderation</i>	Regulating the development of assessment tasks and/or the marking of assessment tasks to achieve consistency in the application of Course and Unit Learning Outcomes, performance standards, and marking criteria.
<i>On-campus examination</i>	An examination conducted at a venue overseen directly by the College.
<i>Off-campus examination</i>	An examination conducted at a venue not overseen directly by the College, such as an examination centre.
<i>Open book examination</i>	An examination in which students are permitted to use notes, texts, or resource materials in an exam situation. Open book examinations test the ability to find and apply information and knowledge.
<i>Special Consideration</i>	A process intended to ensure equitable academic outcomes for students whose performance in an assessment task or course progression more generally has been significantly affected by documented circumstances beyond their control such as illness, misadventure or other circumstances.
<i>Summative assessment task</i>	A graded assessment for the purpose of measuring student performance that contributes to the overall mark and grade in a unit. These assessments may also have a formative purpose to promote students' learning and providing feedback on progress.
<i>Supplementary assessment task</i>	An additional assessment offered on a discretionary basis to allow a student with a final mark in a unit of study of 45%-49% to demonstrate that they have achieved the Unit Learning Outcomes.
<i>Take-home examination</i>	A form of open-book examination undertaken without invigilation. Students are required to complete question(s) over a specified period (often 24 hours) without help from others.
<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.

4. Assessment Principles and Practice

4.1 Principles

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 practices are designed to promote learning, and outcomes are used to evaluate and improve teaching;
- assessment processes are timely to allow feedback for students to enhance their understanding and subsequent performance; and
- assessment is designed to the appropriate AQF Level and to ensure that students experience a variety of assessment methods

4.2 Practice

- 4.2.1 All units at APIC include a low-stake early assessment task scheduled no later than Week 3 or 4 of the teaching semester to support the early identification of at-risk students and to provide timely and constructive feedback.
- 4.2.2 The maximum weighting for an individual assessment task will not normally exceed 40% of a unit of study's total assessment weighting. Assessments exceeding 40% in weight may be approved by the Dean where there are logical, pedagogical and/or regulatory requirements to do so and reported to Academic Board.
- 4.2.3 Working in groups is important for developing a range of important employability skills and graduate attributes concerning communication, collaboration, and leadership essential for working with other people. When group work is used at APIC, the following principles apply:
- (a) Students are provided with an induction to group work at the beginning of the study period. This induction specifically explains
 - (i) why group work is being used in the unit, with reference to unit learning outcomes and skills to be developed;
 - (ii) how the marks for group work will be allocated to individual group members;
 - (iii) how students will be allocated to groups;
 - (iv) roles, responsibilities, and expectations of group members;
 - (v) how to manage group meetings and record group decisions, including how communication between group members will be managed, task allocation and agreed timelines; and
 - (vi) how to manage, document and resolve issues between group members.
 - (b) Following induction, documentation of student's group membership and their understanding of assessment processes is retained by the unit coordinator.
- 4.2.4 The total weighting across all group work assessment tasks in a unit of study will not exceed 30% of marks for the unit. Assessments exceeding 30% in weight may be approved by the Dean where there are logical, pedagogical and/or regulatory requirements to do so and reported to Academic Board.
- 4.2.5 An active participation mark will not normally exceed 10% of the total weighted marks for the unit. Marks are not generally awarded for attendance without active engagement.
- 4.2.6 A range of assessment types will be used across 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.
- 4.2.7 Where a unit of study contains a mixed cohort of students, different assessment tasks may be used for the separate cohorts. All assessment tasks must align with the Unit Learning Outcomes and the Course Learning Outcomes.

- 4.2.8 Assessment submissions will be stored securely and in compliance with data retention requirements.
- 4.2.9 The duration of a final examination in a unit of study will not exceed three hours, except where a documented allowance has been made to accommodate a student with special needs.
- 4.2.10 All examinations will be moderated and approved no later than five working days prior to the scheduled examination date.
- 4.2.11 Assessment goals, criteria and expectations will be clarified to students.
- 4.2.12 Assessment criteria for active participation must make clear the expectations for participation and explain how performance is differentiated.
- 4.2.13 Feedback to students will:
- be timely;
 - justify the mark given against the published assessment criteria;
 - identify how the students(s) could have improved their mark; and
 - suggest how a student may improve in their next assessment task.
- 4.2.14 Where a unit of study is being taught across multiple campuses or modes of delivery, all aspects of the assessment in the unit will be equivalent and in accordance with the published Unit of Study Guide for the unit.
- 4.2.15 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 must be formally notified in writing of the variation.

