RMIT
UNIVERSITY

Assessment Policies and Procedures Manual

A policy guide to assessment at RMIT Higher Education and VET

2009

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1   RMIT Assessment Policies

1.1   Introduction

The RMIT Assessment Policies and Procedures Manual is a comprehensive reference to the University's assessment related regulations, policies and procedures. These are the rules by which the University manages its assessment practices. They are designed to ensure consistency, transparency and fairness, and to support academic integrity.

The Manual provides a synopsis of the important elements of each key assessment policy. It also provides a complete listing of all the related regulations, policies and procedures for more detailed reference.

The Manual is intended to provide a single reference point to enable academic and administrative staff and students become aware of the important rules and practices governing and guiding assessment at RMIT.

The need for an Assessment Policies and Procedures Manual
The University has, over considerable time, developed an extensive range of regulations, policies and procedures to ensure proper governance of its assessment processes. As Australia's largest multi-sector education institution, with a total student population of more than 60,000 the scope of governance is significant and has a major impact on the University's ability to manage academic integrity.

During 2007, RMIT undertook a major review of a substantial number of its assessment regulations, policies and procedures. The scope of these changes has, in many cases, been very significant. Although comprehensive information campaigns were conducted during 2007, it is inevitable that some staff and students will have yet to become familiar with all of these many changes.

Simultaneously, in August 2007, RMIT became part of an Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) initiative known as the Teaching Quality Indicators (TQI) Project. The overarching aim of the project was to ascertain agreed approaches to recognising and rewarding quality teaching and teachers in higher education. The project's focus was on the development of a TQI Framework of indicators associated with four dimensions of quality and its potential systematic use in the university environment. Eight universities participated in the TQI Pilot Project. For further details of the project, please visit: www.rmit.edu.au/tqi

A key outcome of the TQI Project at RMIT was the development of the RMIT Assessment Standards Project. In alignment with the TQI Project's aims, the RMIT Assessment Standards Project set out to systematically investigate the University's assessment policy context and benchmark RMIT's performance against others in the university sector. The systematic examination of RMIT's performance in the assessment policy context highlighted the University's strengths as well as areas for improvement. The inquiry identified a trend within the sector. This trend was that universities have recently started to consolidate assessment policies and procedures as a significant resource for staff and students. This strategy was found to be an indicator of good institutional practice as the establishment of a manual facilitated policy implementation. Hence, the assembly of this Manual is one product of the RMIT Assessment Standards Project.

Another outcome of the RMIT Assessment Standards Project was the development of the Assessment section in the new *Practical Guide to Teaching* (a url link is provided under the Further Information heading at the end of this section of the guide). As a result of the RMIT Assessment

Standards Project Forum held in August 2008, staff urged that the RMIT Assessment Policies and Procedures Manual was complemented with good assessment practices incorporating examples, case studies, exemplars and sharing of stories across the University so that staff could learn and adapt local practices that implemented policies and procedures. The Assessment section of the Practical Guide to Teaching provides a significant environment for this assessment scholarship to occur. The Assessment section is in its early stages of development yet it presents a framework that will be built upon over the years. Should you have any relevant practices that you'd like to share, please contact RMIT's Learning and Teaching Unit via email: LTwebsite@rmit.edu.au

About this Manual

This Manual consolidates RMIT's assessment policies and procedures and facilitates awareness of the many and significant changes to practice introduced during 2007 and 2008.

Although this Manual is available in both hard copy and web-based formats, it is recommended that readers refer to the web version wherever possible to ensure they have the most up to date information. The web version also contains live links to all the relevant regulations, policies and procedures for more detailed information. The Manual will be updated annually to ensure any relevant policy changes are integrated into the next edition.

The Manual provides the online locations (urls) to the relevant RMIT assessment policies. Each policy is supported with multiple related policy resources, for example:
- Supporting documents and information – this will include policy procedures
- Guidelines – provides additional resources to support policy implementation
- Definitions – key terms associated with the policy are defined
- Accountability – provides details of the policy development and review cycle.

Comments and suggestions for improvement of the Manual are welcomed and should be forwarded via email to rowan.simpson@rmit.edu.au

1.2   Principles of Assessment

Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training (VET) Programs
Assessment is the main way that student progress through a course is documented. However, good forms of assessment go beyond simply providing a student the opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the learning outcomes of their courses. Assessment strategies should incorporate and encourage engagement, facilitate meaningful feedback and be flexible enough to accommodate a range of relevant situations.

Purposes of Assessment at RMIT
In 2001, the RMIT Academic community developed the *Overarching Assessment Principles* to provide a comprehensive set of principles which should be achieved by assessment. The Overarching Assessment Principles define the purpose and principles of assessment at RMIT. The statement indicated that the purposes of assessment at RMIT include, to:

- provide a meaningful learning experience
- measure and report students' achievement of capability
- determine students' capabilities against learning outcomes
- identify learning needs
- provide students with feedback on their learning
- increase students' ability to assess and reflect on their own learning
- report on students' progress and achievements
- assist in the evaluation of the learning experience, including the assessment design.

Principles of Assessment at RMIT
The Overarching Assessment Principles provide a guide to focus staff responsible for designing assessment and apply to both Higher Education and VET assessments.

The set of assessment principles identified include that assessment activity:

1.2.1   encourages student learning and participation
   a) Assessment is designed to promote, reinforce and reward student learning
   b) A diversity of assessment approaches across and between courses reflects the variation in intended learning outcomes
   c) The amount, mode and timing of assessment are concordant with the stated learning objectives
   d) Assessment enables the achievement of personal development needs and credentialing requirements.

1.2.2   provides feedback
   a) Students receive constructive feedback on assessment tasks in a timely manner in order to assist them to
   - Identify strengths, acknowledge effort and originality of thought
   - Address misconceptions and gaps in their understanding
   - Identify strategies for improvement.

1.2.3   is flexible
   a) The focus of the assessment is the application, integration and adaptation of learning in a range of contexts rather than its reproduction
   b) Assessment procedures allow students to gain credit for relevant academic/skill achievement irrespective of time, place and mode of their acquisition
   c) Wherever possible, students are involved in shaping the form of assessment.
   d) Assessment is inclusive of different learning contexts.

1.2.4　is manageable
　　　a)　The assessment schedule for the program as a whole is designed in such a way that it is achievable by students within the timeframe allowed and does not create an unreasonable student workload
　　　b)　The assessment schedule is appropriately sequenced in relation to the structure of the program, course and unit.

1.2.5　is fair and considerate of diverse needs
　　　a)　Assessment practices are equitable to all groups of students, minimise disadvantage by using a variety of assessment models, and avoid gender, racial, cultural or other language bias
　　　b)　Assessment practices make explicit provision for procedural variations and/or alternate assessment strategies for students with disabilities and/or special needs
　　　c)　Students are provided with
- Opportunities to challenge assessment processes and outcomes
- Information about their rights
- Opportunities to seek reassessment
　　　d)　All assessment is based on criteria which are provided to the students before the assessment
　　　e)　The assessment tasks, procedures, and criteria for judging performance and criteria specific to each individual assessment are provided to all students.

1.2.6　is reliable
　　　a)　Assessment processes are monitored and reviewed to ensure that there is consistency in the interpretation of evidence
　　　b)　The design of assessment is based on and appropriate to the stated educational outcomes of the course or unit
　　　c)　Assessment procedures enable the recognition of the achievement of the stated outcomes/competencies by a student.

1.2.7　is valid and meaningful
　　　a)　Assessment comprehensively addresses the goals, objectives and learning activities in a program or course as part of coherent course design
　　　b)　Students are assessed on the full range of knowledge and generic capabilities and competencies specified in learning outcomes contained in the course guide, curriculum document or Training Package
　　　c)　The amount and timing of assessment is proportionate to the variety, priority and importance of learning outcomes
　　　d)　The mode of assessment is concordant with the learning activities employed to achieve the stated learning objectives
　　　e)　The assessment process will, where practicable, collect evidence on a number of occasions and in a variety of contexts appropriate to the learning outcomes
　　　f)　Assessment tasks, criteria and judgement will be validated through internal and external scrutiny
　　　g)　Assessment meets the criteria and standards established in the accreditation process
　　　h)　Assessment enables credentialing and personal development needs.

1.2.8　encourages student integration of learning
　　　a)　Integrated or holistic assessments are used wherever possible. Characteristics include:
- Problem oriented
- Interdisciplinary
- Embracing actual practice
- Focussing on common circumstances
- Demanding analytical ability
- Combining theory and practice
- Reflecting on learning and achievement across a program and over time.

