

Assessment Guidelines

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Manager:	Convenor, Academic Administration Committee
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1. PURPOSE

Methods of assessment must provide a valid and reliable indication of students' achievement in relation to all the learning outcomes of the course. The valid assessment of learning outcomes will likely include a variety of different assessment and teaching methods.

2. DESIGN AND TIMING OF ASSESSMENTS

- Assessments should be designed appropriately in relation to the credit value and level. Examiners are encouraged to consider a range of assessment methods as part of the course design.
- Moderation of assessments worth more than 10% is best practice.
- Weightings given to different assessment tasks should be decided by the course examiner and should be related to the amount of work involved in each task and the relative importance of each learning outcome.
- Any assessment held or due during the examination period must be scheduled through the Examinations Office.
- No assessment of any kind is to be scheduled or deemed due during study week, without prior approval from the Academic Administration Committee.

3. RETURN OF ASSESSMENTS

Assessments should normally be returned to the student within three weeks of the date of the assessment. Where this will not take place, the examiner must advise the students in advance. Returned items of assessment will be accompanied by sufficient oral or written information to allow students to form an accurate appraisal of their performance and progress relative to their peers.

All internal assessment must be marked and available to students five working days before the day of the examination, and any feedback on internal assessments which is at all relevant to preparation for the final examination should be provided at least one week before the final examination (variations to this guideline may apply for Summer Schools).

4. CANCELLATION OR DISRUPTION OF ASSESSMENTS

When an examination, test or assignment has been cancelled or disrupted for reasons beyond the control of the students (e.g. extreme weather, fire, earthquake and epidemic), responsibility for determining subsequent grades for the course rests with the examiner.

In cases where the University has declared a disruption as a serious incident, the Convenor, Academic Administration Committee will advise affected examiners of appropriate processes to determine grades for the course.

When advising examiners, the following options for compensating for a cancelled or disrupted examination, test or assignment will be suggested. This list is not exhaustive:

- holding the examination or test at an alternative time
- setting an alternative assessment
- discounting that particular test or examination from computation of the overall grade
- provided that the examiner is convinced that all students are likely to have met a passing standard, award a "P" for all students in the course *or*
- if the examination is disrupted after more than half of the examination time has elapsed, completed work may be marked and the weighting of the exam or test decreased accordingly.

Approval of **any alternative** option must be gained from the Convenor, Academic Administration Committee. The option chosen will depend on a number of factors, for example the level of the course; the weighting of the examination or test; whether or not the examination is required for professional purposes, whether the course is a prerequisite for other courses; the number of sites at which the examination or test was to be administered; and whether or not all sites, or all students were affected. Any student who feels they have been disadvantaged by the process used to achieve their final grade may apply to the Academic Administration Committee for a review.

5. SPORTING OR OTHER REPRESENTATIVE ACTIVITIES AND STUDENT ASSESSMENT OBLIGATIONS

The Academic Administration Committee shall determine guidelines regarding the sitting of tests and the late submission of other items of assessment by students who are selected to perform, compete, adjudicate or officiate as national representatives or at national or international competitions. Assessments include the holding of tests and examinations and due dates for essays, projects and field trip work.

Whenever possible, the examiner should give favourable consideration to making alternative arrangements for such students provided that when making special arrangements, careful consideration is given to issues of equity with respect to the remainder of the class.

Where a student is to be absent from in-term tests or at times scheduled for submission of assessment and wishes for special arrangements to be made, and where examiners are able to make special arrangements, the student must provide a minimum of one week's notice to the examiner for any variation to the assessment requirements in the Course Outline.

Where a student is to be absent from formal examinations and wishes for special



arrangements to be made, the student must contact the Examinations Office at least two weeks prior to the date of the examination.

6. ASSESSING STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Grading student performance

- Final course grades should indicate demonstrated achievement at the end of the course, through an accumulation of appropriate evidence from course work and/or final examination.
- Grades for individual pieces of assessment should be awarded only on the basis of demonstrated achievement in the task being assessed.
- Students' achievement in a piece of assessment should be judged on its own merits (standards-based) rather than judged normatively (i.e. by ranking students' achievement).
- The conversion of marks to letter grades must follow the University's approved grading scale as published in the **Lincoln University Calendar**.
- Adjustment of marks and grades may occur through moderation and scaling processes. Further guidance around the appropriate use of scaling may be found in most recent edition of the Examiners' Meeting Manual.

Feedback on assessment

- In order for students are to gain maximum benefit, they need feedback on each assessment. This can be oral or written and must be timely, sufficiently detailed and constructive to allow students to form an accurate appraisal of their performance, and it should generate suggestions for improving future work.
- Students should be provided with an indication of the distribution of results for the class when each assessed item is returned, in order to inform their own progress.

7. ASSESSMENT OF GROUP WORK

The percentage contribution from group tasks should be related to the learning outcomes of the course.

Before individual grades are finalised, the examiner should seek and take account of additional information about the contributions of individuals to team efforts, particularly if group tasks contribute significantly towards the final course grade.

When using group work for assessment, examiners should ensure that appropriate mechanisms (such as procedures to help facilitate collaboration between group members, or to ensure that group members contribute equally) are in place to support students working in groups.

8. SCRUTINISING GRADE DISTRIBUTIONS OF EXAMINATIONS

Refer to the [Examiners' Guidelines](#).

9. SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

Refer to the Lincoln University Calendar

10. SCALING

Refer to the Examiners' Meeting Manual.

11. LINKS WITH POLICIES / DOCUMENTS

[Assessment Policy](#)

[Examinations Policy](#)

[Examiner's Guidelines](#)

[Guidelines for Examination Moderators](#)

