Assessment Policy

1. Purpose

UniSmarter uses principles that guide the processes to be used in the conduct and management of assessment and feedback practices in all units.

2. Application

This policy applies to all UniSmarter assessment.

3. Policy Statements

All assessment design and practice will adhere to evidence-based principles of quality assessment. Standards-based assessment will be used. There will be no predetermined or ideal distribution of grades across a student cohort. Norm referenced grading (i.e. fitting grades to some predetermined distribution) will not be used.

The following principles will guide assessment practices:

a) Assessments will reflect the values identified in the learning and teaching framework of the underlying Navitas institution's module and reasonably comply with current policies applicable to that institution, and procedures on privacy.

b) Unless otherwise specified (in the Module Outline) all assessment tasks are considered mandatory. This ensures all learning outcomes are assured.

c) Assessment will be aligned with desired module outcomes as detailed in the Module Outline.

d) Assessment practices will be conducted and undertaken ethically and with honesty and integrity by staff and students. Tasks are designed and students educated in ways that promote academic integrity.

e) The complexity and challenge of the assessment tasks must be appropriate for the level of the module and provide opportunities for students to demonstrate evidence of learning.

f) The assessment tasks and methods will be diverse (involving multiple forms or modes of performance).

g) Assessment methods must comprise both *formative* and *summative* assessment tasks.

h) The principles of validity, reliability, flexibility and fairness will be taken into consideration when designing and delivering assessment tasks.

i) All modules will include a low weighted diagnostic task delivered as early in the semester as feasible and by the end of week 3.

j) Where possible, modules will include assessment tasks that encourage students to develop skills of peer and self-assessment.

k) Assessment tasks will provide students, where appropriate, with the opportunity to self-assess the quality of their work.

l) A marking guide / rubric will be provided to students indicating the standard of work required and used to ensure standardised assessment across markers.

m) The design and wording of assessments address issues of equity and inclusiveness to accommodate the diversity of the student body and support internationalisation.

n) No single assessment task will be worth more than 60% of the total assessment for the unit.

4. Examinations

Examinations will be conducted on the UniSmarter platform in an online proctored environment. The educational rationale for the examination will be stated in the Module Outline.

In reference to Special Consideration requests, Supplementary Assessments will be available for all assessments weighted >10%.

The final examination will be worth no more than 60% of the total mark for the module.

5. Participation

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

6. Grading

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

Grading for All Programs

	Grade	Numeric value for GPA	Range	Description
HD	High Distinction	7	85% - 100%	Complete and comprehensive understanding of the module content; development of relevant skills to a comprehensive level; demonstration of insight in interpretation, analysis and intellectual initiative; and achievement of all major and minor objectives of the module.
D	Distinction	6	75% - 84%	Very high level of understanding of the course module; development of relevant skills to a very high level; demonstration of a very high level of interpretive and analytical ability and intellectual initiative; and achievement of all major and minor objectives of the module.

	Grade	Numeric value for GPA	Range	Description
CR	Credit	5	65% - 74%	High level of understanding of module content development of relevant skills to a high level; demonstration of a high level of interpretive and analytical ability; and achievement of all major objectives of the module; some minor objectives not fully achieved.
P	Pass	4	50% - 64%	Adequate understanding of most of the basic module content; development of relevant skills to a satisfactory level; adequate interpretive and analytical ability; and achievement of most of all the major objectives of the module; some minor objectives not achieved.
F	Fail	1	0% - 49%	An unsatisfactory quality of performance or standard of learning achievement. There was evidence of achievement of desired learning outcomes below the passing standard.
W	Withdrawn	0		Withdrawal from a module prior to the academic census date. This is NOT counted as failure but is an administrative record of a student's initial enrolment in this module. It is not included in GPA calculations.

7. Integrity of assessment process

Transparency

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

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

Assessment mode

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

All assessment requirements and due dates are published in the Module Outline at the commencement of the semester.

Moderation of assessments

UniSmarter undertakes regular *internal* and external *moderation* activities as a quality assurance mechanism. These activities ensure that all assessment marking processes are consistent, accurate and in line with the criteria defined for an assessment task. Please refer to the *Moderation and QA Policy* for more details.

Academic Honesty

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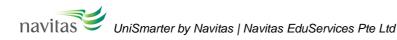
For the purposes of assisting students to undertake their studies effectively and with integrity, UniSmarter engages the facilities of plagiarism and collusion detection software (e.g. *Turnitin*) in modules suited to its use. Students are informed in the Module Outline that plagiarism detection software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

UniSmarter will deal fairly and efficiently with grievances concerning assessment through its *Grade Review Policy*.

Assessment feedback to students

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

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

Grade review

UniSmarter students have the right to apply for a review of final grades within 7 days of the release of results and on applicable grounds appeal the outcome of the final Grade Review. Please refer to the *Grade Review Policy*.

Retention of records

All items submitted or completed by a student for the purpose of assessment or evaluation will be retained at least until the end of the grade appeal period. Copies may be needed for internal and / or external moderation processes.

8. Equity

Special Consideration

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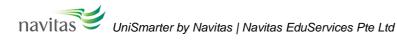
Short Extensions

For all in-semester assessments, other than for final exams, a student may request an extension from the Online Unit Coordinator (OUC) citing reasons for the request. The OUC may, based on their discretion and the evidence provided by the student, grant up to a maximum of 72 hrs of extension from the original time of submission. An extension request must be submitted to the OUC at least by noon of the working day prior to the original submission date. It will be the OUC's endeavour to minimise the cases of short extensions.

Late submission

Assessment tasks lodged after the due date, which do not have an approved extension, must be submitted in accordance with the instructions provided in the relevant Module Outline or in relation to approved Special Consideration arrangements. Typically a standard penalty for late submission without an approved short extension will be 5% of the total possible mark for the submission per day of delay.

Assessment disability guidelines

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

9. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

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

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

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

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

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

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

- *Standards-Based Assessment* - Standards-based assessment depends on a set of predefined statements outlining different levels or standards of achievement in a module or assessment component, and normally expressed in terms of the stated assessment criteria.

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

- *Summative Assessment* - Involves the making of judgments, throughout a module, about student learning, against explicit standards and criteria and these judgments are translated into grades.

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

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

10. Related documents

This policy must be read and understood in conjunction with UniSmarter policies, including but not limited to:
   a. Academic Honesty Policy;
   b. Enrolment Policy;
   c. Final Examination Policy;
   d. Grade Appeal Policy;
   e. QA and Moderation Policy;
   f. Privacy Policy;

g. Special Consideration Policy; and
h. Unit Guide Policy.

Amendment History

Department:	Academic Affairs
Approval Authority:	
Initial Approval Date:	7th July 2020
Date for Next review:	

Revision Date	Version	Summary of changes
07/07/2020	1	Original