Renewing principles of assessment at RMIT

The RMIT Assessment Standards Project has highlighted that there has been a changing learning and teaching policy context at RMIT since 2006 in an attempt to advance learning and teaching excellence. This changing policy environment has also emphasized the need to revisit and renew the Overarching Assessment Principles statement to ensure that the new strategic directions are integrated into the statement of assessment principles. This work will be undertaken in 2009.

Assessment of nationally endorsed and state accredited VET qualifications

Vocational Education and training (VET) programs are assessed in accordance with the principles and standards of the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF).

The Australian Quality Training Framework 2007 Users' Guide to the Essential Standards for Registration establishes the following principles of assessment:

"To ensure quality outcomes, assessment should be:
- Fair
- Flexible
- Valid
- Reliable
- sufficient.

Fairness in assessment requires consideration of the individual candidate's needs and characteristics, and any reasonable adjustments that need to be applied to take account of them. It requires clear communication between the assessor and the candidate to ensure that the candidate is fully informed about, understands and is able to participate in, the assessment process, and agrees that the process is appropriate. It also includes an opportunity for the person being assessed to challenge the result of the assessment and to be reassessed if necessary.

To be flexible, assessment should reflect the candidate's needs; provide for recognition of competencies no matter how, where or when they have been acquired; draw on a range of methods appropriate to the context, competency and the candidate; and support continuous competency development."[1]

The AQTF Essential Standards for Registration as a Registered Training Organisation which relate specifically to assessment are reproduced below

Standard 1   The Registered Training Organisation provides quality training and assessment across all of its operations.

Elements

1.1   The RTO collects, analyses and acts on relevant data for continuous improvement of training and assessment.

1.2   Strategies for training and assessment meet the requirements of the relevant Training Package or accredited course and are developed in consultation with industry stakeholders.

1.3   Staff, facilities, equipment, and training and assessment materials used by the RTO are consistent with the requirements of the Training Package or accredited course and the RTO's own training and assessment strategies.

1.4   Training and assessment are conducted by trainers and assessors who:

a) have the necessary training and assessment competencies as determined by the National Quality Council or its successors

b) have the relevant vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered or assessed

c) continue developing their vocational and training and assessment competencies to support continuous improvements in delivery of the RTO's services.

1.5 Assessment, including Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL):

a) meets the requirements of the relevant Training Package or accredited course

b) is conducted in accordance with the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence

c) meets workplace and, where relevant, regulatory requirements. [2]

Standard 2 **The Registered Training Organisation adheres to principles of access and equity and maximises outcomes for its clients.**

Elements

2.1 The RTO continuously improves client services by collecting, analysing and acting on relevant data.

2.2 Before clients enrol or enter into a contract, the RTO informs them about the training, assessment and support services to be provided, and about their rights and obligations.

2.3 Employers and other parties who contribute to each learner's training and assessment are engaged in the development, delivery and monitoring of training and assessment.

2.4 Learners receive training, assessment and support services that meet their individual needs.

2.5 Learners have timely access to current and accurate records of their participation and progress.

2.6 Complaints and appeals are addressed efficiently and effectively.

(1) Source: The Australian Quality Training Framework 2007
(2) Source: AQTF 2007 Building Training Excellence *Essential Standards for Registration* © Commonwealth of Australia June 2007

Assessment Charter

The Assessment Charter was adopted by the Academic Board in October, 2002. The Charter amplifies and elaborates on the Overarching Assessment Principles by identifying the key responsibilities of students and staff in relation to assessment and is reproduced on the following two pages.

ASSESSMENT CHARTER

Student Responsibilities	Staff Responsibilities
As a student enrolled at RMIT you are expected to	As an RMIT course coordinator or individual staff member with student assessment responsibilities you are expected to
• Adhere to the assessment principles, policies and procedures of RMIT	• Adhere to the assessment principles, policies and procedures of RMIT

• Use assessment to support your learning, by
 	
    o Undertaking self-assessment to ensure that you are ready and prepared for assessment
    o Reflecting and acting on assessment feedback
    o Where required, developing a reflective portfolio to demonstrate how you are achieving the overall capabilities/competences of your program as a whole
	• Incorporate assessment which supports students' learning by
	
	    o Ensuring that assessment occurs in a range of contexts and on a number of occasions
	    o Arranging for constructive and timely feedback on each student's achievement and progress
	    o Providing opportunities for reflective, integrative assessment of the program as a whole
	    o Making sure that there is a clear relationship between expected learning outcomes, teaching and assessment

• Comply with the requirements of the assessment process which means that you should
 	
• Know and understand exactly what you have to do for each and every assessment task for the course/unit, by
    o Receiving a written (hard copy or electronic) outline of the assessment tasks
    o Seeking clarification when you need it
 	
• Negotiate as a class, or individually through a training plan, and as early as possible any variation to the assessment or assessment process where warranted, such as changes to
    o Submission dates
    o Location
    o Mode
    o Nature of assessment task
    o Format of assessment submission
	• Recognise the contractual nature of the assessment process and fulfil its requirements. This requires that you
	
	• Ensure students have a clear understanding of the requirements of each assessment, by providing students with
	    o A written outline of the assessment, containing information about its structure, the assessment criteria, the relative weighting of the tasks, and submission instructions
	    o Appropriate clarification of the assessment when requested
	
	• Be open to and consistent in providing variations in assessments and assessment processes.

Student Responsibilities	Staff Responsibilities
• Ensure that you obtain written confirmation of changes to the assessment or the assessment process which have been negotiated by the class as a whole	• Provide written confirmation of any negotiated changes to the assessment, or assessment process
• Meet required timelines and attendance requirements	• Provide timely notification of submission dates and attendance requirements • Ensure that a suitable location, equipment, materials and environment are available for assessment tasks

• Be accountable for the originalilty and validity of your assessment submissions, and not assist others in any form of plagiarism or cheating. This means that you will
   o Not copy other people's work
   o Acknowledge quotes and sources
   o Do the work yourself (unless it is a group assessment)
   o Adhere to assessment rules and/or guidelines
   o Not falsify data
	• Design assessment tasks to minimise opportunities for plagiarism and/or cheating, and provide students with clear guidelines of what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it

• Follow the instructions of course staff regarding the collection of your assessment items after marking	• Provide, and inform students of, secure arrangements for the collection of assessment items after marking
• Keep a copy of each assessment submission, together with related developmental material in a safe place for the duration of the program so that others cannot access and copy them	

• Participate in group assessment activity as required. Specifically this requires that you
   o Adhere to group processes and outcomes
   o Participate in deciding what each group member's contribution will be
   o Seek resolution if the group is not functioning effectively by providing honest feedback to help resolve problems in the effective operation of the group
	• Provide for positive group assessment activity, as necessitated by coursework. Specifically this requires that you
	   o Clearly explain the tasks and responsibilities of group work, and facilitate the preparation of the group student contract
	   o Provide clear written instructions for group projects, that detail what needs to be done by the group and what is individual work
	   o Provide guidance for groups that are not functioning effectively, and resolution procedures that groups may adopt as required

Further Information:

Regulations
Regulation 5.4.1 – Assessment
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=5svh7yog5qxr

Procedures
Operating procedure Assessment General 7.32.1.1
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=det2rlnje0ay

Resources
Overarching Assessment Principles
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=81g1msies7yx

Assessment Charter
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=kh6a3ly2wi2h1.pdf;STATUS=A?QRY=assessment%20charter&STYPE=ENTIRE

RMIT Learning & Teaching overview of assessment policies
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=m7g4l18jk1bpz

Australian Quality Training Framework 2007: Essential Standards for Registration
http://www.aqf.edu.au/

RMIT VET Essentials Web Resource
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=2z2kw3d6pw12;STATUS=A?RY=vet%20essentials&STYPE=ENTIRE

RMIT Practical Guide to Teaching
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=oq0o018wg4ja1

2   Types of Assessment

Broadly, there are three types of assessment:
- diagnostic – assessment that determines level of competency/ performance/ knowledge *prior* to entering a course/ program/ learning experience;
- formative – commonly it is assessment that provides feedback to the student on early phases or *during* the learning experience as the student works towards their final assessment submission
- summative – assessment that is focussed at the *end* of the learning experience and concerned with grading of the final 'product' of the learning experience.

The types of assessment used in a course should be informed by what kinds of learning outcomes are intended that reflect a constructive alignment between purpose, learning experience and assessment activity. An assessment strategy for a course will use judiciously a range of assessment tasks (or methods) that will achieve the intended learning outcomes from the determined type/s of assessment.

