

STUDENT ASSESSMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES 2021

The Joint Venture Board of the University of Sydney Foundation Program Pty Limited (USFP), as the governing authority of the University of Sydney Preparation Programs, by resolution adopts the following policy.

Dated: 22 December 2021

Last amended: N/A

Signature:

Position:

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PART 1 – STUDENT ASSESSMENT POLICY

1 Name of policy

This is the Student Assessment Policy and Procedures 2021.

2 Commencement

This policy commences the day after the day on which it is registered.

3 Policy is binding

Except to the extent that a contrary intention is expressed, this policy binds The University of Sydney Foundation Program Pty Limited, staff, students and affiliates.

4 Overview

- (1) This policy (and its procedures) outlines the process of collecting relevant evidence and making informed judgements to evaluate student learning outcomes for students enrolled in the University of Sydney Preparation Programs (USPPs) at the College and to ensure equity in assessment procedures.
- (2) The purpose of assessment is:
 - (a) to promote, enhance, and improve the quality of student learning through feedback that is clear, informative, timely, constructive and relevant to the needs of the student;
 - (b) to measure and confirm the standard of student performance and achievement in relation to a subject's defined learning objectives;
 - (c) to reward student effort and achievement with an appropriate grade; and
 - (d) to provide relevant information in order to continuously evaluate and improve the quality of the curriculum and the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process.

5 Application

This policy (and its procedures) applies to students enrolled in the USPPs delivered on behalf of The University of Sydney by Study Group Australia Pty Limited (The College) trading as Taylors College Sydney (the College), and to staff and affiliates of the College.

6 Definitions

Academic integrity	means the honest and ethical behaviour in all academic activities and acknowledgement of the work of others.
Academic misconduct	means an intentional or unintentional breach of academic integrity. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Breach of examination or assessment rules• Bribery• Cheating• Collusion• Contract cheating• Information fabrication or falsification• Plagiarism• Recycling• Student identity fabrication or falsification.
Affiliates	means consultants and contractors to the College; members of the Board of USFP; members of College committees; and any other persons appointed or engaged by USFP to perform duties or functions on its behalf.

Appeal	means the request by a student for a review of a decision made by the College: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• about an outcome of a complaint by a student or about a student• to cancel an enrolment• in response to a Notice of Intention to Report (NIR)• in response to a request by a student to suspend their enrolment• on a grade outcome• in response to a student's application for special consideration• as a result of a misconduct finding and/or penalty.
Appeal Officer	means the staff member or delegate who investigates and makes a determination on an Appeal request by a student.
Assessment	means the process of gathering a range of evidence about students' learning and performance that enables judgements to be formed as to whether a student has achieved the specified level of knowledge, skill and/or proficiency of application and/or performance in relation to the learning outcomes appropriate for the level of the course as specified in the expected learning outcomes for the course and subjects set out in the course and subject syllabus.
Assessment Moderation	means the review of assessment grading to ensure consistency in grading.
Assessment Notice	A formal notification by the College setting out instructions and expectations on how to complete an assessment
Breach of examination or assessment rule	means failure to comply with the examination or assessment rules provided to students.
College	means Taylors College Sydney, including its staff, affiliates and contractors.
College Director	means the most senior staff member for the College (or their delegate).
CRICOS	means Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students.
Critical incident	means a traumatic event, or the threat of a traumatic event, either on or off campus or on-line) that causes extreme stress, fear or injury to one or more students, such as significant disruption to the study routine (which might prevent a student from completing or continuing with the course), an emergency management situation, or threat to the safety of students and staff. Critical incidents include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• missing students• severe verbal or physical aggression• critical mental health episodes• drug or alcohol abuse• domestic violence• physical, sexual or other abuse or assault• death, serious injury or any threat of these• serious accidents• fire or natural disaster

