Assessment Policy

Section 1 - Preamble, Purpose and Scope

Preamble

(1) This Policy is grounded in a mutually supportive community of assessment scholarship amongst the University community, industry and the professions. It forms the apex of SCU's assessment framework.

(2) This Policy's implementation is supported by an accessible and integrated set of Rules, Policies, Procedures and assessment resources.

(3) Assessment for student learning is a core activity of the University.

(4) Assessment is the means by which students gain feedback on their learning and by which their academic achievements are judged and certified.

(5) Assessment has an important role in motivating and shaping students' learning.

(6) The academic standards and rigour of the University's courses are embodied within the University's assessment framework.

Purpose

(7) The purposes of this Policy are to establish key principles and values relating to assessment at SCU, and to ensure assessment at SCU complies with the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standard) 2015, which is made under the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011.

(8) It is intended this Policy be read with related Rules and its subsidiary Procedures, Guidelines, supporting resources and documentation.

(9) The objectives of this Policy are to:

a. describe the purposes of student assessment;
b. articulate an integrated set of principles for student assessment which guide the design, implementation and review of Assessment Procedures and related practices.

Scope

(10) This Policy applies to all:

a. staff engaged in any aspect of student assessment in coursework awards and non-award units delivered by or on behalf of SCU; and
b. students enrolled in in any aspect of student assessment in coursework awards and non-award units delivered by or on behalf of SCU.

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Page 1 of 4

Section 2 - Definitions

(11) For definitions associated with this Policy refer to the Academic Board's Definitions Policy.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(12) The University acknowledges the critical role of academics' professional judgement and expertise in all aspects of assessment, and particularly in making judgements about students' learning.

(13) The University encourages the adoption of assessment practices that are grounded in research-based evidence of pedagogical effectiveness and contemporary best practice.

Section 4 - Assessment Principles

Principle 1: Assessment design takes a whole of course approach

(14) Assessment aligns with the intended course and unit learning outcomes and shapes learning and teaching activities.

(15) A variety of assessment tasks are used across a course.

Principle 2: Assessment is continuous and powerful

(16) Continuous Assessment means an approach to evaluating student progress continuously throughout a course of study, rather than through a single, final examination. It includes formative and summative assessments that are woven together in tasks completed over the Study Period.

(17) Whenever relevant, assessment is powerful through dilemma-based/real-world/authentic task designs that are demonstrably relevant to practice.

(18) Assessment design encourages time and effort on challenging and deep learning tasks.

(19) Assessment tasks are appropriate to the disciplinary and/or professional context.

(20) Assessment tasks encourage interaction and dialogue around learning.

(21) Assessment tasks are designed to facilitate academic integrity.

Principle 3: Assessment practices are inclusive, fair and equitable

(22) Assessment practices are designed to be inclusive, fair and equitable for all students, irrespective of their educational background, entry pathway, mode or place of study.

(23) Assessment tasks should be written in simple, clear and plain English.

(24) Assessment workloads are manageable for students and staff.

(25) Assessment facilitates students' induction into higher education.

Principle 4: Assessment incorporates high quality feedback

(26) Assessment provides opportunities for students to act on formative feedback.

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Page 2 of 4

(27) Feedback is clear, constructive, respectful and timely.

(28) Feedback guides students to judge and improve the quality of their learning and work.

(29) Feedback facilitates a positive attitude toward future learning.

Principle 5: Assessment is criteria and standards-based

(30) Assessment is based on pre-determined, clearly articulated criteria and standards specified to align with learning outcomes.

(31) Assessment is evaluated solely on the basis of students' achievement against these criteria and standards.

(32) Assessment is valid and reliable.

(33) Standards-based assessment is developed with close consideration to disciplinary standards and requirements.

Principle 6: Assessment is benchmarked, moderated, reviewed and continuously improved

(34) Assessment tasks and learning outcomes are moderated and peer reviewed to continuously improve practice.

(35) Peer review of assessment ensures course and unit learning outcomes are aligned.

(36) Benchmarking of assessment ensures consistency with the level and field of education of the qualification awarded, and uses national and international comparators.

(37) Assessment is continuously improved in line with evidence-based learning and teaching practices.

(38) Staff are provided with professional learning in the areas of contemporary assessment practice.

Principle 7: Assessment requirements are clearly communicated

(39) Assessment requirements are communicated with sufficient clarity to enable students to understand and complete their assessment tasks to the standards required.

Status and Details

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