



Assessment and Academic Progression Policy

1. Context

Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin, hereinafter referred to as Trinity, is committed to ensuring that its assessment practices are robust, equitable, transparent, and inclusive, and that they support and enhance student learning.

The scope and purpose of assessment is commonly conceptualized in three ways: Assessment Of Learning; Assessment For Learning; and Assessment As Learning¹.

Thus, effective assessment systems are essential for measuring student learning for progression or certification and in upholding the integrity of academic standards and awards. Assessment also plays a key role in enhancing student learning and preparing students for life and work as a Trinity graduate.

This policy should be read in conjunction with (and is subject to) the relevant provisions of the [University Calendar](#) and [the 2010 Consolidated Statutes of Trinity College Dublin and the University of Dublin](#).

Trinity as a designated awarding body has responsibilities to assure that its linked providers have their own policies and procedures with respect to assessment and academic progression.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to articulate Trinity's commitment to assessing its students:

- using published criteria, and regulations and procedures which are applied consistently and fairly,
- using assessment methods that are valid, reliable, equitable and inclusive, and that support the attainment of a level of expertise appropriate to the intended programme and module learning outcomes, and by implication, the award standard, according to the regulations as outlined in the Calendar, or in instances where alternative arrangements approved by Council apply,

¹ Assessment Of Learning, or **summative assessment**: where the main goal is to get a "snapshot" insight into a student's performance and progression at any point in time. These assessments measure student learning for progression or certification. Examples include mid-term exams, end of term paper or report, final year project.

Assessment For Learning (**formative assessment**): where the main goal is to give students feedback in order to help them learn and improve their performance in future assessments. Examples include summarizing the main points of a lecture, drawing a concept map to represent their understanding of a topic.

Assessment As Learning (also **formative**): where the focus of assessment is on developing students' skills in assessing their own work so that they may set their own learning goals and monitor their progress towards them. Examples include self-reflection work, peer assessment against a rubric etc.



- using assessment design that drives and enhances student learning, and informs decisions concerning the learner's progression through the various stages of the programme.

3. Benefits

- 3.1 Academic standards are upheld, and the integrity of awards is assured.
- 3.2 Assessment facilitates demonstration of programme/module learning outcomes and the graduate attributes, where appropriate.
- 3.3 Assessment and progression practices are consistent and equitable.
- 3.4 Academic progression is based on the attainment of defined academic standards in accordance with College regulations.

4. Scope

This policy applies to:

- 4.1 All programmes delivered by Trinity and, as appropriate, to those programmes or part thereof, delivered collaboratively by Trinity and its partner institutions.
- 4.2 All summative and formative programme and module assessments, including examinations and assignments (e.g. *viva voce* examinations, dissertations, performances, laboratory or clinical examinations, open book assessment), undertaken by students on programmes leading to awards from the University of Dublin or Trinity College Dublin.
- 4.3 Online/in-person or blended assessment modalities.
- 4.4 Students taking micro-credentials²
- 4.5 Assessment and progression in doctoral studies are in accordance with the regulations set out in the Calendar Part III.

This policy does not apply to:

- 4.6 Students studying abroad on Trinity's approved exchange programmes (the regulations of the exchange institutions apply in these instances).
- 4.7 Programmes delivered by Trinity's linked providers.
- 4.8 Students on specific dual degree programmes whilst they are undertaking modules and assessments for Trinity's partner institution(s). The regulations and policies of the partner institution(s) apply in these circumstances, along with any bespoke arrangements outlined in the related operational framework agreement.

5. Principles

This policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- 5.1 Trinity sees the attainment of its academic standards as essential for all students wishing to obtain one of its qualifications or to progress towards doing so.

² Note that as Micro-credentials are currently not stackable, only the assessment aspects of this Policy apply to them and not the progression aspects.



- 5.2 Assessment is planned and considered as part of the overall programme/module workload
- 5.3 Students are involved as partners in learning and assessment and know how and why they are assessed.
- 5.4 Timelines for assessment submission are clearly outlined and communicated, and assessment workload considered.
- 5.5 Inclusivity underpins the design and implementation of assessment methodologies to ensure equitable access to participation in assessment activities.
- 5.6 Assessment feedback promotes and enhances a student's ability to reflect on and critically evaluate their own learning, and to assess the quality of their performance against agreed standards.
- 5.7 Timely feedback that promotes and enhances learning is an integral part of the assessment process (see Return of Feedback on Assessments Policy).
- 5.8 Students' assessed work is regarded as 'personal data' under the European General Data Protection Regulation (EU-GDPR).
- 5.9 The transfer of students' assessed work to external examiners in preparation for attendance at subject or discipline Courts of Examiners, or prior to the conduct of a viva voce is covered by the [procedure for the transfer to External Examiners of students' assessed work \(exam scripts, coursework and research theses\)](#).

6 Policy

- 6.1 Given the crucial and varied roles of assessment, effective assessment design is key to successful student learning and to upholding academic integrity. Robust [assessment design](#), and the development of assessment literacy, promotes a positive academic culture based on academic integrity principles.

Assessment design should ensure that assessment modalities and methodologies:

- are valid, reliable, equitable, and inclusive,
 - ensure academic standards are maintained,
 - are aligned with programme and module learning outcomes, and graduate attributes where applicable,
 - ensure a range of assessments across a programme, appropriate to the total credit weighting of the programme,
 - promote academic integrity and minimize opportunities for academic misconduct.
- 6.2 Trinity has safeguards in place to minimise the risk of bias and error in the marking process, such as anonymous marking, double marking, and the use of rubrics. The use of such safeguards should be specified in the relevant student programme or module handbook or assessment description.



