

ASSESSMENT POLICY

Policy Name:	Assessment Policy	Policy Number:	040
Approving Body:	Academic Board	Version:	12
Custodian:	Head of Academic Planning	Storage:	I:\Institutional\InstitDocs\Current\040_Assessment
Relevant Legislation:	Assessment Policy	Related Documents:	<p>Programme Outlines</p> <p>Extenuating Circumstances Form</p> <p>Teaching and Learning Policy</p>



1. **Purpose.**

The Assessment Policy describes the principles, practices and regulations governing the assessment of student learning at Greenside Design Center College of Design (GDC). This document has been developed to guide and assist academic staff in conducting assessment and to provide principles and procedures for both staff and students that support the development of meaningful, valid, reliable and fair assessment.

2. **Scope**

The Assessment Policy applies to the assessment of all student work across all higher education programmes at GDC. It applies further to the Design Plus programme.

3. **Introduction**

Assessment is the process whereby student competency is determined, student learning is measured, feedback is given to students on their progress and grades awarded. It should be considered in the broadest sense and includes a number of assessment methods.

The rationale for assessment methods is based on Greenside Design Center's assessing the application of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes through appropriate assignments, projects and portfolio reviews. The feedback thus provided maximises the student's opportunity for development and ensures just and fair assessment of their abilities. In order to achieve this Greenside Design Center employs the following principles:

- a) *Validity.* The assessments are designed to measure what they intend to measure, are accurate, appropriate and meaningful. Thus "Am I really assessing what I intended to assess, and are my intentions justifiable in the first place" - ("fitness of purpose" – are we assessing the right things and are we assessing things right). Thus an assignment which requires logical deductions is not assessed for creativity.
- b) *Reliability and fairness.* Assessment decisions are not based on subjective opinions. Decisions are made in relation to standards of quality accepted by a broader educational framework and design community. In addition reliability is concerned with issues of consistency such as "Can we assume that the results of performance can be generalised to other performances? Can we assume that the same results would be achieved on another occasion?"

In addition, the following principles re-enforce the first two:

- a) *Transparency and accountability.* Assessment methods, processes and criteria relate to the aims and learning outcomes of the course and are easily understood by students, staff, external assessors (moderators & verifiers), etc. Assessors should be able to give clear rationales to students in the feedback sessions for their assessment decisions.
- b) *Diversity.* The assessment methods that we use relate directly to the abilities we intend to measure. A range of assessment tools are used. Different abilities require different methods of assessment.
- c) *Inclusivity.* We aim to engage a range of stakeholders in the assessment process of which students play a key role.
- d) *Assessment as a learning tool.* Assessment is used throughout the process of teaching and learning in both formal and informal contexts to develop students' ability and by the academic staff to examine the efficacy of a learning programme. We see assessment not as an end in itself or merely as a method of reporting but a key component in quality teaching and learning.

Criterion-based assessment is used throughout the GDC to assess student work. This means that for every assessment activity the criteria are made clear to the students and all outcomes are measured against these. The assessment criteria relate to the skills, knowledge and values and attitudes we hope to develop in our students. Criterion-based assessment facilitates fair and transparent assessment.

GDC practices three assessment methods:

- a) *Formative and continuous assessment* provides students with feedback on the progress they are making. This feedback takes the form of marking schedules, verbal critiques of student work or written feedback on essays, assignments and projects. Inclusive of formative assessment is the notion that a diagnostic assessment process is used to determine whether students have any gaps in their learning. Where this is the case a suitable approach to address these gaps will be developed and reference to the Academic Support Policy will prevail.
- b) *Summative assessment* establishes what a student has achieved at the end of each project, module and programme of study. This form of assessment is reflected on a separate portion of the marking schedules as marks for particular



subjects. Subject marks accrue throughout the year towards an end of year aggregate. Subject marks and therefore the aggregate are reassessed at portfolio assessments, then both internally and externally moderated to ensure that they are a true reflection of the student's ability.

- c) *Self and Peer assessment* is used for students to examine their own work critically so that a sense of self reflexivity is developed as their academic career progresses. This is manifested in studio critiques where students are given the opportunity to comment on their own and peers work in terms of the relevant assessment criteria. We believe that in order for a student to succeed in the workplace, they must think about and evaluate their work independently and in teams.

4. Background

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process. Through assessment, judgements can be made about the quality and extent of students' achievements and performances. The forms of assessment used throughout GDC are diverse and vary according to academic discipline. The methods of assessment should demonstrate appropriateness to a subject's learning outcomes and requirements for graduation. Assessment plays an important educative role in conveying to students the kind of intellectual engagement desired and provides feedback on learning. Assessment enables students to meet minimum academic and professional requirements and allows GDC to meet its responsibilities to the community to enhance the quality of design in South Africa.

4.1. Definitions

Learning Outcomes

These are the goals or objectives that are set for students in terms of knowledge to be acquired, skills to be gained, and values and attitudes to be engendered.

