



The University of Sydney
Faculty of Health Sciences

COURSEWORK ASSESSMENT MANUAL

November 2002
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(NB: This Manual reflects approved University and Faculty of Health Sciences policies and procedures. It should, however, be noted that some of the policies and procedures referred to herein are currently under review and may be subject to change at short notice in the near future. This manual will be progressively updated, but it is important that the Faculty's policy website be checked before relying solely on the contents of this document.)

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1. Introduction

This document sets out the Faculty of Health Science's policy on the assessment of students in coursework awards. The Faculty policy must be read in conjunction with the policies adopted by the Senate and the Academic Board in related areas. These include –

- (a) Assessment and Examination of Coursework: [Academic Board Resolutions](#)
- (b) Student Appeals against Academic Decisions: [Senate Resolutions](#)
- (c) Student Appeals against Academic Decisions: Undergraduate and Postgraduate Course Awards: [Academic Board Resolutions](#)
- (d) Academic Honesty in Coursework: [Academic Board Resolutions](#)
- (e) the [Coursework Rule](#)

Further policy documents on assessment and student workload, including marking matrices, are available on the Faculty's website at www.fhs.usyd.edu.au/policies/acdocs.htm

These policies are not incorporated as such in the text of this document, but can be accessed by clicking on the hyperlinks above. *If you print this document you will lose these links.*

There are other useful documents on assessment and examination, including the Faculty's *The Ways Forward - Paper 10 Student Workloads and the Quality of the Student Learning Experience*, available at www.fhs.usyd.edu.au/learn_teach/ways_10.pdf and *Guidelines for Good Practice in Teaching and Learning*, published by the Institute for Teaching and Learning and available at http://www.fhs.usyd.edu.au/learn_teach/index.shtml

Senate and Academic Board policies are not discretionary and must thus be complied with at both Faculty and School level. Where the Faculty's previous assessment policy corresponds with the Academic Board resolutions, it has been omitted from this document; where local procedures apply, however, they have been included, but only as an expansion or a local application of the Academic Board's resolutions.

The procedures included in this document are not intended to prescribe the ways in which the procedures are applied at School level. Schools may choose their own methods of application, in so far as they do not conflict with the general principles, policies and procedures.

The policies and procedures outlined in this manual relate to all forms of assessment (including practicals, vivas and clinical placements), and do not apply exclusively to examinations or any other form of assessment unless explicitly stated.

Definitions

In this document:

Academic unit includes a Faculty, Academic College, Board of Studies, School, Department, Centre or interdisciplinary committee of the University.

Course means a program of units of study that leads to the award of an undergraduate or postgraduate degree or diploma of the University, unless otherwise specified. Each course is the responsibility of a Faculty.

Coursework means the learning activities of an award course designed to be a coursework program by Senate or the Vice-Chancellor. All award courses are categorised as "coursework" or "research".

Dean means the Dean of a Faculty or the Director or Principal of an Academic College.

School includes a School, Centre or interdisciplinary committee of the Faculty. Schools are responsible for Units of Study.

Student means a person enrolled as a candidate for a course or unit of study.

Principal Examiner means the academic appointed by the Head of School and responsible for the management, including all assessment procedures, of a Unit of Study.

Unit of Study or **unit** means a stand-alone component of a course. Each unit of study is the responsibility of a School

2. Assessment Program Meetings

It is the policy of the Faculty that assessment requirements for each course will be reviewed at an annual Assessment Program Meeting (APM). Proposed assessments for all units of study for the year should be submitted for discussion at this meeting. This meeting will provide recommendations to the head of the academic unit responsible for the course.

2.1 Purpose of Assessment Program Meeting

The purpose of APMs is to review the proposed assessments for each unit of study and course and to agree to a schedule of assessments which is consistent with the principles of assessment in the Academic Board's policy on [Assessment and Examination of Coursework](#). This schedule of assessments, when accepted, will be distributed to all students and staff, thus meeting the responsibilities of each School.

Useful information about assessment workload and learning may be found in *The Ways Forward -Paper 10 Student Workloads and the Quality of the Student Learning Experience*, available at www.fhs.usyd.edu.au/learn_teach/ways_10.pdf .

2.2 Procedure

An APM must occur before the beginning of the semester by each School responsible for a course.

Where an Academic Unit offers units of study which are common to more than one course, the Academic Unit will convene an annual APM to review the assessment program for these common units of study prior to the course APMs. Academic Units responsible for these common units of study, together with representatives from other Schools and student representatives, will be invited to the course APM. Decisions from the APM for common units of study will be presented at the course APM.

The APM will be chaired by the Head of School (or nominee) responsible for the course/ common unit of study. Academic staff together with student representatives involved in the course are invited to attend the meeting.

All proposed assessments are to be submitted to the Chair of the APM at least two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting time. This will enable the assessment information to be collated into a comprehensive schedule which will be distributed to members of the APM at least one week prior to the meeting. All proposed assessments will specify:

- the name of the unit of study;
- the name of co-ordinator of unit of study
- the number of credit points of the unit of study per semester;
- the nature of each piece of assessment proposed (eg, written examination, viva examination, practical examination, seminar presentation, essay, report, etc);
- the relative size of each piece of assessment (eg, duration of examination, seminar presentation, word length of written assignments, etc.)
- the relative weighting of each piece of assessment, in percentage terms;
- the proposed timing of each piece of assessment;
- how the final grades and marks will be determined for each unit of study, including scaling procedures;
- any special conditions of the unit of study's assessment, eg, a requirement to pass various modules/pieces of assessment.

