NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY ®
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
INSTITUTIONAL OFFICE

Assessment and Moderation Policy

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Director: Teaching-Learning

Assessment and Moderation Policy

1 Preamble

As a pre-eminent University in Africa, driven by its pursuit of knowledge and innovation, with a unique Institutional culture based upon