

CONTENTS

1	PURPOSE.....	1
2	SCOPE.....	1
3	POLICY STATEMENT	1
	Graded and non-graded units	1
	Interim results.....	2
	Grades.....	2
	Grade point average (GPA) calculation	2
	Reviews and appeals	3
4	RESPONSIBILITIES	3
	Compliance, monitoring and review	3
	Reporting.....	4
	Records management.....	4
5	DEFINITIONS	4
6	RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS	4
7	FEEDBACK.....	4
8	APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS.....	5
9	APPENDICES	6
	Appendix 1: Interim results	6
	Appendix 2: Grades	8

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This policy establishes a consistent and transparent grading system to record student academic achievement or other outcomes relating to assessment. This policy also includes the rules for calculating a student's grade point average (GPA).

2 SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to student assessment in CQUniversity undergraduate and postgraduate higher education (coursework and research), vocational education and training (VET) and non-award enabling education (i.e., STEPS¹) courses and units.
- 2.2 This policy does not apply to student assessment in CQUniversity English language or other non-award short courses (i.e., professional development).

3 POLICY STATEMENT

Graded and non-graded units

- 3.1 The University's units are graded or non-graded.
- 3.2 Graded units for higher education and enabling courses are marked on student academic performance in a unit against a range of numerical marks that equate to a particular grade, e.g., Pass, Credit, Distinction. Graded units may also contain pass/fail elements within their assessment structure.

¹ 'STEPS' refers to Skills for Tertiary Education Preparatory Studies.

- 3.3 Non-graded units for higher education and enabling courses are marked/graded on a pass/fail basis and typically have only pass/fail elements within their assessment structure.
- 3.4 VET courses comprise of non-graded units which are marked/graded on a competency achieved/not competent basis.

Interim results

- 3.5 Interim results are the outcome of a student's attempt at a unit assessment, and are used to record a result until a final grade is awarded.
- 3.6 An interim result may be based on academic or competency achievement (e.g., a supplementary assessment (SA) in higher education) or may indicate that a final grade or assessment is to be completed (e.g., result outstanding (RO) in higher education, or reassessment to be undertaken (R) in VET).
- 3.7 Interim results must be converted as soon as possible to a final grade.
- 3.8 Interim results for higher education and enabling courses which are outstanding 12 months after the certification of grades date will be converted automatically to a Fail (F) grade or Not Sat (NS) unless the Dean of School (or nominee) confirms a valid reason not to do so.
- 3.9 Interim results used by the University are in [Appendix 1: Interim results](#).

Grades

- 3.10 Grades are used to record the formal marks awarded for a student's academic achievement in a unit. A grade will only be awarded to a student for a unit if the student is correctly enrolled in that unit.
- 3.11 Grades in higher education and enabling courses and units are criterion-referenced and are decided by the extent to which the assessment criteria have been met.
- 3.12 Grades in VET courses and units are competency-based. Assessment is based on national benchmarks (competency standards) for the occupation or industry in which the student is training. A successful grade is recorded as 'competency achieved' according to industry standards.
- 3.13 Moderation is undertaken to ensure that marks and grades are as valid, consistent, and fair as possible for students. In VET, moderation is undertaken within the validation of training and assessment materials process.
- 3.14 Grades awarded by the University for assessment in a unit are in [Appendix 2: Grades](#).
- 3.15 A designated grade is recorded for exemptions resulting from cross-institutional study completed within the Regional University Network (for higher education units only).

Grade point average (GPA) calculation

- 3.16 GPA calculation is only applicable to students enrolled in higher education coursework courses and units, or when deciding some scholarships and/or prizes.
- 3.17 A GPA is a number representing the average value of a student's final grades earned in units over time. It is calculated by term for term-based courses, and/or for the overall course of study. The final GPA is the average of all grades obtained by the student throughout a completed course of study.
- 3.18 A student's GPA will be recorded on their final official academic transcript and may be considered when deciding a student's eligibility for the award of Degree with Distinction, Class Honours, Research Training Program and Research Higher Degree Scholarships, and University medals and prizes. It may also be considered when deciding a student's eligibility to undertake a Bachelor Honours Degree or vertical degree pathway.