5. Moderation

- 5.1 Moderation is a quality assurance process for ensuring appropriate assessment and consistent marking and grading of student work. APIC does not define the proportion of marks and/ or grades that lie within pre-determined bands but rather uses criterion-referenced assessment.
- 5.2 Moderation is always used during the construction of examinations.
- 5.3 Moderation is always used for assessment tasks where more than one marker is assessing student work either:
- before marking individual assessment tasks (pre-assessment) to ensure markers have a shared understanding of the relevant criteria and standards, and the indicators that will be used to infer that an assignment meets a particular criterion; or
 - 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;

- 5.4 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 and the Board of Examiners has the authority to approve moderation of final marks.

6. Deferred Examination

- 6.1 Students who are prevented by exceptional and unavoidable circumstances from attending a scheduled examination may apply for a deferred examination using the Special Consideration Application Form. Deferred examinations are conducted outside the scheduled examination period and are designed to assess the same unit learning outcomes as the regular examination. A deferred examination is granted on medical or compassionate grounds, including illness (physical or psychological), accident, bereavement, or other serious adverse circumstances beyond the student's control that may prevent them from attending an examination or that may substantially adversely impact their performance in the examination.
- 6.2 Deferred examination will not be granted because a student has misunderstood the manner, time, date or venue of an examination.
- 6.3 Applications for Deferred examination must be received no later than two working days after the scheduled exam. All applications for Deferred examination must be supported by appropriate documentary evidence, which in the case of illness shall include a medical certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner or medical authorities.
- 6.4 A student who has been granted a Deferred examination must attend the examination at the time, place and date set by the College unless there are additional documented exceptional circumstances.

7. 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 an 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 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 student record;
- For examinations:
 - be available to sit examinations during the scheduled time on the date allocated;
 - be present at the examination venue not later than ten minutes before the time specified for the commencement of the examination;
 - bring to the examination venue all equipment necessary to complete the examination (e.g. writing tools, calculator etc.)

- carry in their possession a student identification that accredits them as a student of APIC; and
- comply with APIC's Academic Integrity Policy and other related policies in all aspects of the assessment process.

8. Academic Staff Responsibilities

8.1 It is the responsibility of the Dean, supported by the Course Coordinators, 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 different modes of delivery, all aspects of the assessment in the unit are equivalent; and
- assessment tasks are aligned with the relevant Course and Unit Learning Outcomes.

8.2 It is the responsibility of all APIC academic staff 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 the development of the relevant Course and Unit Learning Outcomes;
- design assessment tasks that mitigate the possible incidence of student academic misconduct;
- clarify goals, criteria and expectations of assessment tasks with students;
- 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;
- release numerical marks for individual assessments tasks within ten working days of the assessment due date unless otherwise notified to students;
- 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 reflect on the student outcomes to assessments to improve teaching; and
- provide opportunities for consultation with students according to a published schedule.

9. Academic Integrity

9.1 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.

9.2 All written assignments must be submitted electronically through APIC's text-matching software with the Declaration that the work submitted is the student's work (refer to Section 11: Academic Integrity Policy).

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

10. Equity and Disability

- 10.1 APIC recognises that some students will have a substantiated disability, ongoing medical or psychological condition, or other significant factors beyond their control that will necessitate 'reasonable adjustments' or academic strategies to support them to complete their studies while managing their symptoms.
- 10.2 Students with substantiated ongoing and/or permanent special needs of the type described above may be eligible for reasonable adjustments, such as extensions or alternative assessments, for all formative and summative assessment tasks for the duration of their course.
- 10.3 Applications for reasonable adjustments should be made to the Student Learning Support Officer located on each campus.