Delegate	means a person who has been authorised to perform a specific responsibility.
Department of Home Affairs (DHA)	means the Australian Government department responsible for issuance of student visa and provision of student visa services (www.homeaffairs.gov.au).
Diagnostic Assessment	means the process used to determine students' individual strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills to guide lesson and curriculum planning.
Due process	means making decisions according to published College rules, policy, procedure and local provisions, as current at the time the decision was made, or the action was performed.
eCoE	means the electronic Confirmation of Enrolment issued by the University of Sydney to verify a student's enrolment in a USPP course.
Enrolment	means confirmed acceptance into a USPP course where a student is progressing towards the completion of the course requirements.
Formative Assessment	means to assist students to identify areas in which they need to improve their understanding and enhance their learning.
Grade	means a mark or score or outcome indicating the quality of a student's work.
International student/overseas student	means a person (whether physically located within or outside Australia) who holds or needs a visa with rights to study in Australia, and who has the right to enrol at the College.
Learning Management System (LMS)	means the system used to record and monitor student learning, support measures and academic progress.
Mitigating circumstances	means circumstances outside of the student's control that have had an adverse effect on the student's work or ability to work for example, critical incidents, health issues or misadventure affecting the student.
Reasonable adjustment	means an adjustment in relation to a student with a disability that balances the interested of all parties affected, including the College, staff, and other students, as provided for in the Student Disability Policy and Procedures.
SMS	means the system used to record student personal information and grades.
Student	means a person who is currently an enrolled student in a University of Sydney Preparation Program (This does not include former students).
Subject	means a separate unit of study; a combination of subjects make up a course of study.
Special Consideration in Assessment	means an adjustment compensating for mitigating circumstances that have impacted on individual student's ability to demonstrate their learning achievements in an assessment.
Summative Assessment	means to enable judgment on the quality of a student's learning, generally in terms of assigned marks and grades.
University of Sydney Preparation Programs (USPPs)	means the non-award pathway programs offered by The University of Sydney and delivered by Study Group Australia trading as Taylors College Sydney.

They include the University of Sydney Foundation Program and the High Achievers Preparation Program (HAPP).

7 General principles

- (1) This policy (and its procedures) is based on the following broad principles promoted and upheld by the College:
 - (a) Staff and teaching affiliates will design appropriate teaching and learning and assessment practices to advance student learning and uphold academic integrity.
 - (b) The College will communicate assessment practices clearly to students, including with appropriate training and support.
 - (c) Staff and teaching affiliates will apply valid and fair assessment practices and adopt good teaching and learning strategies.
 - (d) Staff and teaching affiliates will regularly evaluate their approach and practices with regards to student assessment and make the necessary improvements.
 - (e) The College will promote and act on the importance of excellent assessment design practices and related professional development of staff.
 - (f) The College will seek to ensure that all students and staff are treated in accordance with the College's values, policies and procedures.
 - (g) The College will apply the principles of procedural fairness when dealing with all matters concerning the application of this policy and its procedures.

8 Records Management

- (1) Records in association with this policy will be kept in accordance with the Records Management Policy and Procedures.
- (2) Confidential documents related to the implementation of the policy will be maintained according to relevant privacy requirements.

PART 2 – STUDENT ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

9 Forms of assessment

- (1) Forms of assessment may include, but are not limited to:
 - (a) Assignments – encompass essays, projects, presentations, or experiments or any other summative task. Written Assignments usually take the form of essays, reports, case studies and portfolios.
 - (b) Essays – involve extended writing or other media which is used to present an argument or set of coherent ideas. They can be completed in class, out of class or a combination of the two. Most essays are structured with an introduction, body, conclusion and references.
 - (c) Presentations – are normally based around formal discussion groups where students are delegated particular topics for research and later required to present their findings.
 - (d) Projects – encourage students to explore individual interests and foster either independent or collaborative work. Students have to formulate questions, find and analyse information

which is then synthesised into the final report. Projects are generally completed out of class.