Assessment Criteria

These state in detail how students are expected to show that they have achieved the required learning outcomes. These criteria are specific to each learning area.

4.2. Good academic practice

Students enter into GDC for a variety of reasons, such as to gain a specific qualification, to pursue their interest in the design field in order to become employable and to broaden their education. Good academic practice demands personal integrity and respect for scholarship and vocation. For example, academic staff are responsible for marking student work fairly and consistently, and providing feedback within a reasonable timeframe, and students are responsible for submitting work that represents their own efforts to meet the stated outcome requirements.

Student learning will be more effective and enjoyable if basic principles of good academic practice are followed. These include the following:

- a) Academic integrity
- b) Self-motivation and commitment to learning
- c) Awareness of requirements
- d) Participation
- e) Respecting the rights of others
- f) Seeking timely help from appropriate sources
- g) Attendance at all scheduled academic activities
- h) Submission of all work on deadline

4.3. Academic integrity

Academic integrity involves a good measure of trust between students, and between students and academic staff. Cheating, either in the form of plagiarism, submitting false requests for alternative methods of assessment or special consideration, or any other form, is a breach of this trust. Cheating also diminishes the aims and value of students' studies.

Students should also be aware that cheating diminishes the good reputation of GDC. The continuing value of a GDC award in the opinions of potential employers, other institutions and the community at large, depends on GDC maintaining its reputation as a design college that has utterly reliable credentials.



4.4. Self-motivation and commitment to learning

In general, there is an emphasis at GDC on developing independent learning skills, understanding ideas, and interacting critically with material and raising questions about it. GDC requires a level of self-motivation from students. The onus is on students to complete the requirements of each subject. This demands reasonably high levels of personal discipline, self-motivation and organisation. The ultimate purpose of assessment is to develop in the student the ability for the student to become a self critical and reflective learner. This will prepare the student for the world of work and the process of life-long learning.

4.5. Awareness of requirements

It is the responsibility of students to ensure they are fully informed of all aspects of the assessment process. Students need to be very clear about what is required in each subject and/or project. These requirements are provided in outlines that are given to students at the beginning of each year. Different subjects have quite different requirements. These might include preparation for classes, participation in tutorials, consultations or on-line discussions, completing an independent learning task or working with other students on a collaborative project.

4.6. Participation

Students are encouraged to participate in those classes that are set aside for discussion. Listening to and considering other views and framing and expressing opinions about a topic assists in developing critical and analytical skills. It leads to students' ability to develop the skill of self-assessment.

4.7. Lecturer responsibilities

Students may expect GDC lecturers to undertake their responsibilities as academics in accordance with this policy. Students may also expect academic staff to be competent assessors. Academic staff will also become self-critical and reflective learners through this process of assessment. Students may expect assignments to be marked and returned to them by the lecturers within three weeks. Lecturers will provide feedback to students both individually and as a group so that assignments form part of ongoing improvement for the student.

4.8. Seeking timely help from appropriate sources

It is incumbent upon students to ensure that they use all support systems available should they require assistance in the assessment process. The various support services are outlined in the student handbook, and include both academic and non-academic services.

4.9. Attendance at all scheduled academic activities

As contact-based programmes, students must attend all scheduled academic activities in order to benefit fully from the educational provision as well as peer learning. In cases of absenteeism the onus rests on the student to ensure that they bring themselves up to date with what they missed. See point 7.5.1. for the Due Performance requirements.

4.10. Submission of all work on deadline

Students must submit all projects set on deadline. Students should consult with their lecturers for clarity as late submissions will not be accepted.

5. Assessment Procedures for the Bachelor Degree Programmes and Design Plus

Assessments take place as follows:

- a) Assessment of Assignments which are ongoing throughout the year
- b) Mid year portfolio assessment
- c) Portfolio Pre-Assessment in the 4th term
- d) Final End of Year Portfolio Assessment



5.1. Assessment of assignments

5.1.1. Assessment process

The student's performance in each subject relevant to the given project or assignment is assessed upon submission of work on the given deadline. This is done by means of defined marking criteria that appear on a Marking Schedule for each project. This Marking Schedule is directly related to measuring the achievement of the stated aims and learning outcomes required of students as well as the marking criteria by which they will be assessed. Students are made aware of these criteria before deadline dates. This assessment is undertaken by pertinent academic staff for the given project or assignment.

5.1.2. Moderation

A selection of assignments are moderated by at least one other pertinent academic staff. This may be achieved during or subsequent to the initial assessment.

5.1.3. Outcomes of assessment

Assessment of assignments includes specific feedback to students which is designed to give students the opportunity to improve their work. Feedback is recorded on the Marking Schedules and grades are awarded for each subject that is assessed in the assignment, and these are awarded as symbols (refer to 7. Assessment Rules and Regulations for the key to symbols). Most of these assessments are formative and summative. Marking schedules are returned within three weeks of the submission, allowing students to respond to the feedback in future assignments.