11. Special Consideration

- 11.1 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.
- 11.2 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 factors beyond the student's control, for a defined period of time up to and including the maximum time to completion of their course.
- 11.3 Applications for Special Consideration may be based on evidence that:
- the student's studies have been impeded by documented adverse circumstances;
 - the adverse circumstances have prevented the student from preparing for or completing all or part of an assessment task; or
 - the student was substantially negatively affected by the adverse circumstances during the performance of the assessment task.
- 11.4 Adverse circumstances beyond the student's control may 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.
- 11.5 Routine demands and circumstances will not normally be considered grounds for Special Consideration. Such routine matters include:
- regular academic workload;
 - regular employment;
 - recreational travel; or
 - planned personal, sporting and social events (e.g. weddings)

- 11.6 Outcomes of a successful application for Special Consideration may include:
- extension to an assessment due date;
 - alternative assessment, including deferred assessment; or
 - other reasonable adjustments.
- 11.7 Applications for Special Consideration must be made using the Special Consideration Application Form as soon as possible after the circumstances become apparent, and where possible within two business days of the occurrence of the adverse circumstance. Applications for Special Consideration must be accompanied by 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

- 12.1 Unit coordinators can approve extensions of up to seven (7) days for assessments conducted within study periods other than examinations. Unit coordinators must record such extensions and the basis on which they were granted, for presentation and review at the Results Review Committee meeting.
- 12.2 Requests for extensions longer than seven (7) days can only be approved following an application for Special Consideration that is supported by evidence. The length of the extension granted would not normally exceed the end of the study period in which the assessment task was due.

13. Late Submission of Assessments

Except where an extension of the assessment due date has been approved (see above) a student who submits an assessment task after the due date will be penalised by 5% per day (24 hours or pro-rata) that the assessment is late. 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

- 14.1 Supplementary Assessment is approved at the discretion of the Board of Examiners on recommendation from the Results Review Committee. Supplementary assessment may be granted where a student has gained a final mark in a unit of study of 45% to 49%. All details of the Supplementary Assessment, including type of assessment, length and/or duration, and due date will be approved by the Board of Examiners.
- 14.2 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.
- 14.3 If the student fails to achieve a passing grade in an approved Supplementary Assessment task, the original mark and grade for the unit of study will stand.
- 14.4 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. Appeals

15.1 Appeals against a Final Grade

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

- details of the assessment requirements and marking criteria were not provided for the assessment;
- the assessment requirements notified to students were varied without the approval of the Dean and without written notification to students;
- the assessment requirements notified to students were applied unreasonably or prejudicially to the assessment;
- due regard was not paid to an approved application for Special Consideration; or
- the student believes that a clerical error has occurred in the computation of the mark.

15.1.2 The grounds for the appeal must be clearly stated in the appeal and justified. No other grounds will be considered.

15.1.3 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.

15.1.4 Where the justification for the appeal is not consistent with the grounds identified, the appeal will be refused and not recorded as an appeal.

15.1.5 Where the justification for the appeal is consistent with the grounds identified the appeal will be recorded as a valid appeal and assessed on its merits.

15.1.6 The result of a decision to accept the appeal or assess the appeal will be provided to the student in writing usually within 10 working days of the decision.

15.2 Review/appeal of Assessment Marks

Where a student is concerned about a mark they have received for an assessment the following would apply.

15.2.1 The student should contact the Unit Coordinator/lecturer and request further feedback to explain the grade that was awarded. In preparation for the meeting the student should complete the assessment rubric as they see the result. The request for the meeting and the student's completed rubric will be recorded in unit records. This is considered as a review and not a formal appeal. As such, there is no requirement to record the substance of the discussion nor will the request be classified as an appeal. Where the result of an appeal is a change of mark and/or grade, the normal Change of Grade procedure will apply.

15.2.2 If the issue is not resolved, the student may lodge a formal appeal within ten working days following the meeting with the Unit Coordinator/lecturer.

15.2.3 Both the student and the Unit Coordinator/lecturer will confirm in the workflow that a meeting has taken place and the matter remains unresolved. A formal appeal will not be accepted if the meeting with the Unit Coordinator/lecturer has not taken place.

- 15.2.4 A valid appeal will be assessed by the Head of Discipline or delegate usually within ten working days of receiving the appeal. The student and the Unit Coordinator/lecturer will be notified in writing of the determination of the appeal. Where the result of an appeal is a change of mark and/or grade, the normal Change of Grade procedure will apply.
- 15.3 All assessment appeal outcomes are fully documented and recorded in the Student Management System and the Student Grievances Register.