

## ASSESSMENT

<b>Section</b>	Teaching and Learning		
<b>Approval Date</b>	30.11.11	<b>Approved by</b>	Academic Board
<b>Next Review</b>	Jan 2013	<b>Responsibility</b>	Director of Planning, Quality and Learner Services
<b>Key Evaluation Question</b>	4	<b>ITPNZ Quality Standard</b>	9

### PURPOSE

To ensure NMIT's assessment systems and methodology support students' learning, are appropriate, practicable, inclusive, valid, and reliable, culminating in results that accurately reflect students' achievements; ensuring that NMIT courses and programmes are credible to all stakeholders.

This policy provides definitions, lists assessment responsibilities and outlines policy for assessment at NMIT, and includes a checklist to guide good assessment design and methodology in Appendix 1. For further information on assessment tools and practice see references on page 8

### SCOPE

Assessment in all programmes and courses delivered at, or administered by, Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology; including those delivered by joint venture partners and via all delivery modes.

### DEFINITIONS

<b>Assessment</b>	The collection and evaluation of evidence to establish the level of a student's performance.	
<b><i>Basis of Assessment</i></b>		
<b>Standards based assessment</b>	Assessment methods in which a clearly stated set of criteria (standards) allows reasonably objective judgements about student achievement or non-achievement connected with the learning outcomes.	
	<b><i>Achievement based assessment</i></b>	<b><i>Competency based or Criterion referenced assessment</i></b>
	Measures student performance in relation to criteria which are specified in terms of grades or levels.	Standards based assessments in which the criteria are worded in terms of a competence – what a student should be able to do. The only 'grades' used are 'criteria met' and 'criteria not yet met'.

<b>Grades</b>	The method used to report students' achievement (result). The format can be: A+, A, A-, B, C etc., based on ranges in a norm referenced 'normal' distribution of marks, and/or Pass, Fail, Merit, Distinction Grades can be used in standards based assessment provided the criteria for each of the grades are specified (see Achievement based assessment above).
<b>Aegrotat pass</b>	An academic result generated for students even though all or part of an assessment has been missed due to illness or other reasons beyond the student's control. (NZQA)
<b>Assessment method</b>	The method used to directly assess student achievement of a learning outcome(s), for example: an assignment, practical activity, project, examination paper or written test, portfolio of work, recital and peer review..
<b>Learning outcome</b>	A statement which clearly identifies the knowledge, skills and/or understanding that a student will be able to demonstrate as a result of successfully completing part of a course. Learning outcomes reflect the achievement of course objectives.
<b>Assessment Criteria</b>	The set of rules under which assessment will be conducted, details of the assessment tasks and any weightings that may apply to those assessment tasks within an individual course or across the programme of study.
<b>Assessment schedule</b>	Sets out what is required in order to successfully complete an assessment activity - ie all documentation required for the assessment.
<b>Unit standard</b>	A nationally-recognised, coherent set of learning outcomes and associated evidence requirements together with technical and management information that supports delivery and assessment. All unit standards are registered on the NZQA Directory of Assessment Standards, assigned a level and credit level, and may contribute to the award of a Qualification registered on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework.
<b>Formative assessment</b>	Scheduled assessment carried out to inform and improve student learning. It is carried out during a course with the intention of guiding students' subsequent learning, and tutors' teaching, and encouraging experimentation and deeper engagement with the learning outcomes. The assessment will not count towards the final grade for the course or programme.
<b>Summative Assessment</b>	An assessment which measures a level of performance in learning which has already taken place, and is used in determining the final grade or pass criteria in a course/programme.
<b>Authentic Assessment</b>	Assessment that is close to 'real world' situations, allowing students to demonstrate skills and concepts in situations they will face outside the classroom.
<b>Simulation</b>	An assessment activity that represents a real-life situation.
<b>Peer Assessment</b>	Assessment in which students judge and comment on their colleagues' work

<b>Self-assessment</b>	Students identifying standards and/or criteria to apply to their own work, and/or make judgements about the extent to which they have met these criteria and standards
<b>Validity</b>	Validity influences the extent to which assessment fairly assesses what it sets out to assess in an appropriate manner (ie is fit for purpose).
<b>Reliability</b>	Reliability influences assessment to the extent that it gives results that are a consistent and accurate representation of what is measured - across time/students/courses/ institutions (if relevant), ie results can be relied on.
<b>Reassessment/resit</b>	The opportunity for a student to undertake an assessment task or activity again.
<b>Assessor</b>	A person who marks student assessment.
<b>Moderation</b>	<p>A process designed to ensure assessments are valid and reliable, assessment decisions are fair and consistent, and feedback is used to make improvements. (Refer: <i>Moderation of Assessment</i>)</p> <p>Moderation is usually described in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- pre-assessment moderation: occurs before an assessment takes place</li> <li>- mid (or intra) assessment moderation: occurs during the assessment process</li> <li>- post-assessment moderation: occurs after the marking of an assessment</li> <li>- random moderation: occurs as spot checks; investigating assessment complaints.</li> </ul>
<b>Moderator</b>	A person who checks the validity and reliability of assessment processes against standards and stated course/programme outcomes.
<b>Monitor</b>	A person who monitors degrees and related qualifications, to reassure NZQA and all stakeholders that the degree is being implemented and managed as planned.