5.1.4. Re-working of assignments:

Students have opportunity to improve on marks awarded during the course of the year as follows:

5.1.4.1. Practical assignments that were submitted on deadline and assessed may be re-worked or redone, and resubmitted in the portfolio submissions

- i) Assignments completed in the first two terms may be resubmitted for the mid-year portfolio submission, except for the last assignment of term two which may be resubmitted at the end-of-year portfolio submission. Assignments completed in the second two terms may be resubmitted for the end-of-year portfolio submission except for the last assignment of term four which is not eligible for resubmission.
- ii) There is no cap on the mark for a resubmitted practical project that was originally submitted on deadline.

5.1.4.2. Practical assignments that were **not** submitted on deadline may be submitted at the mid and end of year assessment for a maximum of a 50% mark.

5.1.4.3. All major Critical Studies assignments (i.e. essays) and a selection of minor Critical Studies assignments (for example summaries) that were not submitted on deadline or were not passed may be resubmitted. The assignments for which the resubmission opportunity applies, and the due date for resubmissions, will be stated on the brief. The resubmission of all written assignments, whether submitted on original deadline or not, is capped at a maximum of a 50% mark.

5.2. Portfolio pre-assessment

5.2.1. Assessment process

This opportunity is provided prior to mid-year and end-of-year portfolio assessment (described in 5.3. and 5.4. below) and is available to all students. It is not compulsory for first and second year students but is compulsory for third year students. This assessment is undertaken by the pertinent academic staff. This assessment is formative.

5.2.2. Outcomes of assessment

The feedback from the Portfolio pre-assessment will take the form of verbal discussions and is conducted as a developmental aid to students to assist them in final preparation of their portfolios for submission for final assessment. It is intended to guide students in terms of improving their work before final submission and does not constitute or contribute to the summative assessment



5.3. Mid-year portfolio assessment

5.3.1. Assessment process

A portfolio of work, completed during the first half of the year, is submitted at mid-year for assessment. Resubmitted work is assessed (subject to point 5.1.4 above) according to the relevant project learning-outcomes and the averages recalculated. Thereafter, the portfolio as a whole is reviewed and the calculated averages are moderated in accordance with the stated Learning Outcomes for the portfolio review.

5.3.2. Moderation

A percentage of all work undergoes an internal moderation process. This may be achieved during or subsequent to the initial assessment.

5.3.3. Outcomes of assessment

Grades are awarded for each subject that is assessed in the assignment, and these are awarded as symbols (refer to 7. Assessment Rules and Regulations for the key to symbols). The results of the portfolio assessment are also released electronically to students as Mid-Year Results. This is done to make students aware of their progress and encourage further development. This assessment is summative and the symbols are included on the students' official academic transcripts

5.4. Final end-of-year assessment

The final examination will take place at the end of the academic year on dates specified in the calendar when students submit a portfolio of work for assessment. At this stage, all work must be included in the final portfolio and submitted for summative assessment. All subjects stated in the programme outline will be assessed and all must be passed in order to pass the year of study and/or programme. Assessments will be performed by the Examination Board (refer to Roles and Responsibilities).

5.4.1. Internal Assessment and Moderation

Resubmitted work is assessed (subject to point 5.1.4 above) according to the relevant project learning-outcomes and the averages recalculated. Thereafter, the portfolio as a whole is moderated according to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for the year of study to ensure that the results are valid assessments of the students' abilities and competencies. The aggregates are further moderated internally by pertinent academic staff.

5.4.2. External Moderation and Verification.

A sample of work is then moderated by an External Moderator. The sample of work selected for moderation represents a range from each level of achievement, and includes all borderline fails, borderline distinctions/first class passes and potential candidates for postgraduate studies. A Verifier is present during this process as an additional measure to ensure that the assessment processes are correctly followed, and to comment on international standards. Please refer to Roles and Responsibilities of External Moderator and Verifier.

5.4.3. Outcome of final end-of-year assessment

The final results, as reflected by subject averages and an overall aggregate, will be determined by the Examination Board. Grades will be awarded in symbols and the level of conferment will be indicated. Students will be informed of the Board's decision. Results are made available on the college website, and academic transcripts are issued to all exit-level students. Students completing the full qualification are awarded a certificate indicating the qualification attained at a Graduation Ceremony in the following year.

6. Assessment Procedures for the Bachelor Honours Degree Programmes

- a) Assessments take place as follows:
- b) Assessment of assignments and feedback during the course of study
- c) Final end of year assessment



6.1. Assessment and feedback during the course of study

6.1.1. Assessment Process

For all modules, continual formative assessment is provided through ongoing feedback as well as the assessment of intermediary deadlines. This may take the form of verbal group critique, individual consultations or completed marking schedules. The Minor Design project is assessed summatively on submission at the end of the first quarter.

6.1.2. Outcome of Assessment

The feedback on progress on all modules will include written and verbal comment. The formal assessment of the Minor Design project will be issued on a Marking Schedule and will include the mark or grade awarded for the project.

