

Assessment Policy and Handbook

Policy

The Melbourne Rudolf Steiner Seminar assessment policy and procedures for the course within its scope of registration ensure that all assessment is undertaken with fairness, reliability, validity and flexibility. The policy is to be used in conjunction with the **"Assessment Handbook"**

The policy ensures that:

- for each course module learning outcome the assessment and assessment tool is appropriate to the learning outcome being assessed and meets the requirements of the relevant training package;
- assessment is applied consistently by all assessors and for all participants completing the assessment task;
- evidence used to make an assessment is valid, authentic and sufficient;
- feedback is obtained from participants, assessors and trainers;
- client organisations are considered in reviewing assessment tasks.

Assessment includes all forms of assessment including RPL, workplace assessment and all approaches such as written assignments, tests, evidence portfolios, oral presentations, practical demonstrations, role plays, simulations, etc.

This policy assures that assessment conforms to the *rules of evidence* as per the 2010 AQTF Essential Standards for Registration in that it will be:

Valid: Assessment techniques actually assess what they claim to assess.

Reliable: Assessment approaches provide consistent results every time.

Fair: Ensure that same assessment is used for each learner or situation while still being flexible.

Flexible: Able to assess different ways – e.g. verbal, doing, question and answer.

Assessment tools

Assessment tools are chosen as appropriate to the range of skills and knowledge related to a specific course. They aim to ensure the integrated assessment of knowledge and practical components. Emphasis is given to the holistic assessment of a range of learning outcomes in relation to the module purpose. The national assessment principles as outlined in the AQTF guidelines are incorporated into the assessment approach of the Melbourne Rudolf Steiner Seminar Ltd.

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Assessment tools are **flexible and adjustable** to suit a specific content and needs of students.

Assessment tools are **process oriented** and emphasise independence of thinking and incorporate self evaluation and team evaluation.

Assessment Outcome- Defining Competency

Each module is assessed by the tutor who delivers the module.

Assessment is a '**Competency Based Assessment**'. This is an assessment process of collecting evidence and making judgments on whether competency has been achieved. There is no judgement of degrees of performance intended. The purpose of competency based assessment is to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard expected in the workplace, as expressed in the relevant endorsed industry or enterprise competency standards. The best way to assess is through holistic assessment tools that focus on whole work activities rather than specific tasks or components of a work activity.

Assessment is based on the criterion of competency in the majority of learning outcomes at a given time.

This statement of 'competent' or 'not yet competent' will be accompanied by the tutor's description in writing as to whether and how the assessment criteria were met.

NOTE: A student *cannot* be given an "Overall" assessment of "Competent" for any Module unless they have been assessed as 'competent' in ALL the Learning Outcomes in the assignments covering that Module. For exemptions (e.g. *special* consideration) refer to *Late Assignments* in the Assessment Handbook.

Policy on non-completion of a module:

If the student fails to complete a module of the course the following rules apply:

- If the student is unable to complete the *assessment task*, the student may apply for an exemption from this task, stating the reasons for not completing the task. An exemption from this task may be granted by the tutor upon application and subsequent consultation.
- The tutor may set an alternative *assessment task* if an exemption has been granted.
- A student can appeal against the decision of the tutor.

Requirements to Receive the Qualification

Students must have successfully completed all core modules in a course.

In addition to this the student must have returned all library books and have paid all fees.

Exit Points

The only exit point for the accredited courses of the Melbourne Rudolf Steiner Seminar Ltd is at the end of term 4. No qualifications are issued if the student leaves after term 1, 2 or 3.

However, a student leaving before at some stage during the course will be provided with a record of studies indicating which modules he/she has completed.

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Access

The Seminar will maintain up-to-date records¹ which a student may access at any time.

Appeal

A student who is dissatisfied with an assessment result may appeal the decision.

Assessment Policy and Procedure Review

The Melbourne Rudolf Steiner Seminar reviews this policy prior to the start of each new course. Feedback for this review is obtained from participants, assessors and trainers and client organisations through their annual questionnaires and is considered in reviewing assessment tasks.

The Seminar has the *Assessment Validation and Moderation Policy* as another review tool.

¹ Records will be kept for a minimum of 1 (one) year post completion of the unit and will include, on top of individual student assessment records:

- The assessment schedule for each module
- A copy of all assessment tasks set.
- Samples of student assessments indicating C (Competent) or NYC (Not yet competent)

ASSESSMENT HANDBOOK

This handbook describes the assessment procedures that reflect the Melbourne Rudolf Steiner Seminar’s Assessment Policy document.