## RESPONSIBILITY

**The Academic Board** is responsible for overseeing the development and approval of academic standards including mechanisms that guarantee that programmes and courses are assessed and moderated in a fair, equitable and consistent manner, approving new programmes and redeveloped programmes and courses, developing policy related to assessment and for delegating responsibilities as it deems appropriate.

**Programme Approval Committees** are responsible for evaluating applications for approval and accreditation of new and reviewed programmes, and making recommendations to ensure curricula and educational delivery meet academic standards.

**Academic Committees** are responsible for ensuring that academic standards are consistently met for designated programmes and courses. This includes:

- monitoring the quality of programmes,
- ensuring that approved programme regulations are correctly and consistently applied and moderation requirements are met,
- approving as deemed appropriate, assessment tools and timetables prior to course/programme commencement,
- determining whether course progression and completion requirements are met,
- approving the award of courses and qualifications consistent with approved NMIT policies and procedures,
- considering and determining academic appeals by students.
- approving curriculum changes resulting from moderation and assessment reports and feedback.

**Programme Area Leaders (and managers of contracted training providers) \*** are responsible for:

- implementing and maintaining procedures which ensure that assessment is valid, fair, reliable, and consistent and meets all internal and external moderation requirements.

\*Programme Area Leaders have the authority to assign specific responsibilities to others but maintain overall accountability.

**Programme tutors (and tutors of contracted training providers)** are responsible for carrying out tasks relating to assessment and moderation that are consistent with the approved programme documentation. They are also responsible for ensuring that students' assessments are retained securely, and informing students of requirements for collection of assessed work.

## <sup>1</sup>PRINCIPLES

Assessment is most effective when:

1. Assessment is used to engage students in learning that is productive.
2. Feedback is used to actively improve student learning.
3. Students and tutors become responsible partners in learning and assessment.
4. Students are inducted into the assessment practices and cultures of tertiary education.
5. Assessment for learning is placed at the centre of subject and programme design.
6. Assessment for learning is a focus for staff and institutional development.
7. Assessment provides inclusive and trustworthy representation of student achievement.

<sup>1</sup>Boud, D. and Associates (2010). Assessment 2020: Seven propositions for assessment reform in \*higher education. Sydney: Australian Learning and Teaching Council.

\*(edited from "higher education" to "tertiary education".)

## POLICY

All NMIT programmes should have in place academic systems and schemes of assessment to ensure the validity and reliability of all assessment.

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## COURSE/PROGRAMME ASSESSMENT

*(Refer: Guidelines for Programme Design)*

Programme regulations should describe the basis of assessment – the assessment methods used and how assessment decisions will be made for individual assessments, for courses and for the programme. Assessment details for particular courses should be included in the course descriptors.

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## STUDENT ASSESSMENT

*(refer: NMIT Academic Statute( Section 3 Academic Regulations))*

Students shall be advised of assessment requirements within one week of course commencement. Any subsequent changes to assessment requirements shall be endorsed by the academic committee responsible for the programme and notified in writing to all students.

Students shall make themselves available to undertake all summative assessments at the time and place stipulated by the course tutor.

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## FEEDBACK ON STUDENT WORK & AVAILABILITY OF MARKED ASSESSMENTS

*(refer: NMIT Academic Statute, (Section 3 Academic Regulations))*

Assessments should be marked and constructive feedback provided to students within a specified period as described in each Programme Area's protocol or programme regulations, with current copies of final examination scripts available for viewing. Students shall be given access to the marking schedule used to mark the assessment.

### **Retention of Student Work**

Marked assessments and marked examination papers and scripts may be destroyed 1 year after the date of the release of the assessment/examination results where no time limit has been set for collection or retention of assessed work). \See reference to retention for moderation purposes below.

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## MONITORING AND MODERATION

*(Refer: Moderation of Assessment)*

All courses/programmes shall refer to the moderation of assessment processes to be used for summative assessments, and for each programme the Annual Moderation Plan will specify in the detail the moderation requirements.

For the purposes of Moderation, samples of assessed work should be retained securely, for a minimum period of 7 years after date of last action.

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## APPEAL OF ASSESSMENT RESULTS

*(Refer: Student Academic Appeals)*

Students may appeal decisions made by individuals or Academic Committees on any academic matters.

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## REASSESSMENT/RESITS

*(Refer: Resits – Guidelines for Good Practice and Charging Policy)*

Programme Regulations should refer to the reassessment procedures available for summative assessments in each programme, as approved by Academic Board.

