

## ACADEMIC POLICY - STUDENT ASSESSMENT

<p><b>1. Policy Statement</b></p>	<p>SAE Institute Pty Ltd trading as SAE recognises that assessment of learning is an important aspect of its commitment to quality education and uses this policy to assess student work.</p>
<p><b>2. Purpose</b></p>	<p>Assessment is the process of collecting relevant evidence and making informed judgements to evaluate student learning outcomes.</p> <p>The purposes of this policy are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to ensure that all student assessment tasks are appropriately designed to determine the extent to which students have met the learning and skills outcome requirements within a unit of study</li> <li>to assist teaching staff to make decisions about the performance of individual students within a unit of study</li> <li>to assist in formulating a set of academic standards in courses offered by the SAE in Australia.</li> </ol>
<p><b>3. Scope</b></p>	<p>This policy applies in the context of SAE Institute Pty Ltd operations in Australia and its approved offshore delivery sites, and is applicable to students enrolled with, or intending to enrol with SAE.</p> <p>Procedures for SAE campuses internationally may vary in compliance with statutory requirements in other countries of operation. Students registered with SAE Institute Pty Ltd who transfer their studies to a campus outside Australia, will have their registration with SAE in Australia terminated and are required to adhere to the guidelines, policies and procedures of the legal entity to whom they have transferred their registration. This policy is applicable to all students or prospective students of SAE, irrespective of their place of residence, campus or mode of study.</p>
<p><b>4. Associated Policies and Procedures</b></p>	<p>This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning and Teaching Policy</li> <li>Student Grievance, Complaints and Appeals Policy</li> <li>Student Grievance, Complaints and Appeals Procedure</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Associated Documents</b></p>	<p>This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documentation;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment Guidelines</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Policy</b></p>	<p><b>6.1 Introduction</b></p> <p>The purposes of assessment are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to promote, enhance, and improve the quality of student learning through feedback that is clear, informative, timely, constructive and relevant to the needs of the learner</li> <li>to measure and confirm the standard of student competency or performance and achievement in relation to explicit learning objectives</li> <li>to reward student effort and achievement with an appropriate grade</li> <li>to formally certify student outcomes and achievement in terms of accountability to relevant internal and external accrediting bodies and communities of interest</li> <li>to provide relevant information in order to continuously evaluate and improve the quality of the curriculum and the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process.</li> </ol> <p><b>6.2 Principles and Requirements for Assessment of Students</b></p> <p>Student assessment is a mechanism for assuring the attainment and maintenance of academic standards.</p> <p>SAE requires student assessment practices to be;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fair,</li> <li>Valid, and</li> <li>Reliable</li> </ul>

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In evaluating, grading and certifying student performance against approved standards SAE will adopt methods that ensure assessment requirements are effectively promulgated to students. Where appropriate, students may be afforded some degree of flexibility in evaluating, grading and certifying student performance against approved standards.

As specified in the Learning and Teaching Policy, for the assessment of students SAE requires that:

- a) both formative and summative types of assessment are used during a course in the process of learning;
- b) at the time of announcement of assessment tasks, students are provided with a clear description of the standards of performance and marking criteria;
- c) special provision is made to provide opportunities for formative assessment and guidance to students on assessment tasks in their first year of study;
- d) the conduct of student assessment is transparent and fair, and follows approved assessment standards for all assessment tasks which are provided to students;
- e) units and courses employ systems and structures that where appropriate permit some choice in student learning and assessment;
- f) unit co-ordinators shall have responsibility for appraising the quality of student assessment, for ensuring appropriateness, fairness and constructive alignment of assessment tasks, and for ensuring that assessment practices conform to all assessment and quality assurance policies of the Academic Advisory Board of SAE;
- g) assessment practices are reviewed on an annual basis;
- h) formative feedback is provided to students on completed assessment tasks which addresses how performance might be improved in the unit of study.

Full details of assessment methods are supplied in handouts provided to students at the commencement of study. It is essential that students thoroughly familiarise themselves with this information.

### 6.3 Forms of assessment

Normally, assessment of theoretical work will involve coursework, written tests, examinations and seminar contribution. Practical work will involve progressive assessment, submission of logs, projects, and viva voce examination. These will be graded by lecturers and moderated by the Unit/Course Coordinator or Campus Academic Coordinator.

Assessment may involve one or more of the following formats and will be clearly set out in the course documentation given to students at the commencement of each unit.

#### Written Exams

Written exams may take the form of short questions and essays, where appropriate. In certain circumstances, written exams may be combined with a multiple-choice format.

#### Written Assignments

Written assignments may take the form of essays, reports, work logs, portfolios, etc.

