

## **RULE NO 2**

### **ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT**

**The Academic Senate of the University of Tasmania makes these rules under the University of Tasmania Act 1992 and Ordinance 13.**

#### **1. Commencement and Revocation**

- 1.1 These rules take effect on 16 September 2006.
- 1.2 These rules replace Rule 111 (Academic Assessment) made by Council on 28 February 2003, following the delegation of this rule making power by Council to Academic Senate under Ordinance 13.

#### **2. Application**

- 2.1 These rules apply to all courses, except those leading to a research higher degree, and the students enrolled in those courses. These rules are to be read in conjunction with the Code of Conduct for Teaching and Learning, the Policy on Assessment Practice and the Guidelines on Honours Criteria and Standards.

#### **3. Definitions**

**“Academic Registrar”** includes a delegate of the Academic Registrar under these rules.

**“assessment committee”** means a committee established under clause 9.

**“assessor”** means an assessor appointed under clause 8.

**“associate dean (teaching and learning)”** includes a person to whom the associate dean (teaching and learning) has delegated any power conferred or imposed by these rules.

**“census date”** means the same as it does in section 34(1) of the Higher Education Funding Act 1988 of the Commonwealth.

**“course”** means a course of study prescribed in the specifications of a particular award, or a course of study comprising units specified for a non-award or enabling course.

**“days”** means working days, that is days on which the University is ordinarily open for business

**“deferred ordinary examination”** means a formal examination permitted under clause 17.

**“dean”** includes an authorised delegate of the dean.

**“Director, Governance & Legal”** includes a person authorised by the Director, Governance & Legal for the relevant purpose.

**“enrolment load”** in relation to a student, means the percentage of a full year's course of study in which that student is enrolled in a particular year. The relevant teaching and learning committee decides what is a full year's course of study.

**“faculty pass”** means a pass awarded to a student in a unit in which the assessor did not award a pass grade. The assessment committee may award a faculty pass after a consideration of the student's overall performance in that academic year.

**“formal examination period”** means a period set by the Academic Registrar under clause 12.

**“head of school”** includes a person to whom the head of school has delegated any power conferred or imposed by these rules.

**“ordinary examinations”** means the formal examinations held under clause 13.

**“off campus student”** means a student studying by distance education or from a remote site by flexible delivery, or at a study centre other than at the Hobart or Launceston campus or the North West Centre.

**“study centre”** means a centre for study established by the university from time to time at any place within Tasmania, interstate or overseas.

**“supplementary examination”** means an examination authorised under clause 19.

**“teaching and learning committee”** means a teaching and learning committee of the faculty established under Ordinance 99.

**“terminating pass”** means a pass awarded to a student in a unit in which the assessors did not award a pass grade. A terminating pass may be awarded by the assessment committee, and is not a pass that counts as a prerequisite for enrolment in another unit.

**“unit”** means a separately assessable part of a course leading to an award.

- 3.2 Despite anything else in these rules, the dean has authority for determining any academic assessment matter affecting a student including eligibility for assessment, special assessment arrangements, finalisation of results, and academic progress decisions. The dean will report to the Chair of the Academic Senate on any decisions taken contrary to the advice of a teaching and learning committee or assessment committee.

#### **4. Assessment**

- 4.1 A student enrolled in a unit is to be assessed in that unit in accordance with these rules.
- 4.2 Assessors may use any or all of these methods of assessment -
- formal examinations conducted by the Academic Registrar
  - written or oral tests conducted by the assessors
  - the assessment of a student's performance, including performance in laboratory and tutorial classes and in written assignments
  - any other method of assessment that is approved by the relevant teaching and learning committee and Academic Senate.
- 4.3 Despite anything else in these rules, special assessment procedures may be used in respect of an individual student, following application of the University's equal opportunity policies or in other exceptional circumstances. Any special assessment procedures will be approved by the associate dean (teaching and learning) having regard to advice from the head of school and the Academic Registrar

#### **5. Time of assessment**

- 5.1 Formal examinations must be conducted at times set in accordance with these rules.
- 5.2 Any other method of assessment that is used is to be conducted at times that are set by the assessors and approved by the teaching and learning committee