3.19 A student's GPA is calculated using all attempts at each unit within a course. The GPA calculation formula is as follows:

$$\text{GPA} = \frac{\text{Sum total of (credit points X grade points)}}{\text{Sum total of credit points used in the calculation}}$$

For Example:

$$\begin{array}{rclclclcl} \text{ACCT11056} & 6 \text{ credit points} & \times & 7 \text{ grade points (HD)} & = & & 42 \\ \text{ACCT11057} & + \frac{6 \text{ credit points}}{12 \text{ credit points}} & \times & 6 \text{ grade points (D)} & = & + & \underline{36} \\ & & & & & & 78 \end{array}$$

$$\text{Then: } \frac{78}{12} = \text{GPA} = 6.5$$

3.20 Grade points are assigned as follows:

Grade	HD	D	C	P	F	WF
Grade point	7	6	5	4	0	0

3.21 Grade points resulting from study in non-graded units, where the only possible outcomes are Pass Non-Graded (PN) or Fail (F), do not contribute to a student's GPA.

3.22 Credit for prior learning² does not contribute to a student's GPA, unless the student received credit for a graded unit/s from:

- a) previous study at the University, or
- b) approved cross-institutional study³ at another tertiary educational institution where a formal partnership agreement,⁴ or University policy document⁵ specifically allows such credit to contribute to the student's GPA.

Reviews and appeals

3.23 Students in higher education (excluding research higher degrees) and enabling courses may apply for a review of grade, or challenge the final outcome of a review of grade or other decision made relating to this policy, in accordance with the [Review of Grade Procedure](#).

3.24 Students in VET courses may apply for a re-evaluation of assessment items in accordance with the [Student Assessment Procedure \(VET\)](#), and if dissatisfied with the re-evaluation outcome, may appeal in accordance with the [Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure](#).

3.25 Students in research higher degree courses wishing to challenge a grade awarded, or other decision made relating to this policy, may appeal directly to the University's Academic Appeals Committee in accordance with the Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure.

4 RESPONSIBILITIES

Compliance, monitoring and review

- 4.1 The Deputy Vice-President (Education, Strategy and Innovation) is responsible for implementing, monitoring, reviewing, and ensuring compliance with this policy.
- 4.2 Compliance monitoring will occur through exception reports generated after certification of grades for each term or assessment period.

² For details, see the [Credit for Prior Learning in Higher Education Policy and Procedure](#).

³ For details, see the [Cross-Institutional Study Policy and Procedure](#)

⁴ For example CQUniversity–RUN agreement. For details, see the [CQUniversity cross-institutional study website](#).

⁵ University policy documents that encourage or allow students to undertake cross-institutional study for defined reasons may include GPA-related provisions, e.g., outbound mobility program.

Reporting

- 4.3 No additional reporting is required.

Records management

- 4.4 Employees must manage records in accordance with the [Records Management Policy and Procedure](#). This includes retaining these records in a recognised University recordkeeping information system.
- 4.5 University records must be retained for the minimum periods specified in the relevant [Retention and Disposal Schedule](#). Before disposing of any records, approval must be sought from the Records and Privacy Team (email records@cqu.edu.au)

5 DEFINITIONS

- 5.1 Terms not defined in this document may be in the University [glossary](#).

6 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

[Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure](#)

[Assessment Policy and Procedure \(Higher Education Coursework\)](#)

[Awards Policy and Procedure](#)

[Credit for Prior Learning in Higher Education Policy and Procedure](#)

[Cross-Institutional Study Policy and Procedure](#)

[CQUGlobal Outbound Programs Procedure](#)

[CQUniCares Academic Prizes Policy and Procedure](#)

[Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#) (CwIth)

[Research Training Program and Research Higher Degree Scholarships Policy and Procedure](#)

[Review of Grade Procedure](#)

[Student Assessment Procedure \(VET\)](#)

[Student Medals Procedure](#)

7 FEEDBACK

- 7.1 Feedback about this document can be emailed to policy@cqu.edu.au.

