1. Purpose

To provide academic direction that enhances and assures the quality of learning and teaching through policy and procedures that guide the Assessment of Students undertaking ACER Higher Education Courses.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Staff Members and Students.

3. Definitions

See: Glossary of Terms

4. Legislation and Related Documents

Public Records Act 1973 (Vic)
Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Vic)
Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) 2nd edn. (Jan 2013)
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015
ACER Student Policies
ACER Electronic Communication and Information Systems (ECIS) Policy
ACER Records Management Policy
ACER Student Handbook.

5. Policy Principles

ACER has a responsibility to provide a quality learning environment for its Students.

i. ACER values good teaching and assessment practice and is committed to providing an effective learning environment for its Students. Accordingly, ACER has in place quality assurance processes and procedures to support effective
teaching and fair assessment practices. Underlying these processes and procedures are the principles of equity, consistency, transparency, validity, reliability and collegiality.

ii. Assessment will engage Students in learning and will be designed as an integral part of the learning experience.

iii. Assessment practices will be valid, reliable, and consistent.

iv. There will be quality assurance of assessment at Course and Unit levels, and ongoing revision and improvement of assessment practices.

v. The time Students spend on Assessment Tasks, and the marking requirements for Staff Members will be realistic and will enable effective Student learning.

vi. Learning and teaching at ACER will be resourced and managed to comply with relevant legislation, including the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015.

6. Responsibilities

6.1 Responsibilities of the Director:

   The Director is responsible for monitoring the quality of ACER’s educational policy, practice and procedures. These specific responsibilities include:

   i. Ensuring that ACER’s policies and procedures for its Higher Education Courses are enacted.

   ii. Ensuring that all Assessment Tasks comply with section 7.1.1 of this Policy, have an appropriate volume of learning, and are of a complexity appropriate to the criteria of their AQF level.

   iii. Establishing documented procedures for conducting Examinations and Assessment Tasks.

   iv. Ensuring the establishment of criteria for the assessment of online community contributions, where appropriate.

   v. Ensuring that a copy of all current Unit Guides, for the session in which they are on offer, are freely and publically available.

   vi. Ensuring reasonable adjustment within the teaching environment for Students with a disability or special educational needs.

   vii. Ensuring that quality assessment methods and practices are applied and that assessment is carried out fairly, objectively and consistently.

   viii. Ensuring that Staff Members are available to Students for consultation.

6.2 Course Coordinator, Subject Matter Expert, Unit Coordinator and Online Facilitator responsibilities

   The Course Coordinator, working with the Subject Matter Expert, Unit Coordinator and Online Facilitator, is responsible for assessing Students’ work fairly, objectively and consistently. Specific responsibilities include:
i. Development of a Marking Rubric, with details of criteria used to assess each Assessment Task.
ii. Providing Students with constructive and timely feedback on performance.
iii. Implementing learning and teaching strategies that foster the development of the discipline.
iv. Communicating with Students and the Director on academic consideration issues.
v. Identifying and acting upon possible cases of academic Misconduct by a Student in accordance with the ACER PP3102 Code of Conduct Policy and ACER PP3106 Academic Teaching Review Policy.
vi. Being available for consultation with Students during learning periods, by methods such as email and learning management system, which are clearly communicated to Students:
   a. Online Facilitators are available for 6 hours per week and will endeavour to respond to Students in a timely manner, within 24-48 hours.
vii. Maintaining the principles set out in ACER PP3108 Privacy Policy regarding the confidentiality of personal information including grades and evaluation feedback.
viii. Referring Students, where appropriate, to the relevant support services within ACER.
ix. Before departing on any granted leave, ensuring that all assessment work and other commitments have been completed, marks have been forwarded to the Director, and arrangements have been made for another Staff Member to answer any enquiries about Unit or Course results.
x. Notifying the Director of potential or actual conflicts of interest which could unduly advantage, or disadvantage, a Student in accordance with ACER PP3102 Code of Conduct Policy.
xii. Ensuring that Students at risk of Unit failure, consistent with the ACER PP3113 Student Progression and Exclusion Policy, are reminded of the learning support available.

