

School of Education

Policies and Procedures

(Subject to change: Last Updated 27 April 2022)

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School of Education Policies and Procedures

School policies and procedures are based on UNSW policies. This document outlines addresses some of the more common issues and questions around assessment, as well as additional guidelines and procedures that apply to students studying courses in the School of Education.

More information on UNSW assessment and student conduct policies:

- [Guide to assessment at UNSW](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [Guide to UNSW Grades](#)
- [Guide to Academic Progression](#)
- [Special Consideration at UNSW](#)
- [Academic Advising at UNSW](#)
- [Health and wellbeing support](#)

Assessment Policy

Submission of Assessments

For most forms of written work presented for assessment, students should follow guidelines specified in the American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual for presentation, formatting, writing style, and citation style. (Some genres, such as reports, lesson plans, or units of work may have different conventions, and these will be specified by the course convenor in the assessment information).

The APA Publication Manual and related resources are available at <http://www.apastyle.org/>. Students commencing in coursework and research programs are encouraged to acquire a copy of the current Publication Manual.

Always retain a copy of work submitted for assessment. Students are required to keep all drafts, original data and other evidence of the authenticity of the work for at least one year after assessment. Assessments will often be useful references for other courses, especially capstone and final units.

For example, the Graduate Teacher Performance Assessment (GTPA) in Initial Teacher Education programs, and the capstone project in Master of

Education and Educational Leadership programs all require references to previous work completed in the program.

Penalties for Late Submissions

UNSW has a standard late submission penalty of:

- 5% per day, for all assessments where a penalty applies;
- capped at five days (120 hours) from the assessment deadline, after which a student cannot submit an assessment, and
- no permitted variation.

In the situation where a student fails the assessment task due to lateness, BUT:

- completes an assessment that is of satisfactory quality, and
- achieves an overall mark of at least 50% in the course after the deduction of all penalties

the student may be deemed to have passed the course for the purposes of meeting hurdle requirements.

Special Consideration

[Special consideration](#) is the process for assessing the impact of short-term events beyond your control (exceptional circumstances), on your performance in a specific assessment task.

If your ability to complete an assessment on time has been impacted by circumstances that are short-term, serious, and unavoidable, you may be eligible to apply for Special Consideration. If approved, you may receive an extension or supplementary assessment or extension of time.

You must apply for Special Consideration as soon as possible after the issue occurs or at the latest, within 3 working days of the assessment or the period covered by your supporting documentation.

You must apply for Special Consideration using the [Special Consideration Portal](#). Course convenors and instructors are not permitted to grant Special Consideration. You do not need to notify or request Special Consideration from your course convenor or instructor, as they will automatically be notified.

Equitable Learning Services

[Equitable Learning Services](#) (formerly Disability Support Unit) is a free and confidential service that provides practical support to ensure your health condition doesn't adversely affect your studies.

If you have a disability, medical condition, learning disability, or are dealing with personal circumstances that affect your study, Equitable Learning Services may be able to provide you with assistance.

Equitable Learning Advisors can arrange to put in place services and educational adjustments to make things more manageable so that you are able to complete your course requirements.

ELS assists students:

- living with disabilities
- with long- or short-term health concerns and/or mental health issues
- who are primary carers

Support for Completing Assessments

Staff are not generally available to preview and comment on drafts of student assessments outside of what is provided in the course structure. Instead, assessments are usually guided and scaffolded through course resources (e.g., tutorials, video, discussion groups).

Students are encouraged to make use of these opportunities to raise questions about assessments and to support their peers.

Staff are also available for individual student consultations on request to field any questions on course material or assessments, or to direct students to [university learning and support services](#)

Hurdle requirements

A hurdle requirement or hurdle rule is a course requirement that must be fulfilled in order to pass the course. In all courses in the School of Education, all assessments, regardless of their weighting, are hurdle requirements. That is, all assessments in a course must receive a pass mark in order to pass the course.

Where a student has failed to meet the requirements of an assessment, they may still be deemed to have met the hurdle requirement if the failure was only due to a late penalty, and if the overall mark for the course is still greater than 50.

Feedback and Assessment Criteria

Feedback on assessment will normally be provided within ten working days of submission. In most cases, feedback will be provided in the form of:

- a mark (e.g., 16 points out of 20); and
- indicators of performance on each of the assessment criteria; and
- a brief comment that explains how the assessment aligns with the grade provided, summarises the strengths of the work, and makes suggestions that will assist performance in subsequent assessments.

