

Policies and Procedures

Policy Title	Assessment Policy	Policy Number	435
Section	Academic Affairs	Approval Date	26 October 2022
Subsection	Instruction & Curriculum	Authorizing Entity	Board of Trustees
Responsible Office	Assessment and Grade Approval Committee	Effective Date	26 October 2022
Distributed To	Provost Office, IRA Office, faculty	Next Review Date	2 years after the effective date

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This document is to be used as a policy to provide guidance for faculty on the design, conduct, marking, verification, and moderation of formative and summative assessments as well as provision of feedback to students, release of grades and security of storage across all courses and programs offered by the American University of Bahrain (AUBH).

2.0 DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 Assessor: The faculty member who designs, implements, and marks the examination.
- 2.2 Course: A course is the smallest unit of learning within a program.
- 2.3 Learning Outcomes: The knowledge, skills and competencies that a student can demonstrate as having achieved at the end of a course or program.
- 2.4 Moderation: The process through which a major assessment or an examination is evaluated in terms of the course specifications and intended learning outcomes by a person who is not the assessor. Moderation is undertaken before administering the assessment as well as following the assessment administration.
- 2.5 Pre-assessment moderation: The process through which the internal moderator reviews and evaluates that the assessment tool is appropriate in terms of the course specification with respect to level and the intended learning outcomes.
- 2.6 Post-assessment moderation and verification: The process through which the internal moderator reviews and evaluates the assessment of the examination scripts/student work against the marking rubric to ensure the consistency and fairness of the implementation of the rubric. The process will also include scrutinizing the examination scripts in order to ensure completeness of marking, grades and that marks are captured correctly on the digital database.
- 2.7 Program: A program comprises several courses which, when taken together, enables the students to acquire the knowledge, skills and competencies to achieve the program intended learning outcomes and thus qualification.
- 2.8 Rubric: The criteria for assessing students' performance and/or allocating marks in an assessment.

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3.1 Assessment Design

The following principles are applicable to all courses taught at AUBH:

- a. AUBH adopts an outcome-based curriculum design; hence, assessments should ensure that students can develop the aptitudes for all the intended Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs). On each course syllabus, students must demonstrate a designated level of achievement on all CLOs in order to obtain credit for the course. At AUBH, this level is 60% as per the University Catalog and also the Student Handbook.
- b. Faculty should adopt a continuous assessment strategy for their courses, giving students multiple opportunities to measure their achievement and progress throughout the semester. Assessment tasks may assess more than one CLO, and each CLO should be evaluated at least twice during the course.
- c. Course assessments should comprise both formative and summative assessments, where formative assessment refers to assessment tools that monitor student learning and provide ongoing feedback to both students and the faculty on the level of achievement and what students need to do in order to improve further. These also enable the faculty to identify what students are struggling with and address these problems. Formative assessments generally have low or no accumulative marks assigned to them. Summative assessment refers to assessment tools used to evaluate students' knowledge, skills, and competencies against the CLOs. These normally contribute heavily towards the accumulative marks achieved by the students.
- d. Course assessments are also utilized to directly assess the achievement of Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), especially in upper-level courses using KPIs and performance rubrics. It is expected that at least 70% of the students will show proficiency level in achieving the desired KPI.
- e. Students should be provided with timely and sufficiently detailed feedback on their performance during the semester. The mechanism and turn-around time for providing feedback is specified in the course syllabus shared with students at the beginning of the semester.
- f. As much as possible, assessment methods should provide students with an authentic opportunity to demonstrate the achievement of the CLOs/PLOs. For example, in order to demonstrate acquisition of a skill, the assessment method of choice would be a demonstration of that skill and not a multiple-choice question; however, it may not always be so simple.
- g. Assessment methods should be reliable and give the same result if repeated under the same conditions: for example, two instructors are expected to award the same grade for any one assignment of a student. This could be achieved through the use of rubrics.
- h. When designing a scheme of assessment, the aims and objectives of the course as well as the purpose of the assessment should be considered if it is to be effective. The choice of assessment task is also influenced by several important factors including but not limited to (1) appropriate and proportionate CLO/PLO-Assessment (2) Linkage and Weightage of the Course (3) benchmarks (4) Subject and discipline (5) professional frameworks where appropriate. Assessment methods are designed in a way that provides all students an equal opportunity to

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demonstrate their level of CLO/PLO achievement. Special adjustments to accommodate particle student's needs can only be made subject to the relevant institutional procedure.

- i. The assessment methods (e.g., course work and exams) and their respective weighting (so called 'components of assessment') are described in the course syllabus and should be designed accordingly. Each course should have at least one (1) major assessment that weighs at least 20% of the total grade. No single assessment task should weigh more than 40% of the final grade for the course.
- j. The assessment workload assigned to students should be relevant to the level and length of the course. The table below offers general guidelines for three-credit courses.

