

ASSESSMENT POLICY

1. POLICY STATUS AND DETAILS

| | |
|--|---|
| Policy Number | AC06 |
| Approving Authority | Academic Board |
| Date Implemented | July 2024 |
| Current Version | 4.0 |
| Date of Review | January 2026 |
| Contact Officer | Director Learning and Innovation |
| Related Policies, Procedures and Documents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admission Policy and Procedure • Attendance Policy and Procedure • Credit Transfer and RPL policy and procedure • Student Handbook • Course/Subject Guides • Assessment Sheets and Marking Rubrics • NIDA Student Charter • NIDA Code of Conduct • Appeals – Academic Complaints and Appeals Policy • Academic Complaints and Appeals eForm • Fee Policy _ Domestic Students • Fee Policy - International Students • Course Regulations Documentation • Misconduct Policy • Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy • Student Support Policy • Fitness to Study Policy |

2. DEFINITIONS

| Term | Definition |
|--------------------------|--|
| Accredited Course | A course that is recognised under the Australian Quality Framework (AQF) and is registered with one of the two main regulatory agencies, being TEQSA (Tertiary Education Quality Standards Authority) for Higher Education and ASQA (Australian Skills Quality Authority) for Vocational Programs. |

| | |
|--|---|
| Adjustment | <p>(a) a measure or action (or a group of measures or actions) taken by NIDA that has the effect of assisting a student with a disability or chronic health condition:</p> <p>(i) in relation to a course or program — to participate in the course or program; and</p> <p>(iii) in relation to facilities or services — to use the facilities or services; on the same basis as a student without a disability, and includes an aid, a facility, or a service that the student requires because of his or her disability.</p> |
| Assessment | A systematic process for evaluating student learning. It includes design, development and implementation of tasks and the evaluation and recording of student's performance against the set criteria. |
| Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) | The guidelines established for learning outcomes, knowledge, and skill levels for defined levels of education in Australia. |
| Day | 24-hour period, or any part thereof. |
| Disability | <p><i>disability</i>, in relation to a person, means:</p> <p>(a) total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions; or</p> <p>(b) total or partial loss of a part of the body; or</p> <p>(c) the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or</p> <p>(d) the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or</p> <p>(e) the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body; or</p> <p>(f) a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or</p> <p>(g) a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour;</p> <p>and includes a disability that:</p> <p>(h) presently exists; or</p> <p>(i) previously existed but no longer exists; or</p> <p>(j) may exist in the future; or</p> <p>(k) is imputed to a person.</p> <p>(From Commonwealth Disability Standards for Education 2005 Section 1.4)</p> |
| Due date | The time and date nominated for the final submission point on the assessment task |
| Exceptional Circumstances | <p>Exceptional Circumstances are those that are outside of your control. NIDA recognises three types of exceptional circumstances; short term, essential commitments and long-term circumstances.</p> <p><u>Short Term Circumstances</u></p> <p>Short-term illness, injury or misadventure that has significantly impacted your performance in an assessment or exam. For example: serious illness or injury</p> |

requiring treatment from a medical practitioner, death of a family member for close friend, or an accident or natural disaster

Long Term Circumstances

This includes ongoing or recurring illnesses or medical conditions that might impact your studies.

Essential Circumstances

These are circumstances where you can apply for special consideration because a circumstance, which you cannot change, impacts your ability to undertake or participate in an assessment. Such Essential circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- Legal commitments - Jury duty, summons to appear in court
- Religious or cultural commitments
- Military service
- Pandemics which result in Government Health orders, such as COVID

Grade Descriptors

The published framework to explain student achievement in an assessment task within a subject. Grade descriptors provide a frame of reference for the moderation of assessment activities especially within teaching teams to ensure that assessment practice across NIDA is appropriate, consistent, and fair.

Grading

The academic review, feedback and awarding of a mark against a set of published criteria of an assessment for degree programs

Medical certificate

A certificate from a Medicare registered health care provider. The certificate must indicate the student is unfit for work/study and the dates for which the certificate is valid. Please note backdated certificates are not able to be accepted.

On the Same Basis

- (1) A person with a disability is able to seek admission to, or apply for enrolment in, an institution *on the same basis* as a prospective student without a disability if the person has opportunities and choices in admission or enrolment that are comparable with those offered to other prospective students without disabilities.
- (2) An education provider treats a prospective student with a disability *on the same basis* as a prospective student without a disability if the provider makes any decisions about admission or enrolment on the basis that reasonable adjustments will be provided in accordance with section 5.2 of the Standards.
Note 2 An education provider that:
 - (a) refuses a prospective student with a disability a place in the institution, or in the particular course or program applied for by the prospective student, on the ground that the student would be able to enrol in another institution, or in a course or program at another institution; and
 - (b) does not refuse students without disabilities places on the same ground;
 - (c) does not treat a prospective student on the same basis as a prospective student without a disability.
- (3) A person with a disability is able to participate in courses or programs provided by an educational institution, and use the facilities and services provided by it, *on the same basis* as a student without a disability if the

person has opportunities and choices in the courses or programs and in the use of the facilities and services that are comparable with those offered to other students without disabilities.

