



## **School of Nursing and Midwifery Assessment Policy**

*Last revised: 30 October 2008*

### **Introduction**

The Assessment Policy of the School of Nursing and Midwifery (SNM) provides the broad policy framework for assessment practices in the School, taking into account current ordinances, policies, codes of conduct and guidelines of the University of Tasmania outlined in the Policy on Assessment Practice<sup>i</sup>. The SNM supports the University of Tasmania's principles relating to equitable assessment for all students.

The Head of School with the Director of Teaching and Learning assures 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.

This policy only applies to units offered by the SNM. This policy applies to all students and academic staff in the SNM. The SNM will penalize students who do not comply with the Assessment Policy. The SNM recognises that students who are new to academic life may require assistance in managing their workload including assessment tasks and the SNM will undertake to be reasonable and responsible within the assessment policy framework; in relation to assessment matters for students in their first year of study.

### **Assessment and clinical practice**

To satisfy the requirements of the Nursing Board of Tasmania accreditation processes and University course award requirements, students are required to complete clinical practicum placements. Clinical placements are allocated by the SNM which has a responsibility to ensure that students are adequately prepared and assessed prior to clinical practice.

It is important to note that placement options are limited in Tasmania and it may not be possible to accommodate particular preferences. In the case of BN students, the 'Letter of Offer' prior to the commencement of Year 1, details placement procedures.

Prior to undertaking clinical placement all students of the BN are required to read, sign and return the 'SNM Student Placement Planning Agreement'<sup>ii</sup>

### **Assessment practices at the University of Tasmania**

The University recognises that assessment practices vary across disciplines. Nevertheless, the university believes that all assessment practices should be

underpinned by a common set of principles outlined in the Utas Policy on Assessment Practice.

These include:

1. Assessment practices must be transparent and fair.
2. Assessment must be designed both to support student learning and to test achievement. Such design involves not only the methodology of assessment but also its timing and the provision of constructive feedback.
3. In the Unit Outline, students should be informed of the relationship of assessment tasks to the unit's aims and objectives and the expectations of assessment in the units in which they are enrolled, including any formal criteria and standards against which their performance is to be evaluated, length (words/duration), weighting, submission/sitting dates for all assessment tasks, and penalties for late submission.
4. Where possible assessment practices should support student-centred learning and allow for the accommodation of individual student needs related to disability, health, or other factors. Language must avoid gender, racial, cultural or second language bias (however this does not preclude the use of discipline-specific terminology where appropriate).
5. Assessment practices should be diverse and support student-centred approaches to teaching.
6. Student understanding of the assessment process should be facilitated by explaining assessment approaches, how the approaches relate to the unit's aims and objectives, and the criteria by which students will be assessed.
7. Assessment practices should provide constructive feedback to students that is timely, to permit students to benefit in preparing for future assessment tasks, provides students with a measure of their progress against stated learning objectives, and enables students to learn from their work.
8. Final grades for a unit should not rely on only one assessment task or examination.
9. There should be a clear process available to students who wish their results to be reviewed, and a process by which students can appeal against decisions made.

## **The assessment philosophy of the SNM**

The SNM believes that assessment is central to the curriculum and student learning. The SNM's curricula and assessment policy and strategies reflect and develop the skills and knowledge students will need in their academic studies and their professional practice. The SNM supports the concept of authentic assessment where assessment tasks are embedded in real world contexts within the School's existing curriculum models.

The SNM's assessment strategies demonstrate the way in which the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council Competencies are developed across the undergraduate curriculum and those advanced nursing competencies required by professional authorities at postgraduate level. Moreover, assessment strategies also acknowledge the development of the University of Tasmania's Generic Attributes of Graduates<sup>iii</sup>.

Assessment practices accommodate the SNM's interest in preparing beginning level and specialist nursing practitioners and candidates for higher degrees, and which reflect the broad principles laid down by the University.