7. Practice and Procedures

7.1 Assessment Practice

7.1.1 Principles
Assessment will:
   i. Link Unit-level outcomes to course-level outcomes.
   ii. Be designed so that Unit Assessment Tasks align with the unit-level Learning Outcomes.
   iii. Validly assess progress and, in the case of formative assessment, provide Students with timely feedback that assists in their achievement of Learning Outcomes.

7.1.2 Methods and Tasks:

i. Assessment methods will be appropriate to the Learning Outcomes for each Unit and, where relevant, to professional standards. The validity and
reliability of each assessment method will be considered, and the design of assessment will take into account the broader Course aims.

ii. Learning activities and Assessment Tasks in a Unit must be conducted as specified in the Unit Guide.

iii. Assessment methods may require reasonable adjustment for Students with a disability or special education needs. Any such reasonable adjustments must be agreed in writing between Students and Staff Member.

iv. Clear criteria must be developed for marking all Assessment Tasks in a Unit and details of the criteria must be communicated to Students in the Unit Guide.

v. The technologies required for Assessment Tasks will be based on principles of task-appropriateness, accessibility, safety, and usability.

vi. Group Work must be assessed by means which allow the real contribution of each member of the group to be determined. Group Work must not constitute more than 50% of assessment for a Unit unless approved by the Director.

vii. Where attendance requirements are set for a Unit, attendance records must be kept. Marks cannot be awarded for attendance per se.

7.1.3 Feedback to Students:

i. Students will be provided with a clear understanding of assessment expectations.

ii. Appropriate and constructive feedback on performance in each Assessment Task (with the exception of a final Examination) must be provided to Students.

iii. Feedback will be clear, explicit, usable and focused on enabling Students to improve their performance and progress towards their Learning Outcomes and goals.

iv. Feedback on an Assessment Task must be provided in time to enable Students to improve their performance in areas of knowledge or skill development before further assessment.

v. Assessment Tasks, with the exception of a final Examination must be marked and made available for collection within three weeks of the submission date unless otherwise specified in the Unit Guide.

vi. Students will be notified of grades and feedback for Assessment Tasks within three weeks of receipt of submission, and students are required to confirm notification of grades by return email.

vii. For final results, Students will be notified of grades five weeks after receipt of submission. Students are required to confirm notification of final grades by return email.

7.1.4 Procedures for managing submission and return of Assessment Tasks:

i. Unit Guides will include the format for submission of Assessment Tasks through a Learning Management System (LMS). Also Refer to ACER PP3110 Course Rules.

ii. Dates and times for submission of Assessment Tasks must be notified to all Students on commencement of the Unit.

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Successful submission of Assessment Tasks will be reflected on the LMS, with Student accounts showing a confirmation of submission.

Notification will also be sent to the Student Administrator for storing in the ACER Records Management System.

All hard copy Assessment Task materials must be mailed to ACER by Registered mail. Receipt will be recorded by ACER and an email of receipt sent to the Student. All marked material must be mailed back to the Student in the same way requiring an email note from the Student on receipt of the material. This process must be followed to provide safeguards against claims of non-receipt and non-return.

Students who do not meet the specified deadline for an Assessment Task will be penalised as described in 7.1.5.

### 7.1.5 Late submission

i. Assessments Tasks are considered to be late if submitted after the time prescribed in the Unit Guide or authorised as an extension. If a submission is sent by registered mail, it must be recorded on or before the due date. Assessment Tasks will not be accepted after five working days, and a score of zero will be recorded for that task.

ii. Work submitted late will be marked in the normal way, and a penalty then applied. The original mark and the penalty should be clearly recorded for the Student and the ACER Assessment Committee. The pre-penalty mark should be used as part of the quality review of the Unit and the post-penalty mark should be used in any progression or Award calculation.

iii. Penalties for late submission shall be 5% of the total possible marks for that task for each delay in submission of a day or partial day up to a maximum of five working days after the due date.