The APM committee requires all submissions to address, in specific order, the eight principles set out below. These are matters which can be attended to in different ways prior to the APM, and which may already have been addressed in the process of curriculum development.

1. In what way is this assessment an integral component of students' learning?
2. How is this assessment task designed to facilitate students' integration of their learning?
3. How is this assessment task designed to encourage students to learn how to learn and therefore promote their greater self-reliance in learning?
4. How is this assessment task designed to encourage students to become independent self-evaluators?
5. Which unit of study and course objectives does this assessment task develop and assess?
6. Which generic attributes does this assessment address and assess?

7. What explicit criteria are used to measure students' performance on this assessment task?
8. How are these criteria communicated to students?

Assessment information which is still outstanding or incomplete prior to the meeting, may be accepted at the meeting at the discretion of the Chair. Alternatively, presentation of the outstanding information may be required at a subsequent APM, convened for this purpose.

The APM will appraise the appropriateness of and make recommendations about the:

- workload during the examination weeks
- overall workload of students throughout the semester
- spacing of the assessments throughout the semester
- weighting of the assessments within a unit of study
- scaling procedures in determining final grades
- conditions for passing modules within units of study to pass the unit of study
- nature and level of assessment requirements in terms of their consistency with stated unit of study objectives

Care should be taken to avoid duplication of assessment between different units of study. The proposed timing of assessments should also avoid significant religious or cultural dates.

Following the APM, a Faculty APM form is completed and signed by the Chair indicating the meeting has been completed and that students were invited to attend. This form is then forwarded to the Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee.

3. Conduct of examinations

3.1 Responsibilities of Principal Examiners during examinations conducted by Examination Branch

[Principal Examiners](#) must be available 30 minutes prior to the commencement of the paper and available throughout the entire scheduled time of the examination to answer queries. Principal Examiners may leave their home telephone number, provided that they have a copy of the examination paper to answer any queries. If the Principal Examiner is not available, the Head of School will then be contacted for further advice. Failing this, the examination paper or question may be cancelled at the discretion of the Examinations Officer.

Corrections needing to be made during the progress of an exam should be brought or telephoned to the Examinations Branch for immediate distribution. Examiners should not contact, either by telephone or in person, the examination venue. Supervisors are specifically instructed not to permit the entry of unauthorised persons. If students have already attempted the incorrect version, examiners will have take this into account when marking papers as no extra time can be given to scheduled exams.

All examination answer booklets and question papers are available for collection by Schools from the Confidential Room in A Block (A024) the day after the examination in question was taken. Examiners who wish to collect their papers earlier can do so, but this must be arranged with the Examinations Branch the day before. Papers may not be collected from the examination room.

3.2 Responsibilities of Students

It is the individual student's responsibility to be available for all assessments. Campus based students who intend travelling away from Sydney should ensure that they are able to return in time to undertake an assessment at the scheduled time and place.

Students are required to be present at the correct time and place. Misreading or misunderstanding of the time and/or the location of an assessment will not be accepted as a reason for failure to attend an assessment. Non-attendance on these or any other grounds insufficient to claim serious illness, misadventure etc will result in forfeiture of marks associated with that assessment.

In certain circumstances, a student may be permitted to take examinations overseas, generally at a nominated University. These circumstances usually relate to travel for study purposes or for experience directly connected with studies approved by a School. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain approval from the Head,

Student Administration before proceeding overseas. A fee for administration costs will be applicable for this service, payable by the individual student.

Students will not, by any improper means, obtain or endeavour to obtain assistance, or endeavour to give assistance to any other student during an examination.

Students will not behave in such a way that will interfere with another student's right to undertake an assessment. Students will not do anything designed to disadvantage other students during an assessment.

Misconduct in an assessment will be dealt with under the rules of the Faculty and the Statutes of the University. Overall, failure to comply with the University's standards for academic honesty may lead in appropriate cases to failure in the work submitted for assessment or failure overall in the unit of study or such penalty as is imposed in accordance with the University procedures on student discipline.

3.3 Rules for the Conduct of Written Examinations by the Examinations Branch

Students will be admitted to the examination room and directed to seats ten minutes before the scheduled examination commencement time. Students are expected to seat themselves at their designated seat number. If a student is found in the wrong seat, they are informed and either directed to the correct seat number or venue (under escort if necessary) or recorded on their attendance form and on the Supervisor's Tally Sheet.

During the period prior to the reading time the students must complete the Attendance Form for each examination and placed on the top left hand corner of the desk for collection, immediately writing time commences. Student identification cards are to be placed on top of the attendance form. Title pages and identification details of Answer booklets/Answer sheets/Question papers are to be completed during this period. No extra time at the completion of the writing time is scheduled for these tasks. All assessments conducted by Examinations Branch must have a reading time of ten minutes prior to the commencement of any written assessment.

Writing is not permitted during the scheduled reading time, nor after completing of the actual examination times, nor at any other times prescribed by the Presiding Officer.

No student will be admitted to the examination room after the first 30 minutes of the examination writing period has elapsed nor will any student be permitted to leave the examination room within the first 30 minutes of the examination period.

No student will be permitted to leave the examination room during the last ten minutes of the assessment.

No material, written or otherwise except pen, pencil, ink, ruler and eraser may be taken into the examination room, unless instructions to the contrary are given. Students should be equipped with a ball point pen, black lead (B) pencils, and an eraser. Other materials, such as notes, books and papers, which may be used for benefit by a student, will not be permitted into the examination room, unless instructions to the contrary are given. Students are allowed the use of standard calculators provided by the University, in examinations. Students are not permitted to use any other calculator during examinations without permission from the Examinations Officer. Such permission could be granted, eg, in the case of students with impaired vision or an open book exam.

