



Cairnmillar
INSTITUTE

Treatment | Education | Research

Assessment Policy

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Policy Name | Assessment Policy |
| Policy number | TLP002 |
| Date approved | 12 July 2017 |
| Approving body | The Academic Board |
| Responsible officer | Head of School |
| Implementation officer | Academic Registrar |
| Next review date | January 2019 |
| Linked policies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TLP003 Quality Assurance and Benchmarking Policy • TLP005 Advanced Standing and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy • TLP009 Examination of Theses Policy • SSP003 Special Consideration Policy |
| Linked forms | |

Purpose of this policy

The purpose of this policy is to identify the principles and practices underpinning the Institute's approach to developing and implementing appropriate, quality assured assessment tasks and fair and consistent assessment practises across the organisation.

This policy applies to both Higher Education and VET sectors, unless otherwise stated in the section.

The assessment of research theses for higher education degrees at AQF 8 or higher are excluded and are covered by TLP009 Examination of Theses Policy.

Purpose of assessment

The Cairnmillar Institute (the Institute) aims to provide excellent assessment, and teaching and learning opportunities within a criterion referenced assessment framework where learning outcomes clearly indicate what successful students know and can do as a result of their learning.

The Institute acknowledges that high quality assessment practices are a critically important dimension of the student experience.

The primary purposes of assessment at the Institute is to:

- Contribute to the learning experience
- Provide appropriate feedback to students to support their learning
- Assess student achievement in terms of the intended learning outcomes and graduate attributes
- Contribute measures to help staff evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching
- Provide assurance to the wider community that academic standards and learning quality are being maintained

Assessment design principles

The Institute's approach to assessment focusses on testing the effectiveness of learning and teaching in order to develop the following skills, knowledge and approaches to learning in students consistent with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF):

| | | |
|------------------|--|---|
| Knowledge | | <p>Tasks and assessments designed to develop and assess a student's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depth of knowledge • Breadth of knowledge • Type of knowledge • Complexity of understanding of knowledge at a level commensurate with the relevant Australian Qualification Framework level. |
| Skills | <p>Cognitive Technical Communication Interpersonal</p> | <p>Tasks and assessments designed to develop and assess a student's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written communication • Oral communication • Literacy • Numeracy • Use of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Intuitive thinking ○ Logical thinking ○ Critical thinking ○ Methods ○ Materials ○ Tools |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Instruments |
| Application of knowledge and skills | | <p>Tasks and assessments designed to develop and assess a student's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autonomy, responsibility and accountability • Responses to routine and non-routine application of their skills and knowledge • Responses to the application of their skills and knowledge in predictable and non-predictable situations |
| Values | | <p>Tasks and assessments designed to develop and assess a student's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intellectual honesty • Cultivation of critical facilities • Ability to work flexibly |

Criterion Referenced Assessment

Norm referenced assessment, where students are rated against each other, has now been (or is currently being) replaced by “criterion-referenced” assessment throughout the Institute’s accredited courses.

Criterion referenced assessment, measures achievement against learning outcome objectives.

Marking Guides

For each graded assessment task that is marked using academic judgment, there should be an accompanying marking guide describing the associated learning outcomes and the process by which marks are awarded.

1. The guides must reflect knowledge, skills and their integration for the AQF level
2. Be able to directly relate to professional competencies; and
3. Be adapted from existing marking guides for each type of assessment

Assessment tasks

For each course or program the types and range of assessment must:

1. Discourage plagiarism,
2. Have an integrated approach across a program to ensure assessment types reflect the learning of knowledge, skills and their integration,
3. Have a range of types of assessment throughout the course.

Assessment tasks and criteria must:

- Align to the intended learning outcomes and graduate attributes
- Be supported by appropriate learning and teaching activities

- Support the development of a wide range of capabilities and competencies in students
- Promote engagement and higher order thinking through a range of assessment tasks
- Have marking guides that align with the learning outcomes and graduate attributes
- No one assessment task should account for more than 70% of a final grade or unit outcome

Coursework assessment tasks

For these reasons, coursework units include a cross section of the following assessment activities:

- Oral presentations
- Essay/discussion papers
- Recording and commentaries
- Case studies
- Self-evaluations
- Simulations and role plays
- Standardised client interviews
- Online tests or quizzes (which account for no more than 10% of the final unit grade)

Placement assessment tasks

For these reasons, placement units may include a cross section of the following assessment activities:

- Log Books, hours of client contact, total hours, supervision hours, self-reflection
- Direct observations (Live or Recorded)
- Portfolio Review
- Self-Assessment of Competencies
- APA Rating Scale for Placement Readiness, or similar industry specific measures
- APA Rating Scale for assessment of final placement, or similar industry specific measures

Examinations

Course or units may include scheduled examinations which can include a cross section of the following assessment activities:

- Objective structured clinical examination
- Structured oral examination (viva)
- Written examinations

VET assessment tasks and competency based assessments

For the purposes of VET assessment, the definition from the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 (RTO Standards) or any subsequent legislation or legislative instruments will apply.

***Assessment** means the process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved, to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard required in the workplace, as specified in a training package or VET accredited course.*

(RTO Standards 2015)

Assessment of VET competencies can only be approved and carried out by duly qualified trainers and assessors as per or above the minimum standards set out in Standard 1 or the RTO Standards (2015):

- This will normally be a minimum of the TAE40110 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment or its successor, and
- Relevant specialist training, knowledge or experience in the discipline or subject area being assessed.

VET assessments will be designed in accordance with the relevant training package or VET accredited course rules and the RTO Standards tables for Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence.

Regular Assessment Review

In addition to the Annual Course Reviews conducted in accordance with the CDD005 (Annual Course Review Policy) all assessment will be reviewed prior to each teaching period it is offered. This will be more than once per year if the unit is offered in multiple modes or teaching periods.

