

# Assessment, Teaching and Learning Policy

## Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

### Purpose

(1) This Policy:

- a. articulates the principles that underpin the University's approach to teaching and assessment of student learning; and
- b. supports compliance with relevant regulatory frameworks, including the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#) and the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#) and the standards of professional accrediting bodies (HESF 3.1.5).

### Scope

(2) This Policy applies to assessment, teaching and student learning in the context of all award and non-award coursework units delivered by or on behalf of the University.

## Section 2 - Definitions

(3) The [Definitions \(Academic\) Policy](#) applies to this Policy.

## Section 3 - Policy Statement

(4) The primary purpose of assessment is the systemic assurance of a student's attainment of learning outcomes. The University applies and upholds the following Assessment Principles and Teaching and Learning Principles.

(5) Consistent with these principles, and the principles set out in the [Academic Quality, Standards and Integrity Policy](#), the University supports the use of technology (including generative artificial intelligence) in teaching, assessment and learning provided that its use:

- a. does not compromise achievement of learning outcomes;
- b. does not contravene professional standards or requirements set by external accrediting bodies; and
- c. is represented or acknowledged in a way that is consistent with the values of academic integrity.

### Part A - Assessment Principles

(6) Assessment is designed and developed to monitor, assess and support student progress in accordance with the following principles:

- a. Assessment Principle 1: Assessment is designed for student learning, engagement and success.
- b. Assessment Principle 2: Assessment is designed for the attainment of learning outcomes.
- c. Assessment Principle 3: Assessment is authentic, innovative and relevant to students.

- d. Assessment Principle 4: Assessment is inclusive, fair, transparent and equitable.
- e. Assessment Principle 5: Assessment incorporates timely, clear and constructive feedback to help improve student learning and performance.
- f. Assessment Principle 6: Assessment maintains academic and professional standards, assuring quality learning.

**Assessment Principle 1: Assessment is designed for student learning, engagement and success.**

(7) Our assessment:

- a. Engages and motivates students' learning across the course progression;
- b. Facilitates students' induction into higher education and the principles of academic integrity;
- c. Evidences the process of learning over time and in context;
- d. Builds a future-focused foundation for lifelong learning; and
- e. Is appropriate in volume and cognitive load.

**Assessment Principle 2: Assessment is designed for the attainment of learning outcomes.**

(8) Our assessment design:

- a. Takes a systematic whole-of-course approach aligned with the discipline and award;
- b. Aligns with course and unit learning outcomes, study content and learning activities, in accordance with the [Curriculum Policy](#);
- c. Is appropriately scaffolded and interlinked across both units and courses;
- d. Encourages the appropriate use of technologies, tools and resources; and
- e. Is aligned with professional accreditation and expectations, where appropriate.

**Assessment Principle 3: Assessment is authentic, innovative and relevant to students.**

(9) Our assessment is:

- a. Fit for purpose in the Southern Cross Model, relevant to students and their educational and/or professional goals.
- b. Designed specifically for the teaching period in which units are offered;
- c. Evaluated using multiple means of assessment across a unit and course;
- d. Designed using practice-based and/or authentic tasks, and relevant to students' career or further study aspirations; and
- e. Enhanced through the use of technology, and where appropriate, generative artificial intelligence, enabling students to engage with innovative tools, while maintaining academic integrity. Refer to [GenAI Tool Descriptors - Feb 2025](#) for Students and Staff.

**Assessment Principle 4: Assessment is inclusive, fair, transparent and equitable.**

(10) Our assessment is:

- a. Inclusive of all students, irrespective of educational background, entry pathway, mode or place of study;
- b. Cognisant of student diversity, learners' needs and multiple ways of knowing;
- c. Evaluated on the basis of students' achievement against clear criteria, rubrics and standards;
- d. Designed to minimise complexity and confusion; and
- e. Written in simple, clear and plain English.

## **Assessment Principle 5: Assessment incorporates timely, clear and constructive feedback to help improve student learning and performance.**

(11) Our assessment feedback is:

- a. Timely, clear, and directly relevant to the assessment task, criteria and purpose;
- b. Based on structured rubrics and clear grading standards, guiding students to accurately appreciate the quality of their learning; and
- c. Constructive, formative and respectful, taking a strengths-based approach focused on current and future learning.

