

Assessment Policy – Higher Education

1. Scope

The Assessment Policy applies to all students enrolled in higher education courses at Holmes Institute (Holmes), and the staff who are involved in assessment related matters.

2. Purpose

This Policy sets out the standards, principles and guidelines concerning the assessment, assessment marking and reviewing within Holmes' higher education courses.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 **Academic integrity** is a commitment to act with honesty, fairness, responsibility and respect in all academic work.
- 3.2 **Assessment** is defined as any process used to appraise a student's knowledge, understanding, ability, skills related to a unit or course.
- 3.3 **Continuous assessment** is a form of educational assessment that evaluates a student's progress throughout a prescribed course.
- 3.4 **Course** is a planned and structured sequence of learning and teaching that allows students to gain knowledge, skills and understanding.
- 3.5 **Formative assessment** aims at monitoring student learning, providing ongoing feedback to the student to allow the student improve their learning.
- 3.6 **Show cause** is when a student has unsatisfactory academic progress, s/he is required to demonstrate (show cause) why s/he should not be excluded from their studies.
- 3.7 **Summative assessment** aims to evaluate student learning at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it against some standard or benchmark.
- 3.8 **Unit** is an individual subject that student study as part of the degree. It is the smallest stand-alone component of a course that can be recorded on the academic transcript. Units can be core or elective.
- 3.9 **Online** means when education activity happens via a computing device connected to a network including the internet, regardless of physical location.

4. Assessment Design and Administration Principles

- 4.1 All assessment tasks need to be designed in alignment with the intended learning outcomes, graduate attributes and supported by the teaching and learning activities within the unit and course. The approach to assessment design is based on the following principles:
 - a. Assessment must encourage and reinforce learning;
 - b. Assessment must enable robust and fair judgements about student performance;
 - c. Assessment practices must be fair and equitable for all students; and
 - d. Assessment must maintain academic standards.
- 4.2 All units include formative and summative assessments that spread across the teaching period to enable students to benefit from assessment feedback. Students can expect assessment results and written feedback/comments about their performance in relation to the assessment criteria within 14 days of the due date of the assessment.
- 4.3 Assessment weightings and levels of achievement are explicit. The mechanisms adopted for assigning weightings to, and assigning levels of achievement are fair and explicit.
- 4.4 No individual assessment will assess more than 50% of the marks for any given unit of study. Unless required by an external professional, statutory or regulatory body, or otherwise clearly justifiable on pedagogical or other grounds, the contribution of any single item of assessment to a student's overall grade in a unit in a course will not exceed more than a half of the total value of all assessment for the unit.
- 4.5 All assessments are to be conducted in the English language.
- 4.6 Class tests and examination scripts are not returned to students.
- 4.6 Penalties are applied for assessments submitted after the due date. Assessment items submitted after the due date are subject to a penalty at the discretion of the unit coordinator and course convenor. A penalty of 5% of the maximum possible marks of an assessment item will be applied for each day after the due date that an assessment is submitted. Assessments submitted more than fourteen days (14) days after the due date will not be marked and a mark of zero will be recorded.
- 4.7 Penalties may be applied for breaches of rules related to assessment. Such penalties will be at the discretion of the unit coordinator and course convenor. Where a student submits an assessment that does not comply with the rules, the assessor may apply appropriate penalties such as elect to not assess the relevant section of the assessment, apply a 10% penalty, apply late penalties, or make an allegation of academic misconduct.
- 4.8 A student is entitled to lodge a complaint or dispute an assessment in accordance with the Complaints and Appeals Policy.