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Assessment Tools

The following range of assessment tools is approved to meet the requirements of the courses of the Melbourne Rudolf Steiner Seminar Ltd. They represent acceptable and established practices in the education industry and among our stakeholders.

1. Written Assignment	2. Artistic Work incl. Process Diary/Sketch Book
3. Artistic Work incl. Lesson presentation in class, peer teaching	4. Performance
5. Oral Presentation	6. Observation and Recording task
7. Chart, Map, Model, Worksheet	8. Reflective Journals incl. Self evaluation
9. Project, Lesson plan, Curriculum overview	10. Planning events
11. Exercises in class	12. Tutorial discussion incl. Leading a group, reporting back to a tutor.
13. Experiments	14. Portfolio of Artistic or Craft work
15. Professional teaching experience, lesson delivery.	

Tutors must ensure that the assessment tool/s chosen is/are **appropriate** for the learning outcome/s being assessed, that they allow sufficient **flexibility** of application to meet the needs of all learners and that the **assessment task** set gathers **sufficient evidence** to allow a truthful appraisal of the students competency.²

Defining “competent” – Assessment Methods

The following statements are a **guide** to the application of the approved assessment methods.

1. Written Assignment

A written assignment topic is set that reflects a given leaning outcome.

It is marked based on the following:

- All essential content is included
- It has appropriate structure. That is it has:
 - An **Introduction** that refers to the topic and states a position
 - A **“Body”**, that develops the argument/position in logical order.
 - One main point per paragraph
 - A **Conclusion** that clearly summarises the argument and relates to the statement/s made in the Introduction.

² The “**Key Competencies**” for each Course Module are expressed as “**Learning Outcomes**” or “**Elements of Competency**” in the syllabus.

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- A list of **references and resources**
- Correct paragraphing is used
- There is clarity of expression (This includes appropriate use of punctuation, correct spelling and use of grammar, appropriate style.)
- The relevance of points made
- The appropriate use of references/resources

2. Artistic work – Process Diary/Sketch Book

Process diaries, including sketch books will be based on *focus questions* that clearly reflect learning outcomes for the module.

Assessment will be made based on the following:

- All focus questions have been fully addressed
- Entries are relevant
- Written entries are expressed clearly (This includes appropriate use of punctuation, correct spelling and use of grammar, appropriate style.)

3. Artistic Work incl. Lesson presentation in class, peer teaching

Classroom presentations will be based on *focus activities* that clearly reflect learning outcomes for the module.

The following guide, plus a comment form, will be used. These marking criteria are only provided as suggestions. Some of these *may* be irrelevant to the given topic while others may well be added.

	Comment
Degree of organisation and preparation	
Clarity of organisation	
Relevance of comments	
Initiative	
Grasp of the topic	
Clarity of presentation including speech	

4. Performance

The student is competent when they demonstrate a range of the following:

- Voice projection that is audible and makes an impact to a listener at the back of the performance space
- Speech/performance that conveys feeling and meaning
- A delivery of text and/or performance that is “alive”
- Use of mood and image that is appropriate to the text
- Engagement in the process of extending their performance skills
- An ability to cooperate with others as a part of an ensemble
- An ability to evaluate their own performance
- A willingness and ability to apply methodology to their experience
- An ability to expand beyond their current level of skill

5. Oral Presentation

As for “Performance”

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6. Observation and Recording Task

Observation recording tasks including visual recording will be based on *focus questions* that clearly reflect learning outcomes for the module.

Assessment will be made based on the following:

- All focus questions have been fully addressed
- Entries are relevant
- Written entries are expressed clearly (This includes appropriate use of punctuation, correct spelling and use of grammar, appropriate style.)

7. Chart, Map, Model, Worksheet

The following guide, plus a comment form, will be used. These marking criteria are only provided as suggestions. Some of these *may* be irrelevant to the given topic while others may well be added.

	Comment
Is it complete?	
Is it neat?	
Attention to detail	
Is it accurate?	
Does it address the criteria for the topic	

8. Reflective Journal, self evaluation

Reports or journal entries will be based on *focus questions* that clearly reflect learning outcomes for the module.

Assessment will be made based on the following:

- All focus questions have been addressed
- Entries are relevant
- Entries are expressed clearly (This includes appropriate use of punctuation, correct spelling and use of grammar, appropriate style.)

