



## Assessment, Moderation and Academic Appeals Policy

Governing authority	Academic Board
Responsible officer	Academic Director
Date of approval	8 February 2018
Date of effect	8 February 2018
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### 1. Purpose

This policy provides a framework for assessment, grading, moderation and appeal of grades 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
- Moderation of assessment
- Academic appeals

### 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.
- 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 Academic Director, with oversight by the Academic Board.

### 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 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 term in their unit outlines.
- Penalties for late submission of assessment tasks are specified in unit outlines and applied consistently. The penalty will be 5% of the total assessment mark per day.
- 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 lecturers directly on the assessment, or via Moodle.
- Feedback on assessment items is respectful, timely, and makes clear to students the reasons for the mark and grade awarded.
- Feedback includes 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 Academic Director.
- Final students' results will be released to students on Moodle following approval by the Academic Board at the end of each semester.

## **5.4 Special Consideration**

- Students may apply for special consideration if their performance in assessments and/or or examinations is affected by illness, for example, if they fall ill during an examination and need to leave early.
- Students may also apply for special consideration due to other circumstances that affect their performance in assessments and/or examinations, for example, bereavement or illness of a close family member.
- Evidence must accompany applications for special consideration, such as medical certificates, a letter from a health practitioner, or funeral notice.

# **6. Procedure**

## **6.1 Assessment Design**

The unit coordinator will work with the Assessment and Moderation Officer to ensure that assessment tasks:

- 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;
- are aligned with course and unit learning outcomes;
- assess students against the stated learning outcomes.

A range of assessment genres will be developed for each unit as appropriate for the unit content.

## **6.2 Unit Outlines**

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

- unit rationale;
- credit point weighting;
- learning outcomes;
- content;
- delivery;
- detailed description of assessment items with marking criteria;
- mapping of course and unit learning outcomes against assessment items.

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 expectations of 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
- 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 Term Examinations**

- Examinations are carried out at the end of each semester. Details and dates of examinations are specified in the unit outline.
- If a student is absent from an examination due to illness or an adverse incident, a medical certificate or other supporting documentation is to be submitted to Student Administration as soon as possible.
- Documentation must be received before the Academic Board meets to approve final unit results.

## **6.5 Examination Rules and Procedures**

### ***Performance Examinations***

- End of semester examinations are assessed by two examiners, who assess independently of each other. Where there is a difference in the mark given by each examiner, the student receives the average of the two marks.
- Where there is a discrepancy of more than 10% between the marks given by each examiner, a third examiner will assess the examination. The difference between all three results will be presented to the Academic Board and the results will be tallied, with the average mark accepted.
- 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 Academic Board, who must consider the recommendation/result and make a decision as to whether or not to endorse the result.

### ***Examination Duration***

The duration of examinations and tests is as follows:

Solo performance	30 – 45 minutes according to level
Ensemble performance	10 – 20 minutes
Choir performance	5 – 10 minutes
Theory	3 hours
Aural	20 – 30 minutes

### ***Approved Examiners'/Assessors'Qualifications***

All appointed examiners/assessors, including external examiners/assessors, must hold a music-related degree and music-related postgraduate qualifications.

Each examiner/assessor will be provided with AGME's guide for marking assessments, and must follow the guide. Performance examiners are required to use the instrumental syllabus as the marking guide.

### ***Invigilators for Distance Education***

If distance students are unable to attend on-campus tests and examinations, they are required to organise an invigilator. Invigilators cannot be related to, or a close friend of, the student. Students may request a copy of the full teachers' register if they have difficulty in arranging an invigilator.

Students are to submit the details (name, address, email and occupation) of the proposed invigilator to AGME at least one month before a test or examination.

A Statutory Declaration signed by the proposed invigilator, verifying that he/she has no personal relationship with the student, is to be submitted with the proposed invigilator's details.

AGME will make a decision as to whether the proposed invigilator is suitable to supervise the student's test or examination, and the student will be notified of approval or otherwise by email.

Distance education students are to advise the invigilator of the attending students' examination dates (which are also posted on Moodle) and the invigilator is to attempt to hold the examination on the same date. If this is not possible, then the invigilator and student should negotiate a date as close as possible to the examination date.

Performance examinations for distance education students are conducted via Skype or by submission of a recorded performance.

### ***Distance Invigilator's Role***

- Approved invigilators will be sent an information package, including instructions for supervision, as well as the examination or test. Invigilators are required to comply with the instructions.
- Invigilators are to ensure that the instructions provided by the Guild are strictly adhered to, to ensure that exam conditions are the same as for attending students. For example, there are to be no textbooks or online access (phone or computer access) during examinations or tests.
- Students are to arrange a video camera or other recording device for performance examinations.

- Invigilators are to test the recording equipment to be used prior to the examination date. If the equipment does not work, a computer may be used to
- and choir examination are permitted. There are to be no breaks between songs in a performance solo examination.
- Invigilators are required to sign a statutory declaration that they followed all Guild instructions during the test or examination, and record times and dates on the supervision form.
- Invigilators are to transfer the audio visual recording of the performance onto a DVD or USB stick and post to AGME, together with the statutory declaration, by registered mail or express post. Alternatively, invigilators can upload the recording of the performance to a Dropbox folder, which can be provided by the CEO, or onto YouTube, set to private unlisted. YouTube links are to be sent to the CEO by email and the CEO will distribute the link to the allocated examiners.
- Written tests [theory and aural] are to be sent to the Guild by registered mail or express post. Invigilators are required to notify the CEO by email when assessments have been posted.

