

**UNIVERSITIES OF NEW ENGLAND AND NEWCASTLE
JOINT MEDICAL PROGRAM
School Assessment Responsibilities – Guidelines**

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Related Documents:	These Guidelines pertain to the School of Medicine and Public Health at UoN and the School of Rural Medicine at UNE. At UoN they replace the School Assessment Body Responsibilities – Guideline 000771 in relation to the delivery of the BMed – Joint Medical Program.

1. CONTEXT

- 1.1 a) The Bachelor of Medicine program is delivered as a Joint Medical Program (JMP) by the Universities of Newcastle and New England. The JMP Governance Committee is the peak coordinating body for the Joint Medical Program.
- b) The JMP Committee reports to the Governance Committee and is responsible for planning, implementation and management of the JMP. In the first instance, for a period of five years (2008 – 2012), the Chair of the JMP Committee will be the Dean of Medicine at Newcastle.
- 1.2 These guidelines support the *BMed – JMP Rules Governing the Administration of Assessment Items* and also:
- a) at UoN, the Code of Ethical Academic Conduct;
- b) at UNE, the Code of Conduct; and
- should be read in conjunction with those documents.

2. DEFINITIONS

In the context of this document:

BMed – JMP means the Bachelor of Medicine – Joint Medical Program offered in partnership;

BMed – JMP Year Assessment Committee means the five committees (one for each year of the BMed) responsible for recommending final grades to the Heads of School and for reviewing the assessment of courses / units in accordance with the Universities' quality assurance principles.

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

course at UNE means the program of study approved by the Academic Board that leads to the award of Bachelor of Medicine;

Dean means the Dean of Medicine – Joint Medical Program¹.

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;

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.

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.

JMP Assessment Committee means the joint UoN / UNE committee responsible for overseeing the development, implementation and quality assurance of JMP assessment;

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;

Pro Vice Chancellor – means the Pro Vice Chancellor, Faculty of Health at UoN, and/or the Pro Vice Chancellor and Dean – Faculty of the Professions, UNE;

School means the School of Medicine and Public Health at the University of Newcastle and/or the School of Rural Medicine at the University of New England;

UoN means the University of Newcastle;

UNE means the University of New England.

unit at UoN refers to the proportional amount of academic credit allotted to a course and is used to:

- (a) define the requirements for an award of the University;
- (b) indicate a student's enrolment load.

unit at UNE means any part of a course for which a result may be recorded.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 A joint UoN-UNE BMed Year Assessment Committee will be established for each year of the BMed program, that is for each of Years 1 to 5;
- 3.2 The BMed Year Assessment Committees are responsible for making recommendations to the relevant Head of School for the approval of final grades as well as reviewing the assessment of a course (UoN) / unit (UNE) in accordance with each University's quality assurance principles.

4. MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE

- 4.1 The membership of the BMed Year Assessment Committees may be varied by the JMP Committee.
- 4.2 Each BMed Year Assessment Committee shall include:
 - i. Two academic staff representatives from each School who are external to the specific year of the program, one of whom shall act as Chair;
 - ii. The BMed Program Convenors from both UoN and UNE or their nominated representative(s);
 - (i) The Year Chairs
 - (ii) The Course/Unit Coordinators
- 4.3 Others present, including relevant BMed Year Managers and the JMP Assessment Development Officer, have rights of audience and debate but are not voting members.
- 4.4 Any member of the BMed Year Assessment Committee should absent him or herself from the meeting for the duration of any discussion where the assessment of a student with whom the member has a perceived conflict of interest, is being considered.

5. QUORUM

- 5.1 The quorum will be one half plus one of the membership of the BMed Year Assessment Committee.
- 5.2 When a BMed Year Assessment Committee is inquorate, the meeting must be rescheduled and no business should be transacted. In such cases, the Dean of Medicine - JMP may appoint an additional academic staff member, on the recommendation of the relevant Head of School, to supplement the membership of the BMed Year Assessment Committee for that meeting.

