



Policy and Governance Unit, Academic Registrar's Division

ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE STANDARDS

Date approved	13 June 2007	Date Policy will take effect	Spring Session 2007	Date of Next Review	December 2010
Approved by	Academic Senate				
Custodian title & e-mail address	Senior Manager, Policy and Governance Unit governance@uow.edu.au				
Author	Policy and Governance Unit, Academic Registrar's Division				
Responsible Faculty/ Division & Unit	Policy and Governance Unit, Academic Registrar's Division				
Supporting documents, procedures & forms of this policy	Assessment Guidelines – Scaling Checklist of Procedures for Assessment Committees (attached) Sample Form for Recording Variations to Marks (attached)				
References & Legislation	Code of Practice - Teaching and Assessment Good Practice Assessment Guidelines Records Management Policy				
Audience	Public – accessible to anyone				
Expiry date of Policy	Not Applicable				

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1 Purpose of Policy

1. The Standards, which include a Checklist of Procedures for Assessment Committees, formalise the process to be followed, while allowing Faculties the flexibility of determining how responsibility for the process is divided between Academic Unit Assessment Committees and Faculty Assessment Committees, where both exist in a Faculty. Fundamental to the operation of the Standards are the principles of collegiality, transparency and equity which should underlie the structures, processes and, ultimately, the decisions of all Assessment Committees.

2 Definitions

Not Available

3 Application & Scope

1. These Standards set out the core standards for Assessment Committees in determining and declaring students' session results for courses delivered by the University. A clear process, in conjunction with appropriate assessment, should assure that final session results are a true reflection of student learning and performance and that the University continues to demonstrate its commitment to quality, equity and consistency in assessment procedures.
2. Faculties are required to operate within these Standards, except as approved otherwise by Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic).

4 Principles Guiding Assessment Committee Processes

1. Collegiality - appropriate representation in meetings and consultation regarding decisions ensures authority and responsibility are vested equally among colleagues
2. Transparency - a clear, frank and candid process is ensured through recording reasons for decisions and variations to marks and the provision of feedback, as required
3. Equity - compliance with relevant policies, guidelines and procedures ensures universal principles are applied consistently with fairness and impartiality

5 Membership of Assessment Committees

Membership of Academic Unit Assessment Committees

1. Where such committees exist in a Faculty the Academic Unit Assessment Committee will comprise of the following members:
 - a. Head of Academic Unit (or nominee with delegated authority) as Chair
 - b. all full time and fractional members of the academic staff within the Academic Unit who have taught or coordinated during the session
 - c. other academic staff members who have substantially contributed to teaching and assessment of a subject offered by the Academic Unit, as determined by the Head
 - d. academic staff from Academic Units external to the Faculty or from another University, as determined by the Chair
2. The Committee shall have a quorum as specified in either a or b below, whichever is larger:
 - a. five coordinators of subjects offered by the Academic Unit during the session; or
 - b. one half of the coordinators of subjects offered by the Academic Unit during the session or, where one half is not a whole number, the next higher whole number.
3. A minute taker must also be in attendance.
4. Attendance of casual staff should comply with relevant provisions in the EBA.

Membership of Faculty Assessment Committees

5. The Faculty Assessment Committee will comprise the following members:
 - a. Dean or nominee as Chair
 - b. Sub Dean/ Associate Dean
 - c. Heads, or their nominees with delegated authority, of all Academic Units offering subjects for courses for which the Faculty has responsibility
 - d. academic staff from Academic Units external to the Faculty, as determined by the Chair and
 - e. other academic staff, as agreed by the Chair
6. The Committee will have a quorum of four members of the Committee who fall into one of the following categories: Dean, Sub-Dean, Associate Dean, Head of Academic Unit, Subject Coordinator. Where only the Faculty Assessment Committee exists in a faculty, the quorum requirements for Unit Assessment Committees will apply.
7. A minute taker and appropriate ARD support staff should also be in attendance.

Note 1: Heads must delegate to their nominee the authority to make decisions at the meeting.

Note 2: Where the Faculty Assessment Committee is the only assessment committee in a Faculty, its composition should be similar to an Academic Unit Assessment Committee, as set out above.