- 6.3 Assessment methodologies, criteria and rubrics are published in order to ensure transparency and to facilitate students' understanding of the designated assessments.
- 6.4 Trinity appoints External Examiners, focused for the most part on programme years leading to an award. Their role is to ensure that academic standards are maintained, regulations followed, and to make recommendations on modes of assessment and assessment methodologies.
- 6.5 Assessment modalities and methodologies are regularly reviewed for their effectiveness, drawing on the recommendations of External Examiners and other relevant sources such as student feedback, and are renewed as necessary to adapt to evolving circumstances and requirements.
- 6.6 Extensions may be granted to students with appropriate LENS reports or where course co-ordinators accept *ad misericordiam* grounds presented by students or their tutors/postgraduate advisory service. Module coordinators and relevant staff must ensure that students with LENS reports are provided with the reasonable accommodations outlined in their report, including additional time for submission if appropriate, without further requests for documentation in support of the reasonable accommodation. Such accommodations will not compromise the academic rigor and standards of the assessment modality and methodology and will be in accordance with Trinity's regulations and relevant national legislation.
- 6.7 Requests for extension to a deadline for the submission of assessed work may be considered on substantive grounds e.g. medical or *ad misericordiam* grounds, and normally require supporting documentation. Academics are strongly encouraged to consider positively requests for extensions from students who have a Learning Educational Needs Summary (LENS) report that specifies that they require flexible assessment deadlines (see Late Submission of Assessments (Extensions) Policy). Students with LENS reports should not be required/asked to produce any additional documentation in support of an extension request if this is covered by the LENS' reports reasonable accommodation.
- 6.8 Feedback on assessments supports student learning, engagement and development, and contributes to student success. Timely feedback on assessments facilitates student learning and development, and sources of feedback can include peers (peer review/interaction activities), the student (through self-review/reflection activities), and academic and teaching staff.
- 6.9 Students will demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes and have completed all module assessment components required by their programme of study. Completion may include the submission of assignments, attendance at examinations and/or completion of placements or practicals and may include mandatory attendance at lectures/laboratory work.
- 6.10 Students will meet the academic requirements of their programme of study and satisfy the rules and regulations as set out in the Calendar (Ref. Calendar Part II, Section II, and Calendar Part III) or through alternative arrangements approved by



Council in order to progress academically. Students who do not complete required assessment components will be deemed to have not met the academic requirements of their programme of study.

- 6.11 Students will meet the attendance requirements of their programme of study as set out in the Calendar (Ref. Calendar Part II, Section II, and Calendar Part III) in order to progress.
- 6.12 Students may be asked for verification/validation of their work or submitted assignment via a *viva voce* or discussion/interactive session with their lecturer. Such verification would be intended to uphold quality assurance and to verify that students have met the learning outcomes. This is separate to an academic integrity meeting, which may subsequently be called if some form of plagiarism or fraudulent/dishonest behaviour was suspected.
- 6.13 Plagiarism, cheating, and other fraudulent or dishonest behaviour (including the unauthorized or unacknowledged use of generative Artificial Intelligence) is considered as an offence against academic integrity and is subject to the disciplinary procedures of the University. The relevant Academic Integrity determination procedures and penalties are set out in the [Academic Integrity Policy](#), the [Procedure in Cases of Suspected Academic Misconduct](#), the Calendar Parts II and III and the College Statutes.
- 6.14 The Board of the College reserves the right to exclude from the College, on the recommendation of the University Council, students whose academic progress is unsatisfactory.
- 6.15 All appeals are considered in accordance with the provisions of the University Calendar.

7 Responsibility

- 7.1 The responsibility for this policy lies with the Senior Lecturer and Dean of Undergraduate Studies; the Dean of Graduate Studies; and the Junior Dean.

8 Related Documents

- 8.1 The College [Calendar](#), Parts II and III (assessment and progression regulations)
- 8.2 The 2010 Consolidated [Statutes](#) of Trinity College Dublin and the University of Dublin
- 8.3 The guidelines on [Applying for reasonable accommodations for Students with a Disability](#)
- 8.4 [Policy and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression in Relation to Learners](#) for Providers of Further and Higher Education and Training (QQI Policy Restatement 2015)
- 8.5 [Academic Practice resources on assessment and feedback](#)
- 8.6 [External Examiners Policy – Taught Programmes](#)
- 8.7 [External Examiners Policy – Research Programmes](#)



- 8.8 [Procedure for the transfer to External Examiners of students' assessed work](#)
- 8.9 [Reasonable Accommodation Policy and Code of Practice for Students with Disabilities](#)
- 8.10 [Appeals Policy \(Academic Progress\)](#)
- 8.11 [Return of Feedback on Assessments Policy](#)
- 8.12 [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- 8.13 [Programme Handbook Policy](#)

9. Document Control

- 9.1 Approved by: University Council
 - 9.2 Date of initial approval: October 2016
 - 9.3 Date revised policy approved: 12 March 2025
 - 9.4 Date policy effective from: 29 August 2025
 - 9.5 Date of next review: Academic year 2027/28
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