- (e) Practical Assignments/Projects - students may be required to complete a series of practical assignments or a project designed to test students' abilities.
- (f) Practical experiment reports – students may be required to explain what was done in the experiment and draw conclusions from the results of the experiment. Experiments are usually done with supervision in class and reports can either be written up in class or out of class.
- (g) Tests and exams – are invigilated assessments that may be time limited. They can be closed-book where students have no access to external materials or open-book where students are able to access their notes and other materials. Written exams may take a variety of forms including short answer questions, multiple-choice questions, problem solving and essays.

10 Assessment design and implementation practices

- (1) The College will ensure that assessment is a central and integrated component of the teaching and learning process.
- (2) The College will utilise a range of assessment practices and strategies, including diagnostic, formative and summative assessment, to advance student learning.
- (3) The College will take steps to ensure students are adequately informed of expectations around student assessment and actively supported with advice and training.
- (4) Academic staff and teaching affiliates will undertake relevant professional development to be able to design valid and fair assessment tasks.
- (5) Academic staff and teaching affiliates will design assessment tasks to facilitate student learning, including provide students informal assessment tasks and feedback at different stages for formal assessment tasks.
- (6) Academic staff and teaching affiliates will actively engage in assessment moderation, as outlined in the Assessment Moderation Policy and Procedures.
- (7) The College will encourage a culture of good assessment practice, educate students, staff and teaching affiliates on the importance of academic integrity and may use appropriate software programs to determine the academic integrity of assessments. Refer to the Academic Integrity Policy for further information.
- (8) In summary, assessment tasks should be designed to be:
 - (a) Valid – to assess the learning outcomes and accurately reflects a student's knowledge, skills or understanding;
 - (b) Reliable – to produce stable and consistent results;
 - (c) Fair – to not discriminate against or disadvantage any student or group of students;
 - (d) Compliant – to meet the requirements associated with relevant regulatory frameworks and standards;
 - (e) Reasonable – in terms of work volume and time expectations;
 - (f) Transparent - clearly referenced to criteria or standards against which student work will be assessed; and
 - (g) Enabling – to provide timely, constructive, specific and respectful feedback to students which clearly indicates how they can improve.

11 Timing and weighting of assessments

- (1) Students are expected to reach the objectives of a subject of study progressively throughout a term. They will be set tasks that allow their progress to be evaluated against established criteria. Such tasks will contribute to the final assessment in a subject.
- (2) Subject Outlines will advise students in week 1 how individual assessment tasks will contribute to the overall mark for the unit, including:
 - (a) the type and weighting of each assessment that contributes to the overall mark
 - (b) due dates and rules regarding penalties applied to late submissions and academic misconduct; and
 - (c) expectations regarding student's presentation of work for assessment.
- (3) Assessment tasks will be designed to recognise that student learning is gradual and cumulative, and to reflect the importance of individual assessment tasks in enabling students to meet the objectives of the subject. Set assessment tasks will be kept to a minimum to avoid students having too many formal assessments.
- (4) Ongoing assessment tasks will be set, submitted, marked and returned to students to enable students to make judgements about their progress. Students will also be provided opportunities for self-assessment and to practise continuous skill development. Students will be provided regular feedback on their progress.
- (5) Students will be advised that the final grade for a subject will be moderated. Moderation may result in the award of a different grade that varies from the marks awarded for individual assessment tasks.
- (6) Apart from examination scripts, all assessed work will be returned to students. Students have the right to seek clarification or appeal their assessment results.

12 Communicating assessment requirements to students

- (1) Assessment Notices containing the scope and nature of assessment will be provided to students a week prior to the commencement of the task.
- (2) Any necessary changes to the scope or nature of any assessment task will be approved by the relevant Head of Department and communicated to all affected students at the first opportunity.
- (3) Students will be informed of College expectations of student behaviour during assessments and/or examinations.
- (4) Students will be provided education on appropriate referencing conventions and requirements, on the degree of cooperation permitted between students, what constitutes academic misconduct and the Schedule of Penalties, as outlined in the Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures.
- (5) Students will be informed that failure to adhere to assessment and/or examination rules will be dealt with in accordance with the Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures.
- (6) Students will be provided information on how to apply for appeals, extensions and/or special consideration.

