

# ASSESSMENT POLICY

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## 1. Purpose

This policy establishes the National Institute of Organisation Dynamics Australia's (NIODA) approach to the assessment of student work.

## 2. Scope

This Policy applies to all NIODA students completing assessment tasks and all NIODA teaching staff.

## 3. Policy Statement

The National Institute of Organisation Dynamics Australia (NIODA) is committed to the development of practitioners with high levels of competence and self-knowledge, to social and ethical values, emotional well being, self management and resilience. Assessment of student work is an integral part of NIODA's ethical contribution to the development of professions, which have particular public roles in Australian organisations.

The following values are embedded in the NIODA assessment process and procedures:

- what is to be assessed must be congruent with what has been taught
- experiential learning is the basis for conceptual and practical knowing
- learning is continuous and assessment is an integral part of the cycles of learning
- skills acquisition i.e. practical knowing is as important as the acquisition of academic and conceptual skills as evidenced in writing
- conceptual understanding of learning is developed in dialogue with other students and staff – in the course and through the assessment process
- staff have final responsibility for all decisions about student assessment. At the same time, as members of the NIODA community, students have a voice in decisions that affect them
- a consensus amongst staff at NIODA, based on Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) requirements and with reference to other similar courses, about the content, applications, skills and attainment appropriate for students at each year level of the course
- verification of these claims of quality by others who have the breadth of understanding and experience to be qualified to assess these judgments of quality, and who are not restricted by alternative assumptions or commitment to significantly alternative or competing paradigms.

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## 4. Grading

Graded assessment in the Master course occurs usually through written essay. This type of assessment allows students to integrate learning in the writing process, reinforcing the data driven, reflective nature of enquiry that is central to systems psychodynamic analysis. It also supports the development of academic writing capacity which is critical to building the Institute's high quality academic culture of scholarship. Marking guidelines are attached as Appendix 1 to this policy.

Successful completion of a subject requires a pass grade or higher for all assessable pieces of work.

NIODA's grade evaluation system is as follows:

Grade	Cut-off Parameters
High Distinction	80% -100%
Distinction	70% - 79%
Credit	60% - 69%
Pass	50% - 59%
Fail	Re-submit or fail assessment

## 5. Appeals against assessment decisions

A five stage process is available to students when they have concerns about assessment decisions and/or wish to appeal the decision. It is understood that students may wish to begin the process at any of the five stages.

Stage one - One-to-one meeting with the teacher who graded the assignment for the student to raise concerns and for the teacher to explain in detail the reason for the grade and to address the student's concerns.

Stage two – One-to-one meeting with the Subject Coordinator (if not the subject lecturer) for the student to raise any concerns not previously resolved with the teacher and for the Subject Coordinator to attempt to address these concerns. The Subject Coordinator meets with the subject teacher to hear both sides of the story before offering a solution. If the paper was awarded a fail, the Subject Coordinator will have previously marked this paper for moderation purposes.

Stage three – One-to-one meeting with the Director of Academic Programs for the student to raise concerns not addressed to their satisfaction in stages one and two. Prior to the meeting, the Director of Academic Programs will have consulted with the Subject Teacher and the Subject Coordinator to gain a full understanding of the concerns of all parties. The Director of Academic Programs will address the concerns of the student and has authority to request a third marking of the paper from a different teacher and to make a final ruling on the grade.

Stage four - Appeal to be made to the Education Committee where an Academic Progress subcommittee will be convened.

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Stage five - Appeals against Academic Progress subcommittee decisions to be made to the Academic Board of Governance from where a Grievance subcommittee is convened. This is the highest level of appeal process for assessment decisions at NIODA. This process is detailed in the Student Grievance Policy.

NIODA staff are responsible throughout this process for listening respectfully to students' concerns about the assessment and for carefully explaining the rationale for decisions made, with reference to the assessment criteria.

## 6. Responsibilities relating to assessment

### 6.1. Staff responsibilities

At the commencement of each subject students will be provided with a subject outline that contains details of the assessment tasks, assessment criteria, assessment protocols for the assignment/s, the word limits and the submission date.

It is the responsibility of teaching staff to allocate time within the subject to discuss and respond to questions related to the assessment task.

Marked assignments are to be returned to students within three weeks after the due date.

Subject Co-ordinators are responsible for ensuring that assessment tasks coherently link to the subject's content and expected student learning outcomes and that in turn assessment criteria relating to the various gradings coherently link to assessment task requirements. A generic marking guide to the grading differentials is attached as Appendix 1 to this Policy.

#### 6.1.1. Academic learning support

Students are encouraged to talk with subject teachers about any academic issues they may have. Should the student and teacher not be able to find ways of resolving the issues then staff members will recommend the student make contact with the Student Advisor.

#### 6.1.2. Moderation

Moderation is undertaken to ensure assessment that is undertaken is appropriate and consistent across the course of study.

NIODA staff must be acquainted with and ensure that the assessment moderation procedures are adhered to.

Moderation of assessment requires that the highest and lowest graded assignments and all unsatisfactory/fail assignments are also assessed by the Subject Co-ordinator of the co-requisite subject being taught in the same semester. When inconsistencies are found in how assessment decisions are reached and how grading is determined discussion must then take place with the Director of Academic Programs, who has the delegated authority to determine the final outcome.

When the Director of Academic Programs is a lecturer in the subject or co-requisite subject, the Education Committee will appoint a third person to mark the paper with the delegated authority to determine the final outcome.

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## **6.2. Student responsibilities**

### **6.2.1. Submission of assignments**

A hard copy of the assignment must be submitted to the subject staff by the date specified in the syllabus.

All written assignments should use Calibri 11 point with 1.5 paragraph spacing.

