

# ASSESSMENT TASK RE-ATTEMPT GUIDELINE



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## 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This guideline assists decision-makers and educators when implementing re-attempts in assessment practice.

## 2 SCOPE

- 2.1 This guideline focusses on assessment re-attempts by students covered by the [Assessment Policy and Procedure \(Higher Education Coursework\)](#), i.e. higher education coursework and enabling course students.

## 3 GUIDELINE

- 3.1 The Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework) and the [Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure](#) currently include provisions that allow students to re-attempt assessment.
- 3.2 These policy and procedures however do not provide detailed information on how best to implement assessment re-attempts. For this reason, this guideline has been developed to assist decision-makers and educators when implementing re-attempts in assessment practice.
- 3.3 This guideline focusses on assessment re-attempts of individual students who are at risk of failing their unit, and who meet the policy and procedure, and unit profile assessment re-attempt conditions. Where the student cohort or part of it was disadvantaged as a result of course or unit related problems in the curriculum, delivery, assessment methods or other reasons not caused by the students, the relevant response should be agreed between the Unit Lead/Coordinator and Deputy Dean Learning and Teaching. In such circumstances, an alternative assessment task (i.e. special assessment) task may be considered more appropriate as it offers availability of the full range of marks.

- 3.4 Assessment re-attempts may not be suitable for all types of education, assessment, or units. The aims of this guideline are to:
- achieve consensus on the underlying rationale (philosophy) for using re-attempts in assessment practice (i.e. academic recovery)
  - achieve consensus on the definition of an assessment re-attempt
  - confirm the circumstances where they are suitable and unsuitable to allow
  - confirm the conditions (eligibility criteria) and processes that are suitable in those circumstances, and
  - identify the implications for students, employees and the University, and issues to be considered when allowing re-attempts.

### **What is an assessment task re-attempt?**

- 3.5 The Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework) defines an assessment task re-attempt as an opportunity for a student to re-attempt and resubmit (or re-perform) assessable work (excluding exams) for re-assessment, where the student previously submitted the work and failed the assessment task.
- 3.6 A key element of this definition is the intention that the work was submitted for final assessment and marking (see [what is not an assessment re-attempt](#)).
- 3.7 An assessment may have received a fail mark to trigger a re-attempt, or alternatively, assessment may be deferred until a later time (e.g. pending the outcome of an alleged minor academic integrity breach). If deferred, the student's work may not yet have received a final fail mark. The student may be offered a re-attempt of their work as an outcome of a proven minor academic integrity breach (e.g. plagiarism).

### **What is not an assessment task re-attempt?**

- 3.8 As part of a unit's assessment and feedback strategy, the Unit Lead/Coordinator may allow students to submit a draft of their work for feedback as a learning opportunity, before they submit their completed work for final assessment and marking. In this case, the intention of the initial submission is for the student to receive feedback on a draft, not for final assessment and marking. The student's draft work is not given a mark towards their overall grade for the unit. The student's subsequent submission of their completed work for assessment to receive a mark is the first submission of their assessable work and is not regarded as an assessment re-attempt.
- 3.9 Self-plagiarism, as defined in the Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure, is unacceptable academic practice, and is not an assessment task re-attempt.

### **Why allow students to re-attempt previously submitted work?**

- 3.10 The rationale for allowing assessment task re-attempts is for the purpose of academic recovery, i.e. to enable a student one or more opportunities to demonstrate their achievement of learning outcomes relevant to an assessment task. It may also help to reduce attrition, particularly first-year students in higher education.
- 3.11 Assessment re-attempts may be appropriate to allow during the study period or after certification of grades (e.g. pending a result outstanding), depending on the circumstances.
- 3.12 Because the use of assessment re-attempts may have implications for students (e.g. equitable treatment, workload, timelines), educators (e.g. workload, timelines) and the University (e.g. resources), the decision to allow them needs careful consideration.
- 3.13 Re-attempts and supplementary assessment are used for a similar rationale, i.e. to resolve doubt about the student's achievement of learning outcomes (and an opportunity for academic recovery).