6.1.3. Reworking of the Minor Design project

Students have the opportunity to improve on the mark awarded for the Minor Design Project by re-working it before submission at the Final End of Year Assessment.

6.2. Final end of year assessment

The final examination will take place at the end of the academic year on dates specified in the calendar. At this stage, all work completed for all modules must be submitted for summative assessment and moderation. All modules stated in the programme outline will be assessed and all must be passed in order to pass the programme. Assessments are performed by the Examination Board (refer to 8. Roles and Responsibilities).

6.2.1. Internal Assessment and Moderation

The Research Paper for the Critical Studies module is assessed internally by the staff member who supervised the work. A standard Marking Schedule with the assessment criteria is used. All Research Papers are then moderated internally and forwarded for external moderation. A summation meeting is held with the moderator to confirm the final marks for the module. The Major Design project is submitted and verbally presented for internal assessment. All staff involved in the programme attend the presentation and contribute to the assessment thus incorporating moderation into the process. Verbal feedback on the presentation is given to students in preparation for their presentation to the external moderator. If reworked and resubmitted, the Minor Design project is reassessed.

6.2.2. External Moderation and Verification

Students verbally present their Minor and Major Design projects to the External Moderator and the studio portfolio is externally moderated. A Verifier is present during this process as an additional measure to ensure that the assessment processes are correctly followed, and to comment on international standards. Please refer to Roles and Responsibilities of External Moderator and Verifier.

6.2.3. Outcome of assessment

The final results, as reflected by the final marks for each module and an overall aggregate, will be determined by the Examination Board. Grades are awarded in symbols and the level of conferment is indicated. Results are made available on the college website and academic transcripts are posted to students. Students completing the full qualification are awarded a certificate indicating the qualification attained at a Graduation Ceremony in the following year.

6.2.4. Supplementary Examinations

Should the Examination Board find that a postgraduate student has marginally failed to meet the passing standard for any or all of the modules submitted, the student has the opportunity to improve their work and resubmit the relevant module(s) at a Supplementary Examination in January of the following year. What constitutes a marginal fail is defined in the respective module briefs and marking schedules.

The work submitted for supplementary examinations can be awarded a maximum pass mark of 50%. All work submitted undergoes assessment and both internal and external moderation. The final marks are confirmed at the Supplementary Examination Board meeting in January which is attended by the relevant assessors, internal and external moderators, as well as the Head of Academic Planning and Head of Quality Promotion.



7. Assessment Rules and Regulations

7.1. Minimum End of Year Requirements for the Bachelor Degree Programmes and the Design Plus Programme

- a) For each subject, an average of D (50%) or higher
- b) An overall aggregate of D (50%) or higher
- c) Students who fail to submit their portfolios for final assessment on the given date will be deemed not to have met the minimum requirements and will fail the year of study.

7.2. Minimum End of Year Requirements for Bachelor Honours Degrees Programmes

- a) For each module, an average of D (50%) or higher
- b) An overall aggregate of D (50%) or higher
- c) Students who fail to submit their portfolios or final research papers for final assessment on the given date will be deemed not to have met the minimum requirements and will fail the programme.

7.3. Key to symbols and grades for projects, subjects, and modules.

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Description</u>
A+	85% and above	Work produced is of an exceptional standard for all criteria. Evidence of thorough and extensive research, as well as a clear commitment to socially responsible design.
A	80-84	Produces work and displays abilities and attitudes that are above the expected norms for the level of study. Exceptional on all levels.
B+	75 - 79	Excellent critical and conceptual ability. Highly creative and original. Thoroughly researched. Excellent visual language skills. Presentation comprehensive and accurate. Highly responsible attitude towards studies.
B	70 - 74	Very good critical and conceptual ability. Level of creativity and originality well above average. Thoroughly researched. Very good visual language skills. Presentation comprehensive and accurate. Responsible attitude towards studies.
C+	65 - 69	Good critical and conceptual ability. Level of creativity and originality above average. Well researched. Good visual language skills. Good presentation which is largely accurate. Reasonably responsible attitude towards studies.
C	60 - 64	Good on some levels and average on others, thus may display criticality in response to some aspects but not to others. Is not consistently creative or original. Reasonable visual language skills. Presentation good but not entirely accurate. Reasonably well researched. Mostly responsible in attitude towards studies.
D+	55 - 59	Average critical and conceptual ability. Displays a modest level of creativity and originality. Research acceptable but not entirely thorough. Average visual language skills. Presentation acceptable but not always accurate. Does not always take studies seriously.
D	50 - 54	Average on some levels and below average on others, thus may display some criticality in response to some aspects but not to others. Acceptable visual language skills but at times fails to differentiate between different messages or fails to perceive the organisational structure of visual material. Presentation acceptable but not entirely accurate. Research not quite broad enough, nor in depth. Erratic in commitment towards studies.
E (Fail)	40 - 49	Occasional evidence of understanding and execution. Communication poor. Attitude to studies appears indifferent.
F (Fail)	39 and below	Unacceptable on all levels.



