

# Assessment Policy and Procedure

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**ZENITH INNOVATION INSTITUTE**  
UNPARALLELED EXCELLENCE

## Assessment Policy and Procedure

Approved by the Academic Board on 10 May 2024



# Assessment Policy and Procedure

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## Purpose

1. This Policy sets out the approach used by Zenith Innovation Institute (**Zenith / the Institute**) to assess students' comprehension and achievement of designated learning outcomes.

## Scope

2. This Policy applies to:
  - (a) all enrolled students;
  - (b) academic staff involved in the design, delivery and administration of courses offered by the Institute;
  - (c) all formal assessment activities.

## Policy

### Principles

3. The Institute will ensure that assessments and methods:
  - (a) explicitly link to and support students achieve the learning outcomes for courses and units;
  - (b) develop students' unit and course content comprehension and attainment of key learning skills;
  - (c) are regularly reviewed for effectiveness, and findings of such reviews are considered by academic leader, the Learning and Teaching Committee and/or the Course Advisory Committee and agreed actions are implemented;
  - (d) are based on contemporary practices in teaching and learning in the relevant areas;
  - (e) satisfy relevant professional accreditation requirements as well as the requirements of the Australian Qualification Framework (**AQF**) for the qualification;
  - (f) use a variety of tasks to measure different learning outcomes as specified in the unit outline;
  - (g) challenge students to deeper learning and provide opportunities for students to demonstrate full understanding of learning outcomes;
  - (h) use valid criteria and standards to enable differentiation of levels of achievement;
  - (i) ensure the integrity of the courses that the Institute delivers.
4. Completed assessments will be moderated to ensure appropriate and consistent marking and marking criteria in accordance with the *Assessment Moderation Policy and Procedure*.
5. A diagnostic formative assessment item will be scheduled early (within the first four weeks) in each unit to assist in the identification of any student skills and knowledge deficits as outlined in the *Academic Progression and Students At Risk Policy and Procedure*.
6. Students will be provided with timely feedback on all assessment tasks to aid, inform and support their academic progress.
7. Academic staff will be supported to maintain their understanding of current assessment practices, including Work Integrated Learning, in the higher education sector and specifically in the information technology area.

## Composition of assessment

8. The Institute will ensure an appropriate mix of the two key categories of assessment as per the *Assessment Guidelines Course Quality Assurance*:
  - (a) **Formative assessment** - to assist students identify weaknesses in emerging understanding and learning of content, and to allow improvement of understanding;
  - (b) **Summative assessment** - to pass judgment on the quality of a student's learning, generally in terms of assigned marks and grades.
9. Each unit will include a minimum of two formal assessment items.
10. There will be a minimum value of 10 per cent for any single assessment item.
11. Where a formal examination is included as a final assessment in a unit, the examination should not be more than two (2) hours long and constitute no more than 50 per cent of the overall grade for the unit.
12. Group assessment can constitute no more than 40 per cent of the assessment in any unit except for project-based units.
13. The current types of assessments are outlined in Schedule 1 of this Policy.

## Procedure

### Information to students, Unit Outlines and Unit Learning Guides

14. Information about assessments for each unit is included in Unit Outlines and Unit Learning Guides. Unit assessments are overseen by the respective Course Coordinators.
15. Detailed information about assessment items for each unit is included in the Unit Learning Guide and must include the value (in percentage) of the item and its weighting in relation to the total assessment (100 per cent) as well as the submission date for each assessment item.
16. The description of each assessment item must explain the purpose of the assessment, outline the procedure for completion of the assessment and provide clear assessment criteria which will apply to the grading of student work expressed as a rubric. A formal statement in each assessment specifying the permissible use of AI, if applicable. If no such statement is provided, it will be understood that the use of AI is not permitted for the completion of the assessment. This approach ensures clarity and aligns with academic integrity standards. The preferred referencing system are prescribed in the Unit Outlines as well as the process for applying for extension and penalties for late submissions.
17. Where units include a group assessment, the Unit Learning Guide must outline the object of the assessment, i.e. whether and how much it will focus on outputs produced by the group (e.g. report) or on the process of the group work (e.g collaboration) as well as:
  - (a) the performance criteria used for the assessment;
  - (b) the assessors (in addition to the lecturer, e.g. the student, group or class peers); and
  - (c) the distribution of the mark between group and individual performance (e.g group mark, individual mark, group average, etc).
18. Unit Learning Guides must clearly indicate where a unit includes a hurdle requirement and how the requirement may be met.
19. The Unit Learning Guide, including assessment information, must be made available to students via the Institute's Learning Management System at least one week prior to the commencement of the semester. Academic staff will discuss the assessments of a unit in the first week of classes and answer any student questions pertaining to assessments.

