

Policy Number:	AS-2007-2014
Policy Title:	Student Assessment Policy
Policy Owner:	Vice-President Academic
Effective Date:	September 17, 2014

1. Purpose

This policy presents a framework for assessing student performance.

2. Application and Scope

This policy applies to all degree, diploma and certificate programs delivered by Mohawk College.

3. Definitions

“College-sponsored event” will include varsity athletic competitions, Mohawk Student Association Board events (i.e. meetings, retreats), and formal college events (i.e. convocation, orientation). Social events are excluded.

“Course Teacher” is the individual responsible for teaching and assessing a particular section of a course with respect to any definitions or requirements contained within the current collective bargaining agreement.

“Formative Assessment” refers to the gathering of information or data about student learning during a course or program that is used to guide improvements in teaching and learning. Formative assessment activities are usually low-stakes or no-stakes; they do not contribute substantially to the final evaluation or grade of the student or may not even be assessed at the individual student level. For example, posing a question in class and asking for a show of hands in support of different response options would be a formative assessment at the class level. Observing how many students responded incorrectly would be used to guide further teaching.¹

“Reliability” is the degree to which an assessment tool produces stable and consistent results.²

“Summative Assessment” refers to the gathering of information at the conclusion of a course, program, or undergraduate career to improve learning or to meet accountability demands. When used for improvement, impacts the next cohort of students taking the course or program. Examples: examining student final exams in a course to see if certain specific areas of the curriculum were understood less well than others; analyzing senior projects for the ability to integrate across disciplines.³

“Validity” is the degree to which a test measures what it is purported to measure.⁴

4. Principles

- a) Student assessment will be designed to ensure that students have achieved the stated curricular learning outcomes and competency levels prescribed for a particular course and program.

¹ Taken from Carnegie Mellon Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence & Educational Innovation:
<https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/assessment/basics/glossary.html>

² <http://www.uni.edu/chfasoa/reliabilityandvalidity.htm>

³ same

⁴ same

- b) The processes of design, implementation and administration of assessment of student learning at Mohawk College will ensure that assessment practices within programs and courses facilitate the achievement of specified learning outcomes and graduate employment capabilities.
- c) Mohawk assessment practice will:
 - a. Focus on learning and teaching efforts based on intended learning outcomes and the development of graduates prepared for the workplace in their field of study;
 - b. Promote active learning through student engagement and learning through assessment ;
 - c. Assist students to develop their knowledge, skills and capabilities in meaningful ways in disciplinary, professional and personal contexts;
 - d. Recognize and accommodate student diversity by providing assistance for alternate testing environments;
 - e. Utilize both formative and summative assessments. Formative assessments help the students improve learning and the course teacher to improve instruction during the course. Summative assessments identify the level of accomplishment that has been achieved.

5. Accountability and Compliance

5.1 Accountability Framework

This policy has been approved by the Senior Leadership Team.

5.2 Compliance

Assessment of student progress shall be the professional responsibility of the individual course teacher. Assessment practices will be regularly reviewed at the institutional, school, program and course levels as part of Mohawk College's ongoing quality assurance and improvement processes.

6. Rules

6.1 Assessment Planning

- Assessment of the capabilities of program graduates, including knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes, will be consistent with the program learning outcomes.
- Summative assessments will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure relevance to program standards and graduate outcomes.
- Summative assessment activities will be strategically spread over the semester and planned at a program level to manage student workload.
- Formative assessment will be used frequently throughout the semester to ensure student learning is on track.
- Evaluation methods will be clearly aligned with one or more course learning outcomes. This alignment will be communicated to students. Evaluation methods will also be reliable and valid.
- Early assessments (both formative and summative) will be utilized to identify potential at risk students, supporting student success and retention. Targets for the weighting and timing of early assessments will be determined on a program-specific basis.

6.2 Grading

- Grading will be done in accordance with Policy SS-3104-2009 Grading and Transcripts.
- Grades will be determined in accordance with assessment criteria for each assessment that are clearly communicated to students. Assessment criteria include, but are not limited to, grading rubrics, marking schematics, marking guides.

- Penalties for late submission or missed assessments must be made clear to students at the start of the course.

6.3 Feedback

- Students will be provided with formative and summative feedback on progress on a regular basis. Regular feedback will be defined on a program specific basis.
- Timelines for the feedback from individual summative assessments will be clearly communicated to students. Students should receive feedback from one assessment prior to the next assessment.

6.4 Accommodations

- Accommodations pertaining to a documented disability (temporary or permanent) will be provided in accordance with Policy SS-3201-2013 Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities.
- Accommodations pertaining to other human rights grounds will be provided in accordance with Policy GC-4301-1982 Human Rights.
- For programs and/or courses with a final examination, relief for a student that misses the final exam will be determined by the course teacher in consultation with the program coordinator and Associate Dean, in accordance with all other rules in this policy.

6.5 Exemptions, Re-assessments, Re-submissions and Appeals

- Students who miss an assessment due to a college sponsored event will be provided with a supplemental assessment or other form of relief. The form of the supplemental assessment or relief will be determined by the course teacher. Relief for a missed assessment includes, but is not limited to: deadline extension, deferred test, and re-weighting of grades. The student must notify the course teacher prior to the start of the assessment, or assessment deadline to be eligible for relief.
- Relief or supplemental assessments may be given to students in the event of illness, family emergency, or other extenuating circumstance, provided they submit appropriate documentation. The form of accommodation will be determined by the course teacher. The student must notify the course teacher prior to the start of the assessment, or assessment deadline to be eligible for relief, or at the earliest opportunity that a medical illness or injury may allow.
- Student appeals of final grades will be in accordance with Policy SS-3105-2009 Academic Appeals.
- Policies and processes for re-assessments or re-submissions of individual assessments will be at the discretion of the program area and will be communicated to students in the program handbook and/or course outline.

6.6 Emergencies / Campus Closures

- In the event of an emergency evacuation, the course teacher will determine an alternative assessment method in consultation with the program co-ordinator and Associate Dean. All reasonable steps shall be taken to ensure that students shall not be negatively impacted as a result of an emergency evacuation.
- In the event of a campus closure, assessments will be re-scheduled or an alternative assessment will be provided, to be determined by the course instructor. Assignment submission deadlines will be extended by one school day.

6.7 Academic Integrity and Student Behaviour

- Any occurrence of Academic dishonesty will be dealt with in accordance with Policy SS-3203-2008 Academic Honesty.

- Inappropriate student behaviour will be dealt with in accordance with Policy SS-3200-2006 Student Behaviour.

7. Policy Revision Date

7.1 Revision Date

June 2017

7.2 Responsibility

This policy will be reviewed and updated every three years or earlier if required.

8. Links

Policy SS-3104-2009 Grading and Transcripts

Policy SS-3105-2009 Academic Appeals

Policy SS-3201-2013 Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Policy GC-4301-1982 Human Rights

Policy SS-3203-2008 Academic Honesty