Students must answer the examination in the booklet or answer sheet provided and should only write answers on the ruled pages of the answer booklet. No talking is allowed in the examination room. Should material or information be required the raising of the hand will secure the attention of a supervisor.

A warning will be given ten minutes before the time for the completion of the examination. When that time elapses students must immediately cease writing. The title page of each booklet must be fully completed by the end of this time. The booklets should be submitted as directed by the Presiding Officer. No examination paper will be permitted to be taken from the examination room. In the case of an objective test or completion-type test, both the question paper and the answer sheet must remain in the examination room.

Students are not permitted to take bags, briefcases, folders, umbrellas, mobile phones etc., into the examination room except with the express approval of the Presiding Officer. Small money purses/wallets only may be taken into the room, however they must be placed on the floor. In exceptional circumstances, and only with the express permission of the Presiding Officer, other articles may be brought into the examination room. They also must be placed on the floor.

Students should note that the University takes no responsibility for items left behind after or during the examination. Students should therefore take care to ensure all items left with the Presiding Officer, or on the floor beside the desk are collected prior to leaving the examination room.

Smoking or eating will not be permitted in the examination room nor will students be permitted to leave the room to smoke or eat.

Students will be dismissed from the examination venue by rows and are asked to move away quickly from the exit so that others are not disturbed. During the examination period students should be particularly quiet when near an examination centre.

Failure to comply with any of the above rules may necessitate disciplinary action by the University.

4. Special Consideration

4.1 Special Consideration due to Serious Illness or Misadventure

Students who, through serious illness or misadventure, are unable to complete an assessment may be offered Special Consideration. Students have a right to ask for such consideration, and an obligation to be aware of the Faculty's requirements. Difficulties must be fully documented so that an appropriate evaluation of the circumstances and severity of their experiences can be made.

Students should familiarise themselves with the current Academic Board Resolutions: Assessment and Examination of Coursework Part 5 on Special Consideration which can be found at

<http://www.usyd.edu.au/su/studentcentre/sib/erreviews>

and the Faculty Procedures outlined below. Of particular interest within the Academic Board Resolutions is Section 4 which provides instances of circumstances that would warrant consideration and those for which Special Consideration will not be granted. These criteria apply to all assessments, both within semester and during examination periods.

Students who submit their work by due dates should not be disadvantaged in comparison with those submitting late work. Penalties for late work should be properly notified to students, consistently applied and should allow limited extension of time for valid reasons, with the penalty applied as advised.

Special Consideration will not normally be given for periods of absence due to illness or misadventure, during the semester of one week or less, although frequently recurrent short absences would need documentation. While it is important to ask for a medical certificate for illness of longer than a few days duration at the time of the first visit, there is no need to submit it unless the illness becomes prolonged or further frequent absences are required.

Students experiencing prolonged serious illness or misadventure should consult relevant academic advisers such as unit of study co-ordinators, year co-ordinators, or Heads of School who may refer them to Student Welfare Services for assistance. Student Welfare Services provide general welfare assistance, learning assistance, financial assistance, counselling services and disability services. These students may need to consider whether their best academic interests are served by discontinuing with permission from the program until they are able to resume their studies effectively.

4.2 Faculty procedures for applying for Special Consideration

Staff and students should familiarize themselves with the Academic Board Policy on Special Consideration at

<http://www.usyd.edu.au/su/studentcentre/sib/erreviews>

Students should obtain Application forms for Special Consideration by contacting Student Administration in the Jeffrey Miller Administration Building (A Block) or at

<http://www.usyd.edu.au/su/studentcentre/sib/erreviews>

For students enrolled in Flexible or Distance courses, a copy of the application is supplied in the Distance Education kit. The complete application together with the required supporting documentation should be submitted to Student Administration (A Block).

For serious illness and/or misadventure causes that cannot be predicted the documentation must be lodged as soon as the student may be reasonably be aware of the conflict with an assessment, but no later than 7 days after the scheduled assessment event, unless circumstances beyond the student's control prevent it.

4.2.1 Procedures for applying for Special Consideration

The following table describes the Steps when applying for Special Consideration.

STEP	ACTION	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE
1	Student to obtain forms from website or Student Administration. Professional Practitioner Certificate and application forms completed.	Student	
2	Complete all sections of pages 1 and 3 including the full name of the Unit of Study as well as the Unit Code Number on both pages.	Student	
3	Student to sign the lodgement slip on the bottom section on the front page of the application form.	Student	
4	Student to make a copy of the completed application form for each of the Schools for which special consideration is sought, including a copy for the home school.	Student	
5	Student to lodge the original application forms (and copies) with Student Administration.	Student	Within 7 days from assessment event, prior to the due date of an assignment or as soon as possible once a serious illness and/or misadventure which will impact on an examination or assessment has been identified.
6	Student Administration will sign and date the lodgement slip, date stamp the front page of the application, cut off the lodgement slip and return it with the advice to retain it as receipt of lodgement.	Student Administration	
7	Student Administration will date stamp all copies of the application form and advise students to lodge the copies in the box of the relevant school/s opposite the counter.	Student Administration	
8	It is the responsibility of the student to immediately place the copies of the application in the box of the relevant school/s.	Student	
9	Ensure all three pages of the original document and any attachments are stapled together and forwarded to Exams for recording and filing. The details of the original document are recorded electronically and filed in the students administrative file by the Examinations Officer, Student Administration, for a period of twelve (12) months.	Student Administration	
10	School representatives will collect any paperwork placed within the school mailbox for further processing, and are responsible for ensuring the box is cleared daily.	School Representatives	