- 4.9 Students are made aware of assessment details, including:
- a. The form, amount, weighting and timing of different assessment tasks, including the marking criteria; and
 - b. Students' obligations, procedures and requirements pertaining to assessment. This includes assessment submission deadlines, details about maintaining academic integrity and information about making requests for special consideration.
- 4.10 Reasonable adjustment options are available to students with a declared disability or who have compassionate or compelling reasons in relation to assessments.
- a. In case of any disability, students are encouraged to declare it as soon as possible, during Orientation or during their studies approaching the Campus Director.
 - b. Campus Directors must record the declaration in the Student Management System and refer to the Dean Operations for approval of any reasonable adjustment required.
 - c. The information disclosed by students will be handled in accordance with Holmes' Privacy Policy.
- 4.11 Online assessments should be designed, delivered, monitored and reported in ways that ensure quality and integrity of all processes and outcomes. Online assessments may be conducted on campus, or at trusted third-party location. Additional enhancement and security measures should be implemented as appropriate, including those related to task specification and selection, platform and modality independence, schedule optimization, identity verification, response authentication, environmental sanitation (e.g. video or remote proctoring), plagiarism and misconduct detection, and reporting of results and feedback. Online invigilation will be deployed as required by using proctoring software or an authorised invigilated examination centre.

5. Deferred Assessments

- 5.1 A Deferred Assessment must be approved by the Dean Operations or delegate for a student who has been unable to attempt a final assessment due to one or more of the following circumstances:
- a. Ill-health or disability immediately before, or on, the due day of the assessment;
 - b. A student's performance in the assessment is likely to be severely impacted by previous illness during the trimester;
 - c. Family/personal circumstances beyond the student's control which are likely to have an adverse impact on the student's performance in the assessment; or

- d. Other compassionate or compelling grounds at the discretion of the Dean Operations or delegate.
- 5.2 A final assessment can only be deferred once. If a student is unable to attempt a deferred assessment as per schedule, they cannot apply for another deferment unless compelling or compassionate circumstances apply and are approved by the Dean Operations or delegate.
- 5.3 Students must formally apply in writing for a deferred assessment. Applications must be supported by appropriate evidence. Applications must be received by Student Services within three (3) working days of the due date of the final assessment.
- 5.4 Students who do not attempt a deferred assessment will have their ND grade converted to a grade reflective of their aggregate mark in the unit.

6. Supplementary Assessment

- 6.1 A Supplementary Assessment will be awarded to a student who has met all of the following conditions for a unit studied in the most recent study period undertaken:
- a. The student has achieved a minimum grade of 40% and less than 50% in the unit involved in the supplementary assessment application;
 - b. The student's name has not been recorded in the Academic Misconduct Register in relation to the unit associated with the supplementary assessment for which they are currently enrolled;
 - c. The student will be informed of a supplementary assessment within then (10) working days of results being released;
 - d. A supplementary assessment cannot be deferred unless there are compelling and compassionate circumstances; and
 - e. A student who attempts a supplementary assessment will not be able to receive a total mark higher than 50% for that unit.
- 6.2 The student will be able to ascertain if a supplementary assessment has been granted via the Student Portal LUNA as soon as results are released; students may also be notified via email within ten (10) working days of the publication of results.
- 6.3 Students who do not attempt a supplementary assessment granted will have their NS grade converted to a NX grade, which is a Fail grade.

7. Faculty Pass

- 7.1 A Faculty Pass must be approved by the Dean Academic or delegate as a concession to a student who has met each of the following conditions:
- a. The unit is the final unit required by the student to complete their course of study at Holmes;

- b. The student has recorded an aggregate mark in the unit of 40% or greater, but less than 50%;
- c. The student has submitted all required assessment items for the unit;
- d. The student's name has not been recorded in the Academic Misconduct Register more than once in relation to any unit of study;
- e. The student has submitted a request in writing to Student Services (Hello@holmes.edu.au) for a Faculty Pass within ten (10) working days of results being released; and
- f. The student has not previously been awarded a Faculty Pass. Only one Faculty Pass may be awarded for each course of study.

8. Assessment Review and Feedback

8.1 A student enrolled in a course may formally request to view, and obtain feedback on, their assessments:

- a. In the first instance, students should discuss their work with their lecturer to gain insights about their performance;
- b. Enquiries about summative assessments, e.g. assignments and presentations, should be directed to the lecturer or tutor as soon as the result is available and within the same study period in which the assessment task was undertaken; and
- c. Feedback on any invigilated test or examination can be obtained applying for an Academic Assessment Consultation. No fee is charged for an Academic Assessment Consultation.