2.1   Assessment Strategies

Higher Education

The assessment tasks in a course are the key to measuring student understanding and their achievement of course capabilities. A course assessment strategy will incorporate a range of assessment tasks (methods/ approaches/ activities) to ensure that all the learning objectives of a course have been adequately addressed and to cater for different styles of learning.

RMIT has developed a range of online resources that are available to guide and assist staff in designing assessment strategies for courses, for example:
- Self and peer assessment
- Assessing Online
- Testing
- Open (divergent) questions
- Student Portfolios
- Developing Criterion Referenced Assessment
- Structure of the Observed Learning Outcomes (SOLO) taxonomy.

Vocational Education & Training Programs

Under competency based assessment in Vocational Education and Training programs Training Packages define the *skills* and *knowledge (the competencies)* needed to perform effectively in the workplace. Training Packages provide a nationally endorsed set of standards and qualifications for recognising and assessing vocational skills and knowledge.

Training Packages are developed by industry through National Industry Skills Councils or by enterprises to meet the identified training needs of specific industry sectors.

The competency standards in a Training Package describe work outcomes. Each unit of competency describes a specific work activity, conditions under which it is conducted and the evidence that may be gathered in order to determine whether the activity is being performed in a competent manner.

Competency based assessment is the process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved. The purpose of assessment under the principles of competency-based assessment is to confirm that an individual can perform the standard expected in the workplace, as expressed in the relevant endorsed industry or enterprise competency standards. Valid evidence includes documentation, oral reports and testimony and observation of work performance. Additionally an assessor may involve applicants for assessment in discussions of and reflections on their work practice, to assess capacity to demonstrate competency under contingent circumstances, and also to explore the applicants underpinning knowledge. Self and peer assessment and feedback from work supervisors can form part of the evidence compiled to demonstrate competence.

Further Information:

Policy Strategy
RMIT Learning and Teaching Strategy 2007-2010
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=xz7wbuvjnc0l

Resources
RMIT Practical Guide to Teaching: Types of Assessment
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=4e295lry6eygz

RMIT Diversity of Assessment Strategies Resource
http://mams.rmit.edu.au/xlwl8ng1csxgz.pdf

Student Mentoring and Peer Tutoring in the College of SET
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=ry0lxcvs63c8z

Student Learning Centre
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=aqadglfrax8v;STATUS=A?QRY=student%20learning%20support&STYPE=ENTIRE

Australian Quality Training Framework 2007

http://www.training.com.au/aqtf2007/

3   Designing Assessment

3.1   Design of Assessment

An assessment strategy for a course that incorporates a coherent range of assessment tasks requires a thoughtfully considered design approach. Some of the key issues which need to be considered in good practice assessment design include:

Understanding the diversity within the student cohort

Every student needs to be able to potentially achieve success in the assessment task/s. This doesn't mean that the assessment can't provide challenges or build on areas that aren't student strengths; but it will require that assessment 'scaffolds' or supports students' learning and help them develop skills to undertake the assessment tasks.

A significant strategy to meet this challenge is to provide diverse ways or options for students to demonstrate their learning. Alternatively, providing opportunities for students to negotiate aspects of their assessment can also present ways to address student diversity and their learning needs.

Alternative forms of assessment should be considered from the outset to enable the University to respond to the needs of students who have a learning disability, or who have encountered difficulties during the program and have been granted Special Consideration.

Constructive alignment

Intended learning outcomes must correlate with the learning experiences and show coherence with the designed assessment task/s.

Creating meaningful assessment

Assessment that can engage students and build on their knowledge, skills and attributes is an essential principle for assessment design. A way to deeply engage students in their assessment is to create a strategy that integrates authentic assessment. Using an authentic assessment approach helps students make connections between theoretical and practical aspects of their learning in your course, particularly if it is situated within a real world context.

RMIT's work-integrated learning (WIL) policy and procedures provide guidance on how to develop authenticity in assessment.

Contribution to program and strategic University outcomes

The learning that students gain from individual courses is not isolated. Each individual course contributes to developing students' capabilities and/or competencies in their programs and with attributes identified by the University.

Consequently, assessment must contribute to the student development of broader program capabilities/competencies and strategic university goals that include producing graduates who are:

- work ready
- have a global passport to learning and work
- exhibit RMIT's graduate attributes

Although it is not possible to develop all aspects in a single course, these principles should inform course development at a 'whole of Program' level.

Further Information:

Policies
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=mkxzygomvv8v

Credit points, assessment and student workload
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=asfwldaokew4

Procedures
Management of practical placement and work experience procedure
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=xhf48edklrpv

Resources
RMIT Practical Guide to Teaching: Designing Assessment
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=ynld7o7p16ld

Guidelines on Alternative Assessment Following Specific Request – Special Consideration and Equitable Assessment
(Web link to be provided)

Assessment Design Checklist
http://mams.rmit.edu.au/qxkmlt6fexuaz.pdf

4   Managing and Reporting Assessment

4.1   Introduction

All teaching staff members, whether in the Higher Education or VET sector, must carry out their teaching professional responsibilities as outlined in RMIT's assessment regulations, policies and procedures. These overarching regulations and policies outline that teaching staff have significant responsibilities related to managing assessment processes and reporting on assessment results. For example, staff with responsibilities for teaching a course are expected to:

- provide feedback to students on the progress of their learning during and at the end of the course
- make accurate judgements that are fair and consistent on student performance on assessment tasks
- maintain accurate records of student results during and post the teaching period until grades are finalised and published
- sustain standards of quality in assessment practices such as moderation and validation of assessment
- uphold and certify standards of assessment achievements by students
- be involved diligently in processes that report grades to students and informs academic processes such as Student Progress.

Specific provisions apply to the management and reporting of VET assessments. These are identified in the AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration. Standard 1 identifies the following 5 Elements: [1]

Element 1.1   The RTO collects, analyses and acts on relevant data for continuous improvement of training and assessment.

Element 1.2   Strategies for training and assessment meet the requirements of the relevant Training Package or accredited course and are developed in consultation with industry stakeholders.

Element 1.3   Staff, facilities, equipment and training and assessment materials used by the RTO are consistent with the requirements of the Training Package or accredited course and the RTO's own training and assessment strategies.

Element 1.4   Training and assessment are conducted by trainers and assessors who:
   a) have the necessary training and assessment competencies as determined by the National Quality Council or its successors
   b) have the relevant vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered or assessed, and
   c) continue developing their vocational and training and assessment competencies to support continuous improvements in delivery of the RTO's services.

Element 1.5   Assessment, including Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL):
   a) meets the requirements of the relevant Training Package or accredited course
   b) is conducted in accordance with the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence
   c) meets workplace and, where relevant, regulatory requirements.

(1) AQTF 2007 Users' Guide to the essential standards for registration © Commonwealth of Australia

Therefore the policies within this section deal with issues that arise in the processes that manage and report on assessment, for example:

- moderation and validation of results
- grading of assessment
- special consideration
- appeals against assessment
- academic progress.

Further Information:

Policies
Assessment – General 7.32.1.1
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=det2rlnje0ay

Grades for Recording Student Performance in a Course Operating Procedure 7.32.1.2
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=35g6ignxs74z;STATUS=A?QRY=7.32.1.2&STYPE=ENTIRE

Awarding Degrees with Honours or Pass with Distinction – Operating Procedure 7.34.1.1
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=bloz6f88b3wr

Procedures
Course Guides 7.29.1.1
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=f0xsfhoxeig3;STATUS=A?QRY=7.29.1.1&STYPE=ENTIRE

Business Rules for the recording of competencies
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=94ix2xecbche1

Resources
RMIT Practical Guide to Teaching: Managing and Reporting Assessment
(Web page currently under development)

Results Processing Online (RPO) user manuals
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=m7r6amq9wl351;STATUS=A?QRY=rpo&STYPE=ENTIRE

AQTF 2007
http://www.training.com.au/aqtf2007/

RMIT VET Essentials
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=2z2kw3d6pw12;STATUS=A?QRY=vet%20essentials&STYPE=ENTIRE

RMIT Learning & Teaching Development
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse/Staff%2FLearning%20and%20Teaching/

RMIT Practical Guide to Teaching: Designing Assessment
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=ynld7o7p16ld

4.2   Moderation & Validation of Assessment

The University provides a systematic approach to the moderation and validation of assessment. These mechanisms are utilised to improve student learning and how it is measured in a broader University context.