The following assessment criteria are used for all assessments.

- Understanding of the question, key issue, or concepts
- Depth of analysis
- Familiarity, relevance, and use of appropriate sources and literature
- Structure and organisation of the response
- Academic and linguistic conventions

There is no weighting assigned to each criterion, and the general emphasis may vary depending on the type of assessment. However, performance in each criterion should align at least with the Pass (PS) grade descriptor, otherwise the assessment overall is unlikely to meet the assessment requirements.

In some cases, an alternative set of criteria or an assessment rubric will be used, and this will be specified in the assessment description.

Grading

School of Education grade descriptors

**(HD) High
Distinction
(85% and
above)**

The assignment is of exceptional quality and meets all learning outcomes at a consistent and sustained level. It reveals a deep understanding of the question or issue under consideration, and highly informed, original and creative analytical and evaluative thinking. The work displays a substantial familiarity with the research literature relating to the issues discussed and relates his or her arguments strongly to the findings of this literature. The assignment is also very well-organised and very well-written, demonstrating the ability to critically evaluate competing arguments, perspectives and/or approaches, and the ability to communicate ideas accurately, fluently and clearly in terms of the conventions of the discipline and audience.

**(DN)
Distinction
(75-84%)**

The assignment is of excellent quality and meets all learning outcomes at a consistent level. It demonstrates a very clear understanding of the question or issue under consideration and shows evidence of well-informed analytical thinking with the integration and evaluation of critical ideas, principles and theories, and insight and ability in applying relevant skills and concepts in relation to learning outcomes. The writer displays a substantial familiarity with the research literature relating to the issues discussed and relates to his or her arguments to the findings of the literature. The assignment is well-organized and well-written with convincing argumentation and the ability to communicate ideas fluently and clearly in terms of the conventions of the discipline and audience.

**(CR) Credit
(65-74%)**

The assignment is of good quality and meets all learning outcomes at an appropriate level. It demonstrates a clear understanding of the question or issue under

consideration and shows some evidence of analytical thinking that goes beyond replication of content knowledge or skills relevant to the learning outcomes. The writer displays familiarity with the research literature relating to the issues discussed and relates his or her arguments to the findings of this literature. The assignment is well organized and well-written with clear argumentation and the ability to communicate ideas fluently and clearly in terms of the conventions of the discipline.

**(PS) Pass
(50-64%)**

The assignment is of adequate quality and provides evidence of attainment of all learning outcomes. It demonstrates a clear understanding of the question or issue under consideration. The writer displays a familiarity with some of the research literature relating to the issues discussed. The assignment is moderately well-organised and the arguments can be clearly understood with communication of information and ideas following the conventions of the discipline.

**(FL)
Fail (less
than 50%)**

The assignment is not adequate in quality or content and does not provide evidence of attainment of learning outcomes. The writer fails to demonstrate a clear understanding of the question or issue under consideration, with missing or partial or superficial or faulty understanding and application of the fundamental concepts in the field of study. Little or no mention is made of the research literature relating to the issues presented. The assignment is poorly structured, and meaning is at times unclear, with missing, undeveloped, inappropriate or confusing argumentation and communication of ideas with little attention given to the conventions of the discipline.

Similar descriptors are used for the final marks awarded in a course. For a full explanation of grades that can be awarded to a course, see, <https://student.unsw.edu.au/grade>

Resubmission of Work and Supplementary Assessment

Students are not generally permitted a second attempt at a task if their work was awarded a fail grade, or to resubmit work for a different mark, regardless of the mark obtained.

In some cases, a supplementary assessment may be made available to who have failed an assessment. Supplementary assessment may be considered for students who have failed to meet the requirements for an assessment and:

- have completed less than 18 Units of Credit in a single-degree program, or less than 18 Units of Credit in the Education part of a dual-degree program, or are attempting the final course or term of a program and otherwise fulfilled all other course and program requirements*; and
- the fail grade for the assessment was not due to incurring a late penalty; and
- have not failed to meet the requirements for another assessment in the course; and
- have not failed to meet the requirements for the course previously; and
- can demonstrate a likelihood of success on a subsequent attempt of the assessment or on a supplementary assessment.

In these cases, supplementary assessments are granted on a case-by-case basis and must be approved by the Program Director. The maximum grade awarded for the supplementary assessment in these circumstances is the minimum grade required to pass the assessment (usually 50%).

