

Assessment Policy

Approved by	Academic Board
Approval date	8 February 2024
Previous approval date(s)	27/02/2023, 25/3/2019, 27/2/2017, 5/8/2016, 10/10/2011, 11/4/2011
Date for Review	2029
Responsible Officer Committee	Director of Academic Strategy Coursework Committee
Related documents	Assessment Procedures Assessment Moderation and Monitoring Procedure Academic Integrity Policy Grading Student Performance Procedures Students at Risk Policy Students Grievance Policy and Procedures
Higher Education Standards (2021)	1.4, 3.1.1(e), 3.1.3, 5.3.4(b)
National Code (2018)	

1. Purpose

This Policy articulates the philosophy and principals that guide the SCD approach to the assessment of student learning. It informs the procedures used in student assessment and feedback.

It is relevant to all undergraduate and postgraduate coursework units and programs, including cross-institutional enrolments. It reflects SCD's adopted approach of a standards-based assessment.

2. Scope

This policy applies Sydney College of Divinity (SCD) and its Member Institutions as a whole and as reflected in the relationships between SCD and its constituent Member Institutions. These principles express mutual commitment, responsibilities, and obligations between faculty, students, administrators, staff, council members, denominational stakeholders, and society. Furthermore, they express a commitment to the care of the whole person and to basic principles of equity through which students will be assessed on individual merit. The curriculum has been designed to maximise that learning experience, which is aimed at more than just obtaining a grade.

3. Definitions

The Policy Document Glossary applies to this policy.

The following definitions also apply to this policy:

Term	Definition
<i>Assessment Monitoring</i>	The reporting requirement undertaken at the end of each teaching period whereby at MI presents materials related to the assessment of student results to the SCD Coursework Committee including all students grades and information of its grade moderation process and other specified material as outlined in the Monitor's Report.
<i>Grade Moderation</i>	Is the practice by which there is an adjustment made to the grades/marks of a group of students undertaking the same unit of study to ensure that the grades/marks are consistent, fair and reliable across the student cohort. This practice is undertaken prior to final results release meaning that any marks made available to the students are provisional until grade moderation for the units of study has taken place.

4. Statements and Objectives

Responsibility Assessment

- 4.1. The SCD Academic Board will ensure that Assessment Policies and Procedures are reviewed regularly and conform with current best practice.
- 4.2. Member Institutions of SCD University College must comply with SCD Policy and ensure staff and students are well informed of their obligations.
- 4.3. All faculty have a responsibility to ensure that assessment tasks conform with SCD Policy and principles of assessment and marked according to their professional experience as guided by professional best practice.
- 4.4. Students must engage in set learning activities including the relevant classes, tutorials, and workshops, completing assessment requirements as set, and conform with SCD Policy requirements.
- 4.5. Students and teachers have a mutual responsibility to focus learning and teaching activities on the intended learning outcomes.
- 4.6. Active student engagement in learning is characterised by:
 - a. inquisitiveness, motivation, and enthusiasm for learning,
 - b. attendance and active engagement in all classrooms (whether face to face or online) learning experiences provided by the class teacher, e.g. lectures, tutorials, workshops, assessment tasks,
 - c. increasing mastery, competence, and academic independence and interdependence,
 - d. student inquiry, experimentation, and research-based learning,
 - e. disposition towards lifelong learning,
 - f. attention to feedback to improve performance,
 - g. increasing capacity to connect learning activities to life-related issues, and
 - h. developing graduate capabilities.
- 4.7. Student learning is most effective when students experience diverse, innovative, and contextually relevant assessment tasks that are designed to promote active engagement. Students are treated as persons whose identities are complex, unique, and valued. Ethical practice, honesty, integrity, objectivity, equity, social justice, tolerance, and inclusiveness provide an opportunity for success for all students.
- 4.8. Grades and reports of student learning achievements are valid, reliable, and accurate representations of each student's capabilities in relation to clearly articulated learning objectives and result from procedures that are consistent, fair, and equitable.
- 4.9. Students and staff demonstrate a scholarly approach through:
 - a. inquiry and scholarship
 - b. critical thinking and analysis
 - c. self and peer review
 - d. intellectual and academic integrity
 - e. engagement with the rest of the learning community

- 4.10. High quality and timely feedback assists students to improve their learning performance and to develop their capacity to self-assess.
- 4.11. Expectations and standards of denominational, national, and international stakeholders are met, where appropriate.
- 4.12. The involvement of leaders and managers at all levels will achieve quality enhancement and continuous improvement in assessment. Evidence of these quality outcomes includes:
- a. transparent, consistent, efficient, and effective procedure;
 - b. provision of opportunities for all, at all levels of responsibility, to enhance their knowledge of and competency in assessment theory, practice, and procedures. In this way they will be well informed of their rights and responsibilities and have reasonable expectations regarding assessment process outcomes;
 - c. moderation and peer review processes focus on assessment design and grading outputs;
 - d. institutional quality assurance and quality enhancement processes are informed by regular and multi-level review cycles
 - e. quality processes that are well designed and consistently applied ensure adherence to institutional policy frameworks. They also ensure adherence to procedures relating to academic honesty, access, equity, records management, and intellectual property.
- 4.13. Assessment Practices are communicated to students clearly at the outset of each course unit undertaken.
- 4.14. The Assessment Procedures document describes the requirements for approval of assessment, demand hours, credit points, and weighting of assessment items. It also outlines examination procedures, late submissions, remarking, penalties and notification to students.
- 4.15. Each individual Course Unit Booklet will specify details of specific assessment tasks and the learning outcomes being assessed. Course Unit Booklets are monitored by the Academic Deans of each Member Institution and the SCD Coursework Committee.
- 4.16. Assessment moderation and monitoring occurs at the end of each teaching period. Detailed information governing this process, including the work undertaken within each Member Institution and oversight by the Director of Academic Strategy and Coursework Committee can be found in the policy document: Assessment Moderation and Monitoring Procedure.
- 4.17. Discipline Moderation and Institutional Moderation procedures require external moderators to review quality assurance issues including reporting on quality of assessment. Detailed information governing these processes can be found in their associated policies (Discipline Moderation Policy, Institutional Academic Moderation Policy).

- 4.18. Grade Descriptors and Grading Criteria can be found in the document: Grading Student Performance Procedures.
- 4.19. Students are expected to adhere to high standards of academic integrity and honesty. Failure to do so may constitute academic misconduct. Detailed information regarding academic integrity can be found in the Academic Integrity Policy.
- 4.20. Detailed information regarding student appeals can be found in the Student Grievance Policy.