## **Assessment Principle 6: Assessment maintains academic and professional standards, assuring quality learning.**

(12) Our assessment is:

- a. Designed by academics with contemporary skills and expertise in curriculum design, teaching and learning principles, and disciplinary knowledge, and where relevant, industry or professional skills;
- b. Peer reviewed in line with the Assessment Principles, to ensure quality in design, implementation and against academic standards;
- c. Developed against academic, quality and grading standards, and is continuously improved and updated;
- d. Benchmarked to ensure consistency with the level of qualification awarded; and
- e. Built on a foundation of professional learning and contemporary assessment practice and drawing from a range of assessment methods.

## **Part B - Teaching and Learning Principles**

(13) Teaching is designed and practised to support learning according to the following principles:

- a. Teaching and Learning Principle 1: Learning is supported through a culture of respect, enquiry and dialogue.
- b. Teaching and Learning Principle 2: Learning is supported by recognising and broadening students' beliefs and knowledge.
- c. Teaching and Learning Principle 3: Learning is supported by a consistent teaching delivery approach across the University.
- d. Teaching and Learning Principle 4: Learning is supported through quality learning tasks.
- e. Teaching and Learning Principle 5: Learning is supported by readily available, high quality, technology-enhanced learning materials and resources.
- f. Teaching and Learning Principle 6: Learning is supported through quality teaching practice which is informed by research, feedback and reflection.

## **Teaching and Learning Principle 1: Learning is supported through a culture of respect, enquiry and dialogue.**

(14) Our teaching:

- a. Promotes the University's values, as well as a culture of respect, enquiry and dialogue;
- b. Promotes culturally safe spaces for developing knowledge;
- c. Acknowledges that making mistakes is important in the learning process, for staff and students alike; and
- d. Fosters teaching presence of both staff and student peers.

## **Teaching and Learning Principle 2: Learning is supported by recognising and broadening students' beliefs and knowledge.**

(15) Our teaching:

- a. Promotes students' sense of responsibility for and agency over their learning;
- b. Builds from students' experiences, but also helps them to critically reflect upon understandings, beliefs and assumptions; and
- c. Promotes life-long learning and supports the fulfilment of students' potential.

## **Teaching and Learning Principle 3: Learning is supported by a consistent teaching delivery approach across the University.**

(16) Our teaching is:

- a. Learning-centred, consisting of a combination of self-access learning and class learning that provide equivalent learning experiences for all students, regardless of mode or location of study;
- b. Delivered through self-access learning, which consists of on-demand, self-paced, media-rich, interactive and responsive modules that provide automated feedback to students;
- c. Complemented by class learning, which consists of carefully planned, scheduled, interactive learning experiences that move beyond first exposure to new knowledge and skills and place greater emphasis on active-learning such as application, problem-solving, critiquing, simulating, group inquiry and creating; and
- d. Cognisant that experiential learning, including placements and work-integrated learning, are best developed through individual units at the Faculty/College level.

## **Teaching and Learning Principle 4: Learning is supported through quality learning tasks.**

(17) Our teaching:

- a. Promotes student success through quality learning tasks that are clearly articulated, align with unit or course learning outcomes and are engaging;
- b. Employs an appropriately sequenced, guided, active and interactive learning experience;
- c. Promotes meaningful engagement with issues, theories and challenges that are relevant to and broaden students' futures; and
- d. Employs feedback that is timely, clear, constructive, strengths-based and respectful; and
- e. Is inclusive, fair, transparent and equitable.

## **Teaching and Learning Principle 5: Learning is supported by readily available, high-quality technology-enhanced learning materials and resources.**

(18) Our teaching:

- a. Emphasises the design and curation of quality, fit for purpose learning materials for self-access learning incorporating a variety of media rich, technology enhanced learning materials to provide an interactive learning environment;
- b. Is supported by the Centre for Teaching and Learning guides and best practice examples of media rich, interactive Learning Environments and class plans; and
- c. Is enabled, where appropriate, by the use of technologies that enhance learning and the student experience.

**Teaching and Learning Principle 6: Learning is supported through quality teaching practice which is informed by research, feedback and reflection.**

(19) Our teaching is:

- a. Conducted by appropriately qualified and experienced staff, as outlined in the [Academic Quality, Standards and Integrity Policy](#);
- b. Informed by evidence, drawing on studies of success;
- c. Improved by feedback on our work from students and peers, and informed by quality data and metrics; and
- d. Continuously informed and enhanced by our own professional development, reflective practice and research: we are responsible for our own life-long learning.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
<b>Effective Date</b>	24th September 2024
<b>Review Date</b>	24th September 2027
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Academic Board
<b>Approval Date</b>	19th September 2024
<b>Expiry Date</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Executive</b>	Erica Wilson Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Innovation) +61 2 66203151
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