6. MEETINGS

- 6.1 The BMed Year Assessment Committee will meet when required to undertake its responsibilities in relation to assessment, as soon as practicable after the end of the formal examination period of each term, or as called by the Chair or by a majority of the members.

7. RECORDS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

- 7.1 The BMed Year Managers are responsible for ensuring the:
- a) de-identification of UoN and UNE students in relation to both university of enrolment as well as individual recognition, to ensure confidentiality and lack of bias; and
 - b) re-identification of students for processing of recommended grades and Head of School sign-off.
- 7.2 The BMed Year Manager shall keep a record of the BMed Year Assessment Committee recommendations in the form of a report (or minutes) to the Head of School and these must be retained as an official record for review in case of an appeal against a final result. The report (or minutes) shall contain:
- 7.2.1 the recommendations on final grades;
 - 7.2.2 the reasons for any variations between the results/grades recommended by the Course/unit Coordinator and those recommended by the BMed Year Assessment Committee;
 - 7.2.3 details of any referrals to Course/units Coordinators or Heads of School and if possible the outcomes of such referrals;
 - 7.2.4 details of the way the BMed Year Assessment Committee addressed any applications received under the *BMed – JMP Special Circumstances Affecting Assessment Items Procedure*; and
 - 7.2.5 any delegations that may have been granted during its considerations.
- 7.3 Where possible, the BMed Year Assessment Committee should reach consensus on all decisions regarding students' grades and pass standards. If consensus cannot be reached, a ballot should be undertaken and all members should indicate the result or grade they consider appropriate. The outcome of that ballot will be that agreed by the majority and must be recorded in the minutes.
- 7.4 Any disagreements will be referred to the Dean of Medicine – JMP in the first instance. If agreement cannot be reached, the matter may be resolved through the JMP Dispute Resolution Agreement (Supplementary Agreement to the Memorandum of Agreement for the establishment and operation of the JMP).
- 7.5 The BMed Year Assessment Committee shall treat its proceedings as confidential.

8. PROCEDURES**8.1 Material to be presented to the BMed Year Assessment Committee.**

- 8.1.1 The BMed Year Manager must ensure that results are correctly recorded against the appropriate student and shall supply the BMed Year Assessment Committee with summary documentation which includes the following prescribed components:
- a) breakdown of the distribution of grades for the course/unit for the current and last three offerings of a course (if available);
 - b) de-identified results and weightings across each of the assessment components
 - c) the course/unit outline as given to students in the first two weeks of term;
 - d) assessment items used to assess students during the course/unit;
 - e) a list of students who have submitted applications under the *BMed – JMP Special Circumstance Affecting Assessment Items Procedure*.
- 8.1.2 Following finalization of grades, the Year Manager will provide a report that re-identifies students for the purposes of sign-off by the relevant Head of School and identifying trends that may be University-specific.
- 8.1.3
- a) The Course (UoN) / Unit (UNE) Coordinators for each BMed – JMP course/unit being reviewed at the meeting are required to present, in writing, a brief summary of the delivery of the course/unit at each campus and a joint whole-of-cohort report to the Committee which identifies issues for consideration and makes recommendations regarding the PASS standard.
 - b) The recommendations will include:

- details of any scaling procedures or any moderations undertaken, and a rationale for their use; and
- an assurance that the assessment components and their weightings accurately reflect the information made available to the students through the course/unit outline.

8.2 Responsibilities of BMed Year Assessment Committee

- 8.2.1 Before reviewing any results, the BMed Year Assessment Committee will:
- i. confirm that where possible each section of the written exam has been marked by a nominated marker or that an alternative mechanism for ensuring consistency has been adopted;
 - ii. consider applications made under the provisions of the *BMed – JMP Special Circumstances Affecting Assessment Items Procedure*, and ensure that they are addressed in compliance with the Procedure.

- 8.2.2 The BMed Year Assessment Committee will review the summary of marks for each course/unit for which it is responsible and may examine the assessment components for their:

- quality;
- compliance with the published requirements; and
- relationship to the course/unit objectives

The BMed Year Assessment Committee should report any concerns to the Heads of School.

