



VITALIS TRAINING CENTER

Assessment Policy

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Assessment Policy

Purpose

This Policy specifies the Vitalis Training Centre's assessment philosophy and the general principles that guide the Vitalis Training Centre's assessment practices.

Policy Statement

Assessment is the process of gathering and analyzing information in order to guide and make judgments about students' learning in relation to curriculum goals. Assessment tasks are designed to indicate progress toward the desired learning outcomes of a particular subject and course; the assessment grade is a measure of the extent to which the learning outcomes of the subject have been achieved. Assessment items are an integral part of the learning process and when well-designed can enhance the overall learning experience and contribute to student achievement.

Assessment Principles

The Vitalis Training Centre subscribes to the following assessment principles:

1. Assessment is an integral part of course design

Course design aims to enable students to successfully fulfill the Graduate Outcomes and/or Professional Threshold Learning Outcomes (PTLOs) for their chosen course of study. Assessment design will support the achievement of these outcomes and should not undermine the essential educational philosophy. The Vitalis Training Centre upholds the highest ethical and academic standards in its approach to assessment, and all assessment outcomes are kept confidential.

2. Assessment is linked to Graduate Outcomes

Assessment is linked to graduate outcomes via the course and subject learning outcomes. Assessment should be designed to measure the degree to which students have met the learning outcomes, and different learning outcomes will require different types of assessment.

Students receive timely and appropriate feedback on assignments, projects, and learning outcomes, so students understand their strengths and weaknesses in relation to each of the capabilities.

3. Self-Assessment

The assessment scheme provides a model for internal self-assessment (metacognition) of student's own learning and develops students' skills in critical self-appraisal. Self-assessment is a key professional capability that is necessary to develop a continuous learning plan for professional development. Accurate reflection and self-assessment are also necessary in order to develop as a practitioner and to learn from professional practice.

4. Adult Learning Principles

The teaching of adults at the vocational level is improved by the application of Adult Learning Principles (Andragogy) and this applies equally to assessment. These principles are widely agreed to include the following:

- Adults are internally motivated and self-directed
- Adults bring life experiences and knowledge to learning experiences
- Adults are goal-oriented
- Adults are relevancy-oriented
- Adults are practical
- Adult learners like to be respected

The application of these principles in assessment design includes such things as creating assessment tasks that result in useful artifacts of learning such as monographs, databases of reviewed articles, client education items, etc., which can be shared with other students and classes.

5. Assessment is criterion-referenced and performance standards are specified

Assessment incorporates a feedback process and is based on explicit, pre-specified, criteria (criterion-referenced assessment). Assessment decisions are not made solely on the basis of student performance relative to that of the rest of the cohort (norm-referenced assessment). Criteria are valid and justifiable with outcomes aligning to Graduate Capabilities and/or Professional Threshold Learning Outcomes.

6. Assessment inspires learning

Well-designed assessment engages students' natural curiosity and motivates them to learn.

7. Assessment is relevant

Authentic assessment duplicates real-life situations such as scenarios or case studies and/or promotes the creation of a work product that is useful and relevant to self and/or others.

8. Assessment changes through the course

While assessment early in the course may be discipline-based as students build the foundations of their professional knowledge, later assessment tasks integrate knowledge from a range of disciplines. Generally, they require students to apply what they have learned to a scenario or an experience.

9. Assessment is appropriately weighted

The amount of assessment is designed to provide enough evidence to judge a student's achievement of the learning outcomes for the subject and does not incur an excessive workload on the student or the Lecturer. The effort involved in an assessment task is commensurate with the value awarded to the task. Assessment is managed across subjects offered in a study period so as not to create an undue load.

10. Assessment is rigorous

The standard of performance that is required for the award of a particular grade is a judgment that is based on the professional expertise of the staff members who contribute to the assessment process, and where appropriate, standards set by professional bodies and other institutions.

Assessment Design and Management

Assessment Methods

Assessment methods may take a variety of forms; the key criterion for choice among methods should be appropriateness to the learning outcomes. Assessment is progressive over time so as to reveal the changes that take place as a student learns. A diverse range of fair, equitable, clear, meaningful, and specific assessment instruments and processes may be employed.