* Supplementary assessments will not be offered for capstone courses, WIL or Professional Experience courses, or for the Graduate Teacher Performance Assessment (GTPA)

Review of Results

In some cases, students may be eligible to apply for a [Review of Results](#). Applications for a Review of Results to the School of Education are only approved if a strong case is presented that performance in the assessment does not match the grade awarded for the assessment, or if there is evidence that the procedures outlined for assessment validity and reliability have not been undertaken.

Reviews of results are generally not approved for assessments that receive a fail grade, because these assignments are always double-marked by a second assessor before grades are awarded. Please see [Review of Results](#) for information on eligibility and how to apply.

Assessment Validity and Reliability

In the School of Education, staff assessing student work undertake a range of measures to uphold the validity and reliability of assessment and feedback. These include:

- Small-group standardisation of representative sample of assessments with other staff in the same course or other staff with relevant expertise
- Double-marking any assessments that are likely to receive a 'fail' grade or where there is doubt by a staff member as to the mark that should be awarded
- Double-marking assessment for which there is a plagiarism allegation that is upheld
- Regularly updating assessments based on student feedback and in relation to the course and program learning outcomes
- Regularly reviewing courses to improve the alignment between assessment, course learning outcomes, and program learning outcomes.
- Conducting annual program evaluations with students
- Reporting to Program Directors on levels of attainment in the course for consistency between courses in a program or between student cohorts

Attendance

The School of Education has a minimum attendance requirement for classes, including lectures, tutorials, seminars, and other learning activities whether on-campus, off-campus, online, synchronous, or asynchronous. The attendance requirement is a minimum threshold for engagement and ensures that programs meet the requirements of external accreditation authorities (e.g., NESAs) for a range of programs (e.g., initial teacher education programs and other accredited postgraduate coursework specialisations). The School recognises rapidly changing teaching and learning practices online and incorporates flexibility in the design of all courses with a balance of scheduled and asynchronous learning activities.

Minimum Attendance Requirements

- For classes timetabled as *lectures*: Students must attend a minimum of 80% of the timetabled lectures, regardless of whether the lectures are online, in-person, on-campus, or off-campus. If the lecture is recorded, attendance at the scheduled time is advised, but students may access recordings of lectures in lieu of attendance, and should do so as soon as possible after the lecture occurs (e.g., before the following tutorial). In some cases, the course may require that students demonstrate engagement with recordings (e.g., by submitting comprehensive study notes).
- For classes timetabled as *tutorials, seminars, workshops*, or other events, students must attend a minimum of 80% of scheduled classes regardless of whether the class is recorded, and regardless of whether the class is on-campus, off-campus, in-person, or online. Students must register their attendance according to the course convenor's directions.
- For course material that is not timetabled, such as in classes that are fully asynchronous or blended, students are expected to demonstrate regular and timely engagement with learning activities (e.g., through regular access to the course throughout the entire term, records of access to activities on Moodle or other platforms, records of online activity completion, posts on discussion forums, or downloading of course materials).

Students who do not meet the attendance requirement may be refused final assessment, even if their work meets assessment criteria.

Exceptions to the attendance requirement:

- The attendance requirement may not apply to some optional course activities. These will be clearly indicated by the course convenor from the beginning of the term.
- If a student is unable to attend all classes for a course due to timetable clashes, they may [apply for permission to enrol](#) with alternative arrangements. [More info](#)
- Exemptions from the attendance requirement for individual students may apply in rare circumstances (e.g., when they relate to accommodations for students with disabilities or health conditions which affect attendance requirements, or adverse or unforeseen circumstances outside the student's control). Approval for exemptions must be sought from the Course Convenor and Program Director. Retrospective approval for exemptions will not be considered. Exemptions for employment obligations will not be considered.

Partial absences

Students are expected to be punctual when attending at all classes in which they are enrolled. As a general guide, missing more than 15 minutes of a class (e.g., due to late arrival or early departure) would not be recorded as attendance for the purposes of attendance requirements.

Recording Attendance

Instructions will be provided for recording attendance provided by a course instructor or convenor, which may include signing an attendance record, following an online link, or signing-in for an online class.

Attempts to falsify attendance records will be treated as student misconduct under the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Course withdrawal

Until the designated [census date](#) of any teaching period, a student may withdraw from any course, via myUNSW, without academic or financial penalty. After the census date, academic or financial penalty may be incurred.

Assessment of suitability for teaching

It's a NESAs requirement that Initial Teacher Education providers include a continuum of non-academic evaluation of students' suitability for teaching during programs. UNSW meets this requirement as follows.

