



POLICY TITLE: Assessment of Student Learning

POLICY CATEGORY: ACADEMIC

POLICY NUMBER: A006

POLICY OWNER: Vice President Academic

POLICY APPROVER:

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1. Purpose

1.1. Introduction

The Assessment of Student Learning policy seeks to ensure that assessments are transparent, applied consistently, and are congruent with course learning outcomes; and that students receive an accurate and fair assessment of their work.

2. Scope

All George Brown students will be afforded an equitable framework to ensure fair treatment with respect to the conduct and scheduling of formal learning assessments, grading, and handling of student work once an assessment is complete. Appointees

3. Definition of Terms

Word/Term

Definition

Active Participation

Active participation can take many forms and be executed in any discipline and modality. Students engage with course material and practice skills for learning, applying, synthesizing, or summarizing that material. Common examples include student engagement in small or large activities centred around writing, talking, problem solving, or reflecting.

Accommodation

Services, adaptations, adjustments and/or strategies to equalize opportunities for a person in meeting the essential requirements of applying for or achieving the learning outcomes in a course or program. Appropriate accommodation provides individuals with an equal opportunity to attain an equitable level of performance and mastery of learning outcomes that is experienced by others. Examples include reasonable time off to observe religious holidays or providing additional time during exams for students with disabilities.

Accommodation
(Retroactive)

Accommodations for permanent or temporary disabilities are considered retroactive when the request is made after-the-fact, as the result of a barrier that prevented a student from communicating their need for accommodation. Requests for retroactive accommodations are based on an unexpected disruption in a student's physical or mental health, will be given meaningful consideration, on a case-by-case basis. A retroactive request may be made at any time during the semester or year—see section 6.0 in the College's Accessible Learning Services Policy.

Authentic Assessment	A model of evaluation that requires students to perform real-world tasks to demonstrate meaningful application of the expected knowledge and skills. Jon Mueller described "a process in which students are asked to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills" [from George Brown College Teaching Module '6': Designing Assessments].
Assessment for Learning (Formative)	Assessment for learning involves teachers using evidence about students' knowledge, understanding, and skills to inform their teaching. Sometimes referred to as 'formative assessment', it usually occurs throughout the teaching and learning process to clarify student learning and understanding. Formative assessments help to provide students with information about their progress in learning – these do not need to be tied to a mark or a grade. Formative assessment enables the provision of on-going feedback and reflection that can be used by instructors to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning.
Assessment of Learning (Summative)	Any form of student activity in a course for which student learning is evaluated and a grade is granted by the faculty member. Assessment of learning assists teachers in using evidence of student learning to assess achievement against outcomes and standards. Sometimes referred to as 'summative assessment', it usually occurs at defined key points during a teaching work or at the end of a unit, term or semester, and may be used to rank or grade students. The effectiveness of assessment of learning for grading or ranking purposes depends on the validity, reliability, and weighting placed on any one task. Its effectiveness as an opportunity for learning depends on the nature and quality of the feedback
Assessment Method (Types)	Authentic assessment types include but are not limited to: Skill Demonstration/ Performance; Case study/problem-based learning; Data analysis and interpretation, Project-based assignments; Active Participation; Test/ quiz/ exam Presentation; Project/ model/ product/ prototype; Portfolio; Reflective paper/ journal/comments/ response paper; Research report or essay; Annotated bibliography/ bibliography/ research notes/ definitions.
Learning Outcomes	Learning outcomes are statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completion of a course of study. Learning outcomes are clearly stated in the course outline.
Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU)	The MCU is responsible for the administration of laws relating to education and skills training. For more information go to the Ministry website: https://www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-training-colleges-universities .
Policy	A statement of basic principles, rules, regulations and/or guidelines, developed and enforced to direct and/or limit actions and activities.
Procedure	The operational processes required to implement college policy, to be provided as a clear sequence of instructions to be followed.
Program	An approved combination of courses in a subject area(s) that fulfils the requirements for a degree, diploma, or certificate.

4. Policy

4.1. General Principles

- 4.1.1. The primary purpose of assessing student learning is to allow each student to demonstrate their progress in achieving the approved learning outcomes.
- 4.1.2. The college is committed to equitable and authentic assessment of student learning that is fair and transparent ensuring students are treated respectfully and impartially. This includes students who require academic accommodation, in accordance with college policies and regulations as well as provincial legislation.
- 4.1.3. The college encourages innovation in course delivery and student assessment. In support of the college's commitment to Universal Design for Learning, a variety of subject-appropriate assessment methods will be included in each course. Where practical, students may be given a choice of assessment methods for individual assessments within a course.
- 4.1.4. Courses that do not adhere to any aspect of the Assessment of Student Learning Policy must be approved by the relevant Associate Dean. The Associate Dean is responsible for providing notification to the relevant Dean as a part of this approval process.
- 4.1.5. George Brown College is committed to accommodating the needs of students with disabilities to prevent and remove barriers that might impede students from participating fully in the educational environment. A reasonable accommodation may require an alteration to an assessment in a manner that supersedes this policy. Students who require accommodation or retroactive accommodation should access the Accessible Learning Policy and contact Accessible Learning Services.

