

# Assessment Policy

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## 1. Purpose

To outline the Sydney Institute of Business and Technology (SIBT) principles that guide the processes to be used in the conduct and management of assessment and feedback practices in all units.

## 2. Application

This policy applies to all SIBT students and the staff involved in the assessment process.

## 3. Policy Statements

All assessment design and practice will adhere to evidence-based principles of quality assessment.

Standards based assessment will be used. There will be no pre-determined or ideal distribution of grades across a student cohort. Norm referenced grading (i.e. fitting grades to some predetermined distribution) will not be used.

The following principles will guide assessment practices:

- Assessments will reflect the values identified in SIBT's learning and teaching framework and comply with current legislation, and procedures on privacy.
- Assessment will be aligned with desired course and unit outcomes as detailed in the Unit Guide.
- Assessment practices will be conducted and undertaken ethically and with honesty and integrity by staff and students. Tasks are designed and students educated in ways that promote academic integrity.
- The complexity and challenge of the assessment tasks must be appropriate for the level of the unit and provide opportunities for students to demonstrate evidence of learning.
- There will be between 3 and 6 assessment tasks in each unit.
- The assessment tasks and methods will be diverse (involving multiple forms or modes of performance).
- Assessment methods must comprise both *formative* and *summative* assessment tasks.
- The principles of validity, reliability, flexibility and fairness will be taken into consideration when designing and delivering assessment tasks.
- All units will include a low weighted diagnostic task delivered as early in the semester as feasible and by the end of week 4.
- Where possible, units will include assessment tasks that encourage students to develop skills of peer and self-assessment as part of the SIBT Graduate Signature Capabilities.
- Assessment tasks will provide students with the opportunity to self-assess the quality of their work.
- A marking guide will be provided to students indicating the standard of work required and used to ensure standardised assessment across markers.
- The design and wording of assessments address issues of equity and inclusiveness to accommodate the diversity of the student body and support internationalisation.
- No single assessment task will be worth more than 50% of the total assessment for the unit.
- Students will be shown models or examples of submitted work that demonstrate the assessment requirements.

#### 4. Examinations (if applicable)

- The educational rationale for the examination will be stated in the Unit Guide.
- In reference to Special Consideration requests, Supplementary Assessments will be available for all assessments weighted >10%.
- The final examination will be worth no more than 50% of the total mark for the unit.

#### 5. Participation (if applicable)

If participation is assessed, it is as a contribution to informal presentation and tutorial discussions and the basis upon which grades are allocated is clearly described in the Unit Guide and linked to the Learning Outcomes.

#### 6. Group assessment tasks (if applicable)

The justification for having group tasks as an assessment component will be explained, in relation to the learning outcomes, in the unit guide.

##### 6.1 Grading of group assessment tasks

- Group assessment task cover sheets are to be filled out and signed by all members of the group, indicating the level of contribution from each member.
- Group assessment tasks in which contributions of individual students cannot be identified are graded on a pass/fail basis.
- Group assessment tasks in which contributions of individual students cannot be identified must not constitute more than 30% of the total assessment, unless the unit is graded on a pass/fail basis only.
- Group assessment tasks prepared and presented as a single entity where the contributions of individual students can be identified, are not limited to the above grading restrictions.

#### 7. Grading

The assessment grade is a measure of the extent to which the desired learning outcomes have been achieved for each unit in all courses. The grades the students achieve are descriptive rather than numeric and are officially defined as:

##### 7.1 Grading for all Programs

	Grade	Percentage Range	Descriptors
HD	High Distinction	85 -100	Complete and comprehensive understanding of the unit content; development of relevant skills to a comprehensive level; demonstration of insight in interpretation, analysis and intellectual initiative; and achievement of all major and minor objectives of the unit.
D	Distinction	75-84	Very high level of understanding of the course unit; development of relevant skills to a very high level; demonstration of a very high level of interpretive and analytical ability and intellectual initiative; and achievement of all major and minor objectives of the unit.
CR	Credit	65-74	High level of understanding of unit content development of relevant

	Grade	Percentage Range	Descriptors
			skills to a high level; demonstration of a high level of interpretive and analytical ability; and achievement of all major objectives of the unit; some minor objectives not fully achieved
P	Pass	50-64	Adequate understanding of most of the basic unit content; development of relevant skills to a satisfactory level; adequate interpretive and analytical ability; and achievement of most of all the major objectives of the unit; some minor objectives not achieved.
F	Fail	0-49	An unsatisfactory quality of performance or standard of learning achievement. There was evidence of achievement of desired learning outcomes below the passing standard.
S	Satisfactory	50-100	Provides evidence of achievement of the learning outcomes, within the context of a Pass/Fail unit
W	Withdrawn		Withdrawal from a unit prior to the academic census date. This is NOT counted as failure but is an administrative record of a student's initial enrolment in this unit. It is not included in GPA calculations.
WF	Withdrawn Fail		Withdrawal from a unit after the academic census date with academic penalty. .
EX	Exempt		Recognition of prior learning resulting in an exemption from undertaking the unit.
FA	Fail Absent		Required assessment tasks within the unit are not completed and the student has not withdrawn. It is included in the GPA calculation.