## **Assessment responsibilities**

The SNM's Teaching and Learning Committee, with the Head of School, approves assessment requirements prior to publication in the University Course and Units Guide<sup>iv</sup>.

### **Academics**

Academic staff have the following responsibilities:

1. The Unit Coordinator is responsible for providing students with a hard copy of the Unit Outline, which describes the unit assessment requirements transparently and unambiguously.
2. The Unit Coordinator ensures that students receive the Unit Outline during or before the first week of the academic program.

### **Students**

Students must know their results so that they understand that they are progressing on an appropriate academic pathway. The University normally will withhold academic results if student fees are outstanding. Students are also advised to clearly follow the University's policy for review of results and probationary matters. (See Review of Results below).

Students have a responsibility to:

1. familiarise themselves with the Unit Outline and the assessable tasks detailed therein;
2. raise questions and clarify issues or concerns early in the semester;
3. familiarise themselves with the University's Rule of Academic Assessment<sup>v</sup>; and
4. keep a copy of all submitted assessment items.

## **Attendance requirements in relation to assessment**

The SNM will make any attendance requirements explicit in Unit Outlines.

Attendance requirements are identified in order to maximise student achievement. They will be clearly outlined in the Unit Outline and will take account of University rules, the standards required for competent professional practice educational best practice.

In those units that include a clinical practice placement as part of the teaching and learning approach, specific attendance requirements will be clearly defined in the Unit Outline.

Students who do not meet defined attendance requirements may be deemed ineligible to attend any related clinical practice placement, sit any final examinations and/or to submit further assessment tasks in that unit.

Students who do not attend those classes identified as compulsory and specified as such in the Unit Outline prior to clinical practice, normally will be disqualified from attending clinical placement.

## Assessment alterations

Normally assessment alterations/modifications are approved through the SNM Teaching and Learning Committee or in consultation with the Director of Teaching and Learning. Consistent with the University of Tasmania 'Code of Conduct for Teaching and Learning', changes to assessment will not be made without consultation with the students affected<sup>vi</sup>.

## Grading

1. Criterion-referencing informs the SNM Assessment Policy and assessment practices.
2. All raw marks in the SNM are subject to a process of moderation through the relevant committees and moderation is undertaken by the relevant academic teaching staff prior to the release of any results to students. All student work deemed to be of a fail grade will be reviewed by one other academic prior to a final grade being awarded.
3. Result grades used by the SNM conform to the University's standard grades in Appendix A.
4. The Faculty of Health Sciences Committee of Assessors, chaired by the Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) is responsible for the ratification of results in the SNM.

## Return of assessed tasks

- Assessed tasks will be returned within one month from the time of submission unless otherwise specified.
- Assessed tasks will normally be returned to students at specific times and dates as notified by the Unit Coordinator.
- The last written assessment in any unit will not be returned to students until the University has released the unit results.
- Assessment tasks to be submitted electronically will be returned as provided for in the Unit Outline.
- If a student requires assessed tasks to be posted to them, they must provide a stamped self-addressed envelope.

## Assessment load

The number and length of written assessment tasks will be governed by the weight of the unit, the number of clinical hours and/or other assessment requirements.

## Submission of work for assessment

1. Written assessment tasks must be submitted by midday on the due date in the place specified in the Unit Outline. Due day for assessment is normally a Monday.
2. Students will be advised of the mode of submission (written, electronic, and other) in the Unit Outline.
3. All written assessable tasks must be word-processed and include a standard SNM Assignment Cover Sheet and a signed declaration by the student that states the work presented is their own.
4. Students whose submitted work exceeds or is below the stated word limit by greater than 10% will not have their work graded. However, they will have an opportunity to resubmit the work within the required word limit,

but will receive no greater than a Pass grade. The total word count in an assignment refers to your own words and excludes direct quotations. Paraphrased work should be included in the word count. Do not overuse quotations – use them only to support your argument.

