Candidate Assessment Policy

voice of the profession

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Purpose

As a professional association, the Institute of Internal Auditors-Australia (IIA-Australia) is committed to providing an assessment system which is sufficiently robust to assure both the general public and employers of professionals that qualified members of the IIA-Australia are competent in certain designated work.

Scope

This policy applies to the development and delivery of assessment in the Graduate Certificate in Internal Auditing course.

Definitions

P6.1	Formative assessment	Formative assessment is a reflective process that aims to inform and promote candidate learning.
		The process used by teachers and students as part of instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students' achievement of core learning outcomes. As assessment for learning, formative assessment practices provide students with clear learning targets, examples and models of strong and weak work, regular descriptive feedback, and the ability to self-assess, track learning, and set goals.
P6.2	Summative assessment	Summative assessment (or summative evaluation) refers to the assessment of the learning and summarises the achievement of students at a particular time. For example, after a period of work, say two weeks, the student sits for a test and then the teacher marks the test and assigns a score.
P6.3	Constructivist approach	The constructivist approach is based on a theoretical framework that holds that learning always builds upon knowledge that a student already knows; this prior knowledge is called a schema. Because all learning is filtered through pre-existing schemata, constructivists suggest that learning is more effective when a student is actively engaged in the learning process rather than attempting to receive knowledge passively. A wide variety of methods claim to be based on constructivist learning theory. Most of these methods rely on some form of guided discovery where the teacher avoids most direct instruction and attempts to lead the student through questions and activities to discover, discuss, appreciate and verbalise the new knowledge.
P6.4	Criterion-referenced	Criterion-referenced assessment evaluates students' work against criteria, defined as desirable qualities or dimensions of a student's performance (see definition of 'Marking guides' below).

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P6.5	**Marking guides**	Marking guides in a criterion referenced assessment are based on attributes/outcomes which are expressed as evaluation criteria. Against each criterion, a series of descriptors is developed to guide assessment of the level of achievement (as per the following example).
		Criterion: Identify and apply relevant IPPF guidance and related principles

High Distinction	Identifies and applies all relevant guidance based on a sophisticated analysis of the scenario and supports answer with insightful use of principles drawn from own further research
Distinction	Identifies and correctly prioritises most relevant guidance and applies to the scenario a sound analysis of specific issues. Also makes reference to other applicable principles from own research
Credit	Identifies and correctly prioritises most relevant guidance and applies to the scenario based on some analysis of specific issues
Pass	Identifies core guidance and applies adequately to the broad scenario
Fail	Identifies only limited guidance (some possibly irrelevant to scenario)

P6.6	**Marking**	Evaluation of a student's submissions by assigning a grade or score.
P6.7	**Moderation of assessment**	Moderation is a quality assurance process directed at ensuring that assessments are marked with accuracy, consistency and fairness.
P6.8	**Meta-learning**	Learning about how one learns most effectively and developing a set of skills and attitudes to support lifelong learning.

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Policy statement

This policy outlines the assessment methodology adopted for the Graduate Certificate in Internal Auditing, which is designed to:

- ❖ provide candidates with learning experiences to develop and demonstrate competencies;
- ❖ permit academic staff to measure the achievement of candidates against documented learning outcomes;
- ❖ provide a means of monitoring candidate progress and providing feedback; and
- ❖ provide data for quality assurance and continuous improvement.

The assessment framework is built on the following characteristics:

- ❖ **Content validity**—is it an authentic assessment of the content and key learning outcomes? Does it reflect the teaching delivery?
- ❖ **Predictive validity**—does the assessment predict success in desired outcomes?
- ❖ **Suitability**—is the assessment process suitable to the discipline?
- ❖ **Reliability**—is there consistency in the evaluation?
- ❖ **Relevance**—does the assessment align with the actual work of an Internal Auditor?