## 7.2 Foundation Program

Foundation Program students who achieve a mark above 30 in any unit, will have a contribution made to their GPA for that result, even though they will receive a Fail grade. For a full explanation of the calculation of the GPA in the Foundation Programs, please refer to section 8.0 GPA Calculation of this policy.

## 8. Grade Point Average Calculations

### 8.1 Foundation Program:

Grades awarded for each unit and the numeric value assigned to each for the purposes of calculating a GPA for entry into an SIBT Diploma are:

	Grade	Percentage Range	Numeric Value for GPA calculation
HD	High Distinction	85 - 100	10
D	Distinction Plus	-80 - 84	9
	Distinction	75 – 79	8
CR	Credit Plus	70 – 74	7

	Grade	Percentage Range	Numeric Value for GPA calculation
	Credit	65 - 69	6
P	Pass Plus	60 – 64	5.5
	Pass	50 – 59	5
F	Marginal Achievement	45 - 49	3.5
	Minor Achievement	31 - 44	1
	Fail	< 30	0
FA	Fail Absent		0
WF	Withdrawn Fail		0

$$\text{GPA} = \frac{\text{Total of scores}}{\text{Total number of enrolled units}}$$

Students must achieve a GPA of 5 to enter an SIBT Diploma.

### 8.2 For Certificate IV, Diploma, Advanced Diploma and Associate Degree

Grades awarded for each unit and the numeric value assigned to each for the purposes of calculating a GPA for entry into University are:

	Grade	Percentage Range	Numeric Value for GPA calculation
HD	High Distinction	85 - 100	4
D	Distinction	75 - 84	4
CR	Credit	65 - 74	3
P	Pass	50 - 64	2
F	Fail	0 - 49	0
FA	Fail Absent		0
WF	Withdrawn Fail		0

$$\text{GPA} = \frac{\text{Total of scores}}{\text{Total number of enrolled units}}$$

## 9. Integrity of assessment processes

### 9.1 *Transparency*

SIBT effectively communicates assessment requirements to students. Students are clearly informed about:

- the range of assessment tasks to be performed;
- the requirements of all assessment activities;
- the marking criteria and weighting for each assessment task;
- the submission dates and presentation requirements; and
- provision for extension, review and appeal.

### 9.2 *Assessment mode*

The 'standards-based assessment' informs students of what performance is required to meet the criteria and the standards required to meet each grade. This enables comparisons to be made between students based on their achievement of the standards. Detailed information is provided as to what students are expected to achieve. The criteria and the standards are used to design effective assessment strategies and to provide more efficient feedback to students about their individual performance. Differentiation can be made between the student's ability to meet the learning outcomes and the standard reached. Further, consistency is achieved across multiple markers by sharing the same marking criteria and standards.

All assessment requirements and due dates are published in the Unit Guide at the commencement of the semester.

### 9.3 *Moderation of assessments*

SIBT undertakes regular *internal moderation* activities as a quality assurance mechanism. These activities ensure that all assessment marking processes are consistent, accurate and in line with the criteria defined for an assessment task.

### 9.4 *Academic Honesty*

Throughout the duration of their studies at SIBT, students are expected to conduct themselves in an honest and ethical manner, and in accordance with accepted standards of academic conduct. SIBT will deal fairly and efficiently with issues of student misconduct in assessments through its Academic Honesty Policy. For the purposes of assisting students to undertake their studies effectively and with integrity, SIBT engages the facilities of plagiarism and collusion detection software (*Turnitin*) in units suited to its use. Students are informed in the Unit Guide that plagiarism detection software or other processes may be routinely used, and where routinely used or required, students will be given the opportunity to check their own work prior to submission.

SIBT will deal fairly and efficiently with grievances concerning assessment through its Academic Grievance Procedures.

### 9.5 *Assessment feedback to students*

Feedback is an integral component of the SIBT assessment process. The aim of the assessment feedback is to encourage learning and provide informative and constructive guidance for future learning. It identifies strengths and weaknesses in performance, gives guidance on how to perform better and encourages students to develop strategies to prepare for future tasks. For in-semester assessments, lecturers are expected to provide students with the marks awarded for assessment as well as relevant feedback within 14 days.

In all cases, students should be provided with rubrics so they can see what is expected of them in assessments and so that they can see how they performed. In Multiple Choice examinations the 'correct' responses should be disclosed to students.

## 9.6 *Grade review*

SIBT students have the right to apply for a review of final grades within 7 days of the release of results and on applicable grounds appeal the outcome of the final Grade Review

## 9.7 *Retention of records*

All items submitted or completed by a student for the purpose of assessment or evaluation will be retained at least until the end of the grade appeal period (three months), unless returned to the student. Copies of assessments for Certificate IV enrolments will be kept for at least 6 months after completion of the course/assessment.