## **Extensions and late submissions of assessment tasks**

1. Extensions are only granted in exceptional circumstances.
2. Extensions must be:
  - a. requested in writing to the Unit Coordinator and include supporting evidence;
  - b. submitted on the SNM Request for Extension Form available from the SNM website; and
  - c. submitted at least three days prior to the due date.
3. Extensions for assessment tasks may be granted by the Unit Coordinator or designated member of the teaching team.

## **The assessment of late work submitted without an approved extension**

The SNM routinely penalises work that is submitted late without an extension.

The penalty for late submissions without an approved extension will be 5% of the mark each day for the first week beyond the due date. Thereafter the assessment task will not be marked and will therefore receive a fail grade.

## **Additional assessment**

The Unit Coordinator may recommend additional assessment be granted to a student who has failed within the supplementary range. This decision will be consistent with the University guidelines on eligibility for supplementary assessment.

Students may be offered resubmission or supplementary work prior to the release of final results.

Additional assessment is considered by the Unit Coordinator in consultation with the Course Coordinator at relevant academic progress meetings at the end of each semester.

## **Assessment in units with a clinical practice component**

In some units there are compulsory pre-practice assessment requirements. The Unit Outline will detail any pre-practice assessment requirements.

Attendance at compulsory sessions will be recorded and attendance lists maintained by the Unit Coordinator in collaboration with the teaching team in those units with identified pre-practice attendance and assessment requirements.

Students who do not pass pre-practice assessment requirements will be withheld from clinical practice.

## **Attendance at clinical practice**

Attendance requirements for clinical practice are detailed in the Unit Outline.

Requests for deferment of clinical practice will not normally be granted.

If students are unable to attend clinical practice, they should advise the practice venue and the Unit Coordinator as soon as possible.

Additional time in clinical practice is only offered in exceptional circumstances in line with identified practice and assessment criteria that may be outlined in the Unit Outline.

### **Withdrawal from clinical practice**

A student may be withdrawn from, or be deemed unable to commence a clinical practice placement, by the Head of School with the responsible senior academic if:

- the student has committed an act of misconduct as defined by University Statutes;
- their behaviour has breached the professional conduct, discipline requirements or other rules of the clinical practice placement organisation;
- they are consistently unable, after due guidance and instruction, to perform the skills required at an appropriate standard as determined by supervising university or clinical practice supervisors;
- the Director of Teaching and Learning considers them to have contravened practice placement rules;
- their performance in practice is below a satisfactory standard;
- their behaviour is disrupting either students, colleagues, or the practice setting;
- there is an increased risk of injury or misadventure involving the student or others.

The SNM Director of Teaching and Learning may defer the commencement of a student in a practicum placement within a practice unit where the pre-requisite theoretical studies have not been satisfactorily completed by the student.

If the period of deferral is of such length as to affect academic progress of the student, the SNM Director of Teaching and Learning shall:

- provide notice of the reasons for deferral in writing to the student;
- advise the student of the requirements for satisfactory completion of a practice unit.

### **Examinations**

All examination procedures follow the University examination rules and guidelines as outlined in the Rules of Academic Assessment.

Students should refer to the University Examinations information<sup>vii</sup>.

### **Assessment results**

- The Faculty of Health Sciences' Committee of Assessors, chaired by the Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) is responsible for the ratification of results in the SNM and Faculty.
- The University's Student Administration Office releases the Official Results to students.
- SNM staff will not divulge results before the results have been ratified and officially released.
- The academic progress of each student will be discussed by the relevant academic progress committee prior to the ratification of results.

## Review of results

Rule 2 Academic Assessment<sup>viii</sup> outlines the University rules in relation to assessment and complements the University Assessment Policy. In the event that students wish to instigate a review of results, they must complete then appropriate form with the University Student Administration Office and pay the required fee within in the specified time frame. (See below). Students will need to lodge the original work that was assessed as well as a clean copy.