- 3.14 Unlike supplementary assessment, re-attempts can be implemented during the study period to enable students who fail an assessment task to achieve a pass mark before end-of-term certification of grades and without the need for an additional (supplementary) or alternative assessment task to be developed to assess the student's achievement. Potentially, this may assist students to enhance their learning, particularly early in the term (e.g. to avoid failing the unit), or to enable graduation in their final unit/s (see example circumstances at 3.17).
- 3.15 If the use of assessment re-attempts helps to improve student learning and reduces the students' risk of failing their unit, this could potentially help to reduce attrition and the number of students requiring supplementary assessment to pass their unit.
- 3.16 Tracking the incidence of re-attempts in units (e.g. via unit/course enhancement reporting) may offer a useful diagnostic tool to indicate the need for assessment re-design (e.g. significantly high incidence of re-attempts in particular units). Tracking re-attempts may also provide evidence to evaluate the efficacy of using re-attempts in assessment practice.
- 3.17 The circumstances suitable for allowing re-attempts may vary, as shown in the following examples:
- a) a student has failed to achieve the minimum mark (as stated in the unit profile) to receive a pass for the completed assessment task. The student may be in their first term or are about to graduate. The student may have experienced exceptional circumstances beyond their control, which adversely impacted their submitted work. This can occur at any time in their course.
  - b) a student has failed a non-graded assessment task that must be passed to pass the unit. Single or multiple re-attempts may be appropriate or standard practice for non-graded tasks, e.g. competency or practice-based assessment tasks.
  - c) a student has submitted work that includes what seems to be unintended minor referencing errors and genuine attempts to properly reference work or data. As an educative approach, the student may be allowed to re-attempt and resubmit their work after receiving feedback (instruction) on appropriate referencing.
  - d) a student's work is deemed to have involved minor plagiarism following investigation. The case decision-maker's decision requires the student to correct, re-attempt and resubmit their work for assessment and marking. In this case, the student may not yet have received an initial mark, so the Unit Lead/Coordinator will assess the re-attempted work and assign a mark in line with marking provisions in the Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework) and Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure.
- 3.18 Where assessment re-attempts are implemented, their use and the conditions (criteria) to be applied in the circumstances must be in line with provisions in the Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework) and Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure, and approved unit profiles.

### **What policies and procedures apply to assessment re-attempts?**

- 3.19 The Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework) establishes the rules and processes for assessment re-attempts in higher education coursework and enabling courses.
- 3.20 The [Student Assessment Procedure \(VET\)](#) establishes the rules and processes for assessment resubmissions in VET courses. The Student Assessment Procedure (VET) allows resubmissions but does not clearly define it or the details of their use. Resubmissions have a longstanding history under the procedure's predecessor, the Student Rules Policy (TAFE).
- 3.21 Assessment re-attempts (or resubmissions) are not allowed in ELICOS courses.
- 3.22 The Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure includes an option for students to re-attempt and resubmit their work as an outcome of a proven breach of academic integrity (i.e. minor plagiarism).
- 3.23 It is appropriate to consider the implications of the Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure for all students, because its scope covers students in higher education coursework, VET, enabling, and English language courses.

- 3.24 The decision to impose an assessment re-attempt as an outcome under the Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure will depend on whether it would be consistent with the assessment policy documents or practices relevant to the units in which the students are enrolled and the unit profile.

### **Existing rules**

- 3.25 The Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework) currently includes the following provisions:
- a) Students are allowed a re-attempt of all or part of their work if:
    - they received a fail mark
    - they have made a reasonable attempt to complete the assessment task initially
    - the assessment task is not an exam
    - the unit profile clearly states how it will be implemented or is otherwise allowed in line with the policy and procedure, and
    - the Deputy Dean Learning and Teaching has approved the details in the unit profile of how re-attempts will be implemented.
  - b) More than one re-attempt may be allowed if stated in the unit profile.
  - c) The Unit Lead/Coordinator (or nominee):
    - identifies and informs students who are eligible for an opportunity to re-attempt
    - applies the re-attempt to all students whose circumstances satisfy the associated assessment requirements stated in the unit profile
    - may extend the timeline beyond seven consecutive days for students to submit their re-attempted work (to enable the assessment to occur or if students provide evidence of exceptional circumstances).
  - d) The re-attempted work:
    - must be submitted within seven consecutive days after mark notification unless the Unit Lead/Coordinator allows an extension
    - must be marked without reference to the marks a student has achieved for the unit overall
    - must receive a mark of no more than 50 per cent or the pass mark required for that assessment piece (as stated in the unit profile)
    - will be marked and this will be recorded as the final mark for the completed assessment task.
  - e) Students who fail their completed assessment task initially in a pass/fail unit or pass/fail component will receive a fail for the unit or component, unless the unit profile allows a re-attempt, or re-attempt is otherwise allowed in line with the policy and procedure, and the student passes the re-attempt.
- 3.26 The Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure currently includes the following provisions:
- a) the case decision-maker decides if an allegation is proven and the outcome or penalty
  - b) for a proven minor incident, students may be allowed to re-attempt and resubmit their work in a specified timeframe, and
  - c) the student's re-attempted work will receive a mark of no more than 50 per cent or the pass mark specified for that assessment piece in the unit profile.

### **Approving the use of re-attempts**

- 3.27 If it is decided to allow re-attempts in a unit, the circumstances and conditions applicable for their use must be stated in the unit profile or is otherwise allowed by the policy and procedure. This is to ensure transparency and equity in the manner re-attempts are applied.