4.2. Grading and Assessment

- 4.2.1. All students shall be provided with a course outline that describes the types of evaluation to be used in the course. It shall include but will not be limited to:
 - 4.2.1.1. The number, nature, and types of assessment to be used in the course;
 - 4.2.1.2. Whether any or all of the assignments, projects, examinations or other requirements are mandatory for obtaining a passing grade in the course;
 - 4.2.1.3. The relative weighting of each assessment;

- 4.2.1.4. The approximate date for each assessment.
- 4.2.1.5. Reference to the process for reassessment and the potential for a supplemental assessment according to the Assessment of Student Learning Policy (Sections #5 and Section #8 respectively).
- 4.2.2. All formative and summative assessments must be linked to approved course learning outcomes.
- 4.2.3. Students will be evaluated using a variety of subject-appropriate assessment methods that are scheduled throughout the term using the principles of inclusion, access, and engagement.
- 4.2.4. Unannounced assessments (that is any assessment not included in the course outline) may be used to provide formative feedback but will not contribute to the calculation of the final course grade.
- 4.2.5. Active participation (see Definitions) may account for a maximum of 10% of the final grade and the criteria by which it will be assessed must be communicated to students in the course outline.
- 4.2.6. If a course includes a participation assessment that represents a greater portion of the final grade, the criteria by which it will be assessed must be communicated to students in the course outline.
- 4.2.7. Grades cannot be assigned for attendance.
- 4.2.8. Some courses necessarily require students to be present for skill demonstrations of foundational learning and skill demonstrations relating to the health and safety of students, the public, vulnerable populations, and our community partners in order to receive the course credit. This must be communicated to students in the course outline and must be directly linked to one or more learning outcomes.
- 4.2.9. Bonus marks may only be included in the assessments which are included in the course outline. Bonus marks may account for no more than 3% of the course's final grade and must be available to all students in a course.
- 4.2.10. Grading: Grades indicate a student's status within a course and/or program and provide a basis for decisions regarding recognition of excellence, promotion, academic probation, and registration. The assignment of grades for any assessment is based on the college's standards as outlined in the Grading System Policy [http://www.georgebrown.ca/current_students/grades/].

- 4.2.11. Faculty must post grades on the college's Learning Management System throughout the term and submit final grades into the Millennium FAST system at the end of term.
- 4.2.12. Faculty will post grades on the college's Learning Management System and return graded assessments to students within two weeks (10 Business Days) of their submission by the student. If the faculty member is unable to post the assessment grade within the two-week period, they must communicate the change to students by posting on the LMS or by using George Brown College email.
- 4.2.13. At least 30% of the final grade must be available to students prior to the date for withdrawal from the course without academic penalty. If a course does not adhere to this policy statement it must be approved by the Associate Dean and communicated to students in the course outline. The Associate Dean is responsible for providing notification to the relevant Dean and Vice President Academic as a part of this approval process.
- 4.2.14. Midterm Grades: Students registered in postsecondary, postgraduate, and degree courses will receive a midterm grade, which will provide feedback on academic performance to date. Associate Deans may identify select courses that do not require a mid-term grade such as pass/fail courses, field/lab courses and/or courses of short duration. A midterm cumulative grade will be provided in the LMS. Midterm grades do not appear on the student's official transcript.
- 4.2.15. Faculty must have posted grades on the college's Learning Management System and, where possible, return graded assessments representing no less than 50% of all assessments in the course to students prior to a course's final assessment. If a course does not adhere to this policy statement it must be approved by the Dean/delegate and communicated to students in the course outline.
- 4.2.16. No individual assessment can make up more than 30% of a student's final grade in a course. If a course does not adhere to this policy statement it must be approved by the Associate Dean and communicated to students in the course outline.
- 4.2.17. Changes to assessments during the course, or the relative weighting of these assessments, should be avoided. Where they cannot be, these changes must be clearly communicated to students using the college's LMS with as much notice as possible in advance of the due date or test date.

- 4.2.18. Reviewing Assessments: Provided the request is made within a reasonable time (defined as 10 business days) after the notification of a mark, every student has the right to review any written assessment or examination for which they have received a mark.

4.3. Assessments Taken from Digital Learning Materials

- 4.3.1. Digital learning materials that are included in course or program material fees must align with course learning outcomes and the principles of authentic assessment.
- 4.3.2. Any digital learning material that is to be included in a course or program material fee must first be approved by the relevant Associate Dean. Following this approval, the Associate Dean is responsible for presenting this request to the fees protocol committee for approval, as per the Ministry's Binding Policy.
- 4.3.3. Assessments taken directly from digital learning materials should be consistent with the college's academic policies and values, including alignment to authentic assessment methods.
- 4.3.4. No graded assessment may come from digital learning materials that have not been approved by the relevant Associate Dean and fees protocol committee and are, therefore, not included in course or program material fees.