In exceptional circumstances, a student may request a progressive review of result for a particular piece of work. Such a request should be made to the Director, Teaching and Learning; any such review authorized by the Director, Teaching and Learning will be carried out by the relevant Course Coordinator. In all other respects the procedure to be used for a progressive review will be the same as that for review of final results. Students will not be permitted to apply for more than one progressive review per unit per semester.

The original work that was assessed *must be available* when students request a review of results.

The SNM adheres to Rule 2. In relation to review of final results, Rule 2 states:

### **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.

## Complaints regarding assessment

In the event that a student has a complaint relating to assessment the following process is followed:

1. In the first instance any student who believes that they have grounds for complaint regarding a mark must consult the Unit Coordinator.
2. If the matter is not resolved after discussion with the Unit Coordinator, the student may apply for formal review of assessment under Rule 111.
3. If the student remains unsatisfied they can lodge a complaint under Ordinance of Student Complaints<sup>ix</sup>. A complaint must be acted upon and discussed with the student by the Head of School, within ten (10) days after receipt of the complaint. (Please see Point 2.1.2 Ordinance 8 at <http://www.utas.edu.au/universitycouncil/legislation/ord8.pdf>).

Students may view their Examination Scripts in accordance with the Rule 111.

## Course completion

A Pass grade for all required units as outlined in the Course Schedule (see Course and Unit Handbook of the year the student enrolled) determines completion.

## Progression rules

Academic progress requirements in the SNM follow the University Rules<sup>x</sup>. The SNM follows the University Appeals and Exclusion procedures.

In undergraduate and postgraduate programs:

- The SNM Committee of Assessors identifies students at risk of unsatisfactory course progress requirements, after each semester of study. Progress is monitored progressively throughout the course.
- Students whose progress is considered unsatisfactory are identified at relevant academic progress meetings and are sent letters advising them to seek academic and course advice.
- Students whose progress is considered unsatisfactory may be liable for exclusion from the Faculty.

Unsatisfactory progress in a course is defined as:

- Failure of 50% or more of the units for which they have been enrolled in the previous 12 months (December to November, Semesters 3, 1 and 2), or failure of the same compulsory unit twice;
- Failure to satisfy any particular progress requirements.

Students who have been excluded will receive written notification from the Academic Registrar including information about the exclusion appeal process.

Students undertaking the Graduate Diploma of Midwifery must complete in 3 years.

## Academic integrity in the SNM

The SNM believes with the University that academic integrity is fundamental to scholarly activity. The SNM subscribes to the institutional rules and guidelines concerning academic integrity and takes its responsibilities in regards to academic misconduct seriously.

All students should familiarise themselves with the UTas academic integrity website.<sup>xi</sup>

## Statement on plagiarism and academic integrity

The University of Tasmania states that:

**"Plagiarism** is a form of cheating. It is taking and using someone else's thoughts, writings or inventions and representing them as your own; for example, using an author's words without putting them in quotation marks and citing the source, using an author's ideas without proper acknowledgment and citation, copying another student's work. If you have any doubts about how to refer to the work of others in your assignments, please consult your lecturer or tutor for relevant referencing guidelines, and the academic integrity resources on the web at <http://www.utas.edu.au/tl/supporting/academicintegrity/index.html>.

The intentional copying of someone else's work as one's own is a serious offence punishable by penalties that may range from a fine or deduction/cancellation of marks and, in the most serious of cases, to exclusion from a unit, a course or the University. Details of penalties that can be imposed are available in the Ordinance of Student Discipline – Part 3 Academic Misconduct, see

<http://www.utas.edu.au/universitycouncil/legislation/> "

**The University and any persons authorised by the University may submit your assessable works to a plagiarism checking service, to obtain a report on possible instances of plagiarism. Assessable works may also be included in a reference database. It is a condition of this arrangement that the original author's permission is required before a work within the database can be viewed".** (<http://www.utas.edu.au/plagiarism/>)