Assessment methodology

The assessment methodology adopted for the Graduate Certificate in Internal Auditing has been developed to provide valid, predictive, suitable, reliable and relevant assessment of the key learning outcomes. Its objective is also to encourage candidate engagement with the learning environment throughout the semester.

This methodology combines assessment components with marks for participation, to provide regular opportunities for feedback on candidates' progress and assessment of candidates' abilities to apply learning in practical contexts.

This methodology is informed predominantly from a **constructivist** approach to pedagogy, which is considered appropriate given the focus on developing knowledge and skills required for practical professional work in a variety of specific contexts and the range of attributes and values considered important for the profession of internal auditing.

Assessment overview

The course assessment methodology provides a balance between formative and summative assessment tasks. Each module includes a major final assessment task for summative purposes.

The other components all have a formative role in terms of assisting the candidate to monitor their progress in terms of achieving the learning outcomes and providing constructive feedback which will assist the candidate to perform effectively on the major assessment task.

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The learning materials for each module are also constructed around a series of activities which support the regular application of knowledge and skills and self-assessment against sample answers and/or commentary. The integration of this with online participation and the reflective journal is designed to develop meta-learning capabilities which assist the candidate to become an effective lifelong learner beyond the course of study as they continue in the profession.

There are three broad types of assessment, which can be summarised as follows:

1. **Individual major projects** require the demonstration of specified learning outcomes in the context of that candidate's workplace. The submission of an initial plan is required where the candidate presents a proposal for the project along with an identification of how the project will provide evidence of the achievement of learning outcomes. This supports a constructivist approach by engaging the learner in the active construction of meaning through the design of the task and application of evaluation criteria. It also assists in making the assessment task a part of the learning process.

2. Candidates are required to keep a **reflective journal** throughout the course and specific journal reflections are submitted for assessment. This supports a constructivist approach in that it encourages candidates to reflect on their own perspectives, values and worldview and how these contribute to their own construction of meaning. The submission is linked to work that the candidate does on the major projects, thus further incorporating assessment as part of the learning process. The reflective journal is also a key tool for encouraging candidates to engage in self-assessment and meta-learning, as well as to develop professional attributes ethics and values.

3. Marks allocated to **participation** are intended to reward the candidate for engagement in the collaborative learning environment and are awarded based on the frequency and quality of that engagement rather than technical correctness. A minimum level of participation in scheduled activities such as webinars and tutorials is also required for the award of participation marks. This supports a constructivist approach by recognising the importance of engaging with multiple perspectives and the potential for learning from others in an interactive environment. The approach to assessing participation also rewards authentic engagement in the learning process rather than focusing on the output (which is assessed in other components). Online quizzes followed by online discussion may also contribute to assessment.

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Assessment requirements and penalties

Online participation

Candidates must engage in online discussion and respond to questions posted by tutors throughout the module, where applicable, to receive participation marks. Online participation is monitored and moderated by tutors.

Candidates must complete a minimum two out of three online activities (webinars and discussion questions posted by tutors). Attendance at the webinars will be monitored and logged by our webinar provider and the discussion forum will be monitored and graded by tutors.

The penalty for failure to meet the attendance requirement for the on-line events and subsequent discussion is a zero score for the online participation assessment task.

There are no extensions available for the online participation assessment task activities, except in cases where an application for special consideration (refer to special consideration definition in Policy P5) is made and approved.

Participation scores will be calculated prior to the major final assessment task being submitted. Tutors will provide feedback on candidates' online participation during the semester.

Assignments

To pass the module, a candidate must attain an overall minimum mark of 50% for the entire module (ie, the aggregate of all assessment tasks) together with a mark of 50% or more for the major final assessment task (Assignment 2). Candidates who do not reach the minimum 50% for the major final assessment task will not pass the module regardless of other marks. If a pass is not achieved, the entire module must be undertaken in a subsequent semester. The module fees at the time of re-enrolling will be applied.