13 Submission of assessment tasks

- (1) Students will be required to submit assessment tasks according to the time, date and manner specified in the Assessment Notice
- (2) When submitting assessments, students sign a declaration that they have read, understood and accepted the Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures, and that they are fully aware of the consequences of any form of cheating, plagiarism or misconduct.

- (3) Assessment tasks submitted after the due date will be subject to a penalty unless prior approval for an extension of time to submit the assessment has been granted in writing by the relevant Program Manager (or delegate), or mitigating circumstances apply.
- (4) The time and date assessments are submitted will be recorded.

14 Late submissions and penalties

- (1) An assessment task submitted after the assessment due date, without an approved extension or without approved mitigating circumstances, will be penalised.
- (2) Written work submitted electronically after 11.59 pm on the due date will be considered to have been submitted late.
- (3) For every calendar day up to and including five calendar days after the due date, a penalty of 10% of the maximum awardable marks will be applied to late work. The penalty will be calculated by first marking the work, and then subtracting 10% of the maximum awardable mark for each calendar day after the due date.
- (4) For work submitted more than five calendar days after the due date a mark of zero will be awarded. The marker may elect to, but is not required to, provide feedback on such work.
- (5) Extensions to assessment deadlines based on mitigating circumstances shall be at the discretion of the relevant Academic Manager and will be granted in writing.

15 Reasonable adjustment in assessment

- (1) Assessment procedures, materials and tools may be subject to reasonable adjustment where a student has a disability. In determining the reasonableness of adjustment, the requirements of the learning outcomes of the subject will be taken into account.
- (2) Students must make requests for reasonable adjustment in accordance with the Student Disability Policy and Procedures.

16 Special consideration in assessment

- (1) Students can apply for special consideration in assessment if:
 - (a) they have been unable to undertake an assessment due to sickness, a critical incident or due to reasons beyond their control, or
 - (b) they believe their performance in an assessment has been adversely affected due to mitigating circumstances.
- (2) Students need to make a written request to the relevant Academic Manager (or delegate) within 24 hours after the due date of the assessment task or examination. Where the College is aware that a critical incident has occurred, the process for special consideration may be initiated by the College.
- (3) A decision on the student's application will be made based on:
 - (a) the circumstances, background, nature and severity of the event; and
 - (b) the student's performance in other assessment tasks in the subject.
- (4) Students whose ability to submit or attend an assessment task is affected by sickness or other circumstances beyond their control, may receive special consideration. Students may receive special consideration for sickness if a completed Medical/Health Form is provided within 3 working days of the due date of the assessment task.
- (5) No consideration is given when the condition or event is unrelated to the student's performance in the assessment, or when it is considered not to be a serious factor.

- (6) An application for special consideration may result in any one of the following outcomes:
 - (a) no action is taken
 - (b) an alternative assessment is undertaken and may take a different form from the original assessment.
 - (c) the deadline for assessment is deferred, or
 - (d) the student may be given an estimated grade based on prior performance.
- (7) Students may apply for an extension to the deadline for an assessment by submitting a completed Medical/Health Form.
- (8) The student will be advised in writing of the final decision regarding their application for special consideration within 5 working days.
- (9) The grade will be recorded as 'RP' (results pending) if an alternative assessment is approved. This is a temporary grade only and must be finalised before the end of the following term. The grade awarded after resolution of 'RP' is not limited.
- (10) Special consideration may be given when technical difficulties arise in the use of invigilation software in online assessments. Students who have successfully completed the invigilation training may be:
 - (a) awarded an estimate on assessments tasks within a subject have a cumulative weighting of at most 20%, or
 - (b) complete an alternative task when the cumulative weighting in a subject is more than 20%.