11	After timely consideration is given by relevant school/s (and within two weeks of receipt of application) the Academic Judgement is completed by two assessors, the Unit of Study Coordinator and Head of school of the Unit of Study in question. It is recommended that consultation with the Cadigal Coordinator takes place for Indigenous students.	Head of School of School and Unit of Study Coordinator in which Unit of Study is taken	Extension requests will necessarily need to be assessed in as short a timeframe as is practicable. All academic judgements must be completed within 2 weeks
12	Student is notified in writing (by email or letter) of the outcome of their application.	Head of School of Unit of Study	
13	Original copy of page containing the academic judgement is forwarded to Examinations Officer Student Administration. A copy is retained for School records.	Head of School of Unit of Study	of receipt of application.
14	Results of academic judgement is recorded electronically and filed with the original application on the student administrative file.	Student Administration	

4.2.2 Outcomes of applications for Special Consideration

The following table provides information on the outcomes of Special Consideration applications.

Academic Board Policy	Faculty Procedure
5d: Consistent penalties for failure to complete an assignment or late submission without SC	Faculty procedure states that 10% reduction in marks available for that assignment per day, including weekends, if late submission.
5e: Arrangements for late submission when Special Consideration accepted	Responsibility of Schools to grant extension or other actions which depends on length, type of extension, due date and dates of serious illness or misadventure.
5f: If attested absences have occurred	Responsibility of Schools as to whether marks are averaged
5g: Absence period beyond which student's work could not be considered completed	Responsibility of Schools to determine extent of period of absence beyond which student's work could not be considered completed.
5h: Marks for attendance or participation	Faculty procedure states that if Special Consideration application is accepted, marks will be awarded for attendance or appropriate marks awarded for attendance or participation (e.g. results from other assessments of the student or awarding marks which puts the student in same position in class as student is for other assessments).
5i: Means to make up work during prolonged illness	Responsibility of Schools to determine type and assessment of work to be made up during prolonged periods of illness.
5k: Whether to sit examination	The following Faculty procedure will apply and should be explained to students:- 1. Students should also be advised that the University policy recommends that students sit for an examination if possible. 2. If SC application is accepted, then the examination is not marked and students resit the examination. i). If a mid-semester examination, then time of resit is advised prior to formal examination period. ii). If an end-semester examination timetabled for the examination period, then resit takes place during deferred examination period. 3. If Special Consideration application is not accepted, then examination is marked. 4. If a student does not sit for the examination and their Special Consideration application is not accepted, then zero is recorded for that assessment.

5. Formal Examinations

5.1 Examination periods

There are two formal examinations periods held each year:

- (1) Weeks 15 and 16, semester 1
- (2) Weeks 15 and 16, semester 2

During formal examination periods, examinations will commence at the following times:

- 9.00 am (1 hour and 2 hour sessions)
- 12.30 pm (1 hour and 2 hour sessions)
- 1.50 pm (2 hour and 3 hour sessions)
- 3.30 pm (1 hour and 2 hour sessions)

Each semester, a one week study break (stuvac) is scheduled in Week 14 prior to the formal examination period. During stuvac no teaching or assessment can be scheduled. Students have the right of access to staff for consultation at some time during the stuvac period, and accordingly, details of staff availability should be known in the School office.

5.2 Timetable and seat allocation

At the beginning of each semester the Examinations Branch will send Assessment Schedule forms to each School, requesting details of the proposed examinations for Week 15/16 of that semester. Schedules are to be returned to the Examinations Branch by Week 3. If Assessment Schedules are not received by the due date, it will be assumed that the School does not require the Examinations Branch to timetable and/or conduct examinations in those units of study.

The examination timetable will be structured to try to reduce the number of examinations a student has to sit on the same day. No student will be required to sit for more than two examinations on the same day. In cases where a student has three examinations scheduled for the same day, provision would have to be available for one of those examinations to be taken at an alternative time.

During Week 7, provisional timetables will be circulated to the Schools for checking and will be displayed on Official Notice Boards on the campus as well as on the campus website for the information of Schools and students. Students who identify that they have a clash of examinations in weeks 15 & 16 should complete the "Advice of Clash of Assessments" and see the Examinations Officer in Student Administration. All clashes should be identified by week 9. Final timetables are then circulated during Week 10 to the Schools and are displayed on Official Notice Boards on the campus as well as on the campus website for the information of students.

Seat allocation for students is displayed at Student Administration and on the campus website. Seat allocations are also displayed at the examination venue on the day of the examination.

5.3 Examination papers and answer sheets

During week 10, Blue Aids Forms (request for papers) will be sent to Schools, requesting examination paper(s) and instructions on how the Examinations Branch is to conduct the examination. Failure to submit the examination paper by the end of Week 10 will result in it becoming a School-run examination. Examination papers should be assessed/scrutinised by an assessor in order to avoid typographical errors, factual errors, ambiguities and inappropriate content load or time allowance.

The Examinations Branch is able to supply *only two types of computer answer sheets* for use during examinations.

- (1) Cumberland College (CCHS) ParSCORE 200 multiple choice/true or false item answer sheets. An OMR scanner is available for use by any member of staff within their school.
- (2) UNSW Uniscan 150 multiple-choice item answer sheet. Staff wishing to use UNSW computer answer sheets are required to make their own arrangements with the Educational Testing Unit at the University of NSW for their evaluation.

Stock required for examinations are purchased directly from Central Stores.