### ***Attendance at Examinations***

On-campus 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.

Misconduct in the examination room will be subject to disciplinary action.

### ***Deferral***

Students may request a deferral of an examination due to illness, misadventure, significant and professional performance opportunities, or another approved reason.

Applications are to be submitted to the Academic Director, who will notify the student of the alternate examination date if the request is approved.

## **7. Grading Codes**

<b>GRADE</b>	<b>ABBR EV</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>DESCRIPTOR</b>
High Distinction	HD	85-100	Work of an excellent standard which demonstrates a high level of understanding of course content while producing work in a professional presentation. Work produced may possibly gain publication, air time or public performance. Displays individuality and creativity while expressing one's thoughts and actions. Well versed and demonstrates exceptional research skills. Performance ability suggesting standards of expertise towards a well-developed professional musician who can use musical artistry and creativity as an accompanist/soloist/tutor/sound engineer/composer. Presentations of a high standard in technique/technical control/expression which are fluent, thorough, refined and at a professional standard.
Distinction	D	75-84	Displays evidence of a very high standard which is original, well researched and up-to-date while using convincing arguments or expressive performance skills. Demonstrates individual thought which extends past the content taught in lectures/tutorials/forums and chat sessions. Competence in most areas that indicated wide reading and research and an understanding of theoretical concepts which were fully discussed and understood. A clear understanding of the material submitted which demonstrates potential towards becoming a well-rounded musician who can use musical artistry as an accompanist/soloist/tutor/sound engineer/composer. Accomplishment towards excellent musical creativity and technical control.

Credit	CR	65-74	Work is understood and presented at a high level. Written work does not always have clarity and can at times be poorly structured yet is adequate and above a pass standard. Particular important details can at times be missed yet work is good. Research skills may need improving as student relies mainly on course material/resources. Musicality expressed and confident techniques in performance with infrequent intervals in technical areas.
Pass	P	50-64	Minimum requirements are met and student has adequately demonstrated an understanding of the material. Basic skills in writing demonstrated an understanding of the material, but expression of content, presentation and spelling and grammar all need work. Musical creativity, performance, technique, style, control and expression displayed yet often weak and insecure. Research skills are limited or at times non-existent.
Conceded Pass	CP	46-49	Work submitted or performed is below the minimum requirements of a pass mark yet has demonstrated the potential to attain a higher grade. Students may sit a supplementary assessment to achieve a pass grade.
Fail	FF	0-45	Poor quality work submitted which has not met the requirements of the unit. Insignificant knowledge of material. A small amount or no evidence towards academic and/or technical skills was produced by the student. Performance does not demonstrate a professional sound which includes the following: student stopping during solo, weak expression, lack of musicality, unable to read musical score.
Withheld	W	N/a	Withheld results (reports/transcripts) are applied when students have not returned DVDs/library loans/fees. Reports and transcripts are issued upon items/fees being returned/paid
Advanced Standing	AS	N/a	Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is gained upon an application to the Guild when requirements of several unit are satisfied, such that the student can commence the course at second or third year level.
Deferred Assessment	DE	N/a	Deferment is granted to student upon deferment request and assessment is held until completion and re-enrolment.
Withdrawn with penalty	WN	N/a	Debt incurred when student withdraws from a unit after the census date in a particular term and penalty applies of immediate fail due to all course work for that term is incomplete.

## 8. 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 Academic Board is responsible for oversight of assessment moderation reports.

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 Academic 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.

The Guild 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 term.

## 9. Academic Appeals

Appeal processes are based on principles of natural justice, and are applied fairly and equitably.

Students who lodge an academic appeal against assessment results will not be subject to discrimination at any stage of the process, and confidentiality will be maintained.

If a student wishes to make submit an appeal for an assessment grade received:

1. The student should contact the Academic Director;
2. The Academic Director will provide necessary documentation to the student to complete including the basis and any supporting evidence for the appeal;
3. The Academic Director will upon submission of the appeal review all evidence and appoint a second assessor to validate the initial assessment;
4. The Academic Director will make a decision and contact the student with the outcome of the appeal;
5. If the student is still unsatisfied with the outcome of the appeal process, the student may submit the appeal via an application to an ad-hoc Appeals Committee which may comprise member/s of the Academic Board, the Higher Education or other AGME staff as appropriate.
6. The Appeals Committee will notify the student of the outcomes within two weeks of the application.

## 10. 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**

Specific student learning outcomes that are expected to be demonstrated in any particular assessment task.

### **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.

**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 work.

**Special Consideration**

Special consideration provisions in these procedures may allow a student to apply for supplementary assessment or some other form of consideration including a conceded pass in situations where it can be demonstrated that assessment has been adversely affected by some situation or circumstance beyond the student's control.

**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.

## 6. Related policies and procedures

- Student Support Policy
- Student Handbook

## 7. Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Academic Board or as anytime considered necessary.