7.4. Grading of Awards and Achievement Levels

Symbol	Description	Conferment
B+, A	Indicates that the student has researched, developed and executed all components of the programme in exemplary fashion	Pass with Distinction
B	Indicates that the student has researched, developed and executed all components of the programme in a highly competent manner and some in an exemplary fashion	Pass
C - C+	Indicates that the student has researched, developed and executed all aspects of the programme in a competent manner, or, that levels of execution range from Distinction to Pass	
D - D+	Has adequately researched, developed and executed most aspects of the programme	
F - E	Student has not met requirements of the programme	Fail

7.5. Due Performance:

7.5.1. Notwithstanding approved extenuating circumstances (see 7.6), student work may not be assessed if the student failed to attend at least 75% of all lectures, consults, computer classes or any other scheduled classes. Late arrival for classes may be deemed to constitute absenteeism.

7.5.2. Students will be penalised for incomplete portfolios where work completed during the year is not included in the final portfolio submission.

7.6. Extenuating Circumstances / Temporary Suspension of Studies

7.6.1. Extenuating Circumstance may provide reason for the inability to submit work on deadline, the poor standard of a particular piece of work, poor attendance during time tabled studio periods or lectures etc.

7.6.2. Students must apply for extenuating circumstance (in advance where possible) using the Extenuating Circumstances form. Documentation (e.g. medical or health practitioner's letter complete with practice number and contact details) detailing a student's difficulties should be submitted with the application. No concession to performance will be made without sufficient supporting evidence.

7.6.3. For mid and end of year assessment, it is essential that documentation detailing any extenuating circumstances be presented to the Examination Board before the due date for portfolio submission. The Examination Board can only consider a student's difficulties (when it reviews and confirms finalised results) on the presentation of supporting evidence and documentation.

7.6.4. A Temporary Suspension of Studies is in place to address situations where students are unable to complete the academic year due to bona fide extraordinary circumstances, and where an extension is not feasible. It allows the student the opportunity to temporarily suspend their studies and continue with them in the following calendar year.

7.6.5. Criteria to be considered when granted a Suspension of Studies

- a) date of withdrawal
- b) work completed and students' performance
- c) reason for suspension

7.6.6. Conditions

- a) Students must apply using the Extenuating Circumstances form and include supporting documentation.
- b) The application must be received, complete with supporting documentation, as soon as possible and no later than the last day of the last term of the year. Applications received after this day will not be considered and will not influence the final assessment.
- c) Students awarded a suspension must return in the year immediately following the year of suspension
- d) Fees for the 'current' year are to be paid in full by due date, as per contractual agreement. The student's position will not be reserved for the next year if the account is not settled in full.
- e) The student will be liable for 35% of the new year's fees. This will be payable in full on re-registration in the next year.
- f) Results of work completed in the first year will be retained and will not be remarked, subject to the Assessment Policy. These projects must be submitted in the portfolio for final assessment.



- g) All work not completed in the current year must be completed in the year of return. Lecturers may include additional projects should the curriculum of the course have been revised.
- h) Any changes to the assessment policy from the year of withdrawal to the year of return will apply
- i) Return will be subject to availability of space at Greenside Design Center

7.6.7. The decision to grant a suspension of studies will be made by the Head of Academic Planning in consultation with the Head of Department, relevant lecturing staff and the Head of Quality Promotion. Students will be informed of the decision in writing.

7.7. Submission of Work, Cheating and Plagiarism

7.7.1. Students are expected to submit their own work and Greenside Design Center will not tolerate cheating or plagiarism.

7.7.2. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, any dishonest conduct such as copying work from others in any examination or project/assignment.

7.7.3. Plagiarism is the presentation of another person's work or ideas without acknowledgment. This may also infringe on the copyright legislation

7.7.4. Students will be advised to use a particular system of referencing. Students should ensure that this is used in all assignments, projects, course work or dissertations that are submitted for assessment. Failure to do so may result in suspicion of plagiarism.

7.7.5. Cheating and plagiarism are regarded as serious offences. The Plagiarism Policy and Student Disciplinary Policy outline the consequence of plagiarism which may include expulsion.

7.7.6. Students are required to complete a form declaring that the work submitted is their own, which they must include with each submission.

7.8. Failures and Repeats

7.8.1. Students who have failed a level of study in the Bachelor Degree programmes, or a module in the Bachelor Honours Degree programmes, or the Design Plus year, must repeat that level of study or module in order to proceed. Please refer to the Minimum End of Year Requirements in point 7.1 and 7.2 above.

7.8.2. Students may re-register for a level of study and/or module if it is the first instance of failure. A student may not repeat the same level of study and/or module twice.

7.8.3. Students who fail any or all of the practical subjects of the BA Degree programmes, namely Principles and Theory of Design, Communications, and Technology and Professional Practice, will be required to repeat all three subjects as these are inherently integrated.