#### **6. Notification of unit requirements and assessment procedures**

- 6.1 A head of school must, within the first week of the academic timetable in which a unit is to be taught, ensure that each student enrolled in that unit receives explicit details of unit requirements, including the assessment procedures which will apply.
- 6.2 The details must be in writing and must include details as to
- the aims and objectives of the unit
  - the method of assessment
  - the relationship between the assessment task, the unit objectives and the content

- the criteria which will be applied
- attendance and performance requirements
- a timetable of internal tests and assignments including the weighting of each task
- other assessment deadlines.

In the case of honours students, details must include arrangements for examination of the thesis, the performance required for the various grades of honours and procedures for any review of the thesis result.

Details must also include any specific referencing requirements, the consequences of plagiarism and of failure to meet the attendance requirements, assessment deadlines and word limits.

- 6.3 Unit requirements must not be changed except in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the head of school, in which case students will receive adequate warning and consultation followed by written confirmation.

## **7. Eligibility for assessment**

- 7.1 A student enrolled in a unit must --
- (a) meet the assessment requirements specified under clause **6.2** including any attendance requirements; and
  - (b) perform to the satisfaction of the assessors any tests, exercises, practical or other work that are set by an assessor – unless exempted by the head of school.
- 7.2 A head of school may exclude a student from assessment in a unit, including an examination to be conducted during an examination period, if the student has not met the conditions specified by **6.2**.
- 7.3 The head of school must advise the Academic Registrar of any exclusion and the reasons for it at least 2 weeks before the start of the examination period.
- 7.4 The Academic Registrar must advise the student in writing of the exclusion without delay.

## **8. Assessors**

- 8.1 The assessors for a unit are --
- the head of the school that is responsible for the teaching of that unit, and
  - one or more other people appointed by the head of school
- 8.2 An assessor who has a close family or personal relationship with a student enrolled in the relevant unit – or any circumstance that falls within the ambit of the University Policy on *Avoiding Conflicts of Interest* - must inform the head of

school. If the assessor is the head of school, they must inform the dean, and if the assessor is the dean, they must inform the associate dean (teaching and learning).

- 8.3 The dean, head of school or associate dean (teaching and learning) (as the case may be) must take all steps necessary to make sure that the assessment of the student is carried out in an equitable manner.
- 8.4 The head of school must ensure that appropriate moderation procedures are in place to provide consistency and equity in marking approaches across units in the school and within a unit when more than one marker is involved in assessing the unit.

## **9. Assessment committees**

- 9.1 There is to be an assessment committee, or assessment committees, for each course, made up of the assessors for the units of the course.
- 9.2 A teaching and learning committee may decide that the assessors in 2 or more courses are to meet jointly as one assessment committee.
- 9.3 The associate dean (teaching and learning) responsible for the course or courses is to chair the assessment committee(s).
- 9.4 An assessment committee considers the results of the assessments recommended by the assessors for each unit for each student enrolled in the course, and awards grades in accordance with these rules.
- 9.5 An assessment committee is responsible for monitoring trends in assessment outcomes for individual units and for courses so that standards are maintained and there is consistency of approach over time. It shall report on its findings to the dean, through the teaching and learning committee, annually.

## **10. Grades of pass**

- 10.1 A student is to be given a percentage mark in respect of a unit, unless Academic Senate decides otherwise.
- 10.2 The grades of pass, and the required percentage marks, are -
- pass, at least 50% but less than 60%
  - credit, at least 60 % but less than 70%
  - distinction, at least 70% but less than 80%
  - high distinction, at least 80%
- 10.3 An assessment committee may at its discretion and on the advice of the assessor(s) concerned award terminating passes, faculty passes, or both, as may be outlined in the relevant course specifications.

- 10.4 A faculty teaching and learning committee may decide, in respect of a unit designed to do no more than to impart a minimum level of practical skill, that the only grade of pass to be awarded is a pass.
- 10.5 No credit, distinction or high distinction may be awarded at a supplementary examination.
- 10.6 The Academic Registrar will provide a list of result codes.

