

Appendix A – Course Evaluation Principles and Standards

(See Course Outline Operating Procedure for full document)

Purpose of Assessment

Assessment design must contribute to quality learning experiences and reinforce the development, delivery and quality assurance of courses. Assessment should help students learn (*assessment for learning*), measure explicit evidence of student learning (*assessment of learning*) and develop the students' ability to reflect on their learning (*assessment as learning*).

Evaluation measures the extent of student learning as indicated in the course learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and/or attitudes), and is further used to diagnose misconceptions and facilitate learning.

The following guidelines reflect assessment best practices:

Assessment Best Practice	Rationale
Timing of Assessments	
Students receive a clearly defined course evaluation plan at the start of the semester.	A clear and transparent evaluation plan allows students to prepare for the semester; the evaluation plan is detailed in the course outline.
Students receive an assessment as early as possible in the semester.	Early assessment allows students get receive feedback early, adapt to the teaching environment and assess their own study skills. This also gives faculty early insight into students' learning and abilities.
Students complete assessments regularly throughout the semester.	Regular assessment can formative (ungraded with feedback) or summative (graded with feedback). Ongoing assessment helps students demonstrate and reflect on their learning. Regular assessment allows faculty to monitor student progress and understanding, therefore adjusting teaching practice in accordance to the assessment data.
Types of Assessments	
Students complete a variety of objective assessment types and tools.	Using a mix of assessments provides students with a variety of mechanisms to display their knowledge of course material Types – diagnostic, formative, summative, criterion-references, benchmark, norm-referenced Tools – e.g. tests, quizzes, group work, assignments, reports, practical application, etc.

Students complete formative (i.e. ungraded) assessments	Formative assessments provide students with an opportunity to self-evaluate. They also provide the faculty member with an opportunity to identify gaps in learning.
Students complete summative (i.e. graded) assessments, where all elements of the evaluation are assigned a percentage of the final grade.	Summative assessments give the students an opportunity to demonstrate learning and to determine weight of each assignment as it relates to their final grade

Quality of Assessments

Students' evaluations align with the course learning outcomes, which satisfy the program vocational learning outcomes and the appropriate essential employability skills.	Alignment of course and vocational outcomes ensures the quality of the course within the program. Students will understand the value and purpose of the assessment. Effective planning ensures that the appropriate course learning outcomes and employability skills are taught and assessed. This also discourages the practice of attributing grades as attendance does not reflect what the student has learned. A fair and reasonable deduction for grammar and spelling, which may vary by program, is acceptable.
Evaluation methods encourage high order thinking skills, rather than just rote memory.	High order thinking skills help to develop critical thinking and problem solving skills – skills required of a 21 st century learner.
Students receive well-defined rubrics or grading criteria for assessments at the same time the evaluation is introduced – including expectations for individual and group assignments.	Rubrics/grading criteria ensure that students receive evaluations that are equitable and unbiased, and that the methods used to calculate final grades are fair, consistent and aligned to the course outcomes. In addition, any penalties are clearly documented and communicated to students from the start.
Students are aware of the practice for missed tests and assignments.	These practices must be fair, consistent, and based on the collection of accurate information from the student.

Meaningful Feedback on Assessments

Students receive feedback for assessments that is specific, timely, and focused on moving students forward.	Quality, timely feedback enhances student learning and improves assessment performance.
Students' evaluation information is confidential.	In accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, individual student evaluation information is confidential and is not

be shared without the student's written consent. In the event that the student is a minor, permission will need to be obtained from the student's parent.