Membership of Assessment Committees for summer sessions

8. Given the relatively small number of subjects offered during summer sessions, a combined Faculties meeting might be held comprising:
 - a. Chairs of all relevant Faculty Assessment Committees or their nominees
 - b. Heads of all relevant Academic Units or their nominees with delegated authority
 - c. relevant subject coordinators
9. The Committee shall have a quorum of one representative from each relevant Faculty. The Chair is to be elected at the meeting.
10. Please refer to the relevant Terms of Reference for each committee.

6 Recording of Meetings

1. The University's legal and administrative requirements for record keeping are set out in the University's Records Management Policy.
2. To comply with these requirements, adequate and accurate minutes must be kept of Assessment Committee meetings to record decisions made and action taken by the Committee. This will ensure that adequate records are available should Faculties or Academic Units be required to produce them for an internal or external audit or review. As best practice, records should be kept for a minimum of five years from the date that action or decisions are taken.

7 Responsibility for Marks

1. Responsibility for students' marks shifts as the marks are referred on through the determination and declaration process. The Subject Coordinator is responsible for students' marks until they are referred to the Academic Unit Assessment Committee, when responsibility is passed to the Academic Unit. Once marks are referred to the Faculty Assessment Committee, the Faculty assumes responsibility.
2. Overall, matters such as withholding and varying marks are a collective responsibility, rather than an individual one, although Subject Coordinators are important stakeholders in the process.

8 Variations to Marks

1. The Faculty Assessment Committee may vary any recommended mark as it deems fit. However, consultation must first be undertaken with relevant staff at the previous stage in the process of determining students' marks.
2. If the Head (or nominee) of an Academic Unit offering a subject is not present at the meeting of the Faculty Assessment Committee where a mark for that subject is varied, then the Head must be informed as soon as practicable of the variation. The Head may, without delaying release of results, object to the Chair of the Committee. The Chair, in consultation with the Head, shall determine the matter as deemed fit.
3. A sample form for recording variations to marks is attached. It is recommended that Academic Units or Faculties use and retain such a form as a record of their decisions.

Cross Faculty Teaching

4. When a student takes a subject offered by a Faculty other than that which has responsibility for the degree in which the student is enrolled, the subject deliverer Faculty has responsibility for declaring marks for that subject.
5. The Faculty administering the degree in which a student is enrolled may initiate discussion about individual marks and about marks of groups of students enrolled in a subject.
6. Where there is an issue regarding the marks of a group or cohort of students, and this issue is not resolved to the agreement of both Faculties concerned, the matter may be referred to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), or nominee, for arbitration.

Scaling

7. The University reserves the right to scale marks in any subject. If scaling is routinely used in a subject, the method of scaling must be clearly stated in the subject outline. Scaling may be used when the marks of a group are affected (positively or adversely) by the assessment regime of the subject in an unplanned way. Scaling may involve all of the marks for the subject or just the marks for a particular component of the assessment, for example, the final exam. Further information about scaling marks can be found in the Assessment Guidelines - Scaling.

Honours

8. For the purpose of determining an Honours grade under Rule 8.4 of the General Course Rules, where the weighted average mark is within 0.5 below a threshold mark for the award of a particular class of Honours, the Faculty Assessment Committee may adjust the mark upwards to the next whole number to enable that class of Honours to be awarded. The following factors are relevant to such a decision:
 - a. improvement or otherwise throughout the course;
 - b. performance in professional option subjects;
 - c. performance in project or thesis subjects;
 - d. other relevant considerations.

9 Scheduling of Meetings

1. At minimum four meetings of the relevant Assessment Committees should be held over the course of the year to ensure the timely declaration of all results. For example, Faculties with non-standard sessions for some subjects would need to hold meetings at the close of those sessions, while mid-session meetings in Autumn and Spring may be required to declare late or amended results. It is up to the Faculty to schedule meetings as appropriate to ensure the timely release of all results.
2. Committee members must be given at least two weeks written notice of the date and time of each meeting. Email notification is adequate for this purpose.