- 3.28 Educators who intend to allow re-attempts in a unit:
- should consult with the relevant Head of Course (or Heads of Course for service units)
  - must obtain approval from the relevant Deputy Dean Learning and Teaching (or equivalent), and
  - must include the details (circumstances, conditions, processes) applicable to re-attempts in the unit profile before the term begins.
- 3.29 This will require Unit Leads/Coordinators to plan and ensure the inclusion of re-attempt details in the unit profile before they can be implemented in an upcoming term.
- 3.30 The re-attempt may be contingent on whether a re-attempt is appropriate or available as stated in the unit profile (see [circumstances for allowing re-attempts](#) and [issues to consider](#)).

### **Circumstances for allowing re-attempts**

- 3.31 The following circumstances may be suitable for allowing assessment re-attempts in a unit:
- academic progression (e.g. early in the course)
  - retention (e.g. first term, transition into higher education)
  - opportunity to pass a hurdle to progress (e.g. pass/fail task, competency-based task, high pass mark requirement, pre-requisite unit, single or multiple re-attempts)
  - outcome of proven academic integrity breach, i.e. minor plagiarism (whether the submitted work received a fail mark or is yet to be marked), or
  - adjustment to assessment (e.g. for students impacted by exceptional circumstances beyond their control as described in the Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework)).

### **Circumstances unsuitable for allowing re-attempts**

- 3.32 The following circumstances may be unsuitable for allowing assessment re-attempts in a unit:
- internship units
  - work-integrated learning (WIL) assessment tasks (e.g. work-based or practice-based assessment tasks such as placements, simulations, or projects)
  - major research projects or dissertations
  - exams and other final summative assessment tasks (note: exams are excluded in the definition, supplementary assessment tasks)
  - assessment tasks where the answer/s are already known
  - assessment with externally imposed limitations (e.g. external professional accreditation)
  - units with workload and resource constraints, or
  - assessment subject to other limitations (e.g. restricted timelines, limited availability of equipment or environment required for the re-attempt).

### **Conditions for allowing re-attempts**

- 3.33 The conditions (criteria) under which an assessment re-attempt may be allowed include:
- the student failed the assessment task or has an academic integrity breach outcome requiring re-attempt and resubmission
  - the student has demonstrated a reasonable attempt to complete the assessment task initially
  - unit or Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level (e.g. first-year unit, level one unit, any year or level unit if academic integrity breach outcome or impacted by exceptional circumstances), or
  - assessment task type (e.g. written assessment, quiz, in-class test, practical assessment).

## Conditions for not allowing re-attempts

- 3.34 The conditions under which an assessment re-attempt will not be allowed include:
- a) the student received a mark of pass or above
  - b) the student has not demonstrated a reasonable attempt to complete the assessment task initially
  - c) the circumstances are unsuitable for an assessment re-attempt (as listed above, e.g. exam or not suitable/available in the unit), or
  - d) the student has not demonstrated eligibility for an assessment adjustment (as described in the Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework)).

## Issues to consider

- 3.35 There are a number of issues that Unit Leads/Coordinators and decision-makers should consider if intending to allow or require assessment re-attempts in a particular unit.

## Transparency

- 3.36 If re-attempts may be allowed in a unit, the unit profile must specify the assessment tasks for which a re-attempt may be available, and the circumstances (situation) in which they will be allowed; the criteria to be met; the process to be followed including timelines applicable to students and employees. (See [unit profile details](#).)

## Equity

- 3.37 The Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework) requires the decision to allow students an assessment re-attempt to be applied to all students whose circumstances satisfy the associated assessment requirements stated in the unit profile. It also requires re-attempted work to be marked without reference to the marks a student has achieved for the unit overall.
- 3.38 Assessment re-attempts must be managed in a way that ensures all students in the cohort are treated equitably, i.e. that re-attempts do not unfairly advantage one or more students. Circumstances adversely impacting the assessment of an entire cohort must be addressed on a case-by-case basis between the Unit Lead/Coordinator and the Deputy Dean Learning and Teaching.

## Initiator

- 3.39 Who initiates an assessment re-attempt will depend on the circumstances (situation) in which they are used. For example, Unit Leads/Coordinators initiate re-attempts if they offer students the opportunity to re-attempt and resubmit their work. Case decision-makers initiate re-attempts if they require them as an outcome of proven minor plagiarism.
- 3.40 Students cannot request an assessment re-attempt. The decision to allow assessment re-attempts within individual units is made in advance of term and approved by the Deputy Dean Learning and Teaching.
- 3.41 Students impacted by exceptional circumstances must apply (with supporting documentation) to the Unit Lead/Coordinator for consideration under the adjustment to assessment provisions within the Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework).