Clinical and Practical Subjects

For courses leading to a practitioner qualification with which the graduate will be entitled to consult/treat clients the relevant professional associations strongly support a particular pass level for practical and clinical subjects. In this case, it is understood that a student needs to acquire and maintain a high degree of skill in order to be effective in practice. For this reason, the Vitalis Training Centre stipulates particular pass requirements in some clinical and practical subjects which are not negotiable (Pass / Fail or must meet a particular grade in an assessment). It is also essential that a student exhibit at all times within clinic professionalism including strict adherence to client confidentiality including escalating urgent duty of care issues for clients at risk. A Fail in this area will result in a Fail in the subject.

Assessment Completion

Students are strongly encouraged to complete and submit all assessments listed in their Subject Outlines in order to attain a final grade that fully represents the student's total knowledge of the subject and to provide the greatest chance for success in all subjects.

In some subjects, there are specific requirements for completion of certain assessment items and attaining a specific standard on those items in order to pass the subject. Students must follow strictly the requirements set out in each individual Subject Outline within the enrolled study period with regard to the requirements to pass that subject.

Attendance

Attendance is compulsory for all practical and clinical subjects although not for some non-practical subjects. Any specific attendance requirements, and the consequences of not meeting the requirements, are clearly stated in the Subject Outlines.

Attendance in practical and clinical subjects is a pass/fail requirement as specified on the Subject Outline. Development of skills in these subjects takes place in every session so missing a session is considered to be missing an assessment. In some cases, a limited number of missed classes/clinic shifts may be made up during the study period. It should be noted that student grades will remain Incomplete (I) until the attendance requirement has been met; if the requirement is not met within the required timeframe and a grade is not entered by the census date of the next study period at the latest, the grade will revert to Fail (F).

Online Assessment

Online quizzes must be completed within the stated window in which they are offered; quizzes will be closed at the time and date stated on the Subject Outline even if students have commenced but not completed the quiz.

Timeliness

It is the student's responsibility to manage their individual study and assessment workload to ensure they are able to attend all examinations and meet all relevant due dates. Assessment must be submitted within the timeframes specified unless there is an extraordinary circumstance that prevents the student from meeting the deadline. In this case, the student must follow the appropriate procedure to arrange an extension of time for written assessment.

Feedback

Students receive specific, timely, supportive, constructive, and developmental feedback on their learning and performance.

Assessment Extensions

In certain situations, students may apply for an extension of time of up to two (2) weeks over the original due date of the assessment item. The circumstances considered for the extension applications include:

- Serious personal or emotional trauma (such as a death in the immediate family)
- Exceptional circumstances involving serious student illness which would prevent completion of the assessment item

- Sporting or cultural commitments at the State, national, or international level.

Applications for an extension of time on assessment will not be granted where the decision-maker is not satisfied that the student took reasonable measures to avoid the circumstance that contributed to the student missing the due date.

Extensions of time on assessment will not be granted for:

- Work commitments
- Holiday arrangements (including overseas travel and school holidays)
- Social and leisure events or personal commitments (including weddings)
- Misreading the assessment schedule or
- Forgetfulness.

Please note – if the student is claiming serious illness as their reason for deferral or extension application, a medical certificate will be required which details the student’s lack of fitness to study, and which must cover the relevant due date and the previous two days to the due date.

Student Integrity (e.g.: cheating and plagiarism)

Students are accountable to standards of professionalism and ethics throughout their course of study and therefore the Vitalis Training Centre takes a strong position on cheating and plagiarism. All students should ensure that their assessment appropriately references research or other sources.

Definition of Grades

Pass (P)

Satisfactory performance indicates an adequate understanding of the subject matter, development of relevant skills to an adequate level; demonstration of adequate interpretive and analytical ability, and achievement of the learning outcomes for the subject although some elements of the outcomes may not be fully achieved.

Fail (F)

Unsatisfactory performance indicates an inadequate understanding of the basic subject matter, failure to develop relevant skills, insufficient evidence of interpretive and analytical ability; and failure to achieve the learning outcomes for the subject. Students have failed to obtain a pass mark using the aggregation of all individual pieces of assessment, or have failed to complete a summative assessment item. Finalized by the Vitalis Training Centre as soon as possible following submission by the student, but must be finalized by the census date of the following study period.

Incomplete grades in clinic subjects must be rectified by the student (e.g.: make-up clinic sessions attended) by the end of Week 3 in the following study period, for finalization by the Vitalis Training Centre by the census date of the following study period.

Definitions

Student is an individual person who is formally enrolled to study at the Vitalis Training Centre. The individual person is that who appears on the Vitalis Training Centre's documents such as enrolment, admission, and payment documents, and who is assigned an individual student ID.