10 Release of Marks

1. The University should provide for appropriate dissemination of final assessment results to students within a reasonable time of the completion of subjects. All results must be subject to the same scrutiny and must be notified, minuted and declared by the Faculty Assessment Committee.
2. Where non-standard session, late, or withheld results for individual students must be submitted for release, then the Chair of the Faculty Assessment Committee must sign the declaration for submission of results for each individual student.
3. Where marks are amended or varied for individual students, due to error, those revisions and the reasons for amendments must be recorded and the declaration for submission of results must be signed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic). Those results must be tabled for discussion at the next Faculty Assessment Committee meeting.

11 Use of the Checklist

1. The Checklist of Assessment Committee Procedures sets out the process by which Academic Units and Faculties determine and declare students' results. The Checklist is intended to be flexible; while it describes the process, it allows Faculties and Committees (unless indicated otherwise) the flexibility to determine the most suitable approach to ensuring the process is completed. To this end, the Checklist does not necessarily reflect the sequence of procedures, which may vary between Committees.
2. The Chairs of Academic Unit and Faculty Assessment Committees (where both exist in a Faculty) should consult to determine the Committee responsible for each procedure. It is also the responsibility of the Chair of a Committee to determine, in consultation with Committee members, the number of meetings needed to complete the process to determine results.
3. As responsibility moves from one Committee to the next, the checklist should be signed by the relevant Chair and passed on to the next Committee.

12 Roles & Responsibilities

Not Available

13 Version Control and Change History

Version Control	Date Released	Approved By	Amendment
1	13 June 2007	Academic Senate	Assessment Committee Standards developed for Spring Session 2007 Implementation to rescind Assessment Committee Guidelines.
2	5 February 2009	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)	Migrated to UOW Procedure Template as per Policy Directory Refresh
3	9 March 2010	Senior Manager, Policy and Governance Unit	Future review date identified in accordance with Standard on UOW Policy.

CHECKLIST OF ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

Session & Year:

Academic Unit

Faculty

Procedure	Initial	Remarks
	Unit FAC	
	Chair Chair	

Distribution of marks for each subject

Distribution of marks discussed and recorded			
Distribution compared with historical data			
Subject anomalies identified			
*Scaling applied if appropriate			
Results submitted to ARD			
*Service subject grades' distribution supplied, if required			

Individual students' results

Individual students' consolidated results considered, including anomalies identified			
Decisions made on special consideration applications/medical certificates and WAs/WMs/WOs allocated			
Honours grades determined			
Variations to consolidated results recorded on Form for Recording Variations to grades			
Form for Recording Variation to Grades presented to FAC for approval			
All variations to grades confirmed/rejected and documented			
*Interfaculty results reviewed, if required			
Decisions made on late applications for special consideration and further WAs/WMs/WOs documented			
Variations to marks sent for an opportunity for comment			

to:			
*Chair of Academic Unit Assessment Committee			
Subject Coordinator			
Comments on variations to marks considered			

Declaration of results

Results declared by Faculty Assessment Committee			
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Finalisation of results

Results submitted to ARD for release			
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Non-standard session, late, or amended results

†Declaration for submission of results for each student signed by FAC chair			
†Declaration for submission of results amended due to error signed by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)			
Results tabled at Faculty Assessment Committee meeting			

***Optional procedures, if required**

†Procedure outside meeting procedures, but part of process

Academic Unit Assessment
Committee

Faculty Assessment Committee

Meeting date/s:

Meeting date/s:

Chair's signature _____

Chair's signature _____

Date: / /

Date: / /

Further comments:

SAMPLE FORM FOR RECORDING VARIATIONS TO MARKS

Date: 5 July 2003

Chair: Prof Melanie Smith

Notetaker: Mr John Lelepa

Unit/Faculty: Faculty of Arts

Name	Student number	Undergraduate/ Postgraduate	Subject number	Original mark	Final mark/grade	Rationale for decision
Lee, Ping	332318	U/G	ABCD203	60	60	Due consideration given for HIJK235
Storey, Angela	338695	P/G	LMNO921	0	92	Supplementary exam
Goth, Ian	339345	U/G	STUV227	63	65	Special Consideration
			EFGH204	0	69	Mistaken for Jan Goth
Casiglio, Giovanni	338275	U/G	WXYZ335	84	85	Illness during exam

**Heads of Academic Unit/s
Committee**

Chair of Faculty Assessment

**Unit
Signature
Date**

**Signature
Date**

**Unit
Signature
Date**