ASSESSMENT POLICY

Table of Contents

1. Purpose

1.1 This policy document is intended to ensure that all assessment tasks at Monaro Higher Education (MHE) are appropriate, reasonable and satisfy industrial and legal requirements. These policies are designed to ensure that methods of assessment are consistent with the learning outcomes being assessed, are capable of confirming that all specified learning outcomes are achieved and that grades awarded reflect the level of student attainment.

2. Principles

2.1 Assessments must allow academic staff to understand individual students' performance and effort.

2.2 Assessment feedback must encourage students to learn more, give appropriate recognition of students' work, reward their achievements and highlight areas for improvement with appropriate, clear, useful, balanced, prompt constructive criticism.

3. Context

3.1 All stakeholders must be satisfied that assessments at MHE are appropriate for the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level of the course and the level of the unit, align with the unit descriptions and course and unit learning outcomes.

3.2 Assessment results must chart students' progress in their studies towards achieving the unit learning outcomes and course learning outcomes and embodying MHE's graduate attributes. Since the criteria and standards which support the production of assessment instruments are referenced against these learning outcomes, working on assessments lets students develop and demonstrate newly acquired knowledge and skills.

3.3 Assessment moderation assists with continuous improvement of MHE's courses and teaching.

4. Scope

4.1 This policy applies to all academic staff and all students at MHE.

5. Definitions

Formative / Diagnostic assessment – an assessment which charts and guides a student's progress towards attaining the unit learning outcomes.

Learning Outcomes – Statements of the knowledge and skills students are reasonably expected to acquire and be able to apply during a unit or a course.

Moderation – The ongoing process of ensuring that assessments are administered fairly, consistently and appropriately and that all information they give about students is valid, current, sufficient and authentic.

Summative assessment – an assessment which quantifies a student's attainment of the unit learning outcomes.

Weighting – The percentage of the final mark for the unit which comes from a particular assessment.

6. Policy details

6.1 Unit Learning Outcomes and Course Learning Outcomes

6.1.1 Unit learning outcomes for every unit are specified in the Unit Outline. MHE creates its Unit learning outcomes and course learning outcomes by considering the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level of the unit and benchmarks them against those of comparable courses at leading universities and higher education providers in Australia and worldwide.

6.1.2 MHE's course learning outcomes and unit learning outcomes are founded on acquiring and applying the knowledge, skills and expertise required by graduates' future employers need and for membership of and accreditation with the industry bodies which pertain to their future careers.

6.1.3 MHE's course learning outcomes also reflect a range of graduate attributes which include cognitive learning, independent critical thinking, problem solving and other soft skills which they will apply both in their careers and in their further education.

6.2 Assessment specifications

6.2.1 All assessment must be student/s own work.

6.2.2 All assessments must be designed, expressed and marked in the English Language.

6.2.2 No single assessment, including final examinations, will have a weighting of greater than 50%.

6.2.3 No group assessment will have a weighting of greater than 20% for first year students or 30% in the second or third year, except in the capstone unit.

6.2.4 Assessments conducted in class should not take up more than 10% of total class time across the unit. Supervision of assessments in class may include immediate feedback to detect early student at risk.

6.2.5 At least 20% of the assessments for any unit will be in the first half of the unit duration of class.

6.2.6 MHE uses a wide variety of assessments. For guidance on their usage, see the MHE Assessment Rationale.

6.2.7 Formative/Diagnostic assessment means an assessment task that provides timely feedback to students about how their learning is progressing and identifies students at risk and to staff, any problems or obstacles that students are encountering. Formative/Diagnostic assessments are typically conducted early in the unit, mostly but not limited to before the end of week 3 and normally are not weighted.

6.3 Assessment Scheduling and Design

6.3.1 The assessments for each unit will be described in the unit outline, including its due date, its weighting, its form and its alignment with the unit learning outcomes, course learning outcomes and contribution to the Graduate Attributes.

6.3.2 A unit will have a maximum of four summative assessments. A unit must have a variety of assessment instruments to increase students' cognitive skills. There should be an appropriate number of assessments for students and academic staff to form a reasonable opinion of a student's progress and to ensure that every unit learning outcome is adequately addressed.

6.3.3 Due dates for assessments should be distributed evenly throughout the trimester.

6.3.4 Units with final examinations should not have other assessments due during or after the final week of classes of the trimester. Units without formal examinations may have an assessment due during the examination period.

