JMP - Group, Self and Peer Assessment Policy

Section 1 - Content

(1) This policy applies to all MEDI Course/Units offered by the School of Medicine and Public Health (University of Newcastle (UON)) and School of Rural Medicine (University of New England (UNE)) in the delivery of the Joint Medical Program (JMP).

(2) Assessment rules for elective (non-MEDI) Course/Units undertaken by JMP students will be in accordance with the policy information provided in the Course/Unit outline of the relevant elective Course/Unit.

Section 2 - Definitions

(3) In the context of this document:

a. Australian Medical Council (AMC) means the national organisation responsible for the establishment of medical program standards and accreditation assessment on behalf of the Medical Board of Australia;

b. course at UON means any part of a program for which a result may be recorded;

c. essential criteria means 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;

d. Group learning means learning contexts where two or more students are required to work on Course/Unit content elements together to facilitate each other's learning;

e. Head of School means the Head of School of Medicine and Public Health at UON and/or the Head of School of Rural Medicine at UNE who is/are responsible for the delivery of approved MEDI Course/Units;

f. JMP Teaching and Learning Committee means the joint UON/UNE committee responsible for the planning, implementation and management of the JMP including curriculum, assessment and standards;

g. Joint Medical Program (JMP) means the Bachelor of Medicine – Joint Medical Program (BMed – JMP) or Bachelor of Medical Science / Doctor of Medicine (MD – JMP); as delivered in partnership by UON and UNE;

h. Peer-to-Peer learning means students learning from and with each other in both formal and informal ways to attain educational goals. Problem based learning is a notable example of peer-to-peer learning. Peer-to-peer learning can happen either in group or individual learning situations.

i. Peer assessment means students taking responsibility for assessing the work of their peers against set assessment criteria. It is a tool for encouraging students to work cooperatively, and allows them to give, receive and understand critical appraisal of their work.

j. Self-assessment means a process during which students reflect on and evaluate the quality of their work and their learning, judge the degree to which they reflect explicitly stated goals or criteria, and identify strengths and weaknesses in their work;

k. UON means the University of Newcastle;

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

m. UNE means the University of New England.

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Section 3 - Scope

(4) The policy should be taken into account when:

    a. JMP Year Committees devise and/or amend assessment components for approval by JMP Teaching and Learning Committee;

    b. the JMP Teaching and Learning Committee and Faculty/Teaching and Learning Committee approve Courses/Units; and

    c. The Universities' approve Courses/Units.

Section 4 - Group Assessment

(5) Group work contributes to assessment of learning outcomes in the JMP and graduate outcomes of the program.

(6) Weightings for group assessment must be consistent with the stated course/unit objectives and comply with the following requirements:

    a. if group learning is not a stated Course/Unit objective then no more than 30% of the marks contributing to the final grade in the Course/Unit should be for Group projects;

    b. if group learning is a stated Course/Unit objective then no more than 50% of the marks contributing to the final grade may be allocated for group projects;

    c. weighting of assessment component(s) and group size should be appropriate and consistent with the objectives and workload requirements for the Course/Unit.

(7) When using group assessment, Course/Unit Coordinators have a responsibility to:

    a. establish clear equitable procedure for group work, and detail these procedures in the Course/Unit Outline including the purpose and function of the group assignment, how group conflict will be dealt with, and how the assignment will be assessed;

    b. ensure equity of assessment and workload within and across groups, and minimise the amount of out of class time required for groups to meet by, for example, allocating a proportion of timetabled hours for group work;

    c. maintain regular communication with groups; and

    d. establish procedures for:

        i. the selection of group members;

        ii. the role and responsibility of group members;

        iii. the conduct of group members; and

        iv. feedback stages;

    e. monitor and/or evaluate individual performance within the group on a regular basis during the course of the assessment and have a defined process for assisting under and over performing students and, if necessary, replacement or withdrawal of a student from a group;

    f. establish procedures for assessing the contribution of each member to the group project that ensure that the contributions of individual group members are taken into account in final marks for the group assessment component, for example, peer assessment. Marks may be allocated by a number of mechanisms such as by an individual mark or a shared group mark (noting the weighting requirements outlined above);

    g. provide students with effective learning materials, instruction and support in accordance with the requirements of the JMP Courses/Unit Outlines Policy and the JMP Course/Unit Coordinator Role Guidelines.

    h. consult with students during the establishment and development processes and consult with and advise

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students in writing of any changes to group assessment procedures;

i. be sensitive to cultural and/or gender differences among students.

Section 5 - Peer and Self-Assessment

(8) Self-assessment develops students' ability to think critically about their learning, to determine what criteria should be used in judging their work and to apply these to their own work. Peer assessment is a tool for encouraging students to work cooperatively, and allows them to provide and receive critical appraisal of their own work.

(9) Assessment weightings for peer and/or self-assessment must comply with the following requirements:

a. peer and/or self-assessment should not form a major stated objective of a Course/Unit;
b. no more than 10% of the marks contributing to the final grade in the Course/Unit should be for a peer or self-assessment project.

(10) When using peer and/or self-assessment, Course/Unit Coordinators have a responsibility to:

a. ensure the outcomes of peer and self-assessment are equitable and credible;
b. develop clear guidelines and criteria for students judging their own work;
c. provide mechanisms that increase the likelihood that students are able to judge by the same criteria. Mechanisms that can be used include self-marking (such as using Self-Evaluation Sheets), peer marking (evaluation sheets) and class generated criteria for peer and self-assessment;
d. moderate the results of peer and self-marking, and maintain a record of the moderation and of the marks awarded; and
e. be sensitive to cultural and/or gender differences among students.

Status and Details

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Responsible Executive	Belinda Yourn Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
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