Moderation is a process which is carried out to maximise consistency, fairness, flexibility and reliability in assessment.   This is particularly important given the multiple campus offerings available at RMIT. It should occur in the design process and be ongoing in the delivery of courses and programs.

Validation ensures that assessment processes are internally and externally valid and appropriate to the stated outcomes. Validation should be carried out as part of the design and regular review of programs and courses. Internal consistency ensures that the assessment is aligned with the course capabilities/ competencies and external validation ensures that the assessment is aligned with industry and professional requirements.

Moderation and validation of assessment ensures that assessment:

- promotes, reinforces and rewards student learning
- is aligned with the learning outcomes and capabilities/competencies of each program or course
- is consistent with the Overarching Assessment Principles
- achieves the objectives of the Program Quality Assurance system
- meets the quality requirements of external agencies, including the relevant Standards of the Australian Quality Training Framework.

The Moderation and Validation Policy applies to all VET programs and Higher Education coursework programs.

Further Information:

Policies
Moderation & Validation of Assessment Policy
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=jof1m3aqzf23

Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)
http://www.aqf.edu.au/

Work Integrated Learning Policy
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=mkxzygomvv8v

Procedures
Moderation & Validation of Assessment - H. Ed
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=onpk51q9aflj

Moderation & Validation of Assessment – VET
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=841h6cd6cpsf1

Moderation & Validation of Assessment – RMIT Vietnam
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=v9im7lk6sgnoz

Assessment General Operating Procedure 7.32.1.1
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=det2rlnje0ay;STATUS=A?QRY=7.32.1.1&STYPE=ENTIRE

Management of practical placement and work experience procedure
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=xhf48edklrpv

RMIT VET Essentials
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=2z2kw3d6pw12;STATUS=A?QRY=vet%20essentials&STYPE=ENTIRE

Resources
RMIT Learning & Teaching Development
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse/Staff%2FLearning%20and%20Teaching/

WIL in Creative Practice Contexts Resource
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=jpyz7i8myrv3

4.3   Grading of Assessment

Results are released to students online after the official release date each semester/term. An official transcript printed on polymer stock with advanced security features and containing the full academic record is provided to students after conferral of their award (graduation). Students may also request an official transcript from The Hub at any time upon payment of a fee.

A range of formally approved grades are used to record student performance in assessment. The range of results can differ between Higher Education and VET programs due to the differing requirements of competency-based assessment.

In Competency based training the minimum level of reporting assessment outcomes is at the unit level. Assessment outcomes must primarily be reported on the basis of the candidate being either *competent* or *not yet competent*. However this does not preclude supplementary reporting based on endorsed quality principles. Supplementary reporting of some form of grading may occur. Any supplementary reporting of graded assessment outcomes must be shown as additional information and should not detract or obscure the report of the primary outcome, which is competent or not yet competent.

4.3.1   Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning

Credit Transfer, Recognition of Prior Learning and Recognition of Current Competency are assessment processes that provide formal recognition of the skills students have gained through formal and informal education and training, work and/or life experience.

Students may apply for credit towards their current program of enrolment, or in the case of Vocational Education and Training students, for individual modules/competencies or even a complete qualification.

The costs for assessment of credit/recognition vary depending on the type of credit and how many courses or modules/competencies sought. Detailed information is provided on the individual credit/recognition application forms available on the Current Students webpage.

4.3.2 Grade Point Average System

In addition to standard grades, a system of Grade Point Average (GPA) is used for both Higher Education and some nationally recognised or state accredited VET programs to provide an internationally recognised measure of student performance in a program. The GPA score is recorded on the transcript of results.

GPA is used for a number of reasons, including ranking for:
- award of scholarships and prizes
- award of degrees with Honours and Pass with Distinction
- articulation from VET to Higher Education programs
- entry into Research programs

- entry into undergraduate and postgraduate programs at other Australian universities.

GPA is a numerical calculation, weighted by Student Contact Hours (VET) and Credit Points (Higher Education), of the mean of the grades received over a defined study period. RMIT uses a four point GPA scale.

The following method is used to calculate GPA. For each course:

- Multiply the number of Student Contact Hours (VET)/Credit Points (Higher Education) by the Grade Point Value of the grade received. This determines the Grade Points for each course.
- Then divide the total Grade Points by the Student Contact Hours (VET)/Credit Points (Higher Education) to determine the Grade Point Average.

Final Grades

The following tables provide a general overview of the range of grades available and their Grade Point Value. This table is intended as a guide only. For example, not all 'VET' grades apply to (and pass rates can vary within) some VET Programs. Detailed information on the grades available by specific career and program should be sought from the links provided at the end of this section.

Grade	Description	Result Range	Grade Point Value	Applicable Career
HD	High Distinction	80 – 100	4	H. Ed & VET[1]
DI	Distinction	70 – 79	3	H. Ed & VET[1]
CR	Credit	60 – 69	2	H. Ed & VET[1]
PA	Pass	50 – 59	1	H. Ed & VET[1]
PX	Pass	50 - 100 No higher grade available for this assessment	Not included in GPA calculation	H. Ed & VET[1]
CA	Competency Achieved	CA	Not included in GPA calculation	VET Only[2]
SP	Supplementary Pass	Denotes a pass achieved via supplementary assessment	1	H. Ed & VET[1]
PC	Pass by Compensation	Denotes a pass awarded in place of an earned fail grade for a course on the basis of a student's overall performance in a program	0	H. Ed Only
NN	Fail	0 – 49	0	H. Ed & VET[1]
NYC	Not yet competent		Not included in GPA calculation	VET Only[2]
DNS	Did Not Submit	Denotes that a student did not submit any assessable work.	0	H. Ed & VET[3]
WDR	Withdrawn from course	Denotes that a student withdrew from the course after the census date but prior to the date for academic penalty	Not included in GPA calculation	H. Ed & VET

(1) In the case of VET these grades can apply where graded assessment is used
(2) Applies to VET programs delivered via competency based assessment
(3) In the case of VET this grade does not apply to programs delivered via competency based assessment

Interim Grades

The following are interim grades which will change to a final grade either as a result of further action by the student or the lapse of a predetermined time period.

Grade	Description	Grade Point Value	Applicable Career
DEF	Deferred Assessment – Denotes that a deferral has been granted to a formal examination or assessment via Special Consideration	Not included in GPA calculation	H. Ed & VET
RW	Result Withheld – this grade may apply if results are pending due to an extension of time for an assessment, or if Supplementary Assessment has been granted by a School.	Not included in GPA calculation	H. Ed & VET
S	Supplementary Exam Granted	Not included in GPA calculation	VET Only
NEX	Denotes that no assessment was scheduled for this course during the semester/term of enrolment	Not included in GPA calculation	H. Ed & VET

Credit Transfer, Recognition of learning/Competency and Externally Assessed Grades

Grade	Description	Grade Point Value	Applicable Career
EX	Exemption Granted	Not included in GPA calculation	H. Ed & VET
BX	Block Exemption Granted	Not included in GPA calculation	H. Ed & VET
AL	Assessed / Recognised Learning	Not included in GPA calculation	VET Only
EPG	External Pass Grade – For students engaged in exchange, study abroad and cross-institutional study	Not included in GPA calculation	H. Ed Only
EFG	External Fail Grade – For students engaged in exchange, study abroad and cross-institutional study	Not included in GPA calculation	H. Ed Only
ECP	External Compassionate Pass - For students engaged in exchange, study abroad and cross-institutional study	Not included in GPA calculation	H. Ed Only
RCG	Recognition of Current Competency – Granted	Not included in GPA calculation	VET Only
RCN	Recognition of Current Competency – Not Granted	Not included in GPA calculation	VET Only
RLG	Recognition of Prior Learning – Granted	Not included in GPA calculation	VET Only
RLN	Recognition of Prior Learning – Not Granted	Not included in GPA calculation	VET Only

4.3.4 Awarding Degrees with Honours or Pass with Distinction

The following table provides an overview of the awards that may be granted with Honours or Pass with Distinction. In all cases the award is based on GPA calculation and can only be determined when all requirements of an award have been met.

These awards are managed by the Student Progress Committee at the end of each teaching period.