- 8.2.3 The BMed Year Assessment Committee will examine whether the pattern of results within a course/unit is consistent with other courses/units it considers.

9. REFERRALS AND DELEGATIONS

- 9.1 Where a matter is referred to another person for clarification or resolution, the matter would normally be dealt with within the timeframe of the BMed Year Assessment Committee's meeting. However, if this is not possible, the matters may be dealt with by the Chair of the BMed Year Assessment Committee and a recommendation made to the relevant Head of School.
- 9.2 If any matter which cannot be dealt with during the timeframe of the BMed Year Assessment Committee's meeting has implications for other students, or the results of other students (for example when a moderation has been requested), the BMed Year Assessment Committee must reconvene to make a recommendation to the Head(s) of School.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS ON FINAL RESULTS OR GRADES

- 10.1 The BMed Year Assessment Committee shall:
- 10.1.1 normally accept the recommendations of the Course/Unit Coordinators;
 - 10.1.2 ensure compliance with the Universities' policies and approved course/ unit outlines;
 - 10.1.3 ensure that there are no errors of accuracy;
 - 10.1.4 receive confirmation from the Course/Unit Coordinator that there is no requirement for a Supplementary Assessment.
- 10.2 Where the BMed Year Assessment Committee has concerns about the recommendations, especially the pattern of results, it may request one or more of the following:
- 10.2.1 clarification from the Course / Unit Coordinator;
 - 10.2.2 a moderation of the results assigned to all students or to a group of students for a particular major assessment item or the final results and grades;
 - 10.2.3 details of any inaccuracies or anomalies between the recorded final result or grade and those recommended to the BMed Year Assessment Committee, together with any reasons for the differences.

11. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

- 11.1 When the BMed Year Assessment Committee has finalised its recommendations on each course/unit, the Chair of the BMed Year Assessment Committee will present the recommendations to the Heads of School for approval.

- 11.2 The Heads of School must approve the final grades for all courses / unit within their School.
- 11.3 Once approved by the Heads of School:
- 11.3.1 final grades will be posted in the student administration systems, NUSTAR (UoN) and Callista (UNE), for official publication;
 - 11.3.2 Year Managers will liaise with Examinations staff regarding courses/units which do not have posted final grades prior to official publication date.

12. APPROVAL FOR CHANGES TO FINAL RESULTS AND GRADES

- 12.1 After the official publication date, changes to final results and grades are only possible by way of a *BMed – JMP Amendment to Result Form* or under the provisions of the *BMed – JMP Appeal Against Final Result Procedure*.
- 12.2 In each case, the relevant Head of School will provide written documentation supporting the recommendation to the Dean of Medicine - JMP.
- 12.3 Changes to final results and grades within six months of the fully graded date must be approved by the Dean of Medicine – JMP on the recommendation of the Head of School.
- 12.4 Changes to final results and grades more than six months but less than two years after the fully graded date must be approved by the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor on the recommendation of the Dean of Medicine – JMP.
- 12.5 Changes to final results and grades more than two years after the fully graded date will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and must be approved by the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) on the recommendation of the Dean of Medicine - JMP.

13. QUALITY ASSURANCE CYCLE

- 13.1 Following the publication of final results, the Year Manager will provide the JMP Assessment Committee and Dean of Medicine – JMP with the following:
- 13.1.1 a summary of results for each course/unit by cohort;
 - 13.1.2 a comparison of the distribution of results with the distributions for the previous three offerings (if available).
- 13.2 If the Dean of Medicine – JMP or the JMP Assessment Committee have concerns about the course/unit outcomes, the Heads of School and Course/Unit Coordinators will be consulted and, where necessary, required to adopt strategies for improvement.
- 13.3 Where there are significant improvements or trends identified, these will be reported by the Dean to the JMP Committee. At UoN this report will also be provided to the Pro Vice-Chancellor Faculty of Health who is required to report annually to the Faculty Board Health and the Academic Senate on course outcomes in accordance with the UoN Quality Assurance Cycle.

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