

## Assessment Policy

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### 1. Background

The implementation of effective assessment strategies in all higher education courses of study at Gateway Business College (GBC) plays a crucial role in the achievement of strong student outcomes and the assurance of academic integrity. Course design must ensure that assessment tasks are constructively aligned with learning outcomes and the development of demonstrable graduate attributes. All assessment tasks must be aligned with standards and criteria that are clear to students and markers. Assessment as a measure of student work must be fair, valid, equitable and consistent.

### 2. Purpose

This policy establishes guidelines for how GBC will ensure that assessment design constructively aligns with course and subject learning outcomes, and that students are adequately informed of assessment requirements and procedures. In order to maintain integrity across the implementation and marking of assessments, this policy outlines the mechanisms by which transparency, fairness and consistency can be applied and assured.

This policy should be read, understood and applied in conjunction with other GBC policies, including, but not limited to, the:

- *Academic Integrity Policy*
- *Academic Misconduct Policy*
- *Course Development and Approval Policy*
- *Course Review and Continual Improvement Policy*
- *Examinations Policy*
- *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy.*

### 3. Scope

The *Assessment Policy* applies to all GBC staff involved in designing and conducting assessment, students, and external assessors and invigilators.

### 4. Definitions

**Academic Board:** The board responsible for academic governance at GBC. The Academic Board reports and advises the Corporate Governance Board on academic activity. This board oversees academic activities such as teaching, learning, scholarship, research, course approval, student outcomes, academic standards and academic policy.

**Academic misconduct:** Behaviour that breaches academic integrity, including plagiarism, cheating, collusion, contract cheating, falsifying research data and reports.

**Academic staff:** Staff engaged in higher education teaching, learning and research as employees of GBC.

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**Assessment:** Teaching and learning activity that involves the evaluation of assessment tasks submitted by students against set criteria and standards that are aligned with learning outcomes. Assessment is a process that involves the development of assessment strategies, criteria and standards, marking rubrics, the marking of individual student assessments and providing appropriate feedback. Assessment also involves comparative grading and moderation.

**Assessment task:** An assessment activity designed to develop student knowledge, skills and their application. Assessment tasks are aligned with subject learning outcomes and require students to demonstrate learning and the development of subject and course learning outcomes. Types of assessment tasks include assignments, essays, examinations, presentations, portfolios, quizzes, reflective journals. Assessment tasks may include and assess group work as well as individual work.

**Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF):** The national framework that regulates Australian education and training qualifications.

**Course:** A program of study that is aligned to a higher education certified qualification. A course of study is organised according to requisite subjects and credit points. Students enrol in a course of study and, when they fulfil all requirements for that course of study, receive a certified qualification on graduation.

**Course Coordinator:** A senior academic staff member responsible for the management, coordination and delivery of a course at GBC. A Course Coordinator is expected to hold a PhD, and is responsible for supervising academic staff teaching within a course of study, developing course design and content, reviewing course design and content, teaching into a course of study, remaining research active and contributing to the improvement of academic standards.

**Graduate attributes:** The capabilities and characteristics that GBC students are expected to develop throughout their program of study and demonstrate on graduation.

**Learning outcome:** The defined outcome of a subject, course or assessment task that identifies what a student should learn and be able to demonstrate on completion of a subject, course or assessment task. Learning outcomes are constructively aligned with course design and content, subject design and content, teaching and learning methods and assessment strategies.

**Marking rubric:** A guide including specific assessment criteria and standards used to evaluate student assessment tasks. Marking guides are valuable tools for use by markers and students. Students are provided with marking guides prior to assessment submission as assessment support material. Completed marking guides are returned to individual students as an important component of assessment feedback.

**Pedagogy:** Academic theory, method and practice concerned with best practice in teaching.

**Special consideration:** A consideration applied in the event of an unexpected circumstance experienced by a student that may affect their health or personal situation and impact their ability to meet academic requirements such as complete an assessment task adequately or on time, or maintain a strong record of attendance and class participation. Special consideration may also apply in instances of cultural or legal significance, illness, family bereavement or misadventure.

**Student:** A person currently enrolled in study in a GBC course.

**Subject:** A unit of study within a course in which a student enrolls.

**Subject Coordinator:** A teaching and learning staff member responsible for the coordination and delivery of a subject at GBC. A Subject Coordinator is responsible for developing subject content, teaching and learning materials, lecturing and tutoring, remaining research active and contributing to the improvement of strong student outcomes and academic standards.

## 5. Principles

### 5.1 Assessment design

Assessment is the primary method used to evaluate whether students have achieved the learning outcomes of the subject they are studying.

In order to effectively evaluate student learning, assessment must:

- Be constructively aligned with the subject learning outcomes
- Allow students to demonstrate their achievement of the subject learning outcomes
- Allow markers to evaluate student achievement of the subject learning outcomes
- Be based on subject content and engage with theory and its application
- Have clearly identified criteria and standards
- Have clear instructions and guidelines
- Demonstrate sound pedagogy and support the develop of critical inquiry in students
- Be designed as a learning tool rather than simply a test of student knowledge and skills
- Demonstrate a complexity that is commensurate with the AQF level and year level of the course
- Encourage students to direct and reflect on their own learning.

### 5.2 Administering assessment

Assessment is a core responsibility of all academic teaching staff.