Where assessment for a unit of study has not been updated or adjusted as part of a course review the Unit Coordinator will, in consultation with the Course Coordinator or Program Director, ensure that all formal assessment items are reviewed.

Regular review and adaptation of assessment tasks reduces the likelihood of plagiarism or collusion, both purposeful and accidental, between students from different years or sequences of study. It also demonstrates that the assessment is being considered for currency and validity against the relevant academic standards on a regular basis.

- Where students might be advantaged from drawing upon previous assessments the assessment must be refreshed before each unit offering

Refreshment of assessment tasks between offerings can include, but is not limited to:

- New examples, vignettes or case studies for the basis of an assessment task
- Any multiple choice questions in tests or exams must be 75% different from the prior offering
- Other variations and adaptations as appropriate for the assessment tool or method.

Validation of Assessment Tasks

Both internal and external validation of assessment tasks and methodologies will be carried out in accordance with the CDD Course Development and Design suite of policies and the TLP003 Quality Assurance and Benchmarking Policy.

Benchmarking and validation of assessment outcomes will be carried out as per the Assessment Moderation and Benchmarking section of this policy.

Information to students about assessment tasks

Clear, accurate, consistent and timely information on assessment tasks must be made available to students, staff and external assessors or examiners so students are informed about the level of performance required for each assessment task.

Students should be advised of all assessment requirements at the commencement of each unit, with clear guidelines on submission dates, weighting for the unit, and an indication of what learning outcomes must be evident in the assessment submission.

The unit outline must include but is not limited to the template information about assessment which will be updated from time-to-time, with approval from the Head of School, in line with the relevant processes and procedures.

Unit outlines will ensure students are aware of the following topics, and will not contradict this policy:

1. The student assessment style guide
2. How to apply for an extension or special consideration
3. Word limits, late work and any standard variations of academic discretion

Assessment variations

From time to time, variations to the assessment or assessment rules may be required for individual students or other special circumstances in accordance with this policy or the SSP003 Special Consideration Policy.

Extensions and late work

Late Submissions

Unit Coordinators may set a late work penalty. This penalty must be published in the Unit Guide. The penalty will normally be 5% per day (including weekends and non-business days).

Work handed in more than two weeks late, or after the end of the marking and results deadline for a period of enrolment, will not normally be marked and a fail result will be recorded.

Extensions

An extension may be granted for written assignments where there is objective evidence of unexpected disruptions in the student's available work time. Extensions must be applied for and approved in accordance with the SSP003 Special Consideration Policy and any other published procedures.

Extensions cannot be granted for examinations, presentations, and other similarly scheduled assessment activities but other forms of special consideration may apply, see the SSP003 Special Consideration Policy.

Alternative assessments

Where an alternative assessment is approved for a student as a result of a successful application, as per the SSP003 Special Consideration Policy, alternative assessments will be designed in such a way that:

- The same learning outcomes are assessed as the replaced item of assessment
- Assessment criteria are applied fairly and equitably
- No advantage can be gained by a student or learner having access to the original assessment or prior student work
- The alternative assessment is in accordance with all principles of this policy

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Assessments

All forms of RPL or credit transfer will be assessed as per the TLP005 Advanced Standing and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy.

Assessment Moderation and Benchmarking

Regular Informal Review of Results

At the end of each substantive teaching period, after the entry of final results but prior to the release to students, the Registrar, or nominee, will prepare a presentation of all results for that period to be reviewed by the Head of School, or nominee.

The Head of School will set a list of rules and statistical tests prior to the report being reviewed and any areas of concern will be raised and addressed as part of a formal or informal review process as per procedural guidelines.

Role of the Academic Board

The Registrar will report to the Academic Board on final unit results and assessment outcomes at least twice per year. One of these reports can be the mandatory results section of the annual Student Outcomes Report, an interim report will also be submitted after the first major teaching period or semester so that the Academic Board can effectively oversee assessment outcomes and activity within the School.

External Assessment of Assessment

Every five (5) years a formal external benchmark and external validation of assessment will be carried out for each course, normally to coincide with a point 6 months prior to the next major course review in accordance with the CDD006 Major Course Review Policy and any relevant procedures.

Benchmarking for Higher Education Assessment

Benchmarking will normally consist of cross-marking of a representative sample of assessments in the course or unit to be validated by a qualified external assessor with relevant industry or discipline knowledge.

Industry accreditation and other forms of approved benchmarking can also be conducted in accordance with the TLP003 Quality Assurance and Benchmarking Policy.

Moderation for VET Assessment

Validation of VET assessment will be a review of assessment tools and outcomes, carried out by one or more persons who are not directly involved in the particular instance of delivery and assessment of the training product being validated, and who collectively have:

- a. vocational competencies and current industry skills relevant to the assessment being validated;
- b. current knowledge and skills in vocational teaching and learning; and
- c. the training and assessment qualification or assessor skill set referred to in Item 1 or 3 of Schedule 1 of the RTO Standards (2015) or any subsequent legislative instrument.

Industry experts may be involved in validation to ensure there is the combination of expertise set out in (a) to (c) above.

References

Frameworks and expert views relevant to the development of this policy include:

| | |
|---|---|
| Framework and expert views for this policy | APAC Rules & Standards APA Task Force on the Assessment of Competence in Professional Psychology: Final Report (October 2006) Assessment Benchmarking Project 2010 (Feb 2011) Australian Qualifications Framework (July 2011) Connoley, R. (2004). <i>Criterion Referenced Assessment</i> . Geelong, Victoria: Deakin University TEQSA Threshold Standards Relevant AUQA best practice guidelines Higher Education Standards |
|---|---|