6.3.5 Academic staff must consider how long it would reasonably take students to complete an assessment:

- Assessments should not force students to exceed their expected study commitment, which is generally ten hours per unit per week including attendance at lectures and tutorials, independent self-directed study and research.
- The effort required for each assessment should be proportional to its weighting and to its significance in determining the extent of students' attainment of unit learning outcomes and course learning outcomes.

6.3.6 Assessments must reflect the level of the unit and the AQF level of the course.

6.4 Students' Responsibilities

6.4.1 During the Orientation process, in the Student Handbook and in each unit outline, students will be told their responsibilities regarding academic integrity, plagiarism, referencing and citations, and especially MHE's zero-tolerance policy to contract cheating. Students must submit all written assessments to the Turnitin software to assess it for plagiarism.

6.4.2 Students will receive clear indication of what is expected for each assessment, including:

- What the assessor requires them to do
- Precise required format for presentation or submission – failure to follow the required format may result in reduced marks or a failure grade.
- Minimum standards required addressed in marking rubric
- Marking criteria
- Rules regarding extensions of assessment.

6.4.3 The Orientation process and the Student's Handbook will explain the consequences of late or non-submission. Unless an extension has been granted in writing (see section 6.5 below), assessments submitted after the due date will be marked according to the same standards as all others, but then have marks reduced by 5% for every day between the due date and day submitted. An assessment submitted twenty or more days late receives a mark of zero.

6.4.4 Students must ensure that they understand all feedback. Students are encouraged to discuss their feedback with lecturers and tutors.

6.4.5 Students must meet academic staff when required to discuss their academic performance and take part in intervention in accordance with the MHE Students at Risk Policy and Procedure.

6.4.6 Academic staff shall give students clear rules regarding what they may or may not bring into an examination room.

6.5 Assessment Marks and Feedback

6.5.1 All assessments, except final examinations, will be returned to students within a week of submission.

6.5.2 Students will receive a mark or grade and feedback within one week of submission. Feedback must clearly explain the reason for the mark and especially how it relates to the unit learning outcomes. Strengths and weaknesses must be neither exaggerated nor downplayed but must accurately portray the student's grasp of the unit learning outcomes being assessed.

6.5.3 Each Unit Outline will explain how unit learning outcomes relate to course learning outcomes and which unit learning outcomes are being assessed. A course learning outcome may be assessed more than once throughout the course, with increasing complexity as students' progress, so that by the end of the course the student's grasp of those outcomes will be clearly reflected in their grade.

6.5.3 When marks and grades are recorded and communicated to students, MHE will take all reasonable precautions to uphold students' privacy, confidentiality and security. Feedback given concerning one student's assessment must not be made known to other students without the explicit consent of the student who completed the assessment. If one student's work is used as an example for giving general feedback, academic staff must make all reasonable efforts to preserve the anonymity of the student who produced it.

6.5.4 Feedback for group assessments will have both group and individualised components. Individualised components will generally be, but not be limited to, 10% of the marks in a group assignment.

6.5.5 If the academic staff deem it necessary, remedial exercises may be given together with feedback. Students must diligently complete any remedial exercises assigned to them in addition to regular course work and study.

6.5.6 A student whose final mark is between 46% and 49% may, at the discretion of the Unit Coordinator, be offered a supplementary assessment, which, if completed satisfactorily, may give the student a pass grade. Supplementary exams will only be based on final exams or course coordinator discretion for any other assessment.

6.6 Special Consideration

6.6.1 Students who require Reasonable Adjustment, in accordance with the MHE Student Support Framework, will have the format of their assessments modified accordingly.

6.6.2 A student who experiences temporary illness or misadventure outside his or her control which prevents him or her from submitting an assessment on time or completing an assessment to the best of their ability may request special consideration, which may include:

- Extending deadlines for assessments
- Providing or allowing for additional resources in examinations or in any forms of assessment
- In classroom participation assessments, a Course Coordinator may provide marks based on the average class participations or can choose best few high scored assessments for grading
- An alternative or supplementary assessment.

6.6.3 The request for an extension must be made in writing no more than five days before the due date of the assessment and be accompanied by documentary evidence of the illness or misadventure. The Unit Coordinator must approve the special consideration in writing.

