

**UNIVERSITIES OF NEW ENGLAND AND NEWCASTLE
JOINT MEDICAL PROGRAM
Essential Criteria in Course/ Unit Assessment Policy**

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Related Documents:	UoN Essential Criteria in Course Assessment - Policy 000648

1. Application

- 1.1 This policy applies to all MEDI Course/Units offered by the Schools of Medicine and Public Health (University of Newcastle (UoN)) and Rural Medicine (University of New England (UNE)) in the delivery of the Bachelor of Medicine – Joint Medical Program (BMed – JMP).
- 1.2 Assessment policies for elective (non-MEDI) Course/Units undertaken by BMed – JMP students will be in accordance with the following:
- a) at UoN
 - i. Course Outlines – Policy 000587
 - ii. Rules Governing Administration of Assessment Items – Policy 000113
 - iii. Special Circumstances Affecting Assessment Items - Procedure 000641
 - iv. Appeal Against a Final Result – Procedure 000261
 - v. Remarks and Moderations – Procedure 000769
 - vi. Essential Criteria in Course Assessment - Policy 000648
 - vii. Rules Governing the Administration of Assessment Items – Rule 000113
 - b) at UNE
 - i. General Rules
 - ii. Assessment Policy
 - iii. Special Assessment Policy
 - iv. Student Appeal policy

2. Introduction

The *BMed - JMP Rules for the Administration of Assessment Items* detail provisions regarding assessment procedures and responsibilities across the Universities of Newcastle and New England. Consistent with that Rule, this Policy outlines the principles that dictate what should constitute essential criteria in Bachelor of Medicine assessment. It should be read in conjunction with the *BMed – JMP Rules for Administration of Assessment Items*.

3. Policy Intent

To provide the principles that should shape the choice and use of essential criteria in Bachelor of Medicine assessment.

4. Interpretation

In the context of this policy:

course at UoN means any part of a program for which a result may be recorded;

Dean means the Dean of Medicine – Joint Medical Program¹.

¹ The Bachelor of Medicine program is delivered as a Joint Medical Program (JMP) by the Universities of Newcastle and New England. Management of the program is vested in the JMP Governance Committee as approved by each University.

essential criteria² mean compulsory components or assessment items within a course/ unit that must be satisfactorily completed in order for a student to receive a pass mark or better for that course/unit;

Head of the School means the Head of the School of Medicine and Public Health at UoN and/or the Head of the School of Rural Medicine at UNE who is/are responsible for delivery of JMP Committee-approved MEDI Course/Units;

JMP Committee means the joint UoN / UNE committee responsible for the planning, implementation and management of the JMP including curriculum, assessment and standards. The Committee is chaired by the Dean of Medicine – JMP;

Joint Medical Program (JMP) means the delivery of the Bachelor of Medicine by UoN and UNE in partnership;

participation means individual contribution to class activities and/or discussions;

Pro Vice-Chancellor means the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the Faculty of Health (UoN) and the Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean of the Faculty of the Professions (UNE);

UoN means the University of Newcastle;

Unit at UNE means any part of a course for which a result may be recorded;

UNE means the University of New England.

5. Policy

5.1 Types and Use of Essential Criteria

- 5.1.1 Essential Criteria can:
- i. form part of the assessment requirements for a course/unit; for example, students may be required to achieve a specified level in all or in identified assessment items;
 - ii. be additional to the assessed work; for example students may be required to:
 - a) complete a particular component such as attendance and participation; or
 - b) undertake a placement requirement.
- 5.1.2 Essential Criteria should not normally cause the total work required of the student for the course/unit to exceed that specified in the Universities' policies on student workload.
- 5.1.3 Where it is determined that specific, unmarked/ungraded essential criteria must be met in order to pass a course/unit, these will:
- i. be specifically linked to course/unit objectives;
 - ii. have appropriate justification to ensure that a passing grade cannot be achieved without them;
 - iii. be more than procedural statements, for example, attendance should not be an essential criteria requirement unless it is demonstrated that work cannot be completed or judged against marking criteria unless the student attends particular scheduled activities.
- 5.1.4 Where essential criteria are proposed for a course/unit, the proposal³ should:
- i. clearly state the nature of the essential criteria in the assessment field;
 - ii. demonstrate the relationship between the objectives of the course/unit and the essential criteria requirement;
 - iii. detail the means by which the essential criteria will be assessed as having been satisfactorily completed; and
 - iv. detail opportunities, if any, for students to complete the essential criteria if unsuccessful in only this component of the course/unit (including provisions for

The Chair of the JMP Committee is responsible to the JMP Governance Committee and the Universities, for academic management of the program. In the first instance, for a period of five years (2008 – 2012), this will be the Dean of Medicine at Newcastle.