## **11. Failure**

- 11.1 A student fails in a unit if the student --
  - (a) does not achieve a pass in accordance with clause **10.2**; or
  - (b) is excluded from the relevant assessment or examination under clause **7.2**; or
  - (c) is absent from an examination or fails to complete an assessment task that is a compulsory requirement for that unit and is not granted a deferred ordinary examination or an exemption by the head of school under clause **7.1(b)**; or
  - (d) unless the dean has given approval to withdraw without failure, withdraws from that unit after the end of the week in which 50 percent of the teaching period for the unit is completed.

## **12. Formal examinations generally**

- 12.1 The Academic Registrar is to set formal examination periods --
  - (a) for ordinary examinations, after the end of teaching in each semester; and
  - (b) for deferred ordinary and supplementary examinations, after the ordinary examinations.
- 12.2 The Academic Registrar is to finalise and promulgate examination timetables no later than 20 days before the start of the examination period for Semester 1 and 2 ordinary examinations and no later than 10 days before the start of the examination period for other semesters. The Academic Registrar is to include on the examination schedule advice to students to submit any new application for alternative arrangements within 10 days after the release of their timetable for Semesters 1 and 2 and 5 days after the release of their timetable for other semesters.
- 12.3 If it is necessary to conduct formal examinations outside normal business hours, they will be conducted in evenings or on Saturdays in preference to Sundays.
- 12.4 A student is to sit for an examination in a unit at the study centre where that student is enrolled for that unit, subject to clauses **12.5** and **12.6**.

- 12.5 The Academic Registrar may permit an off-campus student to sit an examination at a study centre other than the study centre at which that student is enrolled. The student must apply in writing to the Academic Registrar at least 28 days before the start of the relevant formal examination period, and must pay any fee that has been set by the Academic Registrar.
- 12.6 A student who can demonstrate excessive hardship if required to sit for an examination at the study centre at which they are enrolled, may be permitted by the Academic Registrar to sit that examination at some other place. The student must apply in writing to the Academic Registrar at least 20 days before the start of the relevant formal examination period, and must pay any fee that has been set by the Academic Registrar. The student will normally sit the examination at another study centre, and will do so in the presence of supervisors appointed by the Academic Registrar. The Academic Registrar from time to time is to issue guidelines to students indicating the grounds under which such an application can be made and the nature of evidence required in support.
- 12.7 A student unable to sit an examination at the date and time scheduled may apply in writing to the Academic Registrar at least 15 days before the start of the relevant formal examination period, seeking a variation to the date and/or time. The application must set out the grounds for the variation, and include documentation of the reasons. The Academic Registrar will consider applications in exceptional circumstances only, having regard to advice from the head of school, and on payment of any fee set by the Academic Registrar. The Academic Registrar from time to time is to issue guidelines to students indicating the grounds under which such an application can be made and the nature of evidence required in support.
- 12.8 At each examination –
- (a) there is to be a writing period of 2 or 3 hours;
  - (b) immediately before that writing period there is to be a reading period of 15 minutes, during which students may read the paper, refer to materials (if applicable) and write;
  - (c) supervisors appointed by the Academic Registrar are to be present; and
  - (d) otherwise the procedure shall be as determined by the Academic Registrar from time to time.

### **13. Ordinary examinations**

- 13.1 A formal examination that is used as a method of assessment in a unit is an ordinary examination.
- 13.2 Ordinary examinations will be conducted at times set by the Academic Registrar and notified to the Academic Senate.
- 13.3 The ordinary examination for a unit taught over one semester is to be held at the end of that semester.

- 13.4 The ordinary examination for a unit taught over more than one semester is to be held, at the discretion of the assessors -
- (a) at the end of the final semester; or
  - (b) partly at the end of the first semester and partly at the end of subsequent semesters.