(From [Commonwealth Disability Standards for Education 2005 Section 2.2](#))

Reasonable Adjustment

- (1) An adjustment is *reasonable* in relation to a student with a chronic health condition or disability if it balances the interests of all parties affected.

Note Judgements about what is reasonable for a particular student, or a group of students, with a particular disability may change over time.

- (2) In assessing whether a particular adjustment for a student is reasonable, regard should be had to all the relevant circumstances and interests, including the following:

- (a) the student's disability;
- (b) the views of the student or the student's associate, given under section 3.5;
- (c) the effect of the adjustment on the student, including the effect on the student's:
 - i. ability to achieve learning outcomes; and
 - ii. ability to participate in courses or programs; and
 - iii. independence;
- (d) the effect of the proposed adjustment on anyone else affected, including the education provider, staff and other students;
- (e) the costs and benefits of making the adjustment.

Note A detailed assessment, which might include an independent expert assessment, may be required in order to determine what adjustments are necessary for a student. The type and extent of the adjustments may vary depending on the individual requirements of the student and other relevant circumstances. Multiple adjustments may be required and may include multiple activities. Adjustments may not be required for a student with a disability in some circumstances.

The Standards generally require providers to make reasonable adjustments where necessary. There is no requirement to make unreasonable adjustments. In addition, section 10.2 provides that it is not unlawful for an education provider to fail to comply with a requirement of these Standards if, and to the extent that, compliance would impose unjustifiable hardship on the provider. The concept of unreasonable adjustment is different to the concept of unjustifiable hardship on the provider. In determining whether an adjustment is reasonable the factors in subsection 3.4 (2) are considered, including any effect of the proposed adjustment on anyone else affected, including the education provider, staff and other students, and the costs and benefits of making the adjustment. The specific concept of unjustifiable hardship is not considered. It is only when it has been determined that the adjustment is reasonable that it is necessary to go on and consider, if relevant, whether this would none-the-less impose the specific concept of unjustifiable hardship on the provider.

- (3) In assessing whether an adjustment to the course of the course or program in which the student is enrolled, or proposes to be enrolled, is reasonable, the
-

provider is entitled to maintain the academic requirements of the course or program, and other requirements or components that are inherent in or essential to its nature.

(From [Commonwealth Disability Standards for Education 2005 Section 3.4](#))

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Show Cause | The student is given the opportunity to provide an explanation and provide any supporting evidence they feel is required to explain why they should be given an opportunity to continue their studies or in the case of exclusion to explain how they are ready to return to NIDA studies. |
| Special Consideration | An application that can be submitted by students who are experiencing circumstances or problems that are seriously impacting their ability to attend, perform in assessments. Special Consideration applications must be completed online and must be supported with documentary evidence unless extenuating circumstances apply. |
| Study Access Plan | A structured plan providing reasonable adjustments for students with learning or lifelong health conditions that require support. |
| Submission | The handing in or delivery of, either electronically, as hard copy, physical project such as a sculpture or model, presentation, performance in person of an assessment task to a teacher for assessment. |
| Technical Fail | A Technical Fail (TF) grade is awarded when minimum performance level requirements for a subject have not been met because of failure to submit one or more reasonably attempted assessment tasks despite the student achieving at least a satisfactory level of attainment of the subject learning outcomes. A student must submit <u>ALL</u> assessment tasks in a subject to avoid a fail. |
| Working day | Monday to Friday, inclusive of public holidays and holiday periods |
| Work Integrated Learning (WIL) | NIDA's practice-based teaching can also be understood in terms of Work Integrated Learning (WIL) which refer to experiential learning, meaning activities that integrate work practices with learning inside an academic institution. WIL can include practicums, placements, internships, industry projects and experience, workplace simulations (productions) and professional activities. Crucially such activities support students' career goals through alignment of activity with their industry aspiration |

3. SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to assessment in all undergraduate, postgraduate degree courses and vocational programs at NIDA.

This policy and procedure has rights and responsibilities as follows:

Director of Learning and Innovation is responsible for:

- ensuring the accessibility of this policy by staff and students.
- implementation of this policy.

All staff are responsible for supporting this policy and following procedure if they are aware of student breaches.

Students are responsible for:

- Being aware of and following the policy and procedure.

4. PURPOSE

This policy outlines the principles of assessment for NIDA's vocational and higher education programs.