² Also known as 'hurdle requirements' or 'criteria fail'.

³ At UoN proposals are lodged through the Course Tracking System (CTS)

cases where Consideration is granted) or, if this is not possible, provide a rationale for why it is not possible.

- 5.1.5 In considering proposals for the use of essential criteria in a course/unit, Heads of School, Dean, JMP Committee, Faculty Teaching and Learning Committees and Pro Vice-Chancellors will:
- i. consider the equity, diversity and disability policies of the Universities in relation to the type of essential criteria; and
 - ii. ensure that the equitable application of the essential criteria across all delivery sites has been demonstrated.
- 5.1.6 Where essential criteria are approved for a course/unit the essential criteria must be entered into online Course/Unit Information, the Course/Unit Outline and at UoN, in the CTS;
- 5.1.7 The Course/Unit Outline will include:
- i. specific details of the essential criteria requirements;
 - ii. the rationale for their inclusion;
 - iii. the means by which they will be assessed as having met the requirements; and
 - iv. provision for feedback as to progress in relation to the essential criteria at least once prior to the end of the teaching semester.

5.2 Class Attendance and Participation

Attendance

- 5.2.1 **Marks may not be awarded for attendance alone.**
- 5.2.2 Where attendance is identified as an essential component in the assessment of a course/unit, attendance will be recorded but no marks will be assigned. Attendance will be an ungraded essential criterion.
- 5.2.3 Where attendance is an ungraded essential component of a course/unit, the following process must be followed:
- i. attendance records must be maintained for all sessions included in the assessment, for example, tutorials, seminars, workshops etc;
 - ii. the attendance record must be retained⁴ as it may be required in the case of an Appeal Against a Final Result;
 - iii. students must be made aware that attendance records are being kept, and should be advised of:
 - a) the purpose of the records and
 - b) the means by which they are being kept, for example, in the case of a Blackboard discussion site, the use of the site backup as a record of student participation.
- 5.2.4 Attendance *with* participation may be assessed as outlined under Participation.

Participation

- 5.2.5 The criteria by which active participation will be assessed is to be included in the Assessment field in the Course/Unit Outline.
- 5.2.6 Where participation⁵ is to be assessed as essential criterion, the following process must be followed:
- i. attendance and participation records must be maintained for all sessions included in the assessment, for example, tutorials, seminars, workshops, etc.
 - ii. the attendance and participation record should be retained⁶ as it may be required in the case of an Appeal Against a Final Result.
 - iii. students should be made aware that attendance and participation records are being kept, and should be advised of:
 - a) the purpose of the records and

⁴ At UoN with the Course Assessment Return

⁵ Course/Unit Coordinators may wish to specify criteria around a statement such as “you will be assessed on the regularity of contribution, level of preparation demonstrated, and quality of response to assigned texts and to the broader discussion”. This form of assessment may require the development of mechanisms for the monitoring of student discussion on Blackboard.

⁶ At UoN with the Course Assessment Return

b) the means by which they are being kept, for example, in the case of a Blackboard discussion site, the use of the site backup as a record of student participation.

5.3 Awarding of Fail Grades

- 5.3.1 Where essential criteria for a course/unit have been approved and a student has failed to meet the essential criteria requirements, the Course/Unit Coordinator must recommend a fail grade to the School Assessment body unless an application for Special Consideration has been received.
- 5.3.2 Where a student has achieved overall marks greater than 50% but has had a fail grade recommended due to failure to complete an essential criterion, a zero mark will be recorded on the transcript of academic record along with the fail grade.