## Assessments, submission and extensions

### Written assessment submission

20. Students must attempt all assessments on time as scheduled in the Unit Learning Guide. The submission date for written assessment should be expressed in semester week number as well as a specified day, date and cut-off time. The assessment cut-off time is 5pm and any submission made after 5pm will be considered as a next-day submission.
21. All written assessments should be submitted online through the Institute's Learning Management System or any other stated means of submission e.g. online quizzes, and as relevant include an originality report generated by the plagiarism detection software available on the Institute's Learning Management System.
22. All written assessment must be uploaded to the Unit website by the due date and time. In the case of unexpected difficulty in uploading assignments, the student must email the assignment as an attachment to the lecturer/course coordinator to demonstrate on-time submission. The lecturer/course coordinator's email contact is available in the Unit Learning Guide.

### Written assessment, late submission

23. The following penalties for late submission will be consistently applied:
  - (a) any assessment submitted after the due date without proper approval, will be considered as a late submission. Five (5) per cent of the total value of the assessment will be deducted from the marked value for every day the assessment is late (including non-working days);
  - (b) an assessment that is more than seven (7) calendar days overdue will not be marked and will receive a zero mark.

### In-class assessments

24. Where a student is absent from a class without valid grounds where an in-class assessment (e.g. quiz, test, presentation) is conducted, the student will receive a zero mark and/or may be awarded an Incomplete (IN) grade for the unit.

### Assessment extensions

25. Students can request an extension of a submission date for written and in-class assessments where they have valid grounds. Such requests must be made formally by completing the *Request for Assessment Extension Form*, on or before the submission date, and attaching relevant supporting documents. The *Request for Assessment Extension Form* must be submitted along with supporting documents by email to the Course Coordinator.
26. Grounds which may be considered valid for extension requests include:
  - (a) **Illness:** A medical certificate is compulsory and must be obtained from a registered medical doctor. The certificate must explain the nature of the condition suffered by the student and the period during which the condition affected the student's performance;
  - (b) **Illness over Extended Period:** A medical report should be attached to a medical certificate and must specify the nature of the condition suffered by the student and the period during which the condition affected the student's performance;
  - (c) **Genuine Misadventure:** In the case of misadventure (personal/family crisis or accident), the Institute should be notified immediately, and evidence submitted as soon as the student returns from a forced absence. The student may be requested to attend an interview to establish the validity of the claims as well as to submit documentary evidence of misadventure, such as medical or police reports.

27. Students will be notified within five (5) working days of the result of the application for extension and any associated penalty by the lecturer/course coordinator.

### **Supplementary/Deferred Assessment**

28. Where a student achieves a Fail grade of 45-49 in a unit, they may apply to undertake a Supplementary Assessment.

29. Supplementary assessment must be designed to address the learning outcomes of the graded failed assessment task(s) and may be an assignment, oral or written examination, or any other appropriate assessment instrument within the particular discipline, providing that the assessment is equivalent but not identical to the previously failed assessment task(s).

30. Where a resubmitted supplementary assessment for a failed assessment task is allowed, the student is eligible to earn a maximum of a Pass grade (of 50%) or a 'Satisfactory' grade.

31. Where a student is subject to foreseeable circumstances that will prevent the student from sitting for an examination, an application for alternative examination known as a Deferred Assessment may be made. Requests for Deferred Assessment will only be granted in specific circumstances normally brought about by illness or misadventure.

32. The Institute must receive applications for Deferred Assessment at least 48 hours before the scheduled examination date. If there is a misadventure on the day of submission of the assessment task or exam, students may apply for special consideration. The Institute may grant a Deferred Assessment if the case is genuine.