8 APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Delegated Approval Authority	N/A
Advisory Committee	Curriculum Committee
Required Consultation	N/A
Administrator	Deputy Vice-President (Education, Strategy and Innovation)
Next Review Date	28/09/2025

Approval and Amendment History	Details
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Amendment Authority and Date	Academic Board 30/05/2001; Academic Board 25/09/ 2002; Academic Board 28/05/2003; Academic Board 30/06/ 2003; Academic Board 24/09/2003; Executive of Academic Board 25/05/2004; Academic Board 29/09/ 2004; Academic Board 20/09/2006; Academic Board 29/11/2006; Executive of Academic Board 21/02/2007; Academic Board 28/03/2007; Academic Board 30/05/2007, effective Term 2, 2007; Academic Board 13/07/2011; Academic Registrar 19/09/2011; Academic Registrar 15/05/2012; Academic Board 17/04/2013, effective Term 2, 2013; Academic Board 28/05/ 2014; Academic Board 26/11/2014; Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) 17/03/2015; Academic Board 6/07/2016, effective Term 2, 2016; Academic Board 15/11/2017, effective Term 1, 2018; Executive Committee of Academic Board 5/07/2018, effective Term 2, 2018; Terminology updated 14/08/2018; Editorial Amendment 26/03/2020; Editorial amendment 02/11/2020; Deputy Vice-President (Education, Strategy and Innovation) 15/03/2021; Academic Board 28/09/2022.
Notes	Formerly known as the Grades and Results Procedure (last approved 06/06/2016). This document consolidated and replaced the Grade Point Average Procedure (effective as of 15/11/2017).

9 APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Interim results

Part 1: Interim results in higher education and enabling courses (unless otherwise specified)

Result	Result descriptor and rules for use
AF	<p>Absent Fail</p> <p>Indicates the student has completed insufficient assessment tasks to pass the unit and further submission of work will not be accepted. An AF is typically applied when a student has not submitted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) assessment tasks with a combined weighting of at least 49.5 per cent for the unit b) at least one Pass/Fail assessment task, or c) at least one task with a minimum mark requirement. <p>This is an interim outcome and for the purpose of calculating academic progress counts as a Fail, i.e., an AF will be awarded if the requirements of the unit profile are not met. An AF interim result appears as a Fail (F) grade on the student's official academic transcript.</p>
DA	<p>Deferred Assessment</p> <p>Indicates a student who, through illness or some other acceptable exceptional circumstances, was unable to undertake one or more assessment tasks, or was disadvantaged during the assessment and has been granted an opportunity for a deferred assessment (other than a formal exam administered by Student Central). DA results are decided based on procedures and criteria in the Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework).</p>
DE	<p>Deferred Examination</p> <p>Indicates a student who, through illness or some other acceptable exceptional circumstances, was unable to sit (attend) a scheduled formal exam during the standard exam period or was disadvantaged during the exam and has been granted an opportunity to attend a formal deferred exam (administered by Student Central). DE results are decided based on procedures and criteria in the Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework).</p>
NS	<p>Not Sat</p> <p>Indicates a student has not sat (attended) a scheduled exam or has not been granted a deferred exam in a unit for which the unit profile specifies that a formal exam must be completed to pass the unit. An NS result will count as a Fail (F) for the purpose of calculating academic progress and will appear as a Fail (F) grade on the student's official academic transcript.</p>
PO	<p>Practicum Outstanding</p> <p>Indicates a student has completed all other assessment tasks for the unit, but:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) has been unable to complete the required residential school and/or work-integrated learning component (e.g., practicum, work placement) in the unit and/or the associated assessment within the normal term or defined assessment period dates, or b) will complete the required residential school or work-integrated learning component (e.g., practicum, work placement) in the unit and the associated assessment outside the normal term or defined assessment period dates. <p>A grade will be awarded for the unit when the student completes the outstanding assessment within the timeline set by the Unit Coordinator (or delegate).</p>

Result	Result descriptor and rules for use
RO	<p>Result Outstanding</p> <p>Indicates a student has completed and submitted all assessable tasks for a unit and the University has not yet decided the grade by the certification of grades date.</p> <p>An RO result may be an outcome from a number of circumstances including, but not limited to, assessment still to be marked due to late submission resulting from an extended submission date and requires extended marking time, or an academic misconduct investigation is still to be completed.</p>
SA / SE	<p>Supplementary Assessment / Supplementary Exam</p> <p>Indicates a student has been granted an opportunity to undertake a supplementary assessment task or formal exam to resolve doubt about the student's academic performance and whether the student has attained the learning outcomes for the unit. SA and SE results are decided by the Curriculum Committee at the end of the current term or as required (for hyperflexible courses), . Students cannot request an SA or SE result. SA and SE results are decided based on procedures and criteria in the Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework).</p>

Part 2: Interim results in vocational education and training (VET) courses

Result	Result descriptor and rules for use
CA**	<p>Competency achieved awaiting verification</p> <p>Indicates the underpinning knowledge and skills has been achieved and is awaiting employer third party verification.</p>
R	<p>Reassessment to be undertaken</p> <p>Indicates student work is to be reassessed.</p>

Appendix 2: Grades

Part 1: Grades in higher education and enabling courses (unless otherwise specified)

Grades in this appendix apply to all graded units in higher education and enabling courses. Pass requirements that differ from the below table may only be applied to non-graded (pass/fail) units in higher education and enabling courses.