## Appendix A: University of Tasmania Legend of Results

Code	Description	Explanation
PP	Pass	Pass grade (50-59%)
CR	Credit	Pass with Credit (60-69%)
DN	Distinction	Pass with Distinction (70-79%)
HD	High Distinction	Pass with High Distinction (80-100%)
UP	Ungraded Pass	Pass awarded in units where the student can only pass or fail
NN	Failure	Failure (0-49%)
NS*	Failure, supplementary exam granted	An NS will only be awarded where exceptional circumstances are demonstrated, and where the mark is less than 45%. The School recommends the supplementary examination, which must be confirmed by the Faculty Assessors' meeting.
TP*	Terminating Pass	Pass grade, but the unit is not permitted to be used as a pre-requisite. The mark range for a TP is 45-49%, where the student has passed the examination component but not the continuous assessment component. TP's should only be awarded to a maximum of 37.5% of a 300% course, or equivalent for courses of differing duration.
TS*	Terminating Pass, supplementary exam granted	Student has been awarded a TP, and has been awarded a supplementary examination to give the student the opportunity to obtain a full pass. The mark range for a TS is 45-49%, where the student has passed the coursework requirements but not the examination component. The School recommends the supplementary examination, which must be confirmed by the Faculty Assessors' meeting.
FP*	Faculty Pass	Pass granted at Faculty discretion, in exceptional circumstances, and beyond the circumstances in which supplementary or deferred examination might be considered.
FS*	Faculty Pass, supplementary exam granted	Student has been awarded an FP, but has been awarded a supplementary examination to give them the opportunity to obtain a full pass.
WT	Withheld	Result withheld - has not been submitted by School. To be finalised by following deferred/supplementary examination period.
NE	Not eligible	Not eligible to sit examination in unit due to non-completion of internal assessment – a failure result. Advice is sent to students 2 weeks prior to the start of the exam period.
NC	Subject not completed	Used for result in first semester of enrolment when student is enrolled in same subject over two semesters or calendar years. Should not be used when there is no further enrolment in the same unit.
ND	Non-degree	Used when a student does not study a unit to count towards a degree, but for interest only.
AN	Absent deemed failed	Student did not attend examination or complete major assessment, or withdrew after the

		commencement of the relevant examination period.
XX	Result in another unit	Result incorporated into another unit's results (often used for Honours sub-units).
DO	Deferred Ordinary	Student granted permission by Examinations Office to defer an examination due to personal circumstances. Used only for ordinary, not supplementary, examinations.
Withdrawal Codes		
W	Withdrawn	Student withdrew from a unit prior to the census date – used by Student Administration only.
WW	Withdrawn without academic penalty	May be used: a) when a student withdraws from a full-year unit after the census date for the first semester, but prior to the end of the first week in second semester; b) when a Faculty has granted a student's request to be withdrawn without academic penalty from a unit due to extenuating personal circumstances.
WN	Withdrawn deemed failed	Student withdrew from a unit after the census date – used by Student Administration only.
WF	Withdrawn by Faculty	Student withdrawn by Faculty from a unit because they were not eligible to enroll.
WC	Withdrawn cancelled	Enrolment cancelled by the Fees Committee due to non-payment of tuition fees.
Supplementary grades		
SP	Pass	Pass after supplementary examination (no higher grade of pass is awarded from supplementary examinations).
ST	Terminating Pass	Terminating Pass granted after supplementary examination; unit cannot be used as a pre-requisite.
SF	Faculty Pass	Pass granted by Faculty following supplementary examination and taking exceptional circumstances into consideration.
SC	Not complete	Unit not complete following supplementary assessment.
SA	Absent deemed failed	Absent from a supplementary examination (used when original grade is NS).
SN	Failure	Failure after supplementary examination (used when original grade is NS).
TA	Absent from supplementary exam	Absent from a supplementary examination (used when original grade is TS).
TN	Failure	Failure after supplementary examination (used when original grade is TS).
FA	Absent from supplementary exam	Absent from a supplementary examination (used when original grade is FS).
FN	Failure	Failure after supplementary examination (used when original grade is FS).
Honours grades		
HF	Honours – first class	Highest pass grade in Honours with mark 80 - 100%
HU	Honours – second class upper division	Honours pass grade with mark 70-79%