Non-award candidates must achieve an assessment grade of Credit or above on Module 1 and at least 50% on the major final assessment task (Assignment 2) to subsequently be considered eligible for award admission and progression in the course. In exceptional circumstances the Education Committee may allow non-award candidates who perform satisfactorily in Module 1 but do not meet these specific requirements to progress into the remainder of the GradCertIA.

All assignments must be submitted by candidates by the notified due date. The penalty for failure to submit will be a zero (0) score, and in the case of the major final assessment task (Assignment 2) the candidate will fail the module.

Assignments can be resubmitted up until the published deadline but submissions received at the due date/time are considered to be final and cannot be overwritten.

Assignment 1 / Reflective Journal 1

Where a candidate is unable to submit their Assignment 1 or Reflective Journal 1 (where applicable) submission by the due date, they should request an extension directly from their tutor

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prior to the submission date. Tutors may provide a maximum extension of seven (7) days for Assignment 1 or Reflective Journal 1 if the tutor deems a genuine reason due to work or personal circumstances outside of the control of the candidate. Any requests for extensions following the due date and/or applications for extensions of longer than one week require a special consideration application to be made to the Registrar (refer to special consideration definition in Policy P5). Applications for special consideration will not be accepted more than seven (7) days past the due date of an assessment task.

Quiz

An online multiple-choice quiz is held near the beginning of semester in Module 1. This assists candidates to ensure key concepts are understood early in the course.

There are no extensions available for the quiz except in cases where an application for special consideration (refer to special consideration definition in Policy P5) is made and approved.

Major final assessments: Assignments 2 and 3

Applications for special consideration will not be accepted more than seven (7) days past the due date of an assessment task. Where a candidate is unable to submit their major final assessment task (Assignment 2) or remaining Reflective Journals (Assignment 3) by the due date, an application for special consideration (refer to special consideration definition in Policy P5) must be made in writing to the Registrar for an extension.

The special consideration application form is available on Moodle and outlines the applicable administration fee. A special consideration application can be made at any time leading up to the major final assessment task due date and up to seven (7) days post the major final assessment task due date. Applications for special consideration relating to assignment extensions received later than seven (7) days past the assignment due date will not be accepted. If an application for special consideration is approved and an extension is granted, the Registrar will advise the revised due date.

Penalties for late submission

- Late assignment submissions will be accepted up to fourteen (14) days following the notified due date for assignments and journals.

- Unless a formal extension has been applied for and granted through the processes outline above, the following are applicable to all assessment tasks (including assignments and journals) submitted after the notified due date:

  - Assignments received more than five (5) days late will attract a late fee to cover the cost of additional marking

    There will be a deduction of 2% of the awarded mark, for each day or part thereof that the submission is late. For example, if an assignment is submitted 4 days after the due date and was graded as 65%, then the actual grade awarded for that assignment would be 59.8% (8% or 5.2 mark penalty)

  - If an assessment task is not received within fourteen (14) days of the due date, it will be

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deemed to have not been submitted and the candidate will score 0% for that assessment task.

- If an extension is granted, the above penalty provisions will apply from the revised due date.

- The late penalty will be applied to all parts of the assignment, not just those received after the deadline.

- Assignments received at the due date & time are considered final and cannot be resubmitted

Word count

Failure to adhere to the prescribed word count for assignments will result in the following penalties:

<10%   No penalty

10% - 20% over the word count incurs a 5% penalty

20% and above in excess of the word count; the marker will cease assessing the paper*

* When the marker ceases assessing the paper, the final mark will be based on assessment of the answers up to 20% excess of word count and will include a 5% reduction of marks.

Please note that word count assessments and penalties will be applied to each part of the assignment individually. For example, if Part B of the assignment is over the word limit, the 5% penalty will apply to the Part B mark only (assuming Parts A and C are within their respective word limits).