33. Students will be advised of the outcome of the application within five (5) working days and a new submission/examination date will be agreed with the approval of the Course Coordinator.

### **Special consideration**

#### **Eligibility**

34. Students who experience circumstances beyond their control that inhibit capacity to complete assessment tasks to the best of their potential may apply for special consideration.

35. Applications for special consideration can only be considered for events that:

- are of short-term impact;
- are outside the control of the student;
- can be substantiated with appropriate evidence;
- have had a significant impact on the student's ability to complete an assessment task.

#### **Applications for special consideration**

36. Students can apply for special consideration using the *Request for Special Consideration Form*. Applications must be submitted to the Course Coordinator within three working days of the scheduled submission date of the assessment task.

37. Applications must be accompanied by official and verifiable evidence, such as a medical certificate, death notice, or counsellor/psychologist statement, including those with disabilities that addresses the eligibility criteria for special consideration and explains the impact of the adverse circumstances on the student.

#### **Assessment of applications**

38. The Course Coordinator will make a preliminary assessment of the student's application for special consideration. Students who are ineligible or are unable to provide sufficient evidence to support the application will be advised that the application has been unsuccessful, the reasons for it and other options that may be available where appropriate.

39. Applications that meet the criteria for special consideration will be referred to the relevant lecturer/unit coordinator for determination.

### Outcomes of special consideration applications

40. The lecturer/unit coordinator will consider the following in determining an outcome for a special consideration application:

- the level of the impact of the particular circumstances on the student's ability to complete or perform the assessment task;
- the timing of the circumstances and the timing of the assessment task;
- what is most appropriate for the student;
- what the Institute can feasibly provide as a solution.

41. Potential outcomes include:

- extension of a due date;
- removal of a late penalty;
- an alternative assessment task, or special examination;
- a resubmission of the original task;
- an exemption from the affected assessment task and a re-weighting of other assessment tasks.

42. Except for the removal of a late submission penalty, adjustments to marks are not made as a result of special consideration.

43. Students will be advised of the application outcome by email and any appropriate changes will be made to students' records.

### Reasonable Adjustments

44. Students with a physical or mental disability or indigenous background may apply for reasonable adjustments to assessment tasks to accommodate their specific needs. These adjustments must account for the individual characteristics of the student while maintaining the integrity of the assessment process.

45. Adjustments must be deemed 'reasonable' and should not place an unjustifiable burden on the Institute.

46. To request a reasonable adjustment, students are required to submit a written application to the Course Coordinator of the relevant unit of study.

47. Reasonable adjustments may include, but are not limited to:

- granting additional time to complete an assessment;
- extending submission deadlines;
- modifying question or response formats; or
- providing or permitting additional resources during examinations.

48. All adjustments aim to ensure equitable access while upholding academic standards.

### Student Support:

49. Support services are available to students who require assistance with special consideration, extension, and deferral applications. Students can contact the Student Support Office for guidance and resources. Furthermore, students who are dissatisfied with any decision regarding extensions, special considerations, or assessment results have the right to appeal under the

provisions of the *Assessment Review Policy and Procedure* and the *Student Grievance and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

50. In cases where the outcome of an application for extension is deemed unsatisfactory, students may pursue an appeal following the appropriate procedures outlined in the *Assessment Review Policy and Procedure*.

## Assessment results and feedback

### Marking

51. Marking must be conducted in a way that is consistent with the specified assessment criteria and standards for the task. A marking rubric/guide will be provided in all Unit Outline Guides to ensure that students have a clear understanding of the criteria used to judge assessments and the standards of achievement per assessment task that demonstrate levels of achievement of the unit learning outcomes.
52. To ensure the consistency of assessment results across different class groupings and/or assessors, a moderation process will be carried out by relevant academic staff appointed by the Institute in accordance with the *Assessment Moderation Policy and Procedure*.