Award	Classification Level	GPA threshold
All VET	Pass only	Not Applicable
Associate & Advanced Diploma	Pass only	Not Applicable
Diploma	Pass only	Not Applicable
Associate Degree	Pass only	Not Applicable
Bachelor Degree (3 yr normal duration)	Degree with Distinction	3.00 or above
Bachelor Degree (= or > 4 yr normal duration)	Honours 1st Class (H1)	3.00 or above
	Honours 2A (H2A)	2.50 – 2.99
	Honours 2B (H2B)	2.00 – 2.49
	Pass	Less than 2.00
Honours Degree (1 yr normal duration)	Honours 1st Class (H1)	Currently under review
	Honours 2A (H2A)	Currently under review
	Honours 2B (H2B)	Currently under review
	Honours 3 (H3)	Currently under review
Graduate Certificate	With Distinction	3.00 or above
Graduate Diploma	With Distinction	3.00 or above
Master by Coursework	With Distinction	3.00 or above

4.3.5 Management of Borderline Fails

All borderline fail scripts, whether major assessment or examination papers are marked by a second examiner. The criteria for determining 'borderline' are normally outlined in the Course Guides for the Higher Education Sector. Where this is not the case a guiding principle has been included in the Guidelines for Student Progress Committees Managing the Academic Progress Policy and Procedures. A link to that document is included under the Further Information heading below.

Further Information:

Statutes
Statute 5.3 Admission to Advanced Standing
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=t7ub21lauvwq

Policies
Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Policy
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=rkjcai2py1qnz

Procedures
Grades for Recording Student Performance in a Course Operating Procedure 7.32.1.2
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=35g6ignxs74z;STATUS=A?QRY=7.32.1.2&STYPE=ENTIRE

Awarding Degrees with Honours or Pass with Distinction – Operating Procedure 7.34.1.1
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=bloz6f88b3wr;STATUS=A?QRY=7.34.1.1&STYPE=ENTIRE

Results Processing Online User Manuals & Guidelines
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=m7r6amq9wl351;STATUS=A?QRY=rpo&STYPE=ENTIRE

Resources
Current Students Web page – Grading Information
http://www.rmit.edu.au/students/grading

Credit Transfer & Recognition of Prior Learning
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=8u7jborsx9dy

Guidelines for Student progress Committees Managing the Academic Progress Policy
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=vj2g89cve4uj1;STATUS=A;SECTION=2;PAGE_AUTHOR=Andrea%20Syers

4.4   Special Consideration & Reasonable Adjustments

A range of assessment adjustment mechanisms are provided to enable the University to take account of a range of learning needs and to respond to unexpected circumstances such as serious illness, injury or bereavement that have affected a student's performance in assessment. These include:

- Special Consideration
- Equitable Assessment Arrangements
- Supplementary Assessment
- Deferred & Re-sit Assessment
- Alternative Assessment
- Extension of Time for Submission of Assessable Work
- Pass by Compensation.

4.4.1 Special Consideration

Special Consideration is considered a significant form of adjustment and is only granted where a serious incident has impacted on a student's ability to be assessed.   For example, it is not normally granted for minor issues such as the symptoms associated with a cold or hayfever, or for symptoms which can be managed relatively easily by readily available medication.

The University introduced a number of important changes to its Special Consideration policy during 2007. These changes were designed to simplify the application process for students and ensure a more consistent outcome. RMIT has a centralised Special Consideration process where applications are lodged centrally and considered by a panel with health and academic expertise, convened by the Academic Registrar.

Application Process

Students must complete the Special Consideration Application Form and lodge it at The Hub (or other recognised service centre if offshore) no later than two working days after the examination that has been affected. Applications may also be emailed to special.consideration@rmit.edu.au where the student is able to scan the form and supporting documents.

All applications must be accompanied by independent substantiating documentation written in the language of instruction, or be accompanied by an authorised translation.

Outcomes

Some of the possible outcomes of an application for Special Consideration include:
- Alternative Assessment
- Extension of Time (Greater than 7 calendar days – a separate extension process applies for shorter extensions)
- Equitable Assessment Arrangement
- Deferred or Re-sit Assessment
- Approval of Late Course Withdrawal Without Academic Penalty
- Application Refused

(Supplementary Assessment is not available as an outcome of a Special Consideration Application)

Communication

All communication with students about lodged applications (including notification of the outcome) is made via the official RMIT student email account.

Further Information:

Regulations
Regulation 5.4.4 - The University Appeals Committee
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=xyet3nk9062v;STATUS=A?QRY=5.4.4&STYPE=ENTIRE

Policies
Special Consideration in Assessment Policy
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=qkssnx1c5r0y

Procedures
Special Consideration in Assessment Procedures
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=riderwtscifm

Resources
Special Consideration Application Form
http://mams.rmit.edu.au/8a5dgcaqvaes1.pdf

Frequently Asked Questions
Current Students Webpage
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=g43abm17hc9w

4.4.2 Equitable Assessment Arrangements

An Equitable Assessment Arrangement is an adjustment or alteration to the standard conditions or format of an assessment. It is designed to ensure equitable access to assessment to all RMIT students. It aims to lessen the impact of a disability or inability to participate in a standard assessment activity due to specific valid reasons to enable the student to be assessed in a fair way. It does not represent a weakening or lowering of the academic standard being assessed, it merely addresses the ability of a student to access and undertake the assessment effectively.

Equitable Assessment Arrangements differ from Special Consideration in that they are planned, proactive arrangements to ensure an equitable assessment environment rather than reactive processes to provide compensation for unexpected illness or hardship. Examples of where an Equitable Assessment Arrangement might be granted include where a student has a relevant learning disability, or is required to be absent from the University for professional reasons, including military or other essential service.

Application Process

Students must complete the Application for Equitable Assessment Arrangements form as soon as they become aware of the need and lodge it at The Hub (or other recognised service centre if offshore). Early notification enhances the ability of the University to provide a reasonable level of assistance to students. Where the application is lodged less than four weeks prior to the assessment there is no guarantee that the University will be able to offer a full range of assistance.

Applications based on grounds of a learning disability may be lodged either with the Disability Liaison Unit or at The Hub (or other recognised service centre if offshore). All other applications should be lodged at The Hub (or other recognised service centre if offshore).

In the case of applications based on a learning disability, the Manager of the Disability Liaison Unit (in consultation with the student and the school) will recommend an outcome to the Academic Registrar. In all other cases the Academic Registrar (or nominee) will assess the application and decide the outcome.

Outcomes

Some of the possible outcomes of an application for Equitable Assessment Arrangements can include:
- Flexible conduct and supervision arrangements (e.g. where an examination paper is delivered to a remote location under approved supervision arrangements)
- Use of ergonomic furniture or special seating arrangements
- Use of a computer for a traditionally paper-based examination
- Use of adaptive technology
- Alternative format examination media (e.g. large print, audio, Braille, electronic)
- Additional reading and/or assessment time
- Rest breaks
- Assistance from Disability Support Workers (e.g. Scribes, Auslan interpreters)

Communication

All communication with students about lodged applications (including notification of the outcome) is made via the official RMIT student email account.

Further Information:

Regulations
Regulation 5.4.4 - The University Appeals Committee
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=xyet3nk9062v

Policies
Equitable Assessment Arrangements Policy
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=01e1u3bemz5gz

Procedures
Equitable Assessment Arrangements Procedure
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=pgt1vmkwj1uv

Resources
Equitable Assessment Arrangements Application Form
http://mams.rmit.edu.au/o2fcsu347cr3.pdf

Guidelines on Alternative Assessment
(insert link to John Milton's guidelines when on web)

Frequently Asked Questions
Current Students Webpage
http://www.rmit.edu.au/students/equitableassessment

4.4.3 Supplementary Assessment

A Supplementary Assessment is an additional form of assessment designed to assist in determining whether a student has achieved the academic standard required for a pass level of achievement.

A Supplementary Assessment may be granted by the Student Progress Committee (of the School that owns the course) in extremely limited situations where there is 'inadequate evidence' to determine whether a student has passed a course. 'Inadequate evidence' means:

a) evidence is available that an item of assessment submitted or completed by the student in accordance with the provisions of the course guide is missing or rendered unable to be assessed through no fault of the student, the absence of which will result in the student having insufficient marks to pass the course.
    or;
b) an external assessor has failed to fulfil their assessment obligations, or a dispute has arisen between the University and the external assessor and the student has insufficient marks from any progressive assessment to pass the course.

The grounds upon which a supplementary Assessment has been granted should be documented by the School and retained for audit purposes, and as evidence in the case of any appeal against results.

A Supplementary Assessment can apply to coursework programs including VET, undergraduate and postgraduate. However it does not apply to competency-based training packages.

The form of the Supplementary Assessment (which may be in any suitable format) should be determined by the Head of the School that owns the course (or nominee) and, wherever possible, be prepared by the original Assessor/Course Coordinator and must test the same areas of skill and depth of knowledge as the original assessment. In cases in which an assessment component or components have been failed (including hurdle requirements), the Supplementary Assessment must be for those components only.