After printing (usually by the end of Week 13), if a correction to an exam paper is necessary, the question/s concerned should be retyped in the School and delivered to the Examinations Branch in sufficient quantities for distribution with the original paper. If the correction is minor, the Examinations Branch can be requested to have it announced at the commencement of the examination.

5.4 Further Assessment Period

In addition to the formal examination period outlined above, the Schools will set aside time for the purposes of further assessment.

6. Feedback and results

6.1 Responsibilities of Head of School

The Head of School will appoint a school examination board to facilitate the determination of the unit of study results of each of the candidates concerned after considering the recommendations of the Principal Examiner(s) appointed for the unit of study.

The Head will forward the results to the Examination Branch on a date to be determined by the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee. In order to minimise delays in the return of results to students, this date will be set as soon as possible after the last scheduled examination.

6.2 Functions of School Examination Board

The functions of the School Examination Board are to –

- recommend unit of study results to the Head of School
- consider grade distributions within units of study
- consider validity and reliability issues in relation to results in units of study
- review future assessment in units of study.

6.3 Responsibilities of Principal Examiners

The responsibilities of Principal Examiners are to –

- submit to the Head the results for all candidates in the unit of study concerned by a date specified by the Head of School
- prepare a summary of unit of study results for presentation at School Examination Board meetings
- consider special consideration requests
- determine marking standards within a unit of study, ensure reliability across markers, and establish and promulgate assessment criteria (see *Marking Assessments* in [Guidelines for Good Practice in Teaching and Learning](#))
- provide feedback to students on their performance on assessments within a unit of study. On progressive assessments, feedback should be confidential and constructive and timed to enable students to improve their learning and performance.
- justify the returned result from evidence such as mark sheets, examination scripts, transcripts of departmental meetings, when and if an appeal process requires such evidence. This evidence must be held for six months from the date of the release of the final result and, if the subject of an appeal, until such time as the appeal is complete
- provide students, on request, with marking schema and numerical marks for the various components of assessment within a unit of study which comprise the final numerical mark reported on Examination Result notices. They should also make arrangements for students to peruse, on request, and where they so desire, to obtain (a copy of) their examination scripts or any other written answers to examination questions, provided that:
 - (a) the request is made within four months of the release of the results of the examinations, and
 - (b) in the case of examinations involving confidential examination papers, where examination questions are used on more than one occasion, students may peruse under supervision, but not obtain a copy of, the examination paper and their answers to the questions.
- arrange for safe storage of all examination and assessment material not returned to students for six months from the date of release of the final results of that unit of study, and, if the subject of an appeal, until such time as the appeal is complete.

Further information about good practice in giving feedback about assessments is in [Guidelines for Good Practice in Teaching and Learning](#).

NB: Assignment/examination marks are to be treated as personal information. Any public display must ensure the identity of individuals is not disclosed. Marks and grades are displayed publicly only in relation to the student's number. Assignments are to be returned personally to students to preserve confidentiality. Assignments are not to be left in a box for students to search through.

7. Marking and grading system

The common result grades used in the University are set out in part 3 of the Academic Board's policy on [Assessment and Examination of Coursework](#). The following information provides details, and additional commentary, particular to the Faculty of Health Sciences.

CODE	RESULT NAME	COMMENT
HD	High Distinction	Indicates an outstanding level of achievement
D	Distinction	Indicates an excellent level of achievement
CR	Credit	Indicates an above average level of achievement
P	Pass	Indicates an acceptable level of achievement
R	Satisfied requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This is used in pass/fail only outcomes ▪ Can be awarded for clinical or group work ▪ Can be awarded when a student is given partial exemption in a unit of study. In this case a mark may or may not be given ▪ For Research Thesis for PhD & HScD
AS	Advanced Standing	Indicates the awarding of credit in the unit of study
UCN	Unit of study continuing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Used at the end of a semester for units of study which have been approved by the Head of School to extend into the following semester. This will automatically flag that no final result is due until the end of the last semester of the unit of study ▪ This could be used in clinical units of study which are conducted out of semester time or for distance mode units in which difficulties with access to teaching and learning resources have occurred ▪ To be used when a research thesis has been submitted for examination and during the examination process, until a final result is resolved
PCON	Pass (Concessional)	<p>University Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use of this grade is restricted to those courses which allow for a Concessional Pass of some kind to be awarded; ▪ A student may re-enrol in a unit of study for which the result was PCON; and ▪ No more than 10% of total credit points for a course can be made up from PCON results. <p>Faculty Procedure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PCON grade may only be awarded in a Unit of Study where the awarding of such a grade is well-defined and transparently explained to students in terms of performance within that Unit of Study and preferably in the context of standards-referenced assessment for all grades. • If more than one PCON is awarded and/or the student has a Fail in another Unit of Study in the same semester, then all PCONS revert to Fails in that semester. • When PCON grades are converted to fail grades in accordance with these procedures, such conversion is implemented by Student Services before results are released to students and does not require the manual intervention or approval of academic staff. • Student Services would be requested to provide a report to schools of grades that have been converted as a result of this policy. <p>Monitoring</p> <p>Results awarded to individual students are monitored by computer software that generates:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ poor performance records for each semester; ▪ a cumulative record of PCON results expressed as a

