
ASSESSMENT EXERCISES AND THEIR PRESENTATION – HIGHER EDUCATION COURSES OF STUDY

Preamble

Commonwealth and South Australian legislation requires that providers have in place appropriate policies and procedures for academic governance and administration of student matters including assessment.

Legislations and Standards

Higher Education Support Act 2003 and Higher Education Provider Guidelines

South Australian Training and Skills Development Act (2008)

National Protocols and Guidelines for Higher Education Registration and Accreditation

Delegations

The ACD Board has delegated to the ACD Executive Officer the responsibility for ensuring that assessment policy and guidelines are communicated to students and staff. The ACD Board has delegated to college Principals, and through them to all teaching staff, the implementation of assessment policy and guidelines.

Approvals

This document was approved by the ACD Board/ACD President on 28 January 2011.

Provisions

1. Assessment

To achieve a grade of Pass or better in a unit students must:

- (a) Provide evidence that they have undertaken the core work set for a unit;
- (b) Demonstrate that they have acquired at least a basic level of understanding that adequately covers the unit's objectives; and
- (c) Satisfactorily complete essential assessment exercises.

Unit convenors will base their final grades for units on the above criteria.

All students should be aware of the assessment requirements for each unit in which they are enrolled. This information will be provided by the lecturer with other course handouts in the first week of lectures. Details will also be included about the length of time that should be expected for the return of work.

Assessment exercises may vary from unit to unit, particularly across the four areas of study. For example an exegetical essay would be an unlikely form of assessment for a unit in the Leadership, Missiology or Christian Education & Discipleship streams. Some of the forms of assessment that may be used include: Essays on set topics; Book reviews; Case studies; Group project; Exegetical exercises; Personal journals; Reflection papers with personal responses to readings/lectures; Tutorial presentations and papers; Project or creative exercises; Examination.

Most units will contain a range of assessment options. Each will be weighted to make up the total assessment.

A general guide to the number of words a student is expected to write is approximately 1000 words per credit point. In other words, in a 4.5 credit point unit students will be expected to write a maximum of 4,500 words. Different units will require different assessment exercises. Lecturers will provide a statement of assessment methods to students and may also give written guidelines that explain exactly what is expected for each form of assessment for a unit.

2. Grades

Final grades and notations awarded by the ACD (based on Flinders University) are as follows:

High Distinction	HD	85 – 100%
Distinction	DN	75 – 84%
Credit	CR	65 – 74%
Pass	P	50 – 64%
Fail	F	0 – 49%
Withdraw, not Fail	WN	
Withdraw, Fail	WF	
Non-Graded Pass	NGP	
Satisfactory	SATIS	

Other notations used ACD are:

Continuing	CO
Incomplete	I

The following grades will be awarded where there is evidence that the student:

Pass (P)	has undertaken the required core work for the unit and has demonstrated at least an adequate level of knowledge/ understanding/competencies/skills required for meeting unit objectives and satisfactorily completing essential assessment exercises.
Credit (CR)	has undertaken all of the required core work for the unit and additional work in wider areas relevant to the unit, and has demonstrated a sound level of knowledge/understanding/ competencies/skills required for meeting unit objectives and completing assessment exercises at a proficient standard.
Distinction (DN)	has undertaken all of the required core work for the unit at a high level and considerable additional work in wider areas relevant to the unit, has demonstrated advanced knowledge/understanding/ competencies/skills required for meeting unit objectives and completing assessment exercises at a proficient standard.
High Distinction (HD)	has undertaken the required core work for the unit at a high level and considerable additional work in wider areas relevant to the unit, has demonstrated the acquisition of an advanced level of knowledge/

	understanding/competencies/skills required for meeting unit objectives and passing the range of unit elements at the highest level.
Non-Graded Pass (NGP)	has achieved a satisfactory level of performance and participation assessed only on a pass or fail basis.
Fail (F)	has not demonstrated satisfactory academic performance in the unit or has failed to complete essential unit elements or required assessment tasks at an acceptable level in accordance with the unit objectives.

3. **Guidelines for Preparing Written Assessment Exercises**

Written assessment exercises will vary considerably. However, in most cases a student will be expected to respond to an exercise set by the unit convenor by preparing a written paper which makes a convincing argument based on appropriate research.

The most helpful place to start research is with the recommended reading listed in unit outlines, which will be available in the Adelaide Theological Library. (Students new to the ACD and theological study are advised to undertake a library orientation tour.) Material likely to be in heavy demand will be on reserve or available for short-term loan. It is a good idea to check with the lecturer if research goes much beyond the suggested reading list. Exploring recent articles in relevant scholarly journals is encouraged.

Once you have explored the unit of your paper, take time out to think carefully again about what is being asked of you. If you are not sure check with the lecturer or tutor to make sure you are absolutely clear. Write a brief outline of your piece of work before you even start writing your paper. Allow plenty of time for writing; it usually takes longer than you think it will.

When you are writing remember to:

1. Take care with grammar and spelling.
2. Use inclusive language. See the ACD's *Guidelines for Inclusive Language and for the Use of Language for God Within the ACD* available from the ACD Office or on the ACD website.
3. Ensure that you are making a logical case.
4. Show that you have digested your research by creating your own piece of work rather than cobbling together a string of ideas from authors you have read.
5. Do not use another person's words or ideas as though they were your own. This constitutes plagiarism.
6. Use footnotes or endnotes to acknowledge words or ideas that are not your own.
7. Prepare a bibliography which lists the books you have used for your research. See below for more detailed information about referencing in the section 'Acknowledging Sources—Referencing'.