Where a student passes the Supplementary Assessment they are awarded a grade of SP (Supplementary Pass), which attracts a Grade Point value of 1. No higher grade is available.

Further Information:

Policies
Supplementary Assessment Policy
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=zbpetmy28o6z

Procedures
Student Progress Committee Terms of Reference
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=q3dve00vnuix1

Frequently Asked Questions
Current Student's Webpage
http://www.rmit.edu.au/students/asschange

4.4.4 Deferred and Re-sit Assessment

A deferral of, or opportunity to re-sit a formally scheduled assessment activity or examination is a major concession which may be granted as an outcome of a Special Consideration application.

A Deferred or Re-sit Assessment may apply to all coursework programs including VET, undergraduate and postgraduate.

The need may arise due to unexpected or extenuating circumstances which:
- Prevented a student from attempting a formally scheduled assessment task or examination, or
- Prevented a student from completing a formally scheduled assessment task or examination, or
- Had a serious negative impact on the student's performance in an assessment task or examination.

It is important to note that the following deadlines for completion of Deferred and Re-sit assessments are strictly enforced:

- For programs with two main teaching periods per year (i.e. on-shore), Deferred and Re-sit assessments must be held by the end of the first week of the next semester.
- For programs with more than two main teaching periods per year (i.e. some off-shore programs), the Deferred and Re-sit assessments must be held within 4 weeks of the date of publication of results for the relevant semester.

The rationale for these deadlines is to ensure that students are able to make any necessary adjustments (subsequent to their performance in the Deferred or Re-sit assessment) to their next semester of study prior to the deadlines for adding and dropping courses and to facilitate management of student academic progress.

Where a student passes a Deferred or Re-sit Assessment the full range of grades can apply, depending upon their performance.

Application Process

Students must apply for a Deferred or Re-sit assessment via the Special Consideration Application Form, and process outlined in this manual.

Further Information:

Policies
Deferred & Re-sit Assessment Policy
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=j38lcj24vjh8z

Special Consideration in Assessment Policy
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=qkssnx1c5r0y

Procedures
Special Consideration in Assessment Procedure
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=riderwtscifm

Resources
Special Consideration Application Form
http://mams.rmit.edu.au/8a5dgcaqvaes1.pdf

Frequently Asked Questions
http://www.rmit.edu.au/students/asschange

4.4.5 Alternative Assessment

An Alternative Assessment may be offered where a student is unable to complete an assessment task in its original form. Alternative Assessments are normally granted either via Special Consideration or an Equitable Assessment Arrangement.

In response to requests from schools for guidance and resources to assist them in dealing with requests for alternative assessments, a comprehensive set of guidelines and resources have been recently developed by Learning and Teaching Development.

Application Process

Students must apply for an Alternative Assessment Arrangement via either the Special Consideration Application Form, or Equitable Assessment Arrangements Form and process outlined in this guide.

Further Information:

Policies
Equitable Assessment Arrangements Policy
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=01e1u3bemz5gz

Special Consideration in Assessment Policy
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=qkssnx1c5r0y

Procedures
Equitable Assessment Arrangements Procedure
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=pgt1vmkwj1uv

Special Consideration in Assessment Procedure
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=riderwtscifm

Resources
Special Consideration Application Form
http://mams.rmit.edu.au/8a5dgcaqvaes1.pdf

Equitable Assessment Arrangement Form
http://mams.rmit.edu.au/o2fcsu347cr3.pdf

Guidelines on Alternative Assessment
(insert link to John Milton's guidelines when on web)

Frequently Asked Questions
Current Students Webpage
http://www.rmit.edu.au/students/equitableassessment

4.4.6 Extension of Time for Submission of Assessable Work

Under certain circumstances students may apply for an extension of time in which to lodge submittable assessment tasks.

Short term extensions (up to a maximum of seven calendar days from the original due date) are managed by the School which offers the course. All other extensions are managed via the centralised Special Consideration policy.

A University-wide procedure was introduced from the beginning of 2008 to ensure consistency in the management of short term extensions. The procedure applies to all coursework programs in all careers. This change responds to feedback on the Special Consideration policy from the University community.

Application Process

Short Term Extensions (up to a maximum of seven calendar days from the original due date)

Students must complete the Extension of Time for Submission of Assessable Work Form no later than one working day before the original submission due date. This form is lodged with the School which offers the course. The School will advise the student of the outcome of their application.

All other Extensions

All other applications for extension must be made via the normal Special Consideration process outlined in this manual.

Further Information:

Policies
Special Consideration in Assessment Policy
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=qkssnx1c5r0y

Procedures
Extension of Time Procedure
http://mams.rmit.edu.au/j7u98q1n1xkz.pdf

Special Consideration in Assessment Procedure
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=riderwtscifm

Resources
Extension of Time for Submission of Assessable Work Application Form
http://mams.rmit.edu.au/seca86tti4g4z.pdf

4.4.7 Pass by Compensation

A Student Progress Committee may address an anomalous fail in an individual student's academic history by the award of a Pass by Compensation. However it does not apply to competency-based training packages.

A Pass by Compensation may be awarded in place of an earned fail grade for a course on the basis of a student's overall performance in the program.

Pass by Compensation applies to Undergraduate and curriculum based VET programs, however a Portfolio is entitled to declare that Pass by Compensation does not apply to a Program where legislative or external accreditation do not permit its use.

A Student Progress Committee may award a Pass by Compensation for a failed course where:
- The failed course is taken in the final semester of study and is the final requirement for a student to qualify for an award; and
- The failed course is weighted no more than 12 credit points or equivalent; and
- The student has passed all other courses in the teaching period and the failed course has a result in the range of 45 to 49%.

Eligibility for a Pass by Compensation is determined by the Student Progress Committee which meets following the main assessment period to review student academic progress.

Where a Pass by Compensation is granted the grade of PC (Pass by Compensation) is recorded, which attracts a Grade Point value of zero.

Further Information:

Regulations
Regulation 5.4.1 – Assessment
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=5svh7yog5qxr

Policies
Pass by Compensation Policy
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=cau3ttsp8dpy

Procedures
Student Progress Committee Terms of Reference
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=q3dve00vnuix1

Operating Procedure Assessment General 7.32.1.1
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=det2rlnje0ay

4.4.8 Appeals Against Assessment

Students are entitled to seek a review of their final results where they believe:
- An error has occurred in the calculation of the grade; or
- The assessment did not comply with criteria published in the Course Guide; or
- The criteria published in the course guide does not meet the requirements of the relevant training package or accredited course (VET only); or
- The assessment did not comply with University Policies on Assessment (i.e. an error of process has occurred).

The Appeals Against Assessment policy and procedure applies to all coursework programs in all careers. There are two stages in the appeal process and students are required to follow the stages in order to ensure their full entitlement to appeal is available.

Stage 1
Students must first seek a review of the result with the School that offered the course as a matter of priority after the date of official publication of the result.

Stage 2
Students may appeal against an assessment outcome to the Portfolio Appeals Committee where:
- They can demonstrate that they have followed the provisions of Stage 1 above but believe that the matter has not been resolved at the School level; and
- They can demonstrate that the grounds for appeal exist.

The deadline for lodging an appeal against an assessment outcome with the Portfolio Appeals Committee is 20 working days after the date of official publication of the result.

It is strongly recommended that students wishing to appeal their results read the Appeals Against Assessment Policy and Procedure carefully as the procedures vary depending upon the career.

Generally the Portfolio Appeals Committee is the ultimate avenue of appeal against results within the university with the following exception:
- There is evidence that there was a breach of University Regulation, Policy or Procedure in the handling of their appeal by the Portfolio Appeals Committee.

Further Information:

Regulations
Regulation 5.4.2 – The Portfolio Appeals Committee
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=4muhud9f01us

Regulation 5.4.4 - The University Appeals Committee
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=xyet3nk9062v

Regulation 5.4.1 - Assessment
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=5svh7yog5gxr

Operating procedure Assessment General 7.32.1.1
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=det2rlnje0ay

Policies
Appeals Against Assessment Policy
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=xe27xu4dcpvm1

Procedures
Appeals Against Assessment Procedure
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=ikqkqdh2zf5n1

4.5   Academic Progress

Management of student academic progress is a cornerstone of the core business of the University.

A new policy and procedure for managing student academic progress was introduced in semester/term two, 2007 which applies to both Higher Education and VET programs.

The key objectives of the new policy are to:
- Provide improved management of student academic progress; and
- Improve student retention rates.