9. Project, Lesson plans, Curriculum overview

Projects, including **curriculum overviews**,

Lesson plans must include the following sections with appropriate content:

1. Rationale
2. Aim
3. Learning Outcomes
4. Teaching & Learning Strategies
5. Lesson Plan that sequences the activities of the lesson and includes appropriate timing indications. It should include:
 - Introduction
 - Tasks including questions
 - Activities
 - Assessment
 - References/resources
6. Resources
7. Cross Curricula connections

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10. Planning events

Planning events is an exercise in logistics connected to requirements for artistic rendering of the deeper meaning of the event. (I.e. a seasonal festival or a play or recital evening)
Assessment will refer to original guidelines provided to the student that clearly articulate expectations for the event. Such expectations should reflect the content of the module to which the event is related.

E.g. A play or a recital as a part of drama or singing or music can be seen as a rehearsal for organising a school or class event. A seasonal festival should derive from discussion of symbolism capable of reflecting the season and the purpose for celebrating it.

Assessment of event planning should refer to planning documents as well as to reflections on the event focussed around the question; "What worked well and could have been improved?"

11. Exercises in class

Classroom exercises will be based on *focus activities* that clearly reflect learning outcomes for the module.

The following guide, plus a comment form, will be used.

	Comment
Degree of participation	
Depth of insight	
Relevance of comments	
Initiative	

12. Tutorial discussion, leading a group, reporting back to a tutor

Tutorial discussions will be based on *focus questions* that clearly reflect learning outcomes for the module.

The following guide, plus a comment form, will be used. These marking criteria are only provided as suggestions. Some of these *may* be irrelevant to the given topic while others may well be added.

	Comment
Degree of participation	
Depth of insight	
Relevance of comments	
Initiative	
Use of references	

In addition, when a student is required to **lead a group** the following *guide*, plus a comment form, will be used;

	Comment
Degree of organisation and preparation	

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Clarity of organisation	
Relevance of comments	
Initiative	
Grasp of the topic	

Reporting back to a tutor is a method of assessment particularly used to afford a student the opportunity to address the criteria for demonstration of competency for a module in a personal interview. It may be used in a situation where a student requires *special consideration*. Should a tutor use this method for this purpose they should use the *same assessment criteria* as were set for the *original assignment for the group*.

13. Experiments

Experimental reports must include the following sections with appropriate content:

- i. Idea being tested
- ii. Equipment used
- iii. Procedure used
- iv. Results obtained
- v. Observations
- vi. Discussion
- vii. Conclusion

14. Portfolio of art or craft work

The following guide, plus a comment form, will be used. These marking criteria are only provided as suggestions. Some of these *may* be irrelevant to the given topic while others may well be added.

	Comment
Is it complete?	
Degree of participation in the classes.	
Attention to detail	
Does it address the criteria for the topic	

15. Professional teaching experiences, lesson delivery

As per the Seminar's *School's Practicum Handbook*

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Lesson Planning

Tutors are required to write up **lesson plans** for their module. These plans must:

- highlight the content as per the syllabus

- list details of the assignments including:
 - the assessment tools and criteria;
 - state the learning outcomes as per the syllabus; and
 - the due date(s)

Plagiarism and Cheating

It is important to remind students that using another person's work without acknowledgment is a form of cheating, formally called plagiarism. To avoid this whenever they use another person's statements or ideas they should *always* cite the reference source.

Late Assignments

Students can apply for an extension with good reasons **prior to the due date** of the assignment. The application should be made directly to the tutor on a *Special Consideration Form* available from the office.

The Seminar reserves the right to determine what it considers to be reasonable grounds for an extension.

Extensions for assignments cannot be granted in the first case beyond the end of January following the year of study. In this case, corrected assignments should be returned by the Tutor to the office no later than the end of February.

A student who has not completed work by the end of the extension date must make a new application for added extension to the Seminar in order to complete any unfinished part of the course. It is the student's responsibility to submit assignment by agreed date or to reapply for a further extension.

Appeal

A student who is dissatisfied with an assessment result may appeal the decision.

To appeal, the following steps occur:

- The student notifies the Seminar using the *Assessment Appeal Form* available at the office within 21 days of receiving the result.
- The two parties negotiate a re-assessment.

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- The tutor in consultation with the coordinator provides a written statement of the outcome of the reassessment within 14 days.
- If the student is still dissatisfied, he/she may seek arbitration by a third party or panel acceptable to the parties to the appeal.
- If the appeal is still unresolved, the student will be advised of external organizations that may be able to assist.