4.4. Assessment and Academic Accommodations

- 4.4.1. Assessment Accommodations for Students Registered with Accessible Learning Services: Modified assessments, or alternate forms of assessment, may be utilized to reduce barriers to student success; however, course and program outcomes cannot be altered. To receive an accommodation, a student with a disability must register with the college's Accessible Learning Services department [<http://www.georgebrown.ca/accessible-learning-services/>].
- 4.4.2. Faculty Role: When a faculty member receives an accommodation form requesting an alternative to the course assessment, they must comply with this request. It is the professor's responsibility to determine an appropriate assessment. If the professor requires support to address the specific barrier, they will contact the student's accessibility consultant. Professors and accessibility consultants work collaboratively to address the learning needs of students with disabilities. Faculty may also seek support from the TLX in the design of effective assessments to enhance accessibility.

4.4.3. Retroactive Accommodations:

- 4.4.3.1. Requests for retroactive accommodations are based on an unexpected disruption in a student's physical or mental health, will be given meaningful consideration, on a case-by-case basis. A retroactive request may be made at any time during the semester or year—see section 6.0 in the College's Accessible Learning Services Policy. Requests for retroactive academic accommodations will be made through AL Servies, with faculty involvement, and given meaningful consideration.
- 4.4.4. Accommodations for Religious Observance: George Brown College respects the diverse religious beliefs and practices of all members of our community. Accommodations are made, whenever possible, for religious observances in each tradition.
- 4.4.5. It is the student's responsibility to contact the faculty to arrange the accommodation for a test, exam, assignment, or clinical placement, work placement or any other academic situation that conflicts with a day or time period for religious observances. Students requiring an accommodation for a religious holiday must notify their faculty in writing a minimum of two weeks prior to the required accommodation date.

4.5. Supplemental Assessments

- 4.5.1. A supplemental assessment is a privilege and not a right. It may be granted by a faculty member on an individual basis to students who have failed a course after completing the entire course and attempting the final assessment.
- 4.5.2. Supplemental assessments are not permitted if the student has achieved the minimum passing grade, as defined by the program, for the course.
- 4.5.3. The maximum grade attainable as a result of the supplemental assessment is the minimum passing grade in the course.
- 4.5.4. A student may only be granted one supplemental assessment for an individual course.

4.6. Assessment Record Keeping

- 4.6.1. Faculty will maintain accurate records of student assessments for three years after course completion or submit these to the academic department [see Section 3.5 of the Code of Conduct: Academic

Employees:

http://www.georgebrown.ca/policies/Employee_Code_of_Conduct_Academic_Staff.pdf].

- 4.6.2. Faculty will communicate the results of all assessments to students using the college's Learning Management System

4.7. Student Responsibilities

- 4.7.1. Students are responsible for exercising due diligence to ensure they:
- 4.7.2. Know and meet the assessment requirements of a course [including how work is to be submitted] or ask for clarification in a timely manner.
- 4.7.3. Inform the faculty immediately (in person or by George Brown College email) if any assignment deadline or exam date cannot be met due to extenuating circumstances. Students not meeting assignment or testing dates may receive a zero for that part of the course grade.
- 4.7.4. Retain copies of submitted written assignments until the final course grade is received.
- 4.7.5. Use their college email for all correspondence with their faculty.

4.8. Reassessment of Student Work

- 4.8.1. Students have the right to request the reassessment of a test or assignment worth at least 20% of the final grade. [See Appendix #1 for an outline of the Reassessment Process]
- 4.8.2. The grade in question may be maintained, raised, or lowered as a result of a re-assessment by the original assessor.
- 4.8.3. There are some assignments that do not lend themselves to independent re-assessment (examples might include presentations or performances). These assessments may, however, be appealed through the Academic Appeals process [see Academic Appeals Policy: <http://www.georgebrown.ca/policies/appeals.pdf>].

5. Appendices

Reassessment Request Procedure:

- 5.1. Step:1 Reassessment Request
- 5.2. Timeline: Students must request a reassessment of their assessment within 10 working days of receiving a grade or academic decision
- 5.3. Step 2:
- 5.4. Timeline: Within 5 working days of the student's request to the faculty member
- 5.5. Action: The faculty member responds to the student's inquiry and sets up a meeting. If the faculty member does not respond to the inquiry within the timeframe or is unavailable to meet with the student during the timeframe, the student should contact the program Associate Dean and may proceed to a formal Academic Appeal process.
- 5.6. Step 3
- 5.7. Timeline: Within 10 working days of the student's request to the faculty member
- 5.8. Action: The student and faculty member meet to discuss the issue. The student must clearly explain why they believe a reassessment is required. If a resolution is reached, the academic decision is modified, if applicable. If a resolution is not reached and the student remains dissatisfied with the academic decision, the student may file a Stage 2 Academic Appeal. [see Academic Appeals Policy for details:
<http://www.georgebrown.ca/policies/appeals.pdf>].

6. Related Policies

[Academic Appeals Policy](#)

[Accessibility Learning Policy](#)

[Code of Conduct – Academic Staff](#)

[Code of Non-Academic Student Behaviour](#)

[Educational Concerns and Complaints Policy](#)

[Office of the Registrar's Policies](#)