The policy promotes the early identification of students who are not achieving acceptable academic performance to enable the provision of proactive assistance and to ensure students are aware of the range of support services available to them at the University.

Among the key changes introduced with the new policy are:
- Greater clarity of the fact that two semesters or terms of unsatisfactory academic performance within the same Program can lead to a decision to exclude a student from their Program. These semesters/terms need not be sequential and the grounds for unsatisfactory academic performance need not be the same

- A greater emphasis on early intervention and being proactive in advising students of relevant support services

- Appeals against exclusion for established unsatisfactory academic progress are now lodged directly with the University Appeals Committee

- A higher level of consistency in procedural arrangements

- A single policy for both Higher Education and VET.

The Policy and Procedures clearly articulate the specific responsibilities of students and academic and administrative staff of the University in managing and monitoring academic progress.

Student Progress Committees play a critical role in the identification and management of students who have had unsatisfactory academic performance. In recognition of this a comprehensive set of Terms of Reference and Guidelines have been developed to provide the Student Progress Committee with guidance in carrying out its roles.

Academic Advisors play a critical role in meeting with and providing advice and guidance to students regarding their academic progress. A detailed set of guidelines has been developed to assist staff who carry out this role.

Detailed templates and processes are used (located on the RMIT Policy web site) to ensure that all critical information is provided to assist students who are not achieving satisfactory academic performance.

Engagement by students with their studies in general and particularly in the early stages of management of their academic progress is the simple instrument for academic success. If an academic advisor suggests that a student access learning or other support, it is strongly recommended that the student does so promptly.

Another innovation of the Policy was introduced a single institute-wide definition of unsatisfactory academic performance (please see Table 4.4.9 Definition of Unsatisfactory Academic Performance for RMIT Students on the next page).

Table 4.4.9: Definition of Unsatisfactory Academic Performance for RMIT Students

A student will be held to have unsatisfactory academic performance when one of more of the following conditions are deemed to exist:	Higher Education Coursework		VET	
	Domestic, Vietnam Campus & International Off-shore students	International On-shore students	Domestic & international Off-shore students	International On-shore students
1 Has failed 40% or more of the enrolled course load in any given semester or teaching period.	●	●	●	●
2 Has failed to comply with conditions prescribed in an academic performance improvement plan.	●	●	●	●
3 Has failed a course for a second time.	●	●		
4 Has demonstrated that progress through a program will not allow completion of the program in the maximum time allowed for that program.	●			
5 Has demonstrated that progress through a program will not allow completion of the program in the expected duration for that program (as stated in the ECOE) and has not shown compelling circumstances to explain the lack of progress.		●		●
6 Has failed to meet progress requirements prescribed in the ESOS Act 2000 or other regulations that affect eligibility for an Australian student visa.		●		●
7 Has been deemed not yet competent in the same course/module/competency for the second successive enrolment			●	●
8 Has not met the timelines prescribed in the apprentices/trainees training plan.			●	
9 Has attended less than 80% of the scheduled contact hours.				●

Note: ● symbol denotes that the criterion applies to that student cohort

Students who have had two semesters or terms of unsatisfactory academic performance are invited to show cause to their School why they should not be excluded. It is critical that students engage fully in the show cause process if they are serious about continuing in their program. An appeal to the University Appeals Committee is not a further opportunity to show cause where the student failed to engage in that step of the process.

Communication:

Aside from the important ongoing personal contact between students and their academic and School administrative staff, the primary means of formal communication with students regarding the management of academic progress is via the student email account. It is essential that students check their email account regularly and manage it responsibly. These are clearly articulated and fundamental student responsibilities.

Further Information:

Regulations
Statute 5.4 – Academic Progress
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=ph28mhu947er

Regulation 5.4.1 - Assessment
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=5svh7yog5qxr

Regulation 5.4.4 - The University Appeals Committee
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=xyet3nk9062v

Policies
Academic Progress Policy
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=vj2g89cve4uj1

Maximum Time Policy
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;FORMQRY=ADV%253DSearch%2526all%253Downer%25253D10
0%2526any%253Dmaximum%252Btime;ID=p3kvq8uvcerv;STATUS=A?QRY=%2B(owner%3D10
0)%20%2B(|maximum%20|time)

Procedures
Procedures for the Management of Unsatisfactory Academic Progress
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=b1wem2lndlwv1

Student Progress Committee – Terms of Reference
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=q3dve00vnuix1

Academic Progress Correspondence and Proforma Templates
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=b1wem2lndlwv1;STATUS=A;SECTION=2;PAGE_AUTHOR=An
drea%20Syers

Guidelines for Academic Advisors
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=b1wem2lndlwv1;STATUS=A;SECTION=2;PAGE_AUTHOR=An
drea%20Syers

Operating procedure Assessment General 7.32.1.1
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=det2rlnje0ay

5   Assessing Student Work

5.1 Feedback *to* learners

Assessment should be integral to the learning experience where the act of assessing student work provides feedback to the learner about the quality of their academic progress and standard related to the assessment activity. Such course of action is an indicator of good assessment practice and is an expectation at RMIT. Consequently, the act of assessing student work contributes to providing a mix of both formative and summative feedback to students on the progress of their learning within a course.

A significant indicator of good assessment practice is to make explicit how assessment tasks are going to be assessed. Such an approach, known as criterion referenced assessment, frequently requires that criteria are established and accessible to learners prior to undertaking the assessment tasks.

Further Information:

Regulation
Regulation 5.4.1 - Assessment
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=5svh7yog5qxr

Policy
Assessment – General 7.32.1.1
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=det2rlnje0ay

Resources
RMIT Practical Guide to Teaching: Assessing Student Work
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=ksx4dsplo5rd

RMIT Learning and Teaching Strategy 2007-2010
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=xz7wbuvjnc0l

5.2 Assessment Procedures

Regulation 5.4.1 Assessment establishes that each course must be assessed and that the Academic Portfolio is responsible for determining the form and content of the assessment.

Details of the form, criteria for marking, and weighting allocated to each assessment are published in the Course Guide.

Most formal end of semester examinations are scheduled and conducted centrally and the examination timetable is published on the RMIT website.

5.2.1 Assessment Operating Procedures

To ensure the integrity of the assessment process there are strictly enforced guidelines governing timing, conduct, behaviour, supervision, attendance, and items and devices prohibited from being taken into exams.

5.2.2 Operating Procedures for the conduct of examinations – Staff Information

Detailed operating procedures are available via the staff section of the RMIT webpage. These are

a comprehensive set of procedures for staff involved with the conduct of examinations, including administrative and academic staff as well as examination supervisors. They provide detailed instructions on:

- Examination timetabling & venue locations
- Guidelines for the preparation of examination scripts
- Management of examination papers, venues & materials
- Appointment and training of examination supervisors
- Managing student attendance and misconduct during exams
- Emergency evacuation procedures
- Responsibilities of examiners.

5.2.3 Examination Operating Procedures – Students

These are a comprehensive set of procedures which provide detailed instructions for students on:
- Timing of exams
- Reading time
- Exam timetables
- Student responsibilities
- How to manage a clash of exams
- Conditions of entry to exam venues
- Personal items allowed in exam venues
- Student identification requirements
- Rules of conduct
- Emergency procedures.

Further Information:

Regulations
Regulation 5.4.1 - Assessment
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=5svh7yog5qxr

Procedures
Examination Operating Procedures – Students
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=xwem6xd0qyj2

Exams – Staff Information
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=20luj3sb244x#_Examinations

Resources
Course Guide Guidelines
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=bocxhl6iru4c

5.3 Feedback *from* students
Essential to the quality and improvement of course and program delivery is to receive feedback on the curriculum, teaching and learning from the students. This is only one type of feedback that can contribute to enhancing course and program quality; yet it is powerful feedback from a key stakeholder in the learning and teaching process.

At RMIT there are a number of survey tools that have been developed for this particular purpose and use across the university. For example, student perceptions are captured by the:
- Course Experience Survey (CES) – students assess their course experience
- Student Experience Survey (SES) – students assess their university wide and program experiences.

Further Information

Policies
Student Feedback Policy
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=9pp3ic9obks7

Procedures
Course level student feedback
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=ucgrw08eroma

Resources
RMIT Practical Guide to Teaching: Evaluating practice
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=k6jktadszgyc1

Survey Services Centre
http://www.rmit.edu.au/SSC

6   Academic Integrity

6.1   Student Responsibilities

The University's assessment related policies and procedures are designed to assist students achieve independent academic success.