iv. Extensions may be granted in exceptional circumstances, as outlined in ACER PP 3117 Special Consideration Policy. An extension must be requested at least three (3) working days prior to the submission.

v. An application for an extension of the due date of an assignment should be made to the online facilitator in the unit, who will share with the course coordinator for a decision to be made. Extension requests must be made at least three (3) working days prior to the advertised submission date. Normally a staff member will respond within 48 hours of receipt of the extension request, and notify the applicant (by email) of the outcome. If the application is denied, reasons for that decision will be stated.

vi. Where an extension of time has been formally sought by the Student and granted, this policy and the same penalties apply to the revised due date.

vii. The penalties for late submission and for seeking extensions of time for submission must be published in each Unit Guide.

### 7.1.6 Resubmission

i. Resubmission of work assessed as unsatisfactory is possible for some Assessment Tasks. The Director will make a determination about resubmission of an Assessment Task on a case-by-case basis. Note that if resubmission is available, it is only permissible after the original Assessment
Task has been marked and returned to Students. The date for such resubmission will be determined by the Unit Coordinator and Online Facilitator.

ii. Resubmitted Assessment Tasks will be marked to a maximum of 50% of the total available marks for that Assessment Task. An opportunity to revise and resubmit is not a guarantee that the Assessment Task will pass.

iii. In determining whether a Student will be allowed to rewrite a failed Assessment Task, The Director will take into account the principle of equity and fairness to other Students.

iv. Extensions may be given to Students only in accordance with the ACER PP3117 Special Consideration Policy.

7.1.7 Supplementary assessment (on academic grounds)

A supplementary Assessment Task may be granted by The Director if a Student has completed all Tasks, and has a final Unit grade of between 45 to 49%. Students may be offered the opportunity to demonstrate competence through an alternative assessment mechanism. For supplementary assessment, only a Pass grade may be awarded.

7.1.8 Determination of final results

i. Grades will be determined according to the marks gained:

   - High Distinction: 85-100%
   - Distinction: 75-84%
   - Credit: 65-74%
   - Pass: 50-64%

ii. Students will be notified of results as stipulated by the ACER Assessment Committee.

iii. An approved grade of performance will be determined and declared for each Unit in which a Student is enrolled, and released in accordance with the Course Rules. A withheld result may be granted in a Unit in accordance with the Course Rules. A withheld result must be declared 10 weeks after the release of results date in accordance with the Course Rules.

iv. Where an incorrect grade or mark has been declared as a result of an administrative error, the amended result(s) must be approved by the ACER Assessment Committee and recorded as a late or amended result.

v. The approved grades of performance for Units are set out in the Course Rules.

7.1.9 Retention of assessment records

Assessment Task records must be retained and stored according to the ACER Records Management Policy 3.14.
8. Dispute Resolution

Should a dispute arise in relation to the interpretation or application of this policy or its procedures, a Grievance may be notified and managed in accordance with the ACER PP3111 Grievance Resolution Procedures.

9. Awareness of Policy

The Director will take reasonable steps to disseminate and explain this policy to Staff Members and Students who may be affected by it.

The policy will be available online at http://courses.acer.edu.au/students/policies

10. Version Control

Authorised by: ACER Academic Board
Maintained by: Director ACER Institute
Written: July 2013
Review: November 2018
Version: 5

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| 5               | 17/8/2016      | P. Taylor-Guy | Incorporated PP3121, Assessment Process Policy  
|                 |                |               | Aligned with AQF and 2015 Threshold Standards  
|                 |                |               | Additional principles added to section 5  
|                 |                |               | Reviewed and revised responsibilities Unit Guides section moved to new Learning and Teaching Policy (L&T Policy)  
|                 |                |               | 7.1.1 added to align with the new  
|                 |                |               | Added supplementary assessment section  
|                 |                |               | Schedule 1 moved to New L&T Policy  
|                 |                |               | Remove table of Definitions and add link.  
|                 |                |               | Update Legislation and Related Documents.  
|                 |                |               | Update Version Control |