5. PRINCIPLES

NIDA is committed to maintaining the integrity and reputation of its higher education degree courses.

The principles that underpin assessment at NIDA are:

- Assessment is designed to enhance learning experiences, align to specific learning outcomes, relevant NIDA graduate attributes, the Australian Qualifications framework (AQF) and where relevant the training package or accredited vocational course.

Assessment task design and assessment implementation is fair and equitable, valid, reliable and ethical.

6. POLICY

6.1 Assessment Design

6.1.1 Good assessment design is a whole of course process that requires:

- a. Planning and systematic development by course teams;
- b. Explicit alignment with course and subject learning outcomes; and
- c. Focus on scaffolding and integrating skills and knowledge learning especially at key points through the course.
- d. Assessment to be fair, unbiased and equitable for all students. Assessment decisions should be based on transparent assessment criteria aligned with learning outcomes.
- e. Assessment to be valid, fit for purpose and reflect fully the knowledge, skills and or abilities students need to demonstrate to meet the prescribed learning outcomes

- 6.1.2 Course assessment design will have an appropriate balance of summative and formative assessment tasks comprising:
- a. Formative assessment and learning tasks: that engage students in productive opportunities to apply knowledge and skills and gain feedback in a timely and constructive manner in order to support student development;
 - b. Assessment tasks undertaken early in a degree or diploma program that introduce students to important skills and literacies; and
 - c. Summative assessment tasks that mirror, complement or build on formative assessment to ensure student learning at key points during the course (productions for instance) for the purpose of confirming that learning outcomes have been met.
- 6.1.3 In degree courses, Assessments are designed to enhance learning and teaching. Learning outcomes and assessment criteria are designed to align with the award levels outlined in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and promote the development of NIDA's stated graduate attributes.
- 6.1.4 In degree courses assessments are designed to reflect the demand of each subject, the subject weighting in terms of credit points and the overall course workload.
- 6.1.5 For degree courses each subject must have at least two assessments tasks and no single assessment in a subject should be worth more than 50% of the summative assessment of that subject. Group-based assessment should be worth no more than 35% of the summative assessment of that subject.
- 6.1.6 In degree courses a low-stakes pre-census task formative or summative that provides students with feedback.

6.2 Assessment Advice to Students

- 6.2.1 Assessment notification of due dates must be in writing and be available at the commencement of the semester in which the assessment is due.
- 6.2.2 Assessment notification must meet the current subject outline template and include clear instructions regarding task type, details, submission date (and time if required), weighting, assessment criteria, submission details (including referencing and formatting requirements as well as elements to be submitted) and moderation details.

6.3 Submission

- 6.3.1 Submission of assessment must be in accordance with the instructions in the assessment brief in the Subject Outline.
- 6.3.2 It is expected that all work submitted for assessment by students is their own work, and that where that work draws on the work of others, it is appropriately referenced.
- 6.3.3 Late submission is subject to penalties as outlined in this policy and procedure.
- 6.3.4 All tasks must be attempted; failure to attempt or submit a task may result in a Technical Fail in the subject.
- 6.3.5 In the case of a Technical Fail, students may be required to Show Cause in order to be granted the opportunity to undertake a supplementary assessment task.

6.4 Marking and Feedback

6.4.1 Engaged feedback:

Assessment involves an engaged process that begins with clearly articulated task guidelines and criteria but should extend to active discussion that facilitates students taking ownership of criteria and standards for their assessment. Post-task feedback continues this dialogue and should be extended through discussion, opportunities for peer assessment and self assessment based on the principle of the 'reflective practitioner' and sharing and individual consultations where needed or requested. Tasks and feedback loops must be timed to ensure students have the opportunity to put the feedback into practice.

6.4.2 Moderation of assessment is undertaken using appropriate methods to contribute to the fairness and equity of assessment.

6.4.3 Feedback should be timely and to be of sufficient quality and quantity so as to support students in their learning experience. It should identify strengths and weaknesses, give guidance and advice and encourage students to reflect on the feedback to determine areas for development.

6.4.4 Grades are to be recorded in the current NIDA Learn and in the Student Management System (SMS).

6.5 Late Submission for degree courses

6.5.1 Late submission of assessments will result in a penalty being applied after the submitted work has been graded in the normal manner. The purpose of applying a penalty for late work is to ensure fair, consistent and transparent treatment of late submission of assessment tasks.

6.5.2 The penalty for late submission is 5 percent of the total available mark per day for up to ten (10) days (including weekends) after the due date for submission, or, where an extension has been granted, for up to ten (10) days (including weekends) after the nominated extension deadline. The original mark and the penalty will both be clearly indicated in the assessment records. The pre-penalty mark will be used as part of NIDA's feedback and moderation processes and the post-penalty mark will be used in any progression or award determination.