The experience of Student Progress Committees and findings of Portfolio and University Appeals Committees hearings confirm that the likelihood of academic success is related directly to the extent to which students engage with the University, its policies and procedures and their commitment to academic discipline. In the vast majority of cases the choice between academic success and failure really is in the hands of the student.

Statement of Student Responsibilities

All enrolled students are bound by this statement. In summary, as a student of RMIT you must:
- Participate fully as an independent and active learner
- Assume responsibility for the choices you make in relation to your program of study
- Adhere to academic advice, the published program structure and study load requirements
- Comply with University regulations, policies and procedures
- Provide accurate and up to date information as required for enrolment
- Read your RMIT student email account at least weekly
- Accept responsibility for correcting any enrolment errors you make
- Read and be guided by the official Course Guides.

Student Charter

The RMIT Student Charter defines important aspects of the broader relationship between the University and its students.

All students are strongly encouraged to read the Charter, which includes the following sorts of responsibilities:
- Be fully committed to your own learning, the decisions you take in relation to it, and the challenges involved
- Work with honest and integrity
- Give and receive feedback about your experiences and participate in continuous improvement processes
- Treat all members of the University community with respect
- Value the diversity of students and staff
- Reject discrimination and harassment
- Champion independent thought
- Respect University facilities and resources, relevant policies, and follow safety and security advice
- Provide up to date, accurate and timely student information when required
- Accept responsibility for decisions made about courses and program choices.

Academic Progress

The University expects all students to be committed to their learning, including taking responsibility

for their own academic progress. Students who have been identified as making unsatisfactory performance, or at risk of making unsatisfactory progress, must take all possible steps to improve their performance including seeking feedback, using available support services and participating fully in the development and implementation of an Academic Performance Improvement Plan.

If you are invited to show cause to your School why you should not be excluded for established unsatisfactory academic performance it is critical that you engage fully in the show cause process if you are serious about continuing in your program. An appeal to the University Appeals Committee is not a further opportunity to show cause where you failed to engage in that step of the process[1].

All RMIT students are expected to adhere to the assessment principles, policies and procedures listed in this manual. To maximise your chances of academic success it is strongly recommended that you:

Use assessment to support your learning by:
- Undertaking self-assessment to ensure that you are ready and prepared for assessment
- Reflecting and acting on assessment feedback
- Where required, developing a reflective portfolio to demonstrate how you are achieving the overall capabilities/competencies of your program as a whole.

Comply with the requirements of the assessment process which means that you should:
- Know and understand exactly what you have to do for each and every assessment task for the course
- Meet the required timelines and attendance (if any) requirements
- Be accountable for the originality and validity of your assessment submissions, and not assist others in any form of plagiarism or cheating
- Follow the instructions of staff regarding the collection of your assessment tasks after marking
- Keep a copy of each submittable assessment item, together with related developmental material in a safe place, at least for the duration of the course
- Participate fully in group assessment activity as required
- Check your RMIT student email account regularly as this is the main form of communication with students during their candidature

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the presentation of the work, idea or creation of another person as though it is your own. It is a form of cheating and is a very serious academic offence that may lead to expulsion from the University. Plagiarised material can be drawn from, and presented in, written, graphic and visual form, including electronic data, and oral presentations. Plagiarism occurs when the origin of the material used is not appropriately cited.

A number of useful resources are available to students at RMIT to assist in understanding what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it.

Academic Conduct

Academic conduct refers to the need to adhere to the University's guidelines, policies and regulations governing learning and assessment.

In addition to specific academic requirements which include maintaining an acceptable level of progress throughout the course of your program, all students are required to observe the broader legal and social behavioural codes whilst at the University.

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[1] Trainees and apprentices cannot be excluded for unsatisfactory progress. Unsatisfactory progress is managed according to the Performance Agreement with Skills Victoria.

Further Information:

Statutes
Student Discipline - Statute 6.1
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=11jgnnjgg70y

Regulations
Student Discipline – Regulation 6.1.1
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=1db54sd7vspz

Procedures
Statement of Student Responsibilities
http://www.rmit.edu.au/students/enrolment/responsibilities

RMIT Student Charter
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=tkn8wtd23h84z

Resources
Academic Integrity @ RMIT
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=kw02ylsd8z3n

6.2 RMIT/Staff Responsibilities

Staff members with assessment responsibilities are required to adhere to the assessment principles, policies and procedures identified throughout this Guide.

Being proactive in the following areas has the potential to reduce the incidence of assessment problems.

Assessment

Staff should ensure assessment supports student learning by:
- Arranging for constructive and timely feedback on each student's achievement and progress
- Ensuring assessment occurs in a range of contexts and on a number of occasions
- Providing opportunities for reflective, integrative assessment of the program as a whole
- Making sure that there is a clear relationship between expected learning outcomes, teaching and assessment
- Ensuring students are provided the opportunity to develop a clear understanding of the requirements of each assessment, by providing:
  - o A written outline of the assessment, containing information about its structure, the assessment criteria, the relative weighting of the tasks, and submission instructions
  - o Appropriate clarification of the assessment when requested
- Being open to and consistent in providing variations in assessments and assessment processes
- Providing written confirmation of any negotiated changes to the assessment or assessment process
- Providing timely notification of submission dates and attendance requirements (noting attendance is not compulsory for HE programs)
- Ensuring that suitable equipment, materials and environment (i.e. laboratories) are available for assessment tasks
- Designing assessment tasks to minimize opportunities for plagiarism and/or cheating, and provide students with clear guidelines of what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it

- Providing and informing students of secure arrangements for lodging assessment items for marking
- Marking without bias and awarding grades which accurately reflect quality of work submitted
- Providing and informing students of secure arrangements for the collection of assessment items after marking

Staff should provide for positive group assessment activities, as necessitated by coursework. Specifically, this requires that you:
- Clearly explain the tasks and responsibilities of group work, and facilitate the preparation of the group student contract
- Provide clear written instructions for group projects, that detail what needs to be done by the group and what is individual work
- Provide guidance for groups that are not functioning effectively, and resolution procedures that groups may adopt as required

Academic Progress

The policy and procedures for academic progress provide very specific responsibilities for academic and administrative staff including providing a supportive learning and teaching environment that will enable students to improve their performance where it has been deemed unsatisfactory. Two important resources to be familiar with are the Terms of Reference for Student Progress Committees and Guidelines for providing Academic Advice to Students.

An overview of the matrix of responsibilities under the academic progress policy is provided in Table 6.2 on the next page for reference.

Further Information:

Regulations
Regulation 5.4.1 - Assessment
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=5svh7yog5qxr

Student Discipline – Regulation 6.1.1
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=1db54sd7vspz

Policies
Academic Progress Policy
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=vj2g89cve4uj1

Assessment – General 7.32.1.1
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=det2rlnje0ay

Procedures
Procedures for the Management of Unsatisfactory Academic Progress
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=b1wem2lndlwv1

Resources
Student Progress Committee – Terms of Reference
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=q3dve00vnuix1

Overarching Assessment Principles
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=81g1msies7yx

Assessment Charter
http://mams.rmit.edu.au/kh6a3ly2wi2h1.pdf

Table 6.2   Academic Progress – Key Responsibilities Matrix ◆ = Key Responsibility. ⊙ = Participatory Responsibility

	Students	Academic Staff	Academic Advisor	Student Progress Committee/ Program Team	Head of School	Portfolio	University Appeals Committee	Academic Registrar	International Services
Commitment to learning & taking responsibility for own academic progress	◆								
Provide supportive learning environment		◆							
Establish Student Progress Committee/ Program Team					◆				
Providing training and support for Academic Advisor						◆			
Assessing student academic performance				◆					
Determining 'at risk' status				◆					
Make appointment with 'at risk' students to discuss performance & develop individual academic performance improvement plan				◆					
Development of individual academic performance improvement plan	⊙		◆						
Invite student deemed 'at risk' for a second time in same program to provide written submission to Student Progress Committee to show cause why they should not be excluded				◆					
Making formal recommendation for exclusion due to established unacceptable academic performance to Academic Registrar					◆				
Annual report on number of students identified at each stage of unsatisfactory progress & number of students recommended for exclusion to Academic Board (Via Registrar)[2]				◆					
Formally advising student of exclusion								◆	
Hearing appeals against exclusion for unsatisfactory academic performance							◆		
Reporting of excluded International On-shore students to Fed. Govt/									◆

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[2] Trainees and apprentices cannot be excluded for unsatisfactory progress. Unsatisfactory progress is managed according to the Performance Agreement with Skills Victoria.