In order to fairly administer the assessment process:

- Assessment task instructions, guidelines, due dates, word counts and marking rubrics must be included in the subject outline
- Assessment task instructions and guidelines must be communicated and explained clearly at the beginning of semester and prior to the submission of assessment tasks, allowing ample opportunity for student queries
- Marking must be conducted with academic integrity, applying a consistent standard and use of the marking rubric
- Marks and grades must be awarded without bias, and accurately reflect a student's achievement of assessment criteria and learning outcomes
- The moderation process must be applied to each assessment task within a subject as described in the *Moderation Policy*, and conducted before marks are released to students

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- Marks and marked assessment tasks must be returned to students within two weeks of submission with detailed, constructive feedback to encourage student development.

### 5.3 Responsibilities

Academic teaching staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring assessment tasks are designed to measure student understanding and achievement of a subject's learning outcomes
- Ensuring assessment tasks are aligned with subject content and the development of knowledge, skills and their application within that subject area
- Developing criteria and standards for assessment tasks that can be effectively evaluated during the marking process
- The fair, consistent and objective assessment of student work
- Ensuring assessment task instructions, guidelines, due dates, word counts and marking rubrics are included in the subject outline and on the subject LMS site
- Administering the first assessment task in a subject no later than halfway through the semester, to ensure both students and academic staff can measure their progress against learning outcomes
- Providing timely, clear and relevant assessment feedback that is encouraging and constructive in its identification of strengths and areas for improvement.
- Returning marked assessment tasks to students within two weeks of submission
- Referring students, where necessary, to appropriate academic support services in light of assessment results
- Advising the Course Coordinator of students who may be at risk of unsatisfactory progress
- Engaging in marking and moderation meetings
- Ensuring all student marks are recorded
- Reporting cases of suspected academic misconduct in accordance with the *Academic Misconduct Policy*.

Course Coordinators are responsible for:

- Administering the moderation process for the course (refer to the *Moderation Policy*)
- Administering instances of alleged academic misconduct (refer to the *Academic Misconduct Policy*)
- Approving final marks and grades, in consultation with other academic staff or committees as required.
- Identifying students who may be at risk of unsatisfactory progress.

Students are responsible for:

- Ensuring they are aware of assessment task requirements, due dates and submission methods
- Accessing the academic support they need to complete assessment tasks from relevant teaching staff or the Academic Skills Advisor
- Contacting a relevant academic staff member should they feel they are unable to fulfil course requirements and/or assessment task requirements
- Undertaking all assessment tasks required in order to satisfactorily complete a subject
- Adhering to all assessment task requirements and relevant policies, including the *Academic Integrity Policy* and *Academic Misconduct Policy*.

## 6. Procedures

### 6.1 Approval of assessment within a course of study

The approval of assessment design is the responsibility of the GBC Academic Board.

Assessment design is monitored and reviewed by the Course Advisory Committee, the Course Monitoring Committee the Teaching and Learning Committee to ensure they support strong student outcomes and the achievement of subject and course learning outcomes.

Within the course development, course approval and course review process, assessment tasks are reviewed to ensure they:

- Are constructively aligned with subject content and subject learning outcomes
- Develop critical inquiry skills and build new knowledge frameworks
- Encourage and reward the development of deep learning processes
- Favour formative over summative approaches
- Provide students with clear assessment criteria and standards, and opportunities for actionable feedback
- Support the valid, consistent and effective measurement of student achievement
- Are integrated with other subjects within the course of study to provide students with a progressive pathway that increases in complexity as they progress through the subject and the course.

### 6.2 Assessment task submission

Assessment tasks must be submitted by the due date, unless the student has an extension in writing from their subject coordinator.

Extensions can only be granted in advance of the submission date, and the student must provide a valid reason and evidence for the request for extension.

Late submissions incur penalties at a rate of 10% per day.

Assessment tasks are to be submitted online through the link provided on the LMS site for the subject.

Plagiarism detection software must be used for the submission of all assessment tasks.

### 6.3 Appealing assessment outcomes

Students are entitled to appeal an assessment task mark. In the first instance, they should speak to the Subject Coordinator.

If an assessment task has been marked by two academic staff members as part of the appeals process, the second mark will be recorded as the final mark.

If a student remains unsatisfied, they may further their appeal according to the *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy*.

### 6.4 Special consideration

Should a student encounter extenuating or exceptional circumstances that may affect their ability to complete an assessment task, they should contact the Subject Coordinator or Course Coordinator for advice on deferment, or an extension to the assessment task due date. Special consideration may apply in instances of cultural or legal significance,

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illness, family bereavement or misadventure. Subject Coordinators must make all reasonable attempts to accommodate students who experience unexpected circumstances. GBC will ensure the provision of adequate support for students requiring special consideration.

### 6.5 Recordkeeping

GBC will ensure an ongoing record of student marks and grades are securely maintained.

### 6.6 Quality Assurance

The integrity of academic assessment at GBC will be maintained as per the *Academic Integrity Policy*, *Academic Misconduct Policy* and *Moderation Policy*.

## 7. Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Academic Board every three years, or more frequently should the Board deem it necessary.

Document History			
Document Name	Assessment Policy		
Document Owner	GBC	Date Developed	07.04.2017
Initial Approver	GBC Policy Development Committee	Date Initial Approval	14.04.2017
Reviewed by	Academic Board	Date of Approval	27.04.2017
Related Documents	Academic Integrity Policy Academic Misconduct Policy Course Development and Approval Policy Course Review and Continual Improvement Policy Examination Policy Student Complaints and Appeals Policy		
Version No.	Summary of Changes		
1.	4. Definition; added information 6.4. Revised information with additional details		