#### Multiple-Choice Exams

A portion of course theory may be examined through multiple-choice format exams. In certain circumstances, the multiple-choice format may be combined with written questions.

#### Seminars

Seminar sessions are normally based around formal discussion groups. Following an initial meeting, students will be delegated particular topics for research and will be required to present their findings at subsequent seminars. Marks are allocated according to the standard of these presentations.

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### **Viva Voce / Practical**

These examinations are designed to test students' abilities under 'real world' conditions and normally take place at one of SAE practical facilities. Students are normally questioned by examiners on a one-to-one basis.

### **Practical Assignments**

Students may be required to complete a series of practical assignments utilising SAE practical resources. Marks awarded for these assignments are normally weighted in accord with the unit outlines.

### **6.4 Multiple Marking**

Certain assignments, particularly those which carry a significant weighting towards final results, may be subject to the judgement of more than one assessor. This is undertaken to avoid, as much as possible, bias resulting from the subjective nature of creative material. In addition, external examiners may be involved in the assessment and moderation of significant assignments. In all cases involving multiple judgements or moderation between markers, the Campus Academic Coordinator will be responsible for determining the final result.

### **6.5 Submission of Assessment Items**

Students are required to submit assessment items at the time and date specified by the Unit/Course Coordinator and in the Unit Outline. Assessment items submitted after the due date will be subject to a penalty unless the Unit/Course Coordinator, Campus Academic Coordinator or Campus Manager has given prior approval in writing for an extension of time to submit that item.

Assessments should be submitted in the form specified in the Unit Outline or as notified by the Lecturer or Unit Coordinator. Where assessment items are submitted electronically, the date and time the file was saved on the server will be considered the date and time of submission. Written papers or other physical submissions are to be time and date stamped as a record of receipt.

### **6.6 Late Submission of Assessment**

Assessment items will not be accepted without an approved extension or without approved mitigating circumstance if they are more than ten working days late. Students should seek to consult with the Course or Unit Coordinator as early as possible if they are unable to meet a due date.

#### **For HE Courses:**

An assessment item submitted after the assessment due date, without an approved extension or without approved mitigating circumstance, will be penalised. The standard penalty is the reduction of the mark allocated to the assessment item by 10% of the total mark applicable for the assessment item, for each working day or part day that the item is late (a 'day' for this purpose is defined as any day on which the relevant campus administration is open). Weekends count as one day in determining the penalty.

**Note:** An assessment item will not be accepted without an approved extension or without approved mitigating circumstance, more than ten days after the assessment due date. In such an instance the assignment will be awarded zero marks.

### **6.7 Extensions to Assignments and Special Consideration**

#### **Extension to Assignment Deadlines**

Extensions to assignment deadlines based on mitigating circumstances shall be at the discretion of the Unit/Course Coordinator, the Campus Academic Coordinator or the Campus Manager, and should be granted in writing. Mitigating circumstances are circumstances outside of the student's control that have had an adverse effect on the student's work or ability to work.

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### Special Consideration

Campus Academic Coordinators may extend special consideration to a student in any course for which they are responsible, and in respect of any assessment item.

Students may apply for special consideration on the grounds of illness, accident, disability, bereavement or other compassionate circumstances if:

- Their performance in an assessment item was seriously affected; or
- They were seriously disadvantaged when the assessment item was attempted.

An application for special consideration is applicable only where the assessment item or examination has been attempted. Where the student is unable to attempt the assessment item or examination, the student may apply for an extension of time to submit an assignment.

Requests for special consideration must be made in writing and accompanied by appropriate documentary evidence. Requests for special consideration in respect of an examination must be lodged with the Unit/Course Coordinator or the Campus Academic Coordinator or the Campus Manager no later than three working days after the date of the examination. Requests for special consideration in assessing an assignment must be lodged before or with the submission of the assignment.

### Forms of Special Consideration

In response to an application for special consideration, the Campus Academic Coordinator may:

- Take no action;
- Provide an extension of time in which the assessment item may be completed;
- Award a final grade on the basis of the student's performance across the unit;
- Provide an alternative or replacement assessment task. An alternative assessment task provides an opportunity for the student to demonstrate learning outcomes similar to those related to the original assessment task; for example, an oral examination may take the place of a written examination. A replacement assessment task is one that resembles as closely as possible the original assessment item and carries the same percentage of total weighting for the course;
- Recommend that the student be granted withdrawal without failure on compassionate grounds.

### 6.8 Moderation

Moderation is the process of ensuring that assessment is valid, reliable and fair, and refers to the processes of moderating grades and moderating individual assessment items. Arrangements in all cases for the moderation of grades where required, the appointment of unit and course moderators where required, and any final outcomes shall be the responsibility of the Campus Academic Coordinator.