CODE	RESULT NAME	COMMENT
		<p>percentage of accumulated credit points up to the end of each semester; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a report when the maximum number of PCON results have been awarded.
INC	Incomplete no mark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This result is used when examiners have grounds (such as illness or misadventure) for seeking further information or for considering additional work from the student before confirming the final result Except in special circumstances approved by Academic Board this result will be converted to a normal permanent passing or failing grade either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) by the Dean at the review of examination results conducted pursuant to section 4 (3) of the Academic Board policy on Assessment and Examination of Coursework or (b) Automatically to an AF grade by the end of the third week of the immediately subsequent academic session. In exceptional circumstances approved by the Head of School this deadline can be extended to week 7 of the immediately subsequent academic session.
MINC	Incomplete with a mark of at least 50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This result is used when examiners have grounds (such as illness or misadventure) for seeking further information or for considering additional work from the student before confirming the final mark and passing grade Except in special circumstances approved by Academic Board this result will be converted to a normal passing mark and grade either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) by the Dean at the review of examination results conducted pursuant to section 4 (3) of the Academic Board policy on Assessment and Examination of Coursework or (b) Automatically to the indicated mark and grade by the end of the third week of the immediately subsequent academic session. In exceptional circumstances approved by the Head of School this deadline can be extended to week 7 of the immediately subsequent academic session.
F	Fail	
AF	Absent Fail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to attend a compulsory examination This result will appear as an absent fail on student transcripts. It indicates that students have failed to complete all compulsory components of a course.
W	Withdrawn no mark	
DNF	Discontinued Not to count as failure	
DF	Discontinued with Failure	

8. *Review of results and Student Appeals against academic decisions*

8.1 **Review of results**

Following the release of results of intrasemester assessments, students may informally request that an assessment be reviewed by the unit of study co-ordinator.

Following release of final results, students may formally or informally request a review of results. Such a review will consist primarily of ensuring that all assessments in relation to a grade have been accounted for and that the total of all marks awarded is correct. If an error is found, the Head of School, on advice from the

Principal Examiner, is responsible for informing Examinations Branch of the correct result. Applications for the formal review must be submitted in writing to the Head of School, within fourteen (14) days of the date on which the results in question have been released.

Note that a request by a student to have results reviewed, either formally or informally, is not the same as appealing against an academic decision. However, academic staff should be aware that failure to act upon, or correctly deal with a request to review results may result in the student deciding to follow the appeal process outlined below. Staff should therefore make every reasonable attempt to resolve any dispute at this review of results stage if appropriate, to avoid later appeals against the academic decision based on marks or gradings.

8.2 Appeals against academic decisions

The [Resolutions of Senate and the Academic Board](#) governing appeals against academic decisions clearly outline the circumstances by which a student may appeal against an academic decision, and the appeals process that **must be followed by all parties in order to resolve any subsequent dispute.**

Failure to comply with this policy may result in claims escalating to Senate level simply because due process was not observed, when such claims may have easily been resolved at School or Faculty level.

The term 'academic decision' includes any decision made by an academic staff member or members that affects the academic assessment or progress of a student. Examples of 'academic decisions' are:

- marks and grading decisions
- progression, exclusion, or show cause
- denial of requests for assignment extension
- denial of requests for special consideration.

9. Progression and show cause

9.1 Progression

To satisfy the academic requirement for a University award, students must obtain a passing grade in all units of study in their courses.

Students must repeat failed units of study or their equivalent at the first opportunity and will be permitted to progress to the next semester in addition to repeating failed units of study, providing course requirements, including any co-requisites, pre-requisites and attendance requirements, can be met. School Academic Advisors may prescribe the program of study for students repeating failed units of study (taking account of load, precedence for repetition of failed units of study, and timetable difficulties). Repeating failed units of study will take precedence over enrolling in next semester units.

Students who do not follow normal progression in clinical education units of study may be required to undertake additional clinical education components to demonstrate skill maintenance at a level which satisfies the Head of School. Successful completion of such additional components will be a pre-requisite to enrolment in the subsequent level of clinical education study.

9.2 Satisfactory progress and Show Cause

Under section 15 (2) of the [Coursework Rule](#), the Dean may require a student who has not made satisfactory progress to show good cause why he or she should be allowed to re-enrol.

While satisfactory progress cannot be defined in all cases in advance, a student who –

- has failed or discontinued (with failure) a unit of study twice (or more), or
- has not successfully completed all first year course requirements within two years (except for students with permission to enrol in the course on less than a full-time basis when the requirement refers to those units in the approved first year enrolment – see below) or
- has failed or withdrawn with failure in two or more subjects in an academic year

shall be deemed not to have made satisfactory progress.

For students who have not demonstrated satisfactory progress and who are enrolled through the Cadigal program at Cumberland Campus progress will be reviewed by the Head (or nominee) of the School in which the student is enrolled and the Head of School (or nominee) of the School of Indigenous Health Studies (Yooroang Garang). Cadigal program students are permitted to complete the first year of enrolment over two years. A student who has not completed the first year requirements within three years or who has failed or withdrawn with failure in three or more units of study in an academic year shall be deemed not to have made satisfactory progress.

9.3 Notification of Show Cause/Pending Exclusion

Students who have failed to demonstrate satisfactory progress, shall be initially prompted, but not necessarily be placed on show cause, by a message on their Assessment Notice. Students required to show cause will receive written notification from the Faculty advising them that they have been placed on show cause and provided with instructions on how to respond. Alternatively, the student may receive a letter of advice from the Faculty concerning the need for improved progress.

Letters will be sent to the student's recorded address – the student is responsible for keeping this address up-to-date. Show Cause letters will be sent by registered mail requiring the student to submit a written show cause submission. Students placed on Show Cause will be advised that they are permitted to re-enrol and/or continue enrolment until the final decision has been taken.

Students who fail to submit the show cause application by the due date will be notified immediately after this date by registered mail that they have been excluded. This letter will be copied to the School. The student will cease attendance at classes.