**14. Deferred ordinary and supplementary examinations**

- 14.1 Semester 1 deferred ordinary and supplementary examinations are to be conducted, on dates set by the Academic Registrar, after the end of that semester but before the start of the second week of the Semester 2.
- 14.2 Semester 2 deferred ordinary and supplementary examinations are to be conducted, on dates set by the Academic Registrar, after the end of that semester but not later than 31 January in the following year.
- 14.3 Deferred ordinary and supplementary examinations for semesters other than Semester 1 and Semester 2 are to be conducted on dates set by the Academic Registrar, after the end of the relevant semester.

**15. Assessors' results following ordinary examinations**

- 15.1 Assessors must forward recommended final results to the Academic Registrar not later than noon on the fifth working day after the last day of the formal examination period for ordinary examinations.
- 15.2 The Academic Registrar must provide schedules of results for the use of the assessment committees no later than 5 days after the last day of the formal examination period for ordinary examinations.
- 15.3 The Academic Registrar may from time to time vary the dates set for submission of results and the provision of result schedules.

**16. Meetings of assessment committees**

- 16.1 When the schedules of results referred to in clause **15.2** are available, each assessment committee is to meet to review the recommendations of the assessors and to ratify the results of each student in each unit of the course.
- 16.2 A nominee of the Academic Registrar is to attend each assessment committee meeting, to provide advice to the chair on these rules and to record changes made to the schedule of results.

- 16.3 If after the meeting of the assessment committee an assessor has reason to recommend a change of assessment result, the altered result must be approved on behalf of the assessment committee by the chair of the committee, having regard to the reasons provided by the assessor for the recommended change.
- 16.4 The chair of the assessment committee must notify the Academic Registrar of the changes.
- 16.5 The associate dean (teaching and learning) is to formally approve all results on behalf of Academic Senate, and the Academic Registrar is to notify students of them, including the percentage mark obtained.
- 16.6 The result of a student in a unit may be temporarily withheld in a special case, but for no longer than the start of the relevant deferred ordinary and supplementary examination period.
- 16.7 The Academic Registrar will notify the dean and associate dean (teaching and learning) of results withheld outside the period specified in **16.6**, and of other incomplete results. The dean will confirm these results before the start of Semester 2 for, for Semester 1 units, and before the start of the next semester, for other semester units.
- 16.8 A result of which a student has been notified under this clause may not be altered except --
- (a) to correct an error; or
  - (b) to give effect to the result of an assessment review under clause **23**; or
  - (c) to give effect to the decision in relation to a complaint under clause **26**; or
  - (d) to give effect to a decision made by the dean to award a withdrawal without academic penalty or other appropriate result, after evidence for making such an alteration has been provided and considered.

**17. Eligibility to sit for a deferred ordinary examination**

- 17.1 A student may apply for permission to sit a deferred ordinary examination in a unit if -
- (a) they were eligible to sit an ordinary examination in that unit; and
  - (b) illness or other serious cause prevented them from sitting that examination.
- 17.2 The application must be made in writing to the Academic Registrar, within 3 days after the scheduled examination date, and must be accompanied by medical or other certification
- 17.3 The Academic Registrar may approve the application, after consultation with the associate dean (teaching and learning) where appropriate.

- 17.4 The Academic Registrar from time to time is to issue guidelines to students indicating when applications for permission to sit for a deferred ordinary examination are to be made and the nature of the evidence that is required in support.
- 17.5 A student who is prevented for any reason from sitting for a deferred ordinary examination in a unit will be awarded an “absent deemed failed” result, or another result approved by the dean, and is not entitled to any further examination in that unit until the next formal examination period.
- 17.6 The Academic Registrar may permit a student to sit for a deferred ordinary examination outside the normal period, but only in exceptional circumstances.

**18. Eligibility for special assessment arrangements**

- 18.1 The Academic Registrar may, in exceptional circumstances and following advice from the associate dean (teaching and learning), vary the assessment arrangements for a student who is not prevented from sitting for an examination but who has suffered serious illness or other adverse circumstances during the semester.
- 18.2 Without limiting subclause **18.1**, in those circumstances the Academic Registrar may permit the student to sit for some examinations during the ordinary examination period and other examinations during the supplementary examination period.

**19. Eligibility for supplementary examinations**

- 19.1 The assessment committee, acting on the advice of the assessors in a unit, may allow a student to sit for a supplementary examination in a unit at the end of a semester.
- 19.2 Eligibility to sit for a supplementary examination must be ratified at the assessment committee meeting. Any supplementary examinations awarded after that meeting must be approved on behalf of the assessment committee by the chair of the assessment committee, and must be reported to the Academic Registrar at least 10 working days before the scheduled date for the supplementary examination.
- 19.3 The Academic Registrar must give a student who is allowed to sit for a supplementary examination at least 5 days' notice of that fact.
- 19.4 Academic Senate may prescribe guidelines, consistent with these rules, to be applied by assessment committees in considering students' eligibility for a supplementary examination.

**20. Assessors' results following deferred ordinary and supplementary examinations**

- 20.1 Assessors must forward recommended final results to the Academic Registrar not later than noon on the fifth day after the last day of the formal examination period for deferred ordinary and supplementary examinations.
- 20.2 The Academic Registrar must provide schedules of results for the use of the chairs of the assessment committees no later than 7 days after the last day of the formal examination period for deferred ordinary and supplementary examinations.
- 20.3 The Academic Registrar may from time to time vary the dates set for submission of results and the provision of result schedules.

**21. Assessment of deferred ordinary and supplementary examinations**

- 21.1 When the schedules of results referred to in clause **20.2** are available, the chair of each assessment committee is to determine the results of each student in each unit of the course.
- 21.2 If an assessor has reason to alter an assessment, the altered result must be approved on behalf of the assessment committee by the chair of the committee, having regard to the reasons provided by the assessor for the recommended change.
- 21.3 The associate dean (teaching and learning) is to formally approve all results on behalf of Academic Senate, and the Academic Registrar is to notify students of them, including the percentage mark obtained.
- 21.4 A result of which a student has been notified under this clause may not be altered except -
  - (a) to correct an error; or
  - (b) to give effect to the result of an assessment review under clause **23**; or
  - (c) to give effect to a decision in relation to a complaint under clause **26**.

**22. Advice as to progress**

- 22.1 An assessor is to provide regular and timely feedback to the student on the standard of all of their assessable work in a unit. This feedback will include a response by the lecturer concerned to a request for a review of the mark for an assignment, or other piece of continuous assessment covered in clause **4.2**, made by the student within 5 days after receipt of the mark for that assignment.
- 22.2 In the case of a unit that is taught over a period extending beyond one semester, an assessor must, after the end of the first semester, advise the student, in writing, if the standard of their assessable work to date in the unit is not of a pass standard.

**23. Review of final result**

- 23.1 A student may request a review of the final result in a unit that has been notified to them under clause **16.5** or clause **21.3**.
- 23.2 A student who requires a review must make the request in writing to the Academic Registrar on the relevant application form. A student with a pass grade seeking to upgrade their pass will be required to pay any applicable fee. The request and payment must be made within 10 days from the date of the result notification.
- 23.3 The head of school will arrange for a review of the student's assessment, if practicable by a different assessor. The review is to include a remarking of any examination paper and a check that all relevant work has been assessed and all marks have been totalled correctly. In the case of honours students such review may, in keeping with the guidelines provided to students by the discipline concerned under clause **6.2**, involve a viva voce examination.
- 23.4 The result of the student in the unit will be amended and the fee paid for the review refunded, if the review discloses that the student should have received a higher grade or percentage mark.
- 23.5 The Academic Registrar must, without delay, notify the student in writing of the outcome of the review.
- 23.6 A request for a review under this clause is not a complaint for the purposes of the Student Complaints Ordinance.

**24. Publication of guidelines**

- 24.1 Academic Senate may issue guidelines from time to time for the use of academic staff in counselling students about the assessment of their academic performance.
- 24.2 Those guidelines are to include information about the access of students to their examination scripts and the responsibility of staff under Freedom of Information legislation.