### Communicating assessment feedback

53. Students must receive constructive feedback for future improvement on assessments in a timely manner to assist with achievement of the specified learning outcomes and to assist improving the quality of work in any subsequent assessment.
54. For early diagnostic assessments, students will normally receive feedback within five (5) days. The maximum turnaround period for other assessment is two (2) weeks from the submission date, including any moderation process.
55. Students will receive feedback on examinations held during the teaching period, as per any assessment item, and may also request access to feedback on summative end-of-semester examinations following marking. Feedback will be provided within five (5) days of request.
56. Feedback provided to students will identify and address individual strengths/needs in terms of satisfying the assessment rubric criteria that measure student achievement of unit learning outcomes.

### Final grades

57. Grades indicate the level of student performance in a unit against specified criteria and standards. A final grade is awarded by the Institute and serves as a statement for students and the community that indicates student achievement of the learning objectives in the unit.
58. Grades are expressed as a percentage as well as a letter grade as outlined in 0 of this Policy.

## Quality assurance of assessment

59. The Teaching and Learning Committee is responsible for establishing a quality assurance regime for assessment in courses and units. This will include both internal and external moderation and benchmarking of assessments. The Institute observes the following principles in relation to providing quality-assured assessment:
  - (a) quality assurance of assessment addresses every stage of the assessment cycle (design, implementation, moderation, and review) and considers available feedback from staff and students in relation to assessment;
  - (b) assessment tasks must be subject to routine assessment moderation processes and review through consensus moderation practices, including peer review, to ensure that they reflect appropriate assessment design and grading;

- (c) as part of the Institute's quality assurance, professional development opportunities that are related to design, implementation and moderation of assessment will be provided to academic staff;
- (d) the Institute's processes for moderation are outlined in the *Assessment Moderation Policy and Procedure*.

## Publication of results

- 60. No exam marks will be released until after the moderation process is complete and the Certification of Grades has been undertaken by the Examinations Sub-Committee. Final grades will be published on the Certification of Grades date each semester and made available to students through the Learning Management System.
- 61. Deferred/supplementary assessment exam grades must be finalised by the deferred/supplementary exam release date each semester.

## Grievances, Appeals or Review of assessment decision

- 62. A student may request a review of an assessment decision in accordance with the Institute's *Assessment Review Policy and Procedure*.

## Responsibilities

- 63. Students are expected to:
  - (a) become familiar with the Unit Learning Guide and learning resources on the Institute's Learning Management System for all currently enrolled units, paying attention to the assessment details provided;
  - (b) if unsure about any assessment element, ask for clarification from the lecturer/course coordinator at an appropriate time as early in the semester as possible;
  - (c) complete all assigned work and assessment to the best of their ability and apply sound academic integrity practices when approaching study and in completing assessments;
  - (d) check returned assessments and final grades as soon as possible to meet the necessary timeframes should the students wish to seek a review of results or grades (see *Assessment Review Policy and Procedure*).
- 64. Undertake study and assessments responsibly, honestly and only submit academic work that is their own work or that of the group (in the case of group assessments). The ethical use of AI is encouraged at the Institute to support student development. The permissible use of AI will be clearly specified in each unit to guide students in using AI responsibly as part of their academic journey. If no such statement is provided, it will be understood that the use of AI is not permitted for the completion of the assessment. This approach promotes academic integrity while supporting the integration of AI in students' learning and development.
- 65. Academic staff are expected to:
  - (a) design and development assessments that aim to protect academic integrity;
  - (b) establish valid criteria and standards of performance that are consistent with the assessment item and are aligned to the relevant learning outcomes and experiences as specified in the Unit Learning Guide;
  - (c) update assessments regularly to support academic integrity and help ensure that students are achieving the required learning outcomes;

- (d) publish assessment tasks in Unit Outlines and Unit Learning Guides and that communicated assessments tasks are not altered, unless approved by the Teaching and Learning Committee;
- (e) communicate to students:
  - (i) information about the expectations and requirements of all assessment tasks in the Unit Learning Guide;
  - (ii) assessment criteria and performance standards in an assessment rubric;
  - (iii) in a timely manner before the unit offering commences;
- (f) wherever possible, provide students with the opportunity to experience or practice each type of assessment incorporated in the final (summative) assessment task over the semester;
- (g) provide relevant feedback on all items of assessment;
- (h) ensure that the Institute's timelines and deadlines for the submission of examination papers are met;
- (i) ensure that assessment processes and grading are consistent with this Policy and Procedure and the *Assessment Moderation Policy and Procedure*;
- (j) ensure that complete and accurate records of marks and grades of individual student performances are securely maintained and are accessible by relevant staff.
- (k) Assessment design needs to adhere to the AI Framework.
- (l) Assessment design needs to be moderated before the semester starts.