17 Conduct and security of examinations

The Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures sets out the procedures for the conduct and security of examinations.

18 Marking, allocation of grades and results

- (1) Marking will be in accordance with the criteria provided to students for either individual or group assessment.
- (2) All students studying a subject will be assessed according to the same standards and using the same or comparable assessment task(s).
- (3) Grades will be applied consistently and allocated using the grading system established by the College. Grades will be moderated in accordance with the Assessment Moderation Policy and Procedures.
- (4) The College will factor in any special consideration and/or reasonable adjustment requests which may be made as part of this policy.
- (5) Results will be finalised by the relevant Head of Department and released to students by the College Director.
- (6) The student's academic transcript will include the approved grades for the subjects in the course.
- (7) Records of all assessments will be retained in accordance with the Records Management Policy and Procedures.

19 Grade outcome appeals

- (1) A student may make an internal appeal concerning the grade awarded for an assessment or the final grade awarded for the subject. A student cannot appeal the grade awarded for the same assessment more than once.

- (2) Students are encouraged to initially discuss their concerns with the relevant teacher.
- (3) Students can submit a Student Internal Appeals Form (Phase 3) to the College within 3 working days of formal notification of the result, in accordance with the processes outlined in the Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures.
- (4) Appeals can be requested if the student believes that an error has been made in the calculation of the grade, the student's grade is inconsistent with the published assessment requirements or assessment criteria or there has been a failure in due process.
- (5) Students should note that each grade outcome appeal is determined on its own merit without reference to other applications.
- (6) The Appeal Officer (or delegate) will normally respond to the request for a grade outcome appeal in writing within 5 working days of the receipt of the Student Internal Appeals Form (Phase 3) and may confirm or vary the original decision.

20 Training and professional development of teaching staff

- (1) Training will be provided to incoming teaching staff on examination and assessment rules, use of the common referencing style guide, appropriate use of copyright, and use of invigilation and text matching software.
- (2) Academic staff and teaching affiliates will receive training on College expectations around academic integrity, identifying academic misconduct and taking appropriate action in accordance with the Academic integrity Policy.
- (3) Academic staff and teaching affiliates will be provided professional development opportunities in curriculum design and implementation.
- (4) Academic staff and teaching affiliates will be encouraged to collaborate and share best practice strategies in assessment design and implementation.

21 Continuous improvement and quality assurance

The College is responsible for monitoring and analysis of assessment practices and making recommendations to improve overall assessment design, implementation and broader teaching and learning practices.

22 Rescissions and replacements

This document replaces the following, which are rescinded as from the date of commencement of this document:

Nil

NOTES

Student Assessment Policy and Procedures

Date adopted: 22 December 2021

Date registered: 5 January 2022

Date commenced: 5 January 2022

Administrator: Position title of the most senior person responsible for the day to day operation of the policy.

Review date: At least once every 5 years from the date of commencement.

Rescinded documents: Not applicable

Related documents:

- (1) *Competition and Consumer Act 2010 (Cth)*
- (2) *Corporations Act 2001 (Cth)*
- (3) *Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 (Cth)*
- (4) *Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2019 (Cth)*
- (5) Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015
- (6) National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (the National Code)
- (7) National Standards for Foundation Programs
- (8) *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*
- (9) Medical/Health Form
- (10) Student Internal Appeals Form (Phase 3)
- (11) Critical Incidents Involving Students Policy and Procedures
- (12) Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures
- (13) Assessment Moderation Policy and Procedures
- (14) Monitoring Course Progress Policy and Procedures
- (15) Records Management Policy and Procedures
- (16) Student Attendance Policy and Procedures
- (17) Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures
- (18) Student Code of Conduct
- (19) Student Disability Policy and Procedures
- (20) Student Enrolment Terms and Conditions
- (21) Student Learning Assistance Policy and Procedures
- (22) Student Misconduct Policy and Procedures
- (23) Student Privacy Policy
- (24) Student Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures