

Australian Guild of Music Education

Assessment and Moderation Policy

Governing authority	Academic Board
Responsible officer	Program Director
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Reviewed	9 December 2019

1. Purpose

This policy provides a framework for assessment, grading and moderation in AGME's accredited higher education course. Student assessment is integral to the quality of student learning and to the academic standard of AGME's Bachelor of Music course. All assessment is based on the principles of integrity and equity.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all AGME higher education students and staff. It is acknowledged that students will come from a range of backgrounds and pathways. This policy covers:

- Assessment and grading; and
- Moderation of assessment.

3. Objectives

Assessment in the Bachelor of Music course aims to determine whether students are achieving the stated course and unit learning outcomes. AGME is committed to achieving the following aims:

- Well-designed assessment appropriate for an AQF Level 7 qualification;
- Use of marking rubrics to ensure consistency;
- Academic integrity; and
- Fairness and equity.

AGME ensures that marks and grades are awarded based on the attainment (or otherwise) of assessment criteria at the required standard.

4. Implementation

All academic teaching staff are responsible for implementing this policy with academic

leadership provided by the Program Director, with oversight by the Academic Board and its committees, the Board of Examiners and the Student Progress Committee.

5. Policy

The following policy statements apply to all assessment and related activities in AGME's higher education course.

5.1 Assessment

- The design of assessment tasks ensures alignment with course and unit learning outcomes, and AGME's graduate attributes.
- A range of assessment genres are used, including written, oral, practical and performance testing.
- The design of assessments includes clearly articulated criteria.
- The risk of plagiarism by students is minimised by regularly changing assessment tasks, use of software for detecting plagiarism, and using authentic assessment methods, for example performance.
- Assessment within units provides opportunities for formative and summative assessment.
- Alternative assessment methods for students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodation are made available.
- Assessment requirements and criteria are made available to students at the beginning of the semester in their unit outlines.
- Penalties for late submission of assessment tasks are specified in unit outlines and applied consistently. The penalty for late submission will be 5% of the total assessment mark per day following the due date.
- Scheduling of due dates of assessment tasks ensures student workload is evenly spread over the semester and avoids overloading students in the second half of semester.
- Assessment decisions are made by academic staff against stated criteria to ensure consistency of assessment outcomes.

5.2 Feedback to Students

- Feedback on assessment items is provided to students in a number of ways according to the assessment genre, including verbal or written comments from academic teaching staff directly entered into the assessment, or online via the Learning Management System (LMS).
- Feedback on assessment items is respectful, timely, and makes clear to students the reasons for the mark and grade awarded.
- Feedback includes guidance on how students can improve their learning and performance on future assessment tasks.

5.3 Approval of Unit Grades by Academic Board

- The aggregation of student marks and grades is checked for each unit by the Board of Examiners.
- Final students' results will be released to students on the Learning Management System following approval by the Academic Board at the end of each semester.

5.4 Grading key

AGME grades and marks are as follows:

High Distinction (HD) 85-100%

Distinction (D) 75-84%

Credit (C) 65-74%

Pass (P) 50-64%

Conceded Pass (CP) 45-49%

Fail (FF) 0-49%

Withheld (W)

Advanced Standing (AS)

Deferred Assessment (DE)

Withdrawn Without Penalty (WN)

6. Procedure

6.1 Assessment Design

The Unit Coordinator will work with the Program Director to ensure that assessment tasks:

- Are aligned with course and unit learning outcomes;
- Are appropriate for AQF Level 7 and the year level of the unit;
- Increase in complexity and challenge as students progress through the course;
- Are an appropriate workload for the unit's credit points weighting; and
- Assess students against the stated learning outcomes.

A range of assessment genres will be developed for each unit as appropriate for the unit learning outcomes and content. A rubric for assessment will be developed for specific assessment tasks, as appropriate.

6.2 Unit Outlines

All units will have a unit outline developed that is provided to students at the beginning of each semester. Unit outlines will detail:

- Unit rationale;
- Credit point weighting;
- Learning outcomes;
- Content;
- Modes of Delivery;
- Detailed description of assessment items with marking criteria;
- Mapping of course and unit learning outcomes against assessment items; and
- Relevant reference and reading materials

Unit outlines include the requirement that students use the APA referencing system when referencing a direct source or paraphrasing another person's work. Students are

to use reference lists to comply with AGME's expectations for academic writing.

6.3 Submission of assessment items

Cover pages for assignments require the following information:

- Student name and ID;
- Unit title and code;
- Lecturer's name;
- Title of assignment;
- Date due; and
- A signed statement that the assignment is the student's own work.

Students must keep a copy of all assignments submitted for assessment.

6.4 End of Semester Examinations

- Examinations are carried out at the end of each semester. Details and dates of examinations are specified in the unit outline.

6.5 Examination Rules and Procedures

Performance Examinations

- End of semester examinations are assessed by a panel consisting of two examiners, one of whom will be a specialist in the instrument or voice and a third member acting as Chair of Examiners. The principal study instrumental or vocal teacher will not be a member of the panel.
- The principal study instrumental or vocal teacher will provide a written report about student progress and development during the semester. This report will be made available to the Panel by the Unit Coordinator.
- The Panel will assess the performance examination using the following marking rubric. The examining members will prepare a written report during the examination and propose a mark. The Chair of Examiners will guide the discussion at the end of the examination to an agreed mark, and provide a written account of the discussion in cases when moderation is required.
- When there is an irreconcilable difference in the mark given by each examiner, the Chair will moderate, normally arriving at an average of the two marks.
- An audiovisual recording of all performance examinations is mandatory, and will be used in the event of a student appeal or request for review of results.
- The final results for performance examinations are presented to the Board of Examiners.
- Students must present their proposed performance program for approval to the Unit Coordinator two weeks before the end of the semester. The proposal must include the duration of each piece, the total duration of the program, and the name of the accompanist.
- Students must present their program notes to the Unit Coordinator for approval one week before the end of semester.
- It is the expectation of the Examination Panel that students will conduct their performance examination in a professional manner.

Examination Duration

The duration of examinations and tests is as follows:

Solo performance	30 – 60 minutes according to level
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Ensemble performance	10 – 20 minutes
Theory	3 hours
Aural	20 – 30 minutes

Examinations and tests must not exceed the prescribed duration.

Approved Examiners'/Assessors' Qualifications

All appointed examiners/assessors, including external examiners/assessors, must hold a music-related degree and postgraduate or other relevant qualifications or industry experience.

Each examiner/assessor will be provided with AGME's guide for marking assessments and must follow the guide.

Attendance at Examinations

Students are required to attend all examinations and to arrive on time. Students are not permitted to enter the examination venue more than 30 minutes after the commencement of the examination.

Students are to notify AGME immediately if they are going to be late or absent from an examination. Students who fail to attend an examination will receive a fail grade, except in situations where the Special Consideration Policy applies.

Student misconduct in the examination room will be subject to disciplinary action, as outlined in the Student Misconduct Policy.

Deferral

Students may request a deferral of an examination due to illness, misadventure, significant and professional performance opportunities, or another approved reason, by following the Special Consideration Policy. Applications are to be submitted to the Higher Education Executive Manager with supporting documentation, who will notify the student of the alternate examination date if the request is approved.

7. Moderation

Moderation of assessment and results is a quality assurance strategy directed at ensuring the reliability and validity of assessment and ensuring assessments are appropriately designed for AQF Level 7. Moderation tests whether the standard of marking within units is appropriate and consistent. The Board of Examiners is responsible for oversight of assessment moderation reports in the first instance.

At the commencement of each semester, a moderation schedule will be developed to determine the assessment items that will be cross-marked internally and externally.

Internal Assessment Moderation

Moderation will occur each semester for all units offered whenever two or more academic staff teach within a unit, including performance. Collaborative activities will occur throughout the semester to ensure that effective and consistent assessment occurs.

A sample of written assessments will be cross-marked blindly. The Program Director will meet with teaching staff to discuss assessment expectations.

External Moderation

External moderation is utilised to benchmark assessment criteria, and marking and grading outcomes, to improve consistency of marking and grading practices within AGME.

AGME will engage an external academic in the discipline of music to review assessment for one unit per semester for each year level (three in total). A different unit will be selected for moderation each semester.

8. Definitions**Academic Integrity**

Demonstrating the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility in all academic endeavours, including preparing and presenting work for assessment as part of coursework or research.

Assessment

A process used to determine a student's achievement of expected learning outcomes and may include a range of written, oral and practical methods. It also includes gathering information from multiple and diverse sources in order to develop a clear understanding of what students know, understand, and can do with their knowledge as a result of educational experiences; and it culminates when assessment results are used to improve student learning.

Assessment criteria

A clearly articulated description of the level of attainment that acts as a stable reference point or recognised measure for the purposes of reaching a decision on the quality of a student's submitted assessment.

Assessment moderation

The process for ensuring consistency of assessment marking and grading across institutions and within units.

Course

A course or other set of units, *units* of study/competency or other defined work requirements, the completion of which makes the student eligible for the granting of an Award or other formal record of achievement by the Guild.

Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are the expression of the set of knowledge, skills and the application of the knowledge and skills a person has acquired and is able to demonstrate as a result of learning.

Unit

A *unit* of study, unit of competency, module or other similar component of a *course* that has an allocated identification code and is given a result which appears in a student's record.

9. Related policies and procedures

- Grievance, Complaints and Academic Appeals Policy
- Special Consideration Policy
- Student Support Policy

- Student Handbook
- Student Progression Policy