## Definitions

66. For the purposes of this Policy:

Term	Definition
Alternative assessment task	An assessment task awarded as an outcome of a successful application for Special Consideration which is similar in weighting, duration/length, difficulty and unit matter coverage to the original assessment task addressing the same learning outcomes.
Assessment	The evaluation of any work submitted in order to determine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) whether a student has met the requirements of the task</li> <li>(b) how well the student has met the requirements and what grade a student is to be awarded in relation to that work.</li> </ul>
Assessment Task	Any piece of work assigned to students in a unit which is given a mark or grade that counts towards the final result for the unit.
Deferred assessment	An assessment task that, with the permission of the Unit Coordinator and without academic penalty, a student sits or submits at a later date than the original sitting or submission date.
Misadventure	An accident or other event of ill fortune, (e.g a public transport breakdown on the way to an examination).



Term	Definition
Serious illness	An acute illness, whether physical or mental, causing sufficient distress to require treatment by a doctor or other registered health care professional.
Special consideration	A special concession in assessment, sought by a student claiming that his or her performance in an examination or in another assessment task was adversely affected by illness or another cause.
Supplementary assessment	An additional form of assessment designed to assist in assessing whether a student has achieved the academic standard required for a Pass level of achievement, where a student's assessment demonstrates knowledge of fundamental concepts and essential skills sufficient to meet the course learning outcomes. Where a resubmitted assessment for a failed assessment task is allowed, the student is eligible to earn a maximum of a Pass grade (of 50%) or a 'Satisfactory' grade.
Working day	Any day other than Saturday or Sunday or a public holiday which is observed by the Institute.

## Version history

Version	Changes	Approval Body	Approval Date
1.0	Original Policy	Academic Board	
1.1	<p>Added Portfolio assessments in schedule 1</p> <p>Added under 58: Assessment design needs to consider AI capability; Assessment design needs to be moderated before the semester starts.</p> <p>Under Hurdle Requirements added - Students will be provided with timely feedback on all assessment tasks to aid, inform and support academic progress.</p> <p>Point 14 updated to have Course Coordinator oversight</p> <p>Point 11 – Duration for exam reduced to 2 hours</p> <p>Point 46 updated “meaningful feedback” to “constructive feedback for future improvement”</p> <p>Point 16 removed Harvard style and replaced with as prescribed in the unit outlines</p> <p>Schedule 2 – ungraded pass and ungraded fail removed</p> <p>Point 37 – added including those with disabilities</p> <p>Point 24 updated “...the student will receive a zero mark and/or may be awarded an Incomplete (IN) grade for the unit.”</p> <p>Removed ungraded pass and ungraded fail from the grade schedule</p>	Academic Board	10 May 2024
1.2	<p>Point 13 replaced “individual and group” with “current”</p> <p>Point 16 added “A formal statement in each assessment specifying the permissible use of AI, if applicable. If no such statement is provided, it will be understood that the use of AI is not permitted for the completion of the assessment. This approach ensures clarity and aligns with academic integrity standards”</p> <p>Point 22 deleted “To support academic integrity of assessment submission”</p> <p>Point 8 added “as per the <i>Assessment Guidelines Course Quality Assurance</i>”</p> <p>Point 44 Added Reasonable Adjustments.</p> <p>Added Student Support Section</p> <p>Point 64 added “The ethical use of AI is encouraged at the Institute to support student development. The permissible use of AI will be</p>	AB	20 Jan 2025



Version	Changes	Approval Body	Approval Date
	<p>clearly specified in each unit to guide students in using AI responsibly as part of their academic journey. If no such statement is provided, it will be understood that the use of AI is not permitted for the completion of the assessment. This approach promotes academic integrity while supporting the integration of AI in students' learning and development"</p> <p>Point 65 k) replaced "needs to consider AI capability" with "adhere to AI Framework"</p>		

# Schedule 1 – Composition and format of assessments

The composition and format of assessment may include but is not limited to the following assessment activities:

## 1. Quizzes

Quizzes are intended to ensure students study regularly and have an understanding of the material covered in lectures and tutorials. Quizzes usually take the form of multiple choice questions and short answer questions, or a combination of both.