# 10. **Equity**

## 10.1 *Special Consideration*

SIBT recognises that a student's performance in assessment tasks or examinations may be affected by compassionate or compelling circumstances. The SIBT Special Consideration policy allows for reasonable adjustment to the standard assessment requirements and ensures equitable assessment for all students.

## 10.2 *Late submission*

Assessment tasks lodged after the due date must be submitted in accordance with the instructions provided in the relevant Unit Guide or in relation to approved Special Consideration arrangements.

## 10.3 *Assessment disability guidelines*

SIBT will make *reasonable adjustments* to assessment, where appropriate and practicable, to provide students who have identified disabilities an appropriate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of learning outcomes. These accommodations will be provided such that academic standards are not compromised.

# 11. **Definitions**

- *Assessment*

Assessment is the process of collecting evidence and making judgments on whether learning outcomes have been achieved.

- *Examination*

A time limited assessment task conducted under invigilation e.g., tests, practical assessments, quizzes and final examinations.

- *Validity*

Refers to the degree to which an assessment measures what it claims to measure.

- *Reliability*

Refers to the extent to which an assessment is consistent and stable in measuring what it is intended to measure. Most simply put, a test is reliable if it is consistent within itself and across time.

- *Flexibility*

Means the assessment tool and process allows for a range of assessment contexts.

- *Fairness*

Means the assessment will not disadvantage any person and will take into account the characteristics of the person being assessed.

- *Standards-Based Assessment*

Standards-based assessment depends on a set of pre-defined statements outlining different levels or standards of achievement in a program, course or assessment component, and normally expressed in terms of the stated assessment criteria.

- *Formative Assessment*

Formative assessment facilitates effective approaches to learning, by providing assessment tasks which do not add to the graded weighting of the unit, but allow teaching staff to monitor student progress against explicit criteria. This is followed by providing feedback to students. Feedback is a key element of formative assessment in that it provides students with information about how their performance compares with the standard required, and it assists them in achieving that standard.

- *Summative Assessment*

Involves the making of judgments, throughout a unit, about student learning, against explicit standards and criteria and these judgments are translated into grades.

- *Internal Moderation*

Refers to a process whereby criteria and standards are set and a comparison is made between student's assessment tasks in order to confirm the marking against both the criteria and the standards.

- *Compassionate Or Compelling Circumstances*

Compassionate or compelling circumstances are generally those beyond the control of the student and which have an impact upon the student's course progress or wellbeing. These could include, but are not limited to:

- A serious illness or injury that prevents a student from completing or sitting an exam or seriously affects their preparation for the exam or submitting assessments. A medical certificate supporting that the student was unable to attend classes will be required.
- Bereavement for *immediate family members*, (provision of a Death Certificate)
- Immediate family member with long-term medical condition. (Supporting documents required)
- The student is pregnant and unable to complete an assessment task or attend classes. A medical certificate will be required.
- The student is a party in legal proceedings where the timing is beyond the student's control (these cases should be supported by police or court reports). The student is involved in custody proceedings for their child. These cases should be supported by police or court reports).
- A legal commitment, where a student is called for jury duty or is subpoenaed to attend a court, tribunal or hearing, and the requirement to attend is specified in supporting documentation.
- A student has been caught up in a natural disaster, political uprising or other tragic event.
- A student has been selected in a State or National sporting team. (Supporting documentation required)

- *Reasonable Adjustment*

The amendment of an assessment procedure or resources, to ensure that the needs of students with specific requirements or disabilities, are met.

- *Immediate Family Member*

An immediate family member includes a spouse, de facto spouse, parent, parent-in-law, sibling or child.

## 12. Related documents

- Unit Guide Master Template
- Assignment Cover Page Master Template
- Academic Honesty Policy
- Academic Grievance Procedures
- Special Consideration Policy
- Moderation of Assessment Policy

## Amendment History

Department:	Academic	
Approval Authority:	Academic Board	
Approval Date:	10 May 2010	
Date for Next Review:	31 July 2018	
Revision Date	Version	Summary of changes
10/05/10	1	New template used. Included new reference number and version.
06/10/11	2	Updated formatting in line with UPD
18/06/12	3	Added statement - SIBT may commence applicable disciplinary procedures if a person to whom this policy applies breaches this policy (or any of its related procedures).
1/03/2013	4	Complete review incorporating MQ's Assessment Policy criteria
1/05/2015	5	Minor revision as part of SIBT Curriculum Review. Policy statements and grading bands simplified.
31/07/15	6	Reviewed and updated
07/08/15	7	Reviewed and updated after comments from Interim Academic Board and SMT.
07/10/15	8	Approved and endorsed by SMT
05/02/16	9	Changes from Interim Academic Board included and endorsed by SMT.
11/03/16	10	Approved by Interim Academic Board