The moderation of grades for each student in each unit and course of study seeks to ensure that there is a fair distribution of grades. The course moderator will consider samples from students in all centres studying a particular unit or course to determine the fairness of the application of the assessment criteria for all students, the appropriateness of the assessment scheme and all summative assessment items for students in a course.

Where the course or unit moderator is not the Campus Academic Coordinator then the course moderator will compile a report to the Campus Academic Coordinator for each set of moderated assessment items.

The relevant Course Moderator will conduct moderation activities to ensure that:

- The standard of achievement is uniform, particularly for units being delivered to different groups of students by different staff in different locations
- Each assessment task matches the specified outcomes and performance criteria listed in the unit outline

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- Where feasible, assessment tasks within and between units are integrated
- Assessment is consistent through “cross-marking” a sample of submissions
- All relevant resources required for the assessment task are available
- Accurate and current records of students’ performance are maintained
- Timely feedback is provided to students
- Assessment tasks follow the guidelines for criterion-referenced assessment.

Where the same course is offered across different degree programs, internal moderation will be common to both programs to ensure consistency of standards.

### 6.9 Criterion referenced assessment

Criterion referenced assessment focuses on each student’s achievements in relation to specified criteria compared to norm-based assessment where the achievement of a particular student is compared to the achievements of other students.

The internal moderation of criterion referenced assessment tasks will ensure that assessment items specified in the Unit Outlines meet the following requirements.

1. Each Unit Outline must contain a detailed set of learning outcomes stating what students are expected to achieve by the end of the unit.
2. Each Unit/Course Coordinator must ensure the assessment items assess how well students have achieved the stated learning outcomes, and the means and form by which feedback will be provided.
3. Each Unit/Course Coordinator must develop assessment criteria directly related to the learning outcomes to indicate to students how they will be judged.
4. Each Unit/Course Coordinator must develop standards to inform students how the assessment task will be assessed.
5. Each Unit/Course Coordinator must develop a marking scheme that reports to students their level of achievement according to the stated criteria.
6. Where students do not agree with the results from moderated assessment items, they have recourse to appeal the decision as specified in the Academic Grievance Policy.

### 6.10 Academic Appeals Process

Students who wish to appeal an academic decision or grade should refer to the Grievance Policy and Student Grievance Procedure.

### 6.11 Assessment Outcomes

#### Background

SAE has campuses and conducts courses in many locations throughout the world, and students are encouraged to travel and familiarise themselves with a global industry. Students also undertake different courses within SAE in different locations. It is necessary therefore that the grading system used is transportable across countries and locations, and incorporates comparability and equivalence across educational systems.

Many forms of outcomes evaluation at SAE are also related to criterion referenced assessment and achievement of required skills and skill sets. The Academic Board has therefore determined that academic grade distribution does not need to fit a pre-determined range (e.g. ‘fitting the bell curve’ or ‘scaling’). The Academic Board, through its committees, will monitor the overall grade distribution at unit and course level to ensure comparability, fairness and quality assurance.

### 6.12 Grades (HE Courses)

During each trimester, students will be provided with an evaluation of their individual performance with reference to the criteria for each assessment item. Student performance in individual courses shall be graded in accordance with SAE grading scheme outlined below:

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- **High Distinction (HD):**  
Outstanding performance, normally 85% and above.  
Complete and comprehensive understanding of the course content; development of relevant skills to an outstanding level; demonstration of an extremely high level of interpretive and analytical ability and intellectual initiative; and excellent achievement of all major and minor objectives of the course.
- **Distinction (D):**  
Very high level of performance, normally 75-84%.  
Very high level of understanding of the course content; development of relevant skills to a very high level; demonstration of a very high level of interpretive and analytical ability and intellectual initiative; and comprehensive achievement of all major and minor objectives of the course.
- **Credit (C):** high level of performance, normally 65-74%.  
High level of understanding of course content; development of relevant skills to a high level; demonstration of a high level of interpretive and analytical ability and achievement of all major objectives of the course; some minor objectives not fully achieved.
- **Pass (P):**  
Competent level of performance, normally 50-64%.  
Adequate understanding of most of the basic course content; development of relevant skills to a satisfactory level; adequate interpretive and analytical ability and achievement of all major objectives of the course; some minor objectives not achieved.
- **Pass Conceded (PC):**  
Where a student has not achieved a passing grade but has demonstrated a level of performance that is close to that of a passing grade, the Examiners Committee may award a grade of Pass Conceded in order to facilitate student progress through a program. The grade of Pass Conceded does not satisfy prerequisite or co-requisite requirements, as the student's performance is not sufficient to provide a sound basis for proceeding to higher level studies in the subject area of the unit.
- **Fail (F):**  
Unsatisfactory performance, normally below 50%.  
Inadequate understanding of the basic course content; failure to develop relevant skills; insufficient evidence of interpretive and analytical ability; and failure to achieve some or all major and minor objectives of the course.
- **Withdraw with Failure (WF):**  
Cancelled enrolment in the course after the final date for withdrawal with failure (after week 8 of any given Trimester).
- **Withdraw without Failure (K):**  
Cancelled enrolment in the course before the final date (end of week 8 of any given Trimester) for withdrawal without failure. This grade may also be awarded to students who withdraw from a course after the withdrawal date under special or compassionate circumstances. In these cases the grade is awarded at the discretion of the Board of Studies.
- **Non-graded Pass (NGP):**  
Successful completion of a course assessed on a pass/fail basis, indicating satisfactory understanding of course content; satisfactory development of relevant skills; satisfactory interpretive and analytical ability and achievement in all major objectives of the course.