Use of workplace information

For any element of the course where candidates use their workplace as a case study or a discussion point, candidates must seek written permission from their employer using the form provided in the Module Outline. (Form F2: Authorisation for case study). It is advised that company names are not included in the major final assessment task.

Module Learning Pack

Detailed assessment requirements, including weighting of assessment tasks, due dates and arrangements for collection and return of assessment tasks, are set out, where available, in module outlines which are distributed within Module Learning Packs prior to the commencement of each module.

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Marking and grading

Online quizzes may form part of the course and are in multiple choice format and are marked on a simple correct/incorrect basis. The other forms of assessment are criterion referenced and assessment criteria are developed along with customised marking guides to guide the assessment process for each specific assessment component. Detailed assessment criteria are made available to candidates to ensure transparency in the process and assist candidates to develop skills in self-assessment.

Marking of the major final assessment task submissions is completed by a group of suitably qualified and trained assessors who assemble at a secure site to complete the assessment of candidate submissions. Assessors are provided with appropriate 'criterion-referenced' marking guides.

The following grades, at the mark ranges indicated, are applied in the assessment of each component and the final grade is based on total marks for the entire module:

HD   =   High Distinction (85–100%)

D   =   Distinction (75–84%)

C   =   Credit (65–74%)

P   =   Pass (50–64%)

F   =   Fail (< 50%)

Z*   =   Resubmit

DNS   =   Did Not Submit.

*   Note that 'Z' scores will not be given for major final assessment tasks.

NB: No concessional passes will be awarded

In line with the criterion-referenced approach, the proportion of results across a candidate cohort in each grade level is not determined by any formula or pre-set quota system, but only by the extent to which candidates provide evidence of achievement of the learning outcomes of each module. In other words, candidates are not assessed against each other, but against the standards established in the assessment criteria and articulated in the marking guides. So, there is nothing in the grading rules preventing every candidate in a module achieving a high distinction result.

Grade Appeals

If a candidate considers the final grade they received for a Module to be incorrect or unfair, the candidate has the right to appeal the grade by lodging a Grade Appeal.

Grounds for appeal
Grade appeals may be lodged where the candidate has concerns in relation to any of the following:

- Clerical errors in determining the final grade
- Circumstances disadvantaging the candidate as a result of the assessment task
- Decision/s regarding special consideration have not been taken into due consideration in marking an assessment task.

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The purpose of a Grade Appeal is not to challenge individual points raised by markers. Candidates are expected to have sought feedback on individual assessment tasks prior to the award of a final grade, where applicable. It is not possible to appeal the result for an individual assessment task during the teaching of the module. A Grade Appeal is only possible once the final grade for the module has been released.

The candidate should contact the Registrar to discuss his or her concerns in relation to the Grade Appeal in the first instance. If the candidate's concerns are not resolved through the discussion with the Registrar, they may proceed to lodge a Grade Appeal.

A Grade Appeal must be submitted within 15 working days of the final grade being made available to the candidate.

Candidates making a Grade Appeal should submit a Grade Appeal Form (available from IIA-Australia) to the Registrar outlining the grounds for appeal and attach appropriate evidence where applicable. The Grade Appeal Form provides an opportunity for the candidate to state the reasons why they believe the final grade they have received for a module is incorrect or unfair.

The candidate will receive an acknowledgement of receipt of the Grade Appeal within three working days of lodging the appeal. IIA-Australia will attempt to resolve the matter within 15 working days of receipt of the Grade Appeal Form.

Eligible Grade Appeals will be referred to the Conduct and Appeals Sub-committee for a decision. If the appeal is not deemed to be eligible, the candidate will be notified accordingly.

A Grade Appeal may result in no change, an increase, or decrease in the final grade awarded.

The candidate will be sent a letter notifying them of the outcome of their Grade Appeal. The letter will outline the reason(s) for the decision and notify the candidate of any further rights of appeal, where applicable, in accordance with P4, Grievance Policy.