7.8.4. In the BA Degree programmes, if students successfully pass the subject of Critical Studies but fail and are required to repeat the practical subjects noted above, their results for the Critical Studies subject will be retained and the student will not be required to re-register for the Critical Studies subject.

7.8.5. In the BA Degree programmes, if students successfully pass all three of the practical subjects but fail and are required to repeat the Critical Studies subject, their results for the practical subjects will be retained and the student will not be required to re-register for the practical subjects.

7.9. Recording of Results

7.9.1. Grades awarded for the assignments are captured in a secured SQL database. A hierarchy of permissions ensures that the results are secured and accessible to relevant personnel only. A hard-copy of results is kept as back-up and is stored securely in the Administration Office.



7.9.2. End of Year results are released to students via the Greenside Design Center website and exit-level students are issued with an academic transcript detailing their full academic history at the institution. Students from other years of study may request a transcript from the Administration Office. Results are released directly to students and not to sponsors or parents.

7.10. Queries and Appeals

7.10.1. Students wishing to query the results for an assignment should arrange an appointment with the assessor for that assignment where the assessment and results can be reviewed and discussed. Other pertinent academic staff may be consulted if necessary. Should the matter not be resolved, the parties may approach the Head of Department. If still unresolved, the Head of Academic Planning will take the final decision.

7.10.2. There are particular situations in which students may appeal the end-of-year results. These must be based on the contention that the process and procedures for assessment and moderation described in this policy were not complied with, and will only be considered in the following cases:

- a) A student completing the degree programme narrowly misses the admission requirements for entry into the honours programme
- b) A student narrowly misses an overall Distinction for the year of study
- c) A student has narrowly failed to pass the year of study

7.10.3. Appeals for the end of year results must be made in writing to the Head of Academic Planning in the year following the final examination, within 3 days of the college reopening in January. The appeal must detail the reasons for the appeal.

7.10.4. Appeals shall be heard by an Appeal Board which shall include the relevant lecturer, Head of Department and both an internal and external moderator. The Appeal Board is chaired by the Head of Academic Planning.

7.10.5. The role of the Appeal Board is firstly to determine if any irregularities occurred in the assessment process and practice. Only in the case that an irregularity is identified, meaning that there is evidence that the Assessment Rules and Regulations were not fairly and consistently applied, will student work be reviewed. If no irregularities are identified, the work submitted for assessment will not be reviewed and the findings of the Examination Board will be sustained.

7.10.6. The decision of the Appeal Board shall be final.

7.10.7. The cost of such an appeal will be R2000-00 which is refundable if there is a positive judgment in the student's results.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

8.1. Student:

The term student is used to denote a candidate enrolled at Greenside Design Center College of Design. Students are expected to:

- a) Engage actively in the learning process and participate according to subject and assessment requirements.
- b) Complete assessment tasks diligently and honestly to provide evidence of learning achievements in a subject.
- c) Meet assessment requirements as specified in the subject outline, including submission of work by the due date.
- d) Apply the principles of good academic practice (refer to 4.2)

8.2. Lecturers and Assessors:

Lecturer is used as a term to mean any academic staff member with responsibility for teaching and assessing in a subject. Assessors are one and the same as a lecturer and have undergone the appropriate training and development. Lecturers / assessors shall:

- a) Assist in the preparation and/or review of formal assessment vehicles and criteria
- b) Exercise professional judgement involved in implementing and/or administering assessment items that are relevant, fair, transparent, valid and appropriate to the aims of the course and subject objectives.
- c) Provide feedback within a reasonable time on how effectively students are learning
- d) Provide evidence to the Head of Department and Head of Academic Planning that students have achieved a particular standard or achieved certain outcomes.
- e) Inform students of assessment policy and procedures and what constitutes acceptable academic conduct.



- f) Provide academic support where required to improve student learning

8.3. Internal Moderators:

An internal moderator is a head of department or another lecturer who moderates/oversees the assessment process. The role of the internal moderator is to ensure that all procedures related to assessment and the standard of the programme are in place, correct and maintained, the internal moderator assures that:

- a) justice is done to each student by assuring that the process of student assessment is conducted with rigour and due regard to best practice;
- b) students have fulfilled the stated objective in their submission

8.4. Head of Departments / Programme Leaders:

Head of Departments report to the Head of Academic Planning. They are responsible for all learning and teaching in their respective departments. Heads of Department shall:

- a) Determine and design the assessment items, assessment pattern and methods by which final results are calculated.
- b) Consult with the Head of Academic Planning about appropriate learning and assessment arrangements
- c) Prepare Programme Outlines in accordance with procedures and lodge subject outlines with the Head of Academic Planning
- d) Provide formal and informal assessment tasks
- e) Set alternative/additional assessment items.
- f) Consult with the Head of Academic Planning about withdrawals
- g) Determine interim results.
- h) Communicate relevant information to all staff teaching and assessing in a subject.
- i) Arrange for a percentage of all assignments to be internally moderated prior to final end of year assessments
- j) Ensure that there are assessment criteria for each assignment and that all students understand these prior to commencement of the assignment.
- k) Conduct ongoing analysis of assessment results which then inform further Teaching and Learning.