9.4 Showing good cause

Students so notified of pending exclusion may exercise the right to show good cause why they should be permitted to re-enrol. While it is not possible to define in advance all the reasons relevant to showing good cause against exclusion, good cause means circumstances beyond the reasonable control of the student which may include serious ill health or misadventure (properly attested), but does not include demands of employers, pressures of employment or time devoted to non-University activities, unless these are relevant to serious ill health or misadventure. In all cases the onus is on the student to provide the University with satisfactory evidence to establish good cause. The University may also take into account a student's general record in other courses or units of study, undertaken either within the University or at other institutions. Apart from demonstrating the reasons for not making satisfactory progress, students are required to indicate why they would be successful if permitted to re-enrol and what steps have been taken to resolve the preceding issues.

The Show Cause Committee will consider written advice from the Head of School and from the student concerning these two factors:

- Circumstances which led to the student's unsatisfactory performance
- Circumstances or actions which would prevent or resolve the student's difficulties in progression.

The Show Cause Committee will consider these two factors as well as previous show cause situations and actions taken (including school advice letters or show cause meeting reviews). The Committee may find that the student *should* be excluded from a course if the student has previously been on 'show cause' for essentially the same reasons, and the Committee believes that there has been little evidence of change in the student's behaviour or situation.

The Show Cause Committee will normally invite the relevant Head of School (or in the case of students enrolled in the Cadigal program the Head of School and the Head of Yooroang Garang or nominee) and the student to be in attendance at the Show Cause Committee meeting.

After the Show Cause Committee meets:

- The decision of the Committee is conveyed to the student and Head of School.
- A summary of the decisions of the Show Cause Committee (which does not identify students or schools) is presented to the next meeting of Faculty.

9.5 Re-enrolment after showing good cause

After the meeting of the Show Cause Committee, in cases where the Faculty permits the re-enrolment of a student placed on Show Cause, the Faculty may require the completion of specified units of study in a specified time, and if the student does not comply with these conditions the student may again be called upon to show good cause why he or she should be allowed to re-enrol in the Faculty of Health Sciences.

9.6 Exclusion

Students will be automatically excluded if they do not submit a 'Show Cause' response. Students excluded from an award course may not enrol as miscellaneous students in units of study which may be counted towards any such course.

A decision to exclude a student from a course means an exclusion for two academic years. In exceptional circumstances the Faculty may recommend to the Registrar that a student be excluded for one year. After two academic years, a student can reapply for admission to the course from which he or she was previously excluded. There is no guarantee of re-admission.

9.7 Appeals against exclusion

A student notified of a decision by the Faculty to exclude him or her from re-enrolling in a course and/or unit(s) may appeal to the Senate's Student Appeals Committee (Exclusion and Re-admissions) by following the procedures set down in section 18 of the [Coursework Rule](#).

The effect of the Faculty's exclusion decision will commence either (a) when the period in which an appeal to the Senate has expired and the student has not lodged an appeal, or (b), in the event that the student appeals to the Senate within the prescribed period, on the date on which the Senate's Appeals Committee rejects the appeal. Until the effect of the exclusion decision applies, the student is permitted to continue in all units in which the student is eligible to be enrolled.

9.8 Re-admission after exclusion

An excluded student may apply for re-admission after two academic years. Any subsequent application for re-admission to a course must be lodged with Student Administration at the Cumberland campus by 1 December of the year preceding the year of proposed re-admission. The application must include information indicating a readiness to return to tertiary study and will be considered in the light of all other applications received that year for that course.

10. Frequently asked questions

About determining results

Who determines final results in units of study?

The [Principal Examiner](#) for a unit of study finalises the results of students enrolled in the unit of study and sends them to the [Head of the School](#), who confirms them after receiving advice from a [school examination board](#), and sends them to the Examinations Branch.

What do School Examinations Boards do?

The school examinations boards have a range of functions in assessment at the school level, dealt with in the relevant section of the [Faculty policy](#).

Are students entitled to have their examination scripts returned to them?

No. The School retains students' written papers for the specified [script retention period](#) of 4 months. During this time, students have a right to access their own written paper. Papers may be destroyed after the script retention period.

Can a student fail a unit if the total of their marks in individual assessment items came to more than 50%?

It depends on the assessment procedures for the unit of study concerned, which are included in the unit of study description available from the School concerned. Check the description, and then, if further information is needed, talk to the unit of study co-ordinator.

What can a student who is not satisfied with their result in a unit of study do about it?

The first thing the student should do is to think hard about their approach to the assessments. How much effort really went into those? Make a realistic appreciation of the effort and the result. What factors were there that might have prevented a better performance?

If the dissatisfaction remains, talk to the unit of study co-ordinator.

About complaints about grades and marks

How does the University deal with complaints about results in units of study?

The University sets out a number of steps to assist students and staff in dealing with student complaints. One of the principles on which the steps are based is that the process of dealing with a student complaint should be informal, and undertaken at the local – i.e. School – level. For example, the Senate Appeals Committee will not hear an appeal from a student who has not first approached the School about the matter. Only if the complaint has not been resolved at this level can it be taken higher.

As a first step, staff will analyse what the student's complaint is, and take steps to address the issues involved. They will check that –

- all the various assessment components of the unit of study have been received and correctly recorded;
- the addition of the marks awarded for each assessment component is correct, making sure to include all the marks awarded for individual questions on an examination script;
- the marks have been transmitted correctly to the Head of School and the Examinations Branch.

If there has been an error in one or more of these, the Principal Examiner will advise the Head of School of the new mark and, if appropriate, the new grade on a change of result form. The Head of School forwards the change of result form to the Examinations Branch. Faculty oversight of this process has been delegated from the Dean to the Associate Dean (Undergraduate Studies) and the Associate Dean (Graduate Coursework) as appropriate.

