

Communication

Assessment and Student Progression Manual: Principles & Requirements

Principle 9: Information about assessment is readily available.

Communication with Students

Under the terms of the [Student Charter](#) Curtin undertakes to provide students with “accurate and accessible information about all relevant aspects of a course including unit learning outcomes, content, assessment and timetables in a timely manner before the start of each study period.” Information about the assessment, including the assessment criteria, provided to students must be clearly and accurately stated and sufficiently detailed to make explicit what is required of students undertaking an assessment task. Jargon or abbreviations that students are unlikely to be familiar with should be avoided. Well communicated assessment requirements will help the student not only to target their effort and stay on task, but also minimise the number of enquiries requesting greater clarity made to the academic (Dunn, Morgan, O’Reilly & Parry, 2204).

Comprehensive information on each assessment task should be detailed in the unit outline. It is the responsibility of the unit coordinator to publish the unit outline at least one week prior to the teaching period. The unit outline should be prepared using Curtin’s [Unit Outline Builder](#) (UOB), which automatically inputs the approved, authoritative assessment data from Student One into the unit outline. Assessment details imported includes the assessment tasks for the unit, corresponding mark allocation (percentage or pass/fail) and which unit learning outcomes the tasks articulate with. The due date for assessment submission and supplementary information is manually added by the unit coordinator.

Supplementary material provides the students with further information concerning the assessment tasks and may include details on:

- specific description of each task to make clear the requirements and format of the task, including word count and duration of a test/examination as appropriate;
- marking criteria, in the form of a marking guide or rubrics for each assessment;
- group marking processes;
- work integrated learning / fieldwork placement requirements;
- assignment submission and return processes, including expected return date;
- feedback processes, including the nature of feedback and how it will be provided;
- moderation process;
- plagiarism monitoring;
- penalties for late assessment (see [Assessment and Student Progression Manual: Consolidated Policies and Procedures](#), p. 25);
- requests for assessment extension (see [Assessment and Student Progression Manual: Consolidated Policies and Procedures](#), pp. 26-30), and
- scheduled dates for deferred assessments and supplementary assessments (see [Assessment and Student Progression Manual: Consolidated Policies and Procedures](#), pp. 31-33).

Take the time to engage with students and discuss the above issue in tutorial time or through online forums.

Communication within the Teaching Team

Details of the assessment tasks must be made available to the teaching team and any external assessors or examiners. Feedback to external assessors is particularly important for fieldwork education where careful attention to moderation processes are needed to ensure consistency and reliability across placements (see [Assessment and Student Progression Manual: Consolidated Policies and](#)

Requirement 3.4.1
Details of the assessment tasks including required word counts (if appropriate), weighting, due dates and marking criteria will be specified and made available to students in the unit outline.

Requirement 3.4.2
The unit outline must be made available to students via the University learning management system no later than one week prior to the commencement of the study period.

Requirement 3.4.3
Students will be informed as to when and how they will receive feedback on each assessment task.

Requirement 3.4.4
Where the assessment takes the form of a group task, students must be informed in advance as to how individual marks will be determined. If the allocated group mark is to be modified for any group member to reflect their individual contribution, this process must be communicated clearly to the students in advance, together with information to show how individual marks are calculated.

Requirement 3.4.5
Should any changes to the assessment be required, students will be notified in writing. Assessments may be changed after the publication of the unit outline, providing that such changes do not disadvantage any student and that the change has majority approval from the students currently enrolled in the unit. In exceptional circumstances (outlined in the Teaching and Learning Risk policy) changes may be made to assessment without recourse to students.

[Procedures](#), p. 21, and [Fieldwork Education at Curtin](#)). The unit coordinator is responsible for organising and maintaining channels of communication between the teaching team to address assessment and moderation processes and issues (refer to the role description of unit coordinators in the [Unit Coordinator Handbook](#)).

eVALUate

At Curtin the opportunity for students to provide evaluation on the unit to teaching staff is provided through Curtin's [eVALUate](#) system. In particular, items 4 and 5 in the 'unit survey' and item 6 in the 'teaching survey' concern assessment and feedback.

Providing opportunities for informal communication forums, either face-to-face or online throughout the teaching period will supplement the information obtained through use of eVALUate. Many issues can arise during the semester, and prompt understanding and management on behalf of the teaching team can do much to mitigate problems connected to the unit assessment.

References

Dunn, L., Morgan, C., O'Reilly, M., & Parry, S. (2004). *The student assessment handbook*. London: Routledge.

Recommended readings

Rust, C., Price, M. & O'Donovan, B. (2003) Improving students' learning by developing their understanding of assessment criteria and processes, *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 28(2), 147-164.