Assignments are expected to be submitted by the due date unless an extension has been approved.

Students must retain a copy of each assignment submitted.

Students must comply with word count requirements for all assignments. Essays submitted which are beyond the word limit will not be read and will be returned to students for re-submission. If an assignment on extension beyond the word limit, the additional words will not be read.

Students who are experiencing difficulty with the submission of assignments either in regard to assignment content or submission dates are responsible for speaking to the teaching staff as early as is possible to enable appropriate supports to be put in place.

### **6.2.2. Plagiarism**

The use of another person's work or ideas must be acknowledged. Failure to do so may result in charges of course misconduct, which carry a range of penalties, including cancellation of results and exclusion from your course. Students are responsible for ensuring that their work is kept in a secure place. It is also a disciplinary offence for students to allow their work to be plagiarised by another student. See Academic Misconduct Policy.

### **6.2.3. Extensions**

Requests for extension of assignment submission dates of no more than two weeks must be addressed to the subject staff member prior to the submission date.

The staff member is responsible for acknowledging receipt of a student request for an extension and notifying the student that an extension has or has not been granted.

Requests for extensions of longer than two weeks should be addressed to the Director of Academic Programs.

The Director of Academic Programs will then request the student to complete a special consideration form. On receipt of the application the Director of Academic Programs will convene a meeting of the Special Consideration subcommittee of the Education Committee where a decision will be made on the veracity of the student's application for extension of a submission date or for alternate assessment in accord with the Special Consideration Policy.

### **6.2.4. Resubmission**

Where an assessment piece is graded a fail (after moderation procedures occur) students have one opportunity to resubmit the piece. Resubmissions can only be graded as pass (50%) or fail. Where a student elects to not resubmit an assessment piece or where the resubmission is graded a fail (after moderation procedures occur) the student will have one opportunity to repeat the whole subject in a subsequent semester.

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## 6.2.5. Special Consideration

A student whose work during a teaching period has been affected by acute illness or other exceptional circumstances beyond their control may apply to the Director of Academic Programs for special consideration. Special consideration may take the form of an extension of time for submission of assignments or an alternative assessment method.

Further details and special consideration application forms are available in the Special Consideration Policy available on the NIODA website <https://www.nioda.org.au/policies>.

## 7. Unsatisfactory academic progress

When it is clear that students are at risk of failing a subject or subjects either for the first or second time, staff have a responsibility to ensure that students are informed of student advisory facilities in the Institute and that the Director of Academic Programs is aware of this possibility.

Students who fail a subject for the second time will be excluded from further re-enrolments in the course.

In this instance students can appeal against exclusion from the course through application to the Education Committee. The Education Committee will convene an Academic Progress subcommittee where the student will have the opportunity to present their case. The student must provide documented evidence (e.g. medical evidence) that shows subject failure was outside of their control.

Where evidence is accepted, the Academic Progress subcommittee must be convinced that the student is likely to succeed in a third attempt at a subject. To enable this, the committee must consider what support NIODA can offer.

## 8. Grievances

Grievances relating to student assessment and academic progress subcommittee decisions should be taken up as per the NIODA Student Grievance Policy. This policy is published on the NIODA website <https://www.nioda.org.au/policies>.

## 9. Publication

This policy is publicly available on the NIODA website <https://www.nioda.org.au/policies>.

## 10. Related Documents

- Special Consideration Policy
- Student Grievance Policy

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## APPENDIX 1

### MARKING GUIDELINES

#### Introduction

A Pass grade would be received when the student has satisfactorily completed all required elements of the assessment requirements. A Credit grade would be received when the quality of the work is beyond this, and a Distinction grade would be received when the submission is 'Distinctive'. To gain a High Distinction grade would be unusual in the first year of the course as it is likely students will take time to gain full understanding of system psychodynamic concepts and their application.

#### **High Distinction (HD) 80 – 100%**

Exceptionally clear understanding of subject matter and appreciation of issues; well organised, formulated and sustained arguments that are grounded in data, including the student's own experience as potential system data; well thought out and structured diagrams; extensive and in-depth use of relevant literature; systems psychodynamic concepts are defined and used, showing sophisticated understanding; well written, structured and referenced. Evidence of creative insight and originality in terms of comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

#### **Distinction (DI) 70 – 79%**

Strong grasp of subject matter and appreciation of key issues, clearly developed arguments that are grounded in data, including the student's own experience as potential system data; relevant and well-structured diagrams; appreciation and in-depth use of relevant literature; well written, structured and referenced. Systems psychodynamic concepts are defined and used, showing in depth understanding Evidence of creative and solid work in terms of comprehension, application, analysis and synthesis.

#### **Credit (CR) 60 – 69%**

Competent understanding of subject matter and appreciation of the main issues; clearly developed arguments with strong links to data, including the student's own experience as potential system data; relevant diagrams and literature use; well written, structured and referenced. Systems psychodynamic concepts are defined and used, showing clear understanding. Solid evidence of comprehension and application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

#### **Pass (PA) 50 – 59%**

An appreciation of subject matter and issues; arguments that make sense and are grounded in data but generally lacking in depth and breadth and with some gaps. Analysis is grounded in data, including the student's own experience as potential system data, and utilises some relevant theory. Systems psychodynamic concepts are defined and used, showing understanding. Usually investment of greater care and thought in editing, organising and structuring work and in referencing would be required to improve.

#### **Fail (NN) 0 – 49%**

Evidence of lack of understanding of subject (minimal or inadequate comprehension and little or no application) and an inability to identify issues. Often inadequate in depth and breadth. Poor definitions., inadequate referencing. Sometimes incomplete or irrelevant.