If there has not been an error, the staff member will discuss the student's individual assessment component results with them to show where the performance did not meet the requirements in the unit of study description, and advise them on how to improve their performance so that they meet the requirements next time around. The staff member might, for example, go through the examination script with the student to show where the problems were, or, if appropriate, review the aspects of clinical practice in which the performance did not meet the standard required.

About setting and scheduling assessment items

When are assessment requirements for units of study set?

Planning assessment is an integral part of planning the unit of study itself, and so the assessment requirements will be part of the plan of the unit in the first place. Some information about assessment will therefore be given as part of the unit of study description approved by the Faculty. This information could be required as much as a year before the unit of study is delivered.

The brief description of the unit of study in the Faculty *Handbook* also includes a summary in very broad terms of the assessment requirements. This may be required several months before the unit is delivered.

The detailed unit information made available to students at the start of the teaching period in which it is delivered will have a great deal more information.

When is the assessment schedule finalised?

The determination of the assessment schedule is one of the functions of the [Assessment Program Meeting](#).

How are requests for extensions of time to submit assessment items dealt with?

Staff consider requests for extensions of time individually. If it becomes clear early on that a high proportion of students in the unit of study are having difficulty meeting the submission date for an unanticipated reason such as a major communications technical failure then the staff member might grant an extension to everyone in the unit of study. However, due dates for assessments were agreed at the [Assessment Program Meetings](#) and moving one due date will have an impact on other assessments. Thus, changes during semester would have to be considered seriously and involve discussions with the Head of School and other affected staff members.

Staff will keep a record of the request so that they will know what has occurred when they come to finalise the assessment results in the unit of study, and also to pick up any patterns that emerge. For example, if the unit of study is taken by a large number of students from a particular religion or culture, the need to request extensions can be avoided by taking the religious or cultural event into account in scheduling the assessment item.

Staff will not necessarily approve requests for extensions of time, especially where there are equity considerations where the granting of an extension of time to one or more students might disadvantage others enrolled in the unit of study. Staff will document the reasons for their decision and advise the student promptly.

As it is an academic decision, the decision to decline a request for extension could be subject to appeal by the student concerned.

About requests for Special Consideration

Does a request for Special Consideration mean the student concerned is granted a further examination?

Not necessarily. As a first step, staff will assess the request carefully to determine whether it provides sufficient credible information to cause them to grant special consideration.

For example, each request must include a professional practitioner certificate. Staff will consider whether the certificate complies with the University's requirements for such documents, whether it covers the period of the examination and the preparation time beforehand. Also whether it includes the doctor's assessment of the extent to which the student would have been incapacitated by the complaint, and the duration of the incapacity.

Outcomes of applications for Special Consideration, both successful and unsuccessful are detailed on page

Staff might decline to grant a request for special consideration in a number of circumstances – for example:

- the certificate on which it is based is signed by a member of the student's family, or
- the certificate is submitted later than 7 days after the examination (unless there are good reasons for this), or
- the illness or other event is not serious or has little or no impact on performance, or
- the student concerned makes repeated requests for special consideration (unless they have a continuing medical or other disability and are registered with the Student Welfare Service).

I was granted Special Consideration before, but not this time. Why not?

Every application is considered individually on its merits. It may be that this time the application did not comply with one or other of the requirements – it was late, or lacked the necessary documentation, for example.

Can a student request Special Consideration on the basis that English is not their first language?

This is not one of the reasons for granting Special Consideration because the level of proficiency in English that the student either claimed, demonstrated or documented in their application for admission was considered to be sufficient for them to function successfully in the early stages of their course. Students who feel that they need to develop their English language skills can seek assistance from the Language and Learning Unit on 9351 9319.

Why doesn't the University accept the demands of employment as a reason for Special Consideration?

The University understands that sometimes employers can be demanding about when and where students work, and that these demands make it hard for students to satisfy the University's requirements for attendance at assessments, for example.

It's a question of competing priorities. The University gives as much advance notice of its requirements for attendance as possible, to ensure that students engage in the teaching and learning experiences it specifies. It needs to be sure that students satisfy its requirements so that academic and professional standards are maintained and that its graduates are competent in their chosen field.

About Showing Cause

Can a student be asked to Show Cause more than once?

Yes. A student is asked to Show Cause on the basis of unsatisfactory progress. They may demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Faculty that the unsatisfactory progress was caused by circumstances that no longer pertain, and the Faculty may permit them to re-enrol, perhaps imposing conditions on the re-enrolment. If the student again fails to make satisfactory progress, or fails to meet the conditions imposed, then the Faculty may ask the student to Show Cause again.

About University policy

How does a student influence University assessment policy?

The University provides a number of avenues for students to participate in University governance. These include –

- student membership of relevant Faculty Committees (in this case, the Teaching and Learning Committee)
- student membership of the Faculty of Health Sciences
- student membership of the Academic Board and its Teaching and Learning Committee
- student Fellows of the Senate

The University's academic policies are reviewed in accordance with a regular schedule, but individual aspects of them can be re-considered at any time, if the authority concerned – the Faculty, the Academic Board, for example – thinks that the case to do so is strong enough. In the first instance, students seeking a review of the Faculty's assessment policy should consult the Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) who chairs the Teaching and Learning Committee.

How is student workload managed in units of study?

The Faculty has specified the number of hours per semester that a credit point can represent in its [statement on workload](#). Its [Assessment Program Meeting procedure](#) can identify units of study in which the assessment workload is excessive.