Undergraduate (BEd) students only: Students must successfully complete a full year (48 UOC) of studies in their specific disciplinary content area, (for example, Maths, Science, Economics or Arts), and 30 UOC of mandatory general education courses before undertaking any discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogic studies (Methods) or professional experience placements in schools.

As a way of ensuring students are progressing through the program effectively, we undertake an extensive evaluation of teacher suitability for their specific teaching areas and continually monitor and evaluate the relationship between these measures, their performance during professional experience and graduate outcomes, including a level of self-efficacy. We do this via a range of strategies, including, where relevant:

- Tutorial activities such as microteaching and groupwork,
- Using direct observation of all professional experience placements, including the placement as a teaching assistant,
- Multiple critical assessment tasks,
- A teaching performance assessment (TPA), and
- Observations and activities based on a set of [inherent requirements](#) used by a range of NSW teacher education providers.

In addition to this, before their first supervised professional experience placement, all teacher education students must:

- Undertake and pass The Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education (LANTITE). For further details please visit the [NESAs website](#). Tests are available through the [Australian Council for Educational Research \(ACER\) website](#).
- Undertake a Working with Children Check. The Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998 introduced mandatory requirements for background checking of people working with children. All Teacher Education Students therefore must complete a [Working with Children Check](#).

- Complete Anaphylaxis Training. The Department of Education (DEC) require that all initial Teacher Education Students have training in managing anaphylaxis. Students must complete the free anaphylaxis e-training module provided by the [Australian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy](#) (ASCIA) in conjunction with practice using an adrenaline autoinjector training device.
- Confirm that they're fit for their school placement and meet the [inherent requirements](#) of a teacher education student. This self-assessment is completed prior to EVERY placement and submitted through the online placement system (OPS).

English language proficiency

It's a NESAs requirement that all teacher education students can effectively communicate with students, colleagues and the broader education community daily. In addition to satisfying [UNSW entry requirements](#), oral and written communication skills are assessed regularly as part of all coursework and professional experience.

Student conduct and academic integrity

Upon your enrolment at UNSW, you share responsibility with us for maintaining a safe, harmonious and tolerant University environment. You are required to:

- Comply with the University's conditions of enrolment
- Act responsibly, ethically, safely and with integrity
- Observe standards of equity and respect in dealing with every member of the UNSW community
- Engage in lawful behaviour
- Use and care for University resources in a responsible and appropriate manner
- Maintain the University's reputation and good standing

Further information: <https://www.edi.unsw.edu.au/conduct-integrity/conduct-unsw/student-conduct-integrity/student-code-conduct>

Plagiarism

At UNSW, [plagiarism](#) is considered a form of academic misconduct and is viewed very seriously. In some cases, student inexperience is a mitigating

factor, and students may be permitted to resubmit work where necessary. More serious breaches may incur academic penalty that affects your ability to pass the course or your academic standing.

The School of Education follows the UNSW Plagiarism Management Procedure by:

- Checking for signs of plagiarism or contract cheating, which may be indicated by high levels of similarity with text from other sources or the work of other students, inconsistencies in work between different assessments
- Reporting all concerns about plagiarism to the designated School Student Integrity Officer
- Thoroughly investigating available evidence for plagiarism allegations
- Recording all upheld plagiarism allegations on a central register

All students in the School of Education should complete the [self-paced Working with Academic Integrity module](#) in the earliest stages of their degree program.

Student Complaints

If you have issues related to, or concerns about, academic decisions or any aspect of Learning & Teaching in the School of Education, you should contact the Course Convenor in the first instance.

If your issue or concern is not satisfactorily resolved, you may contact your Program Director or then Deputy Head of School (Learning & Teaching). The School Office (education@unsw.edu.au) can help you identify who to contact.

Further information: [Complaints at UNSW](#)

Course and program evaluation and development

Student evaluative feedback on their programs and courses is gathered using UNSW's myExperience process and through annual online program evaluations.

Student representatives also meet with the relevant Program Director to discuss any issues or concerns once every semester. Student feedback is taken seriously, and continual improvements are made to the program and courses based on such feedback.

Calls for participating in annual program evaluations are usually sent mid-year.

The School Learning and Teaching Committee also appoints student representatives to inform and be involved in decision-making that affects the student experience in programs and courses.

Student representatives are able to raise issues in committee meetings and can liaise between students and Program Directors or other academic staff. To find out who your student representative is, contact your Program Director or the School Office.