6.6.4 For the purpose of point 6.6.2 above, "misadventure" specifically does not include pressure from an employer, anything related to the student's paid or voluntary employment (unless it is the cause of a severe injury) or general stress.

6.6.5 Any special consideration or reasonable adjustment of the unit must be completely fair to all students and must not give any student any kind of disadvantage. In particular, the special consideration or reasonable adjustment:

- must never reduce the number of criteria being assessed
- Must require the student to exhibit the same level of knowledge as is expected from all other students
- Must require the student to exhibit the same graduate attributes as all other students

- Must never alter the relationship between the assessment and unit learning outcomes or course learning outcomes
- Must neither waive nor relax any required academic standards appropriate for the level of the unit and the AQF level of the course.

6.7 Moderation of Assessments

6.7.1 Participation in moderation is compulsory for all academic staff.

6.7.2 Moderation will apply to the assessment instruments, markers' rubrics and the process of giving marks and feedback, as outlined in the MHE Moderation Policy and Procedure.

6.7.3 The Course Coordinator will monitor the percentage of students who progress and complete each unit and each course as well as the spread of grades or marks in each assessment and of grades in each unit. The Course Coordinator is responsible for monitoring assessment moderation. After each trimester, the Course Coordinator will submit the summary reports to the Dean. The Dean will report these data to the Academic Board. The Learning and Teaching Committee will scrutinise the data for potential improvements to MHE's teaching and assessment practice. (See the Course Review and Continual Development Policy and Procedures for Details.)

6.8 Appeals of Assessments

Informal Appeals

6.8.1 Students who are dissatisfied with their marks or grades must first discuss their assessment and the result with their academic staff. If the student is still not satisfied after this, students have rights to make formal appeals.

Formal Appeals

6.8.2 A student may make a formal written appeal within ten working days of receiving the mark and feedback for that assessment. The student must clearly indicate procedural grounds for the appeal, which must explain how the conduct of the assessment in some way breached the MHE Assessment Policies and Procedures or some other procedure, or else an error in adding up the marks.

6.8.3 The Course Coordinator will provide a written response to the student's appeal to the Dean, together with the copy of the assessment and the student's appeal ground, normally within five working days of receiving the appeal.

6.8.4 The Dean will provide a written response to both the student and the Course Coordinator within five working days. If the Dean rules in the student's favour, the Dean will ensure that the student's marks are adjusted accordingly and that details of the appeal are reported promptly to the Academic Board.

7. Relevant Legislation and Regulations

MHE acknowledges its legal and regulatory obligations under the following frameworks:

- Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) 2021

- Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Framework 2013
- Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS)
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000

8. Policy Administration

Policy category	Learning and Teaching
Policy owner	Academic Board
Responsible officer	Dean
Approving authority	Academic Board
Contact officer	Dean
Approval date	27th May 2022
Commencement date	27th May 2022
Review date	Three years
Version	1.3
Related documents	Assessment Procedures Assessment Moderation Policy and Procedure Student at Risk Policy and Procedure Student Support Framework Appeal policy and procedure Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure Assessment Rationale

9. Version control and change history

Version	Approval date	Approved by	Summary of changes
1.1	11 March 2022	Academic Board	
1.2	13 April 2022	Academic Board	Clarify grounds for appeal; adjustment to weightings for group assessments; reduce number of assessments per unit to maximum of 4
1.3	27 May 2022	Academic Board	Approved; replace list of assessments with reference to the Assessment Rationale
1.4	17 Nov 2022	Dean	Minor adjustments related to Formative / Diagnostic assessment.

10. Reference /Benchmark

- Apex Higher Education
  APo3.2021.1_AHE_Student_Assessment_PandP-ofb14.pdf (pagecloud.com)
- Australian School of Accounting
  Student-Assessment-Policy_V3.0.pdf (asahe.edu.au)
- Crown Institute of Higher Education
  Microsoft Word - QA20 Student Assessment 2.0 (3).doc (cihe.edu.au)
- ICHM
  Assessment.pdf (ctfassets.net)
- Macleay College
  Assessment Policy v3.pdf (macleay.edu.au)
- Ozford Institute of Higher Education
  Assessment-Policy-AB-Final-Nov-19-CE.pdf (ozford.edu.au)
- Sydney Institute of Commerce and Science
  Assessment Policy and Procedure.docx (sharepoint.com)
- The Institute of International Studies
  Student-Assessment-Policy-20210324.pdf (tiis.edu.au)