Moderation of assessment—Quality assurance

The IIA-Australia policy is to maintain a quality assurance process by which the Academic Standards and Quality Committee confirms that assessment is continuously conducted with accuracy, consistency and fairness. Quality assurance is integral to all aspects of the IIA-Australia postgraduate program (refer Policy P7: Quality Assurance).

Refer below to the responsibilities (as set out in their Terms of Reference) of the Education Committee's Sub-committees—the Academic Standards and Quality Sub-committee and the Technical Advisory Sub - committee—which have specific responsibilities for assessment and quality assurance.

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Responsibility

Candidates

Responsibilities are set out in Policy P14: Code of Academic Conduct.

Assessors

Responsible for:

- ❖ complying with this policy—any matters for clarification or notification are to be raised with the Registrar
- ❖ passing the candidate assessment results to the Registrar in the prescribed form.
- ❖ implementing Grade Appeals process where applicable

Education Manager and Registrar

Responsible for:

- ❖ collation of assessment results from assessors and passing to the Technical Advisory Sub-committee as required
- ❖ implementation of the assessment standards and oversight, as a member of the Academic Standards and Quality Sub-committee
- ❖ managing the Grade Appeals process
- ❖ notifying candidates of assessment results and final grades for each Module.

Module Director

Responsible for (per the Terms of Reference of the Technical Advisory Sub-committee):

- ❖ ensuring assessment tasks for the GradCertIA are appropriately designed to measure intended candidate learning outcomes for the course.

Technical Advisory Sub-committee

Responsible for (per the Terms of Reference of the Technical Advisory Sub-committee):

- ❖ providing assessment standards and oversight
- ❖ compiling the assessments results with commentary including trends, percentage passes, etc. and presenting to the Academic Standards and Quality Committee.

Academic Standards and Quality Sub-committee

Responsible for (per the Terms of Reference of the Academic Standards and Quality Sub-committee):

- ❖ assessment standards and oversight, including:
  - ▪ receiving the assessment results from Technical Advisory Committee
  - ▪ reviewing assessment results according to standards

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- making enquires of the Technical Advisory Committee as needed
- recommending the outcomes as the final assessments to Education Committee for approval and release

- benchmarking by ensuring candidate learning outcomes for the course are monitored and periodically compared with those of similar courses in Australian universities and the broader higher education sector.

Conduct and Appeals Sub-committee

Responsible for (per the Terms of Reference of the Conduct and Appeals Sub-committee):

- Ensuring the dissemination of information to candidates and academic staff regarding Policies, Procedures and Rules
- Receiving, Hearing & Providing Rulings
- Continuous Improvement

Legislative context

- National standards, policy and legislation on which this policy is based:
  - Australian Qualifications Framework Second Edition January 2013
  - Commonwealth of Australia Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011
  - Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015

Associated documents

- Policy P1: Candidate Plagiarism
- Policy P4: Candidate Grievance
- Policy P5: Candidate Progression, Exclusion and Graduation Policy
- Policy P12: Privacy and Security of Information
- Policy P13: Candidate Fees and Tuition Assurance
- Policy P14: Academic Code of Conduct
- Procedure R2: Candidate Academic Records Management
- Form F2: Authorisation for case study
- Form F4: Moderation Checklist
- Education Committee Charter which contains the Terms of Reference (ToR) for Candidate Conduct and Appeals Committee
- Graduate Certificate in Internal Auditing Course Handbook

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Version:

Version No	Date	Document Location	Name of Person	Comments
V1	May 2016		EC	Policy revised
V2	29 Nov 2016		EC	Editing and updating of legislation
V2.1	8 December 2016		AS	Formatting of previously approved policy
V3	January 2017		EC	Updating for HES Framework 2015
V4	July 2017		EC	Update to Grade Appeals process
V5	December 2018		IIA-Australia	Update email address
V6	July 2019		EC	Update information about deadlines, late penalties and word count

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