## 2. End of semester exam (final exams)

End of semester exams (**Final Exams**) are (usually) closed book exams that test knowledge acquired from the entire unit and may include multiple choice questions, essays, short answer questions, problem solving exercises and practical exercises.

## 3. Case study/written reports

Case studies and reports encourage students to apply academic learning to real-world scenarios. They vary in length and must adhere to academic standards, including appropriate referencing and should demonstrate adequate research frequently indicated by a literature review.

## 4. Practical exercise(s)

These can be conducted individually or in groups and address a practical element of a unit. They may employ various media in resolving a material or technical problem and frequently include a written report. Practical exercises allow students to demonstrate their applied or technical skills associated with the abstract learning of their unit.

## 5. Group work and/or presentations

Group work demonstrates a student's ability to work and interact with others; group work also enhances students' individual learning. Such activities reflect common business practices and often require students to demonstrate various skills.

Group presentations are usually accompanied by a written report of adequate length and appropriate format to demonstrate the research problem, the key literature pertaining to the issue as well as major findings and recommendations.

Group assignments need to be designed to allow for measurement of individual performance, in addition to group performance. This can be achieved by including tasks through which students can demonstrate individual attainment such as presentations, critical reports, and reflective journals. Lecturers/course coordinators may directly observe group work processes or use technological platforms for group work where individual contributions may be tracked and monitored, such as wikis, blogs or peer group assessments.

## 6. Hurdle requirements

Hurdle requirements ensure that a unit may not be passed unless a certain activity has been carried out or satisfactorily performed.

Hurdle requirements may be included in the assessment of a unit if deemed appropriate and passing the hurdle clearly demonstrates attainment of learning outcomes.

**Students will be provided with timely feedback on all assessment tasks to aid, inform and support academic progress.**

## 7. Portfolio Assessments

Portfolio assessments are a versatile and comprehensive method for evaluating a student's learning and development over a period of time. They allow students to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and competencies through a variety of activities and artifacts. The composition and format of portfolio assessments may include, but are not limited to, the following assessment activities:

- Reflective Journals
- Project Reports
- Research Papers
- Peer Reviews



## Schedule 2 – Grades schedule

Percentage	Letter Grade	Interpretation
80 and above	HD	A student assigned a “High Distinction” grade, addresses the assessment task criteria to an excellent standard. Outstanding achievement of all the learning outcomes. Superior level of knowledge and skills displayed.
70-79	D	A student assigned a “Distinction” grade, addresses the assessment task criteria to a very high standard. Very good achievement of the learning outcomes. Very high level of knowledge and skills displayed.
60-69	C	A student assigned a “Credit” grade, addresses the assessment task criteria to a high standard. Good achievement of the learning outcomes. High level of knowledge and skills displayed.
50-59	P	A student assigned a “Pass” grade, addresses the assessment task criteria to a satisfactory standard. Satisfactory achievement of the learning outcomes. Adequate level of knowledge and skills displayed.
0-49	F	A grade of “Fail” may be awarded when a student fails to adequately address the assessment task criteria. Does not achieve the learning outcomes. Does not display an adequate level of knowledge and skills.
	IN	Incomplete assessment task is awarded by the Student Services Manager approved by the Academic Dean to those students under special consideration. When a student fails to attempt one or more assessment components of the unit as listed in the Unit Outline.
	DE	Deferred Assessment – denotes that a deferral has been granted to a formal examination or assessment via Special consideration.
	W	Withdrawn from course and/or unit – applies where a student withdraws from a course and/or unit before the census date or no later than the last day to withdraw without academic penalty.
	WL	Withdrawn Late – is given when students withdraw from a course/unit after the last day to withdraw without academic penalty.
	TR	Ungraded Credit Transfer – notes that credit has been granted for the unit based on recognition of prior learning.