## Timelines and resources

- 3.42 The use of assessment re-attempts may have implications for students and educators with regard to workload and timelines, and the University from a resources perspective, which require careful consideration before a decision to allow re-attempts is made.

- 3.43 Students allowed to re-attempt an assessment task must re-attempt/resubmit the completed assessment task within seven consecutive days after receiving a mark for the initial assessment. The Unit Lead/Coordinator (or nominee) may extend this timeline if necessary, to enable the assessment to occur (e.g. during Residential Schools, at the end of term) or if a student provides evidence of exceptional circumstances (in line with the Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework)) preventing them from meeting the timeline.
- 3.44 Where practicable, students will be provided with feedback and advised of the mark for their re-submitted work within five working days from submission.

### **Process**

- 3.45 When managing assessment re-attempts in a unit, it is important that the steps employees and students are to follow (including timelines) are clearly communicated. Any relevant steps to be followed by students should be simply described in the unit profile. (See [unit profile details](#).)
- 3.46 Re-attempts will be managed in line with provisions in the unit profile. The way in which re-attempts are managed when they result from proven minor plagiarism will be managed in line with the Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure related practices. Flexibility may be needed when managing re-attempts as an assessment adjustment in response to a student impacted by exceptional circumstances because each situation will likely differ.

### **Reasonable first attempt**

- 3.47 What constitutes a 'reasonable' first attempt is a matter of academic judgement.
- 3.48 Consider to what extent the work shows the student's attempt to address the marking criteria? Does the work show signs of a cursory, minimal attempt to meet the marking criteria or does it show signs of genuine attempts to address all or most of the marking criteria?

### **Marking**

- 3.49 What proportion of the student's work is to be re-attempted and resubmitted for assessment—all or part of it? What learning outcomes will be assessed in the re-attempted work?
- 3.50 Where re-attempts are permitted, only one assessment re-attempt is allowed per unit, unless otherwise specified in the unit profile. Similarly, only one opportunity to re-attempt/resubmit the assessment is allowed unless otherwise specified in the unit profile.
- 3.51 The maximum mark a student can achieve for re-attempted work is 50% or the pass mark specified in the unit profile.
- 3.52 The original mark assigned will stand unless superseded by a higher (pass) mark achieved as a result of resubmission.
- 3.53 If students do not re-attempt and resubmit their work when required as an outcome of proven minor plagiarism, the unplagiarised component of their original submission is to be marked where practicable, otherwise zero marks will be given for the assessment task (in line with the Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure).

### **Review of grade**

- 3.54 Students who meet the criteria specified in the [Review of Grade Procedure](#) will be eligible to apply for a review of grade on their re-attempted work.
- 3.55 Where a review of grade is granted, the student will receive a mark of no more than a maximum of 50 per cent (or the specified pass mark) for that assessment task.

## Supplementary assessment

- 3.56 Students who meet the criteria specified in the Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework) will be eligible for an SA interim result to undertake supplementary assessment if the failed assessment task was re-attempted.

### Unit profile details

- 3.57 The details set out in the unit profile should not need to replicate 'rules' that are accessible in the Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework). They should provide only as much detail as is needed and can refer students to the policy and procedure for further information. As the policy and procedure is amended over time, unit profile statements should be adapted to ensure alignment.

- 3.58 Example unit profile statements include:

- a) *Re-attempt is where you are given a second opportunity to demonstrate your achievement of one or more of the unit's learning outcomes before you can progress to new learning or participate in subsequent learning activities. You may be given the opportunity to re-attempt an assessment but will only achieve a mark no greater than the minimum for a pass standard for the assessment. You must:*
- *have shown a reasonable attempt to complete the initial assessment task*
  - *be granted a re-attempt by your Unit Lead/Coordinator*
  - *note that only one opportunity to do a re-attempt will be given, and*
  - *make changes to the nominated assessment task which you have failed and resubmit the revised work for marking within seven consecutive days, no assessment extensions will be approved.*
- b) *In this unit, you may be allowed to re-attempt one failed assessment task to demonstrate your achievement of one or more of the unit's learning outcomes. A re-attempt will only be considered if you have demonstrated a reasonable attempt to complete the assessment task.*

*If the Unit Lead/Coordinator allows you to re-attempt an assessment task, you must resubmit your revised work within seven (7) consecutive days of being notified about the re-attempt opportunity. A re-attempted assessment will receive a mark no greater than the minimum pass mark allowable for the original assessment task.*

## 4 DEFINITIONS

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

## 5 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

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

[Review of Grade Procedure](#)

[Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure](#)

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

## 6 FEEDBACK

- 6.1 Feedback about this document can be emailed to [policy@cqu.edu.au](mailto:policy@cqu.edu.au).

## 7 APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

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