8.5. The Role of the Examination Board:

The Board shall consist of the following members:

- a) GDC's Academic Board. The Chair of the Academic Board shall Chair the Examination Board.
- b) The external moderators for the programme(s)
The external verifier for the programme(s)

The duties of the Examination Board are to:

- a) assess student performance in terms of the stated objectives and standards required for the programme and makes recommendations to the Academic Board;
- b) receive, consider and agree on all assessment requirements;
- c) review the assessment regulations and make recommendations to the Academic Board for improvements.

8.6. Chair of the Examination Board:

The Chair of the Board shall ensure that:

- a) the assessment of students has been conducted in accordance with the approved policy, regulations and procedures governing the programme of study;
- b) opportunity exists for the board to discuss all information pertinent to student assessment and that the Board's recommendations are arrived at as a result of informed and impartial consideration;
- c) proper and secure arrangements are made for any revisions to assessment material required by the Board;
- d) proper procedures are agreed upon in relation to deferral, referral, or failure and that appropriate actions are taken to notify students of any requirements they may have to fulfil and of any right of appeal they may have, as determined by the recommendations of the Board.



8.7. External Moderator:

It is important to recognise that the External Moderator's role is not that of a marker but rather a moderator to ensure that all procedures related to assessment and the standard of the programme are in place, correct and maintained. The role of the External Moderator is to report on the student outcomes as shown through assessment.

8.7.1. Role of the External Moderator. The External Moderator assures that:

- a) justice is done to each student submitting for passing the level or, for the conferment of an award, by assuring that the process of student assessment is conducted with rigour and due regard to best practise;
To ensure this the External Moderators must:
 - be competent in assessing students' knowledge and skills at higher education level and be impartial in judgement
 - be able to judge student work impartially on the basis of work submitted for assessment, without being influenced by previous association with the program, any staff or any of the students
 - have the right to attend all moderators' and assessors' meetings and have access to all assessed work
 - have the right to moderate the marks awarded by internal assessor
 - have the right to conduct viva voce examination of any candidate
 - attend the meeting of the Examination Board at which decisions on recommendations for the award or the progression to the next level are made and ensure that those recommendations have been reached through agreement, by means according with the stated regulations and requirements and with the normal practice in higher education
 - participate as required in any reviews of decisions about individual students' awards and progressions
- b) students have fulfilled the stated objectives in their submission for passing the level or the conferment of the award. In order to ensure this the External Moderators must have received the appropriate programme documents and have been briefed in the task – preferably by visiting the Institution to meet staff and students – as soon as possible after appointment.
- c) the standard of the award is consistent with that nationally accepted as appropriate for the level of award. In order to ensure this External Moderators must:
 - be able to compare performance of students with that of their peers on comparable programs of higher education
 - approve proposed examination papers and other assessment materials which count towards the award or progression to the next level so as to ensure that students will be assessed fairly in relation to validated syllabi and regulations and in such a way that External Moderators will be able to judge whether they have fulfilled the objectives of the program and reached the required standard
 - see an agreed selection of work from all students proposed for the highest category of the award or the progression to the next level, and for failure, and samples of the work of students proposed for each category of the award in order to ensure that each student is fairly placed in relation to the rest of the cohort. This statement does not preclude assessment procedures which employ more extensive forms of scrutiny by External Moderators
 - see that the assessments are conducted in accordance with the approved program regulations
 - be consulted about and agree to any proposed changes in the approved progression and assessment regulations which will directly affect students currently on the program.
- d) the programme continues to maintain its academic quality by reporting on the standard of student outcomes as shown through the assessment conducted and assessment procedures.
In order to ensure this External Moderators must:
 - be an expert in the field of study concerned
 - maintain independence by not acting concurrently as a consultant to the program team or as a member of a panel established to review the program
 - undertake their duties in such a way as to ensure that student assessment and meetings of the Examination Board are conducted thoroughly and effectively
 - report back on the effectiveness of the assessment procedures, the delivery of the objectives of the program, on student outcomes as shown through assessment and on any lessons to be drawn from the assessment