Grade	Grade descriptor and rules for use	Range of marks
HD	High Distinction Demonstrates imagination, originality, or flair, based on proficiency in all the learning outcomes of the unit; work is interesting or surprisingly exciting, challenging, well-read or scholarly.	Composite mark in the range 84.50% and above (85 – 100% when rounded to the nearest integer).
D	Distinction Demonstrates awareness and understanding of deeper and less obvious aspects of the unit, such as ability to identify and debate critical issues or problems, ability to solve non-routine problems, ability to adapt and apply ideas to new situations, and ability to invent and evaluate new ideas.	Composite mark in the range of 74.50 – 84.49% (75 – 84% when rounded to the nearest integer).
C	Credit Demonstrates ability to use and apply fundamental concepts and skills of the unit, going beyond mere replication of content knowledge or skill to show understanding of key ideas, awareness of their relevance, some use of analytical skills, and some originality or insight.	Composite mark in the range of 64.50 – 74.49% (65 – 74% when rounded to the nearest integer).
P	Pass Demonstrates the learning outcomes of the unit, such as knowledge of fundamental concepts and performance of basic skills; demonstrates sufficient quality of performance to be considered satisfactory or adequate or competent or capable in relation to the learning outcomes of the unit.	Composite mark in the range 49.50 – 64.49% (50 – 64% when rounded to the nearest integer).
PN	Pass Non-Grade Indicates a pass in a unit for which the full range of grades is not available, i.e., the only possible outcomes are Fail (F) or Pass Non-Grade (PN).	Not applicable
S	Successful Indicates the successful completion of a research only unit.	Not applicable
U	Unsuccessful Indicates the unsuccessful completion of a research only unit.	Not applicable
F	Fail Indicates failure to demonstrate the learning outcomes of the unit or the student has not met the overall pass requirements for the unit as specified in the unit profile.	Composite mark below 49.50% (50% when rounded to the nearest integer).

Grade	Grade descriptor and rules for use	Range of marks
#	In-Progress Indicates an in-progress grade and is assigned to Part A of a full-year unit combination.	Not applicable
W	Withdrawn Indicates a student has withdrawn from a unit after the census date for enrolments and their application for withdrawal without academic penalty is approved. W results are for administrative purposes only, and do not appear on the student's official academic transcript.	Not applicable
WD	Withdrawn Indicates academic withdrawal of a student from a research only unit after a date the University decides or is mutually agreed between the student and the University.	Not applicable
WF	Withdrawn Fail Indicates a student has withdrawn from a unit with academic penalty after the census date for enrolments. WF results only apply to unit enrolments withdrawn before the formal exam period begins.	Not applicable
Grades relevant only to Bachelor Honours Degrees		
	First Class Honours Indicates students have achieved results in this range or specified grade point average (GPA).	84.50 – 100.00% (or GPA 6.0 and above for those courses which do not correlate with the percentage-based calculations).
	Second Class Honours, Division A Indicates students have achieved results in this range or specified GPA.	74.50 – 84.49% (or GPA 5.5 – 5.9 for those courses which do not correlate with the percentage-based calculations).
	Second Class Honours, Division B Indicates students have achieved results in this range or specified GPA.	64.50 – 74.49% (or GPA 5.0 – 5.4 for those courses which do not correlate with the percentage-based calculations).
	Third Class Honours Indicates students have achieved results in this range or specified GPA.	49.50 – 64.49% (or GPA 4.0 – 4.9 for those courses which do not correlate with the percentage-based calculations).

Part 2: Grades in vocational education and training (VET) courses

Grade	Grade descriptor and rules for use	Range of marks
CA	Competency Achieved Indicates sufficient evidence has been gathered that competency has been met/completed in relation to the relevant training package or learning outcomes of an accredited course.	Not applicable
NC	Not Competent Indicates the student has attempted all assessment requirements and has been assessed as competency not achieved in at least one form of assessment.	Not applicable
WD	Withdrawn Indicates the student has engaged in some learning activity.	Not applicable