HL	Honours – second class lower division	Honours pass grade with mark 60-69%
HT	Honours – third class	Honours pass grade with mark 50-59%
HN	Honours – failure	Honours fail grade with mark 0-49%
Postgraduate Degrees		
XE	Unit not examined	Result for units for higher degrees which are not examined until the thesis is submitted or all assessment completed.
TT	Thesis submitted	Result used on submission of a higher degree thesis.
V1	Vary enrolment/course	Enrolment in research higher degree changed to another level, eg. Master to PhD, or to another course.
ZZ	Enrolment suspended	Enrolment suspended in research higher degree unit for period of time.
WW	Withdrawn without academic penalty	Used when candidate withdraws from a research higher degree.
WL	Withdrawn lapsed	Enrolment in research higher degree lapsed and candidate is withdrawn from unit.
WD	Withdrawn terminated	Enrolment in research higher degree terminated by Dean of Graduate Studies by Research.

## Endnotes

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<sup>i</sup> Policy on Assessment Practice:

[http://www.admin.utas.edu.au/academic/acservices/meetings/Senate/Appendix/4\\_02E1.2.doc](http://www.admin.utas.edu.au/academic/acservices/meetings/Senate/Appendix/4_02E1.2.doc)

<sup>ii</sup> SNM Student Placement Planning Agreement:

[www.healthsci.utas.edu.au/tson/policies/placement\\_planning\\_agreement.pdf](http://www.healthsci.utas.edu.au/tson/policies/placement_planning_agreement.pdf)

<sup>iii</sup> Utas Generic Graduate Attributes

[http://www.admin.utas.edu.au/academic/acservices/meetings/Senate/Appendix/3\\_01D1.doc](http://www.admin.utas.edu.au/academic/acservices/meetings/Senate/Appendix/3_01D1.doc)

<sup>iv</sup> University of Tasmania Course and Units Guide:

[2006http://courses.utas.edu.au/portal/page?\\_pageid=53,32663&\\_dad=portal&\\_schema=PORTAL&P\\_YEAR=2006](http://courses.utas.edu.au/portal/page?_pageid=53,32663&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&P_YEAR=2006)

<sup>v</sup> University of Tasmania Rule 111 Academic Assessment

<http://www.utas.edu.au/universitycouncil/legislation/rule111.pdf>

<sup>vi</sup> University of Tasmania ‘Code of Conduct for Teaching and Learning’

<http://www.utas.edu.au/tl/policies/codes.html>

<sup>vii</sup> University of Tasmania Rule 111 Academic Assessment: Examination section

[www.utas.edu.au/universitycouncil/legislation/rule111.pdf](http://www.utas.edu.au/universitycouncil/legislation/rule111.pdf)

<sup>viii</sup> University of Tasmania Rule 111 Academic Assessment

<http://www.utas.edu.au/universitycouncil/legislation/rule111.pdf>

<sup>ix</sup> (Please see <http://www.utas.edu.au/universitycouncil/legislation/ord8.pdf> or [http://www.acserv.admin.utas.edu.au/complaints\\_check.html](http://www.acserv.admin.utas.edu.au/complaints_check.html)).

<sup>x</sup> Admission and Student Progress

<http://www.utas.edu.au/universitycouncil/legislation/rule112.doc>

<sup>xi</sup> Academic Integrity

<http://www.utas.edu.au/tl/supporting/academicintegrity/index.html>