**25. Academic progress review**

- 25.1 The dean, in consultation with the relevant assessment committee, must conduct an academic progress review at the end of each academic year in respect of each student in the faculty in order to identify any student who has –
- (a) failed to pass at least 50% of the enrolment load undertaken by that student in that year;
  - (b) if enrolled towards a combined degree, failed to pass at least 50% of the enrolment load for each component of the combined degree undertaken by that student in that year;

- (c) failed a unit for the second time; or
  - (d) failed to satisfy any particular progress requirement prescribed by the relevant teaching and learning committee.
- 25.2 The dean may also, in consultation with the relevant assessment committee, conduct an academic progress review after the end of the first semester of enrolment.
- 25.3 The dean may, having carried out a review under clause **25.1** or **25.2**, decide that a student -
- (a) is excluded, absolutely or for a specified time, from further enrolment in the relevant course;
  - (b) will be permitted to re-enrol in that course on probation with or without restrictions or conditions; or
  - (c) will be permitted to re-enrol in the course unconditionally.
- 25.4 The dean must report the result of an academic progress review to the relevant teaching and learning committee and to the Academic Registrar. The Academic Registrar will advise the student of the outcome of the review.

## **26. References to complaints procedures**

- 26.1 A student who has a complaint about a re-mark as a result of a review of assessment under clause **23** may ask that the matter be reviewed by a student complaints tribunal under Part 3 of the Ordinance of Student Complaints. The request must be made in writing to the Director, Governance & Legal within 10 days after the date of the advice from the Academic Registrar.
- 26.2 The student's request for review must set out clearly –
- (a) what the complaint is; and
  - (b) the grounds on which review is sought.
- 26.3 The student must provide any supporting documentation with the request.
- 26.4 The request must then be treated as a request for review under clause **2.2** of the Ordinance of Student Complaints. Parts 3 and 4 of that Ordinance apply to the request with any necessary changes, and in particular as if any reference to a staff member who is the subject of the complaint was omitted.
- 26.5 A student who has a complaint about being placed on probation or being excluded from further enrolment in a course, as the result of an academic progress review under clause 25, may ask for the matter to be reviewed by a faculty academic progress review committee. The request must be in writing to the Director, Governance & Legal and must be made within 10 days after the date of the advice from the Academic Registrar.

- 26.6 The student's request for review must set out clearly –
- (a) what the complaint is; and
  - (b) the grounds on which review is sought.
- 26.7 The student must provide any supporting documentation with the request.
- 26.8 The faculty academic progress review committee will be chaired by the dean of the faculty or a nominee of the dean and will comprise at least 2 members of the academic staff of the faculty who have not had any previous dealing with the student. In the case of a single school faculty where the dean is the head of school, the chair of the faculty academic progress review committee will be the associate dean (teaching and learning).
- 26.9 The process for conducting the review must follow that outlined in Part 3 of the Ordinance of Student Complaints, as if references to the student complaints tribunal were references to the faculty academic progress review committee and as if any reference to a staff member who is the subject of the complaint was omitted.
- 26.10 A student dissatisfied with the decision of a faculty academic progress review committee may give notice in writing to the Director, Governance & Legal within 10 days after they are notified of the decision that they require the decision to be considered by an appeals committee of the Academic Senate under Part 4 of the Ordinance of Student Complaints.

**27. Re-admission after exclusion**

- 27.1 A student who has been excluded for a specified time from enrolment in a course after an academic progress review may apply to the faculty to be re-admitted to that course at the end of that time.
- 27.2 The dean, in consultation with the relevant teaching and learning committee, may grant the application, but the dean must take into account -
- (a) the applicant's total academic record, including the record in the relevant discipline before exclusion;
  - (b) the applicant's activities since exclusion, including any relevant employment and studies undertaken in any other discipline or institution;
  - (c) any evidence to suggest a change in capacity, attitude or motivation;
  - (d) the extent of competition for places in the course; and
  - (e) the availability of places in the year which the applicant wishes to enter.

**Made by Academic Senate on 15 September 2006.**

Professor John Williamson  
**Chair, Academic Senate**

**Witness**