For NMIT policy relating to the following areas *(Refer: NMIT Academic Statute (Section 3 Academic Regulations))*

- Use of Te Reo Māori in assessment
- Recording the final outcome of a course or programme
- Special Assistance for Summative Assessment
- Special Assessment Circumstances (eg aegrotat considerations)
- Notification of Results (for programmes and courses)
- Reconsideration of Assessment Results
- Academic Misconduct (including plagiarism)

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## REVIEW OF ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS

*(Refer: Self Assessment Policy)*

The formal annual review process for each programme or Programme Area or Business Support Area that provides the opportunity to review the effectiveness of assessment arrangements and respond to feedback from a range of evidence sources, including students.

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## STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Academic staff and contractors, including those for sub-contracted programmes should all receive a copy of this policy before embarking on teaching or assessment duties for NMIT programmes, to ensure that NMIT's principles, policy and guidelines for assessment are understood.

Academic Staff are required to complete a tertiary teaching qualification if they do not hold a recognised equivalent qualification.

*(Refer Academic Probation)*

## APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Checklist to guide good assessment design and methodology

## REFERENCES

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## INTERNAL

NMIT Academic Statute  
Student Charter

Guidelines for Programme Design NMIT approved programme documentation  
Self Assessment Policy  
Moderation of Assessment  
Resits – Guidelines for Good Practice and Charging Policy  
Recognition of Academic Credit  
Student Academic Appeals  
Student Academic Counselling and Exclusion  
NMIT Guidelines for New Tutors <http://ecampus.nmit.ac.nz/moodle/course/view.php?id=537>  
NMIT Certificate in Adult Teaching  
CPIT Diploma in Tertiary Learning and Teaching  
<http://ecampus.nmit.ac.nz/moodle/course/view.php?id=1268>

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#### EXTERNAL

NZQA website:  
<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/quality-assurance-of-itps/external-evaluation-review/>

ITPNZ Academic Quality Standards (April 2006)

Quality Assurance Requirements for Providers of Adult and Community Education  
(NZQA, 2005)

NZQA website:  
<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/Providers-and-partners/Registration-and-accreditation/registration-accreditation-evaluation-indicators.pdf>

Best Practice Principles for Assessment of Unit Standards (NZQA, 2005)

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#### FURTHER INFORMATION

NZQA <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/index.html>  
Ako Aoteroa's Assessment Guide <http://ako.aotearoa.ac.nz/topics/term/12>  
Centre for the study of Higher Education (Australia) - Core principles of effective assessment  
<http://www.cshe.unimelb.edu.au/assessinglearning/docs/CorePrinciples.pdf>

## CHECKLIST TO GUIDE GOOD ASSESSMENT DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Assessment of student work should be based on the concepts of validity and reliability, which can be characterised through the principles and guidelines listed in the following checklist:

<b>Validity</b>
The assessment plan for courses should consider the validity of summative assessments carried out during the course and assessment via a final examination or assessment task(s), and weight them accordingly.
Assessment requirements for a course should be transparent, with the relevant expectations and processes being communicated clearly to students at the beginning of the course.
The workload associated with assessment tasks should be achievable (while meeting programme requirements).
Timed assessment tasks should reasonably be completed in the time allowed.
The set of assessment tasks for a course should sample fairly the stated course content and objectives
Assessment tasks and associated marking criteria should be moderated to ensure they are clear and free of ambiguity
To facilitate fair achievement based assessment, assessment tasks should not be identical in successive years or assessments, unless they are sufficiently process oriented such as working to a specific brief - eg a practical test, writing a research journal, creating a proposal, for instance.
Assessment tasks and procedures should be fair to all students taking the course, and should not, as far as practicable, advantage or disadvantage students on grounds other than competence in the subject. There should be no discrimination on the basis of gender, race, religion, disability or political affiliation, for example.
The resources needed to undertake an assessment (eg library books, on-line resources) should be accessible to all students.
Marking criteria should be appropriate for the task and the level being assessed. They should be clearly explained in writing and given to students in advance of the assessment (except for detailed assessment/marking schedules eg answers for examinations).
Marking allocations for each task/question should be shown on the assessment task.

If relevant to the assessment method (ie for methods other than competency based assessment), marking criteria should allow differentiation between students' answers.

Where students are offered a choice of assessment tasks, their comparability should be monitored. Similarly alternate course options should be monitored to ensure comparability in different routes through a programme.

### *Reliability*

Marking practices should ensure consistent interpretation of assessment criteria by different markers, or by the same marker at different times (ie through moderation).

Where students are marked/graded for a course on the basis of only one assessment, the marker should have the opportunity to gauge each student's performance over separate stages of the work (also allows for consideration of aegrotat considerations), and moderation should be rigorous for the marking of the assessment.

In the case of a summative assessment of oral, or performance presentation, or any practical activity, more than one assessor should be present. Where possible a video/audio recording should be made as evidence of the assessed work.