Assessment Procedure Flow Chart

- a. Tutors are provided with information from the course syllabus regarding their Module. This includes:
 - i. *Learning Outcomes* – these **cannot** be altered.
 - ii. *Assessment tasks* and *Assessment Criteria* – there is some flexibility to adjust these.
 - iii. *The Assessment Task Record Sheet (discussed at point (h) below)*
- b. Setting the assessment task
 - i. *Learning Outcomes* – these are prescribed in the approved course syllabus and cannot be altered.
 - ii. *Assessment task choice*

The *learning outcomes* listed in the Module descriptor **cannot** be altered. Tutors may choose to use the *assessment task* and *assessment criteria* as they are offered in the module outline. If tutors feel that a **different** task from that outlined in the syllabus should be used to assess the learning outcome, they may alter the task accordingly, providing that the method is one of the 15 methods given in the *Assessment Handbook*. For example, the syllabus may suggest a 1000 word essay to assess a learning outcome but a tutor may believe that a class presentation is more appropriate.
 - iii. *Assessment criteria choice*

The assessment criteria clearly state how tutors are going to assess the student as being competent in the given learning outcome. It is essential that the students are given the assessment criteria at the same time that they are given the *assessment task* and its due date. As with *assessment task*, there is some flexibility to alter the *Assessment Criteria*. If the *Assessment Criteria* are altered they need to clearly indicate HOW they will assess competence in the relevant *Learning Outcome*
- c. Tutors must provide the Administrative Officer with copies of:
 - i. All resources used
 - ii. All assessment tasks set
- d. At the start of the module the tutor will outline the module and distribute to the students the *learning outcomes*, the *assessment criteria* and the *assessment tasks*.
- e. At the appropriate time students are provided with details of the *assessment task(s)*. This will include the *learning outcome* it is assessing, the corresponding *assessment criteria*, and the *due date (s)*.
- f. The students submit their work with an *Assignment Cover Sheet* into an assignment box in the front office.
- g. Receipt of the submitted assignments will be recorded by the Office Manager prior to being distributed to the tutor for correction.

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- h. **Special Consideration:** Students may apply for an extension with good reasons **prior to the due date** of the assignment
- i. The application should be made *through* the office to the tutor on a *Special Consideration Form* available from the office. The Office Manager will record the receipt of the request prior to forwarding them to the relevant tutor
 - ii. The tutor assesses the request (Seminar reserves the right to determine what it considers to be reasonable grounds for an extension.)
 - iii. The tutor returns the *Special Consideration* form to the Office manager who records the outcome and passes it onto the student
 - iv. A student who has not completed work by the end of the extension date must make a new application for added extension to the tutor. A *third application* for an extension must be directed to the Coordinator.
- i. The tutor assesses the task and records the results on the *Assessment Task Record Sheet*. Feedback to students on their assignment can be made on the *Assignment Cover Sheet*.
- j. Tutors return all completed work to the Office Manager who record its receipt and hold it for student collection. **PLEASE NOTE:** The *three samples* of student work representative of the range of quality including workplace/flying logs or workbooks, together with results and where relevant, an example of a *Not Yet Competent* (NYC) assessment for each discrete assessment task need to be identified by the tutor to the Office Manager who will then copy each of these to be filed for auditing purposes, prior to returning the originals to the students. (See *Retention of documentation* below)
- k. Tutors submit the completed student *Assessment Task Record Sheet* to the Administrative Officer when the **bulk** of assessments have been completed and recorded. **PLEASE NOTE:** It is the Tutor's responsibility to follow up on incomplete work (through the *Special Consideration* process) and to communicate the results of this to the Administrative Officer.
- l. The Administrative Officer records individual student's results on the *Master Assessment Spreadsheet*, and then the record sheet is filed by module. The *Master Assessment Spreadsheet* is used to monitor academic progress, and importantly, to generate the final Certificate.
- m. **Retention of documentation:**
- i. The following will be kept for a period of **30 years**:
 - *Outcomes at unit of competency or module level and qualification level and*
 - *Statements of attainment and qualifications issued.*
 - ii. The following shall be kept for a period of **1 year**:
 - Copies of all assessment tasks, including tests, assignment, role plays, projects and including the assessment schedule for that unit
 - A copy of any workplace/flying log or workbook used by students to provide evidence of competency including a copy of at least one a sample completed workbook
 - The *three samples* of student work representative of the range of quality including workplace/flying logs or workbooks, together with results and where relevant, an example of a *Not Yet Competent* (NYC) assessment for each discrete assessment task.