8.2 Where a student wishes to seek feedback on an invigilated test or examination, or is concerned that the assessment may have been unfairly or inappropriately assessed after enquiring with the lectures or tutors, the student shall follow the process below:

- a. Students need to submit an Academic Assessment Consultation Form for each assessment for which they seek feedback. The Form is available on Blackboard and at the Student Services in each campus. Students must submit this form within two (2) weeks of the publication of results. Requests outside this period can only be considered with the approval of the Dean Academic;
- b. The student will be notified of the scheduled review date and time in writing. The student is responsible to be available during the nominated time;
- c. An academic mentor with expertise in the content area, will be present for the consultation;
- d. The student will meet with the nominated academic mentor to view their assessment and obtain feedback on their performance;

- e. The Academic Assessment Consultation will exclusively deal with the issues raised by the student for the unit in question as part of their consultation, and not include other units, or queries on their overall academic performance.
- 8.3 Following an Academic Assessment Consultation, any one of the following outcomes may occur as per recommendation of the academic mentor involved:
- a. Feedback was provided and no further action is taken; or
 - b. An administrative/procedural error was ascertained by the academic mentor during the consultation as below that requires for the assessment results to be reviewed:
 - i. A piece of work was not marked appropriately, e.g. answers, or sections thereof were not marked; or
 - ii. Marks were added or transferred incorrectly.
 - c. A determination on whether an assessment results review will be undertaken will be made within fourteen (14) working days after the Academic Assessment Consultation. This timeframe may be extended to allow for concurrent consideration of a Show Cause response, where applicable.
- 8.4 Should the results change, students must be notified as soon as the changes are approved.
- 8.5 The following are not valid grounds for an assessment results review:
- a. Challenges to:
 - i. The specified unit learning outcomes;
 - ii. The assessment methods approved for the unit; or
 - iii. The standard required to receive particular grades in the unit.
 - b. A study overload;
 - c. Personal and medical problems other than those permitted on the basis of special consideration;
 - d. Financial implications of not passing the unit;
 - e. Visa implications of not passing the unit;
 - f. Marks or grades received by other students in the unit (unless discrimination is being claimed);
 - g. Marks or grades received by the student in other units;
 - h. Lack of language proficiency;
 - i. The amount of work the student has done in preparation of the assessment;

- j. A penalty imposed on a student for academic misconduct in accordance with Holmes' Academic Conduct and Integrity Policy; or
 - k. The need for additional marks to achieve a higher grade.
- 8.6 Where a student's final grade for a unit (or units) result in the student making unsatisfactory academic progress, as set out in the Monitoring Course Progress Policy leading to an Intention to Report (ITR) notification, the student can request an Academic Assessment Consultation for the unit/s as part of their response to the ITR notice. The ITR appeal and request for the consultation will be dealt with together.
- 8.7 Where a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of an assessment review, they may exercise their right to appeal under the provisions of the Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures.

9. Special Consideration

- 9.1 If a student is unable to complete an assessment by the due date, the student may be given a later opportunity to complete the assessment.
- 9.2 The special consideration process is in place to support genuine cases of serious illness, trauma or incapacity to complete an assessment. A special consideration will not necessarily be granted for minor ailments or incidents.
- 9.3 A request will only be considered if the student has submitted or attempted all other preceding assessment tasks within the unit for which the special consideration is sought.
- 9.4 For a test or examination, special consideration will not be granted where a student is in breach of examination rules, e.g. where a student arrives more than 30 minutes after the beginning of reading time.
- 9.5 No special consideration will be granted where a student has attended and sat for an examination.
- 9.6 Students requesting for a special consideration must submit the Special Consideration Form with supporting documents to Hello@holmes.edu.au within three (3) working days of the due date of the assessment. The Form is available on Blackboard and at Student Services on each campus. Late submission of the Form and supporting evidence will only be considered where the student can demonstrate that extenuating circumstances prevented the student from lodging the request by the due date.
- 9.7 In case of trauma, a police report or equivalent will be required to support the request.
- 9.8 Where special consideration is sought on medical grounds, the Special Consideration Form must be presented to, and completed by a doctor who prepares the medical certificate. The signed copy of the completed form along with the original medical certificate need to be submitted for consideration.