- 8.7.2. Rights of the External Moderator. It is the right of the External Moderator to:
- a) have access to all assessed work and to decide to assess candidates by means other than those set in program regulations where this is judged necessary to provide further evidence of a candidate's ability before reaching a decision on the recommendation for an award or the progression to the next year of study.
 - b) withhold consent from a recommendation on the conferment of an award or progression to the next year of study. Any decisions which External Moderators declare a matter of principle shall either be accepted by the Examination Board or shall be referred to the Institution's Academic Board
 - c) expect that the report submitted to the Institution's Academic Board on the conduct and outcomes of assessment just concluded be considered at a meeting of the programme team chaired by the Head of Department or equivalent, that a copy of the report of this meeting be made available before the next appropriate meeting of the Board and that this meeting formally receive and record its response to the programme team's considerations
 - d) make direct representations to the Chair of the institution's Academic Board on any matter of serious concern arising from the assessments which puts in jeopardy the standard of the award or progression to the next level and the fair treatment of any individual student
- 8.7.3. Responsibilities of the External Moderators: External Moderators Reports. All External Moderators are required to report annually to the Institution's Academic Board on the conduct of the program of study to which they have been appointed and to include in their reports such comments as they consider relevant on:
- a) the overall performances of the students in relation to their peers on comparable programs
 - b) the strengths and weaknesses of the students
 - c) the quality of knowledge and skills (both general and subject specific) demonstrated by the students
 - d) the structure, organisation, design and marking of all assessments
 - e) the quality of teaching as indicated by students outcomes
 - f) the lessons of the assessments for the curriculum, syllabus, teaching methods and resources of the program
 - g) any other matters arising from the assessments

8.8. External Verifier:

The role of the Verifier is to report on the Quality Management System of the final assessment process by commenting on the assessment practices and principles. The Verifier is thus intended to ensure that the assessment policy, rules and regulations are fair and appropriate, and that these are fairly and consistently applied and implemented. The Verifiers are distinguished professionals from design and/or education institutions of excellence and provide a benchmark of quality for the programmes.

9. Quality Assurances Mechanisms

9.1. Training and development of assessors

Assessors must be academic staff who have undergone assessor training and development. Assessors must hold a qualification in the relevant field of at least one level above the level being assessed. In terms of the preparation of lecturers for the assessment process, the following requirements will apply:

- a) All full-time GDC lecturers must at minimum complete the unit standard 115753: *Conduct outcomes-based assessment* within 24 months of commencement of employment
- b) All full-time GDC lecturers must complete the unit standard 115759 – *Conduct moderation of outcomes-based assessment* within 36 months of commencement of employment
- c) In accordance with the GDC Staff Development Policy, completion of the Post Graduate Certificate in Higher Education (PGCHE) at NQF 7 is considered a preferred activity, and will be prioritised amongst other applications for Staff Development

9.2. Appointment of External moderators

GDC External Moderators may be appointed for a period of one to three years depending on the needs of the programme. Nominations for the appointment of an External Moderator are approved by GDC's Academic Board.



The following best practices should be taken into account when appointing moderators:

- a) The External Moderator's academic/professional qualifications must be appropriate to the program to be examined both in terms of level and subject. A moderator must hold a qualification in the relevant field of at least one level above the level being assessed
- b) The External Moderator should have appropriate standing, expertise and experience to maintain comparability of standards as indicated by post and place of work; and range and scope of experience
- c) Current and recent active involvement in research/scholarly/professional activities in the field of study concerned.
- d) The External Moderator should have recent external moderating or comparable related experience to indicate competence in assessing students in the subject area.
- e) External Moderators should be drawn from a variety of institutional/professional contexts; an appropriate balance between academic and professional practitioners should be reflected.
- f) External moderators should be drawn from a variety different institutions.
- g) There should not be a reciprocal relationship between GDC and other institutions for the same or cognate programmes.

9.3. External Moderator's and Verifier's reports.

9.3.1. The purpose of the report is to enable the Institution's Academic Board to judge whether the program of study is meeting stated objectives and to make necessary improvements, either immediately or at the next review as appropriate, as well as whether the External Moderators are fulfilling their responsibilities. The purpose of Verifier's report is to enable the institution's Academic Board to judge whether the program of study is meeting stated objectives, the assessment process is appropriate, and that the standard of student work produced is comparable to international institutions of the same nature. External moderating is a vital means of maintaining standards and providing information on outcomes for use in program reviews. It is however a separate process from programme review processes and it is important that there should be no confusion or role conflict between the two. The report may have implications for the way in which the program is designed and delivered, but it is for the Academic Board rather than the External Moderator to consider what changes should be made as a result. External Moderator's and Verifier reports will always form part of the documentation used in programs review, and the review panel will scrutinise the reports and records of the program team's response.

10. Certification

Please refer to GDC's policy on Certification.

11. Version History

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By:	Nature of Amendments
5	January 2012	Quality Assurance Facilitator	Minor formatting amendments in line with policy standards
6	January 2012	Managing Director	Amendments to points 8.7 and 8.11.
7	January 2012	Academic Board	Revisions to the assessment procedures for the BA Honours programmes
8	January 2014	Head of Academic Planning	Amendments to minimum end-of-year requirements for postgraduate programmes
9	July 2014	Head of Academic Planning	Revisions to eligibility criteria for the moderators. Clarification of pass mark for supplementary examinations for postgraduate students.
10	January 2015	Quality Assurance Facilitator	Amended date of appeals, removed reference to Student Liaison
11	June 2015	Academic Board	Grounds for appeal, preparation for assessors, minor revisions to wording for better clarity, branding
12	January 2016	Academic Board	Resubmission process, constituents of the appeal board, moderator reports, renumbering