6.5.3 Assessments will not be accepted after 10 working days unless a formal Special Consideration is in place. Without approval of Special Consideration, a mark of zero and a result of Fail will be assigned.

6.5.4 If a student is concerned that their assessment will be impacted in some way because of circumstances beyond their control they can submit before, or as soon as practical after the due date an application for Special Consideration.

6.6 Special Consideration

6.6.1 Special Consideration is available for students who believe that exceptional circumstances beyond their control, serious illness or misadventure have adversely affected their ability to undertake an assessment or their performance in an assessment. It provides an opportunity to have the impact of that circumstance taken into account in the determination of marks/results and or consideration of an alternative submission date.

6.6.2 By submitting an assessment on the scheduled due date you are declaring that you are fit to do so and you cannot later apply for Special Consideration.

6.6.3 To be considered eligible for Special Consideration applications must be made in writing using the current version of the Special Consideration Application form, available online in advance of the due date of the assessment task.

6.6.4 Submission of an application for Special Consideration does not guarantee it will be granted.

6.6.5 Requests for special consideration must be genuine and made in good faith. Should it be

determined that a request is not genuine or not made in good faith, action may be taken under the Misconduct Policy and Procedure.

- 6.6.6 Even when granted Special Consideration a student is still required to demonstrate achievement of the designated learning outcomes.
- 6.6.7 Special Consideration granted to one or more students must not disadvantage other students.
- 6.6.8 Special Consideration for an assessment may be accommodated as:
 - an extension of the submission date
 - amended assessment brief
 - adjusted marking, or
 - a combination of the above as recommended by the Course Leader and approved by the Director of Learning and Innovation.

6.7 Reasonable Adjustment

- 6.7.1 Where appropriate reasonable adjustment can be made to assessment to support an applicant with a disability, specified learning need or with Special Consideration.
- 6.7.2 Where appropriate reasonable adjustment can be made to an assessment to support a student with a disability who is on a Study Access Plan (SAP) or to support a student who has been granted Special Consideration. It is a requirement that the learning outcomes of the course are still met once a reasonable adjustment process has been undertaken.
- 6.7.3 Reasonable adjustment must be made in a timely manner to support student learning and to ensure equity and fairness in the assessment process.
- 6.7.4 Consultation with an applicant or student must be undertaken before a reasonable adjustment is made to an assessment.
- 6.7.5 If a Study Access Plan (SAP) is in place the student can choose to advise their lecturer or course leader that they wish to engage their SAP for the assessment.

6.8 Plagiarism

Academic work that is suspected of being plagiarised will be subject to NIDA's Plagiarism Policy and Procedure and the Misconduct Policy and Procedure.

6.9 Appeals

Students have the right to lodge an appeal for an assessment. Applications must be in writing and follow the Grievance and Appeals – Academic Matters Policy and Procedure.

https://www.nida.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/77661/Academic-Complaints-and-Appeals-Policy_AB_08_2022.pdf

7. CHANGE HISTORY

| Date | Change Description | Reason for Change | Author | Version |
|----------|---|-------------------|--------|---------|
| May 2024 | Revised template, expanded definitions, included information on reasonable adjustments and Study Access Plans, enhanced information on feedback and added | Policy Review | SSQA | 04 |

| | | | | |
|---------------|---|---|-----------------------|----------------------|
| | information on assessment design | | | |
| November 2022 | Adjusted details for late submission, established a rationale for a Technical Fail; included text around Study Access Plans: changed the definition to Accredited Course not program. | Review | SSQA | 2.0 |
| 01 June 2018 | Incorporated late submission (13 Dec 2013), extensions and special consideration into the assessment policy and procedure | Late submission, extensions and special consideration are subsets of assessment | Learning and Teaching | 1.0 |
| November 2008 | | | | Trim Record 14/06308 |

8. CONSULTATION/BENCHMARKING

Benchmarked against policies and practice from a number of higher education providers and other sources.

Relevant policy documents from the following are gratefully acknowledged:

- Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS)
- Edith Cowan University Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAAPA)
- University of Sydney
- University of New South Wales (UNSW)
- University of Wollongong
- The Juilliard School

Consultation: Academic Heads of Courses, students and the Head of Nida's First Nations Team.

Legislation and Regulatory Frameworks

[Australian Qualifications Framework](#)

[Higher Education Threshold Standards 2021](#)

[TEQSA Guidance Notes](#)

[Higher Education Support Act 2003](#)

[Australian Qualifications Framework](#)

[Education Services for Overseas Students \(ESOS\) Act 2000](#)

[National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#)

[Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998](#)

[Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#)

[Disability Standards for Education 2005](#)

[Standards for Registered Training Organisations \(RTOs\) 2015](#)

[ASQA General Directions](#)