3.2 Transparency of assessment

- a. At the beginning of the semester, students should be given a clear schedule of course assessments together with information on the topics and CLOs/PLOs covered by each task and the evaluation criteria and guidelines used in the course.
- b. During the semester, students should be given enough notice of these assessment criteria before submitting their work. All summative assessments that contribute to the final course mark must be described in the course syllabus to students. Weightings of different elements, word limits, and lengths of examinations are also expected to be specified. Preferably, students will be informed about the overall structure of the final exam, project, or paper in advance (i.e., number of sections and type of questions).
- c. Where an assessment involves group work or peer reviews, the method of determining an individual student's mark should be clearly indicated.
- d. To ensure transparency of assessment, AUBH also requires that the criteria against which pieces of work are assessed (e.g., tests, quizzes, assignments, etc.) are clearly documented (in the form of marking criteria or marking rubrics; and model answers should be provided where appropriate) and these should be available to students concerned as well pre-and post-assessment moderation, and to the external examiners.

3.3 Major assessments and examinations

- a. Major assessments and examinations are designed to enable students to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the CLOs/PLOs.
- b. The complete assessment/ examination cycle from planning to results is well regulated to ensure the integrity of the process.
- c. A variety of assessment strategies are used to evaluate student achievement in each course so that different aspects of student learning and competency are measured. These are in accordance with pre-determined criteria. While the overall assessment score for any course is 100, the weighting assigned to course examinations varies from subject to subject as published in the course syllabus.
- d. Arrangements are made for students who have a valid and documented reason for missing an examination or a major assessment deadline to take the examination or submit the major assessment.
- e. The assessment/ examination rubric including grading criteria is transparent and valid.

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- f. Students have the right to appeal, as per the Student Handbook.
- g. All major assessments/examinations are subject to internal pre- and post- assessment moderation. External moderation will be used when required by the Assessment and Grade Approval Committee.
- h. Moderators are appointed based on their experience and expertise in the course being examined/assessed and assigned by Program Leads/Department Chairs.
- i. Moderators are appointed at the beginning of each academic year, for a one-year cycle per course.
- j. During the post-assessment moderation process, major examinations marks are verified to ensure that grades have been calculated accurately and recorded correctly.
- k. The Assessment and Grade Approval Committee considers the results of the students and approve all final grades as per the Terms of Reference (ToR) and analyze them to inform decision-making.
- l. The integrity of assessment/ examination records is assured through a robust secure digital system in which there is a hierarchy of privileges.
- m. Major assessments/examinations are monitored and evaluated as part of AUBH's internal quality assurance system.
- n. The Proctoring Handbook outlines the procedure and protocols for on-campus and online invigilation.

3.4 Academic dishonesty

- a. AUBH has zero tolerance policy towards acts of cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty such as fabrication, collusion and ghost writing.
- b. Each student is responsible for knowing the limits of assistance allowed. However, each student should assume that any form of assistance is dishonest unless expressly permitted by the faculty member in the course syllabus, written assignment instructions, or test instructions. It is the responsibility of individual faculty members and/or academic programs to determine and articulate any additional expectations of academic integrity within a given program or course.
- c. Faculty members are obliged to report all academic violations (including those determined to be caused by carelessness) to the Academic Integrity Committee (AIC) and the Dean of Students.
- d. If the AIC determines that an instance of academic dishonesty has occurred, the AIC report will be forwarded to the Dean of Students and a Dean's Hold is imposed on a student file preventing the student from further registration and placing a student on immediate suspension pending appeal or mediation.

3.5 Final grade award

Final grades must be cross-referenced to the total marks earned by a student and the definition of the letter grades awarded to students are as follows:

Letter Grade	Definition	Grade Points	Percentage Grade
A	Excellent	4.0	94 and above
A-	Very Good	3.75	90-93
B+	Very Good	3.5	87-89

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B	Good	3.0	83-86
B-	Good	2.75	80-82
C+	Satisfactory	2.5	77-79
C	Satisfactory	2.0	73-76
C-	Below Average	1.75	70-72
D+	Below Average	1.3	67-69
D	Poor	1.0	60-66
F	Failure	0	Below 60
I	Incomplete	0	-
W	Withdrawal	0	-
P	Pass	0	-
AU	Audit	0	-

3.6 Custodial Standards and Security of Assessment Records

Electronic records of all assessments (respective of whether the assessment is qualified as major or minor) are maintained and secured within the University's LMS. The regulations for data entry, extraction and security of records in LMS are described in the IT System Guideline. Final grades are entered by the course instructor after the completion of the post-assessment moderation process and the approval of the Assessment and Grade Approval Committee as per Registrar's instructions. Grades of other assessments are entered within two weeks after the administration of the test or the receipt of the project or assignment from the student or on the prescribed date for entry of the final grade, whichever deadline comes sooner.

4.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS AND REFERENCES

- 4.1 Academic Integrity Committee's Terms of Reference
- 4.2 Assessment and Grade Approval Committee Terms of Reference
- 4.3 AUBH Assessment Manual
- 4.4 Examination Protocols and Procedures
- 4.5 Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement Framework
- 4.6 Students Handbook

POLICY HISTORY

Date of Last Action	Action Taken/Changes	Authorizing Entity	Effective Date