### 6.13 Competency Based Assessment (VET Courses)

Competency based assessment is utilised for all Vocational Education and Training courses where learners are assessed against nationally endorsed competency standards or on competencies developed by relevant industry, enterprise, community or professional groups.

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During each study period, students will be provided with an evaluation of their individual performance against the criteria for each assessment item. The following assessment codes are utilised:

- **Competent (C):**  
The student has demonstrated competency in an element or criteria in a unit of competency.
- **Not Yet Competent (NYC):**  
The student has not demonstrated competency in an element or criteria in a unit of competency. Further evidence will need to be provided to demonstrated competency. Students should discuss their assessment options with the relevant Course Coordinator or Campus Academic Coordinator.

### 6.14 Other Grade Outcomes for HE and VET Programs

- Credit Transfer (CT)
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- Result Un-finalised (U)
- Result Withheld (RW)
- Deferred Assessment (DA)
- Fail Not Submitted (FNS)

### 6.15 Grade Point Average (GPA)

A GPA is calculated for the following reasons:

- to provide students with an indicator of their academic progress and overall academic performance;
- to provide SAE with an indicator to assist in determining academic merit of individual students;
- to provide other institutions, professional bodies or prospective employers with an indicator of a student's overall academic performance.

For each student enrolled in a Higher Education course, SAE will calculate two GPA's:

**Cumulative GPA** – This can be calculated at any given point in time and is based on the grade outcomes in all units, over all study periods that the student has been enrolled in, for all courses studied at SAE at a particular level (undergraduate or postgraduate).

If a student enrolls in another course at another award level, a new re-set cumulative GPA will be calculated for studies undertaken in the new course.

**Course GPA** – This will be calculated when a student graduates and will be based on all attempts at all relevant units over all trimesters of a student's enrolment in a particular course studied at SAE.

Once a student successfully attains the required credit points for the award in which they are enrolled (E.g. 240 credit points for a Bachelor award), the GPA will be calculated as the final GPA for that award.

#### Nested Courses

Where students exit a Degree course with a nested award, they will receive a Course GPA for completion of the nested units.

#### Calculation of the Grade Point Average (GPA)

The following table outlines the numerical value to be assigned to each Final Grade to allow the calculation of a student's GPA:

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Grade	Grade Value
High Distinction (HD)	7
Distinction (D)	6
Credit (C)	5
Pass (P)	4
Pass Conceded (PC)	3
Fail (F)	2
Withdraw with Failure (WF)	1
Withdraw without Failure (K)	0
Non-graded Pass (NGP)	0

The GPA is calculated using the following formula:

GPA =	sum of (credit points of unit X numeric value of grade for that unit)
	sum of credit points of unit(s)

The GPA calculation includes all attempts at units studied at SAE where a numerical value has been awarded.

A GPA will be calculated to the second decimal place.

The following Grades are not included in the GPA calculation:

- Credit Transfer (CT)
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- Result Un-finalised (U)
- Result Withheld (RW)
- Deferred Assessment (DA)
- Fail Not Submitted (FNS)

### 7. Records

13 July	2007 policy implemented (Approved by Academic Board)
30 July	2009 policy update (Approved by Prof. Z. Klich chair, Academic Board)
10 September	2010 policy update (Approved by Academic Board)
18 February	2011 policy update (Approved by Prof. Z. Klich, CEO & Managing Director)
28 February	2011 policy update (Approved by Prof. Z. Klich, CEO & Managing Director)
21 August	2011 policy update (Approved by Prof. Z. Klich, CEO & Managing Director)
24 February	2012 policy update (Approved by Joseph Anthonysz, CEO & Managing Director)
13 March	2012 policy update (Approved by Joseph Anthonysz, CEO & Managing Director)
26 July	2012 policy update (Approved by Academic Board)

**Policy to be reviewed: 26 July 2014**

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