- 9.9 Where the provided evidence is false or misleading, disciplinary action will be applied in accordance with the Student Charter and Conduct Policy and Procedure, and the request for special consideration will be deemed invalid.
- 9.10 Special consideration applications will be assessed by the Dean, Operations or delegate. Where evidence submitted is assessed as inadequate students might be asked to submit additional information within three (3) working days.
- 9.11 Students will be notified of the outcome within seven (7) days of receipt of the complete documentation of the request.

10. Grading System

10.1 Grades will be awarded according to the following:

GRADE	LETTER	GRADE EXPLANATION
High Distinction	HD	80% and above
Distinction	D	70 – 79%
Credit	CR	60 – 69%
Pass	P	50 – 59%
Faculty Pass	FP	Awarded by the Dean Academic in exceptional circumstances
Fail	NN	0-49% - student did not meet the standard required according to the learning outcomes in the Unit Guide
Supplementary Assessment (temporary grade)	NS	40-49% - student granted a supplementary assessment as per meeting the supplementary criteria
Deferred Assessment (temporary grade)	ND	Student officially awarded a deferred examination
Fail	NR	Student did not submit any work according to the schedule in the Unit Outline
Fail	NX	Student did not attempt a supplementary assessment
Result Withheld	RW	Student granted an extension to submit additional assessments/work
Result Withheld	WH	Student has outstanding fees for non-return of Holmes Institute materials
After Census Withdrawal	AC	Withdrawal after census; no academic penalty but financial penalty applies
Credit Transfer	TC	Internal Credit Transfer
Exemption Granted	EX	Student has exemption granted in accordance with the

		Advanced Standing Policy
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10.2 Grade Point Average (GPA)

A GPA is calculated for the following reasons:

- to provide other institutions, professional bodies or prospective employers with an indicator of a student's academic performance
- to provide students with an indicator of their academic progress

The grade point average (GPA) is the average result of all a student's grades and is calculated on a 7-point grading scale. 7 being the highest (HD), and 0 is the lowest (fail).

Grades	Description	GPA Value
HD	High Distinction	7
D	Distinction	6
C	Credit	5
P	Pass	4
FP	Faculty Pass	4*
F	Fail	0

** Faculty Passes (FP) are not usually included in the calculation of a GPA*

11. Assessment Moderation

- 11.1 Assessment moderation is in place to ensure that reliable and consistent judgments are made about a student's performance and that academic integrity is maintained. Assessment methods, and the criteria by which student work will be judged, are based on pre-determined and clearly articulated academic standards that are accessible to students. Assessments will be moderated to ensure appropriateness to the unit and level of difficulty; that assessment criteria have been applied consistently; and that the outcomes are reliable.
- 11.2 The moderation process involves collaboration between academic, with the aim of reviewing assessment tasks and assessment criteria before a unit begins, and then reviewing judgments of student performance (marks/grades) on completion of the assessment tasks, to ensure that:
- a. Assessment tasks are appropriate, in terms of their alignment with unit learning outcomes (pre-assessment);
 - b. Assessment criteria are appropriate, in terms of the characteristics against which assessments are measured (pre-assessment);
 - c. Marks/grades are appropriate, in terms of the standards of performance achieved against the assessment criteria. That every marker in the unit applies the same marking standard to demonstrate equity of marking (mid-assessment); and
 - d. Results awarded for each task and that the student's final mark and grade for the unit are fair, reliable, and consistent (post-assessment).
- 11.3 Pre - Assessment Moderation
- a. The aim of pre-assessment moderation is to ensure that assessment tasks are fit for their purpose and are likely to provide valid and reliable evidence of a student achieving the specified learning outcomes.
 - b. As part of the pre- moderation of assessment, each Unit Coordinator ensures that for each assessment task a solution guide and/or marking rubric is developed that will allow the teaching team to clarify assessment requirements and ensure consistency of expectations.
 - c. Solutions and marking rubric also provide a mechanism against which external moderators can review marking practices undertaken by Holmes staff.
 - d. During each trimester, the teaching team for each unit will meet to discuss the assessment tasks and the marking rubrics. The team also provides feedback on

the rubric where requirements are unclear or there is potential for a discrepancy around expectations.