General Presentation

Type or write legibly essays on single-sided A4 paper. Double-space the text, leaving a margin of 4 cm on the left side of each page. Number each page. Include a title or cover page. This should contain:

- Student's name
- Name of the unit
- Title of the essay
- Tutor's name
- Date submitted

Standard essay cover sheets are available from the Adelaide Theological Library or the ACD Office. The number of words in an essay should be within ten percent of the set word limit, e.g., if a paper is set at 2,000 words, the essay should be within the range of 1,800 to 2,200 words.

Submission

Assessment exercises should be submitted to the tutor or to the Uniting College office by 5:00 pm on the due date. An extension may be given at the discretion of the tutor for medical or compassionate reasons but not because of poor organisation. An extension should be negotiated *before* the due date. The tutor may require the request for an extension to be presented in writing with submission of a medical certificate or other relevant evidence where appropriate. No essay will be accepted after the first day of examinations except with the approval of the Examinations Board.

An essay received after the due date (or extended due date) will be marked and then the following penalty will be applied: a reduction of ten percent of the possible mark for each day after the due date (eg an essay marked out of thirty which was submitted two days late would have six marks deducted from the marks given).

Return of Papers

Papers normally will be returned to students during lectures or tutorials. After the final class students may collect essays from the Uniting College office. Alternatively, students may hand in with their essay a suitably stamped self-addressed envelope for its return. Lecturers and tutors will endeavour to return work to students as soon as possible, usually no later than three weeks after the date of submission.

Style Guidelines

- 1) *Spelling*: When in doubt, check an appropriate dictionary such as *The Macquarie Dictionary*. In some cases the dictionary may provide alternative spellings (eg – ise/isation as well as ize/ization endings). Whatever version is chosen should be used consistently throughout the essay.
- 2) *Capitalisation*: It is now standard practice to keep capitalisation to a minimum. For example, most scholars no longer capitalise pronouns and adjectives which refer to God. As a general rule, if in doubt, do not capitalise. The following are some examples of when to capitalise and when not:
 - Jesus the Christ, but christology
 - the Trinity, but trinitarian doctrines
 - the Bible, but biblical books
 - the canon of Scripture, but scriptural passages
 - the Uniting Church, but the local church
 - the Roman Catholic Church, but the catholic (meaning 'universal') church
 - the Eucharist, but eucharistic theology
 - Clement of Alexandria, but the early church fathers
 - Gnosticism/the Gnostics, but the gnostic writings

the Middle Ages, but the medieval period
Pope Gregory VII and King Henry IV, but the pope and the king
the Protestant Reformation, the Protestant reformers
Western Europe, but the south-west of France
the Oxford Movement, but the ecumenical movement

- 3) *Abbreviations and Shortened Forms*: Avoid using shortened forms in the main text of an essay. However, if a name is used repeatedly, such as the World Council of Churches, it may be appropriate to use an abbreviation after the first use. For example: 'The World Council of Churches (hereafter WCC) ...'
- 4) *Quotations*: Quotations of less than four lines are usually incorporated into the text and quotation marks are used. They may be either single or double. If double, single marks should be used for any quotation within the quotation, and vice versa. When quoting four lines or more from a source, leave a blank line, then indent the quotation and use a capital letter for the first word. Do not use quotation marks and leave another line blank before resuming the text. Students should strive to copy the original source exactly, but if it is necessary to omit some of it indicate the omission by using three spaced stops (...). If it is necessary to modify the original source in any way, place the amendment in square brackets. If you wish to draw attention to a particular word or phrase in the quotation, place it in italics but then add 'emphasis mine' in square brackets at the end.
- 5) *Numbers and Dates*: Generally speaking, it is appropriate to spell out numbers which can be written in one or two words and use numerals with abbreviations (eg 100 kms). The abbreviation BCE (before the common era) and CE (common era) are now widely used instead of BC (before Christ) and AD (Anno Domini). AD usually precedes the year, while BCE, CE and BC follow it. It is not necessary to use AD or CE when it is clear that you are referring to a date in the common era. The Latin word *circa* (about) is used to indicate that a date is only approximate. It can be abbreviated to ca. or c. Centuries are usually spelled out (eg the nineteenth century, the nineteenth-century Oxford Movement) but decades are not unless it is clear which century is meant (the 1950s, the sixties). Roman numerals are used to designate biblical books (II John, I Corinthians 3).

Acknowledging Sources – Referencing

When writing essays, you must indicate the exact source of quotations, paraphrases (summaries of another person's words or ideas), facts which could be disputed and the opinions of others. Such acknowledgment is called referencing.

Plagiarism is the failure to acknowledge the sources of information which you have used in your essay. It is a very serious offence. If a student is found guilty of plagiarism the following penalties may be applied:

- No marks may be given for the particular piece of work
- A fail grade may be given for the whole unit
- A student may be excluded from further enrolment.

For further information on examples of how to acknowledge the sources you have used you should consult the document *Examples of Citations for Notes and Bibliographies Using the Chicago Style* which is available from the Adelaide Theological Library or the ACD website. This is an essential tool for the preparation of assessment exercises.