11.4 During - Assessment Moderation

- a. The aim of moderation at the point of assessment is to ensure quality of judgements and to confirm correct and consistent application of assessment criteria and standards for assessments in the unit.
- b. To ensure the appropriateness of marking, in assessments of weighting of 30 percent and above, during the marking process the Unit Convenor will undertake a review of a random sample of assessed work.
- c. Where the unit is delivered in more than one location or mode of delivery, samples from each of these must be represented in the reviewed sample.

11.5 Post - Assessment

- a. The aim of post-assessment moderation is to ensure that assessments align with the established criteria and standards and are equitable, fair, and valid and that judgments are consistent, and reliable.
- b. On completion of all assessed items the unit coordinator in consultation with the teaching staff will review the results of students to identify:
 - i. Large numbers of failures or high distinctions amongst students who have participated in the unit;
 - ii. Discrepancies between grades of different student cohorts (mode, campus, etc);
 - iii. Discrepancies between grades allocated to individual students in successive assessment tasks;
 - iv. Disproportionate distribution of grades according to historical data; and
 - v. Borderline grades for eligibility for supplementary assessment or passing the unit.
- c. As a result of the review the following outcomes could occur:
 - i. The results are accepted and recommended to the Degree Committee for acceptance;
 - ii. Assessment items for students with borderline grades are reviewed; or
 - iii. A sample of assessments at each grade level are re-marked.

11.6 The outcomes of the review must be documented and presented to the Degree Committee. Any recommendations for adjustments to grades must be documented and justified to ensure transparency and consistency.

12. Release of Marks

12.1 Final unit grades will be determined by addition of the marks of all assessment tasks in the unit, approved by the Board of Examiners on the finalisation of the internal assessment moderation process.

12.2 All assessment results will be released within two weeks of submission.

12.3 Results will be released to students via the LMS (Blackboard) after final unit results are published on the Student Portal (LUNA)

13. Assessment Security

13.1 The integrity of the assessment process is of paramount importance. Holmes' assessment security and handling processes have been structured to ensure adequate security is implemented, in accordance with Holmes' Records Management Policy and the Procedure Manual. Additional measures are to be implemented as appropriate for any online assessment.

13.2 Examination scripts and other forms of assessment are held for at least six months.

Version Control and Accountable Officers

It is the joint responsibility of the Implementation Officer and Responsible Officer to ensure compliance with this policy.

Responsible Officer	Dean		
Implementation Officers	Dean		
Review Date			
Approved by			
Academic Board			
Associated Documents			
Academic Assessment Consultation Form Benchmarking Policy and Procedure Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures Course Handbooks External Moderation Policy and Procedures Faculty of Higher Education Student Handbook Monitoring Course Progress Policy and Procedures – Higher Education Procedure Manual Records Management Policy and Procedure Request for Special Consideration Form			
Version	Brief Description of the Changes	Date Approved	Effective Date
1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Merged Assessment and Marking Policy, Assessment Feedback and Review Policy, Deferred Examination Policy and Supplementary Examination Policy. Included updated policies on supplementary exams and the faculty pass. 	2 Dec 2019	2 Dec 2019
2.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed the fee for Academic Assessment Consultation. Amended rules on Supplementary Assessments to grant access to all students in all units (subject to conditions). Incorporated Assessment Feedback and Review Procedures into this policy. Incorporated Examination Marking and Moderation Procedures into this policy. 	17 March 2020	17 March 2020

2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amended rules on Supplementary Assessments by waiving the requirement that student must submit a serious attempt at each assessment component. It is deemed sufficient that a total mark 40-49 be achieved. 	13 August 2021	13 August 2021
3.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The administrative procedure recorded in the Procedure Manual, leaving the assessment principles and student procedures in this document. • Principles of special consideration added in the policy • The Definition Section added • Inclusion of GPA 	25 May 2022	25 May 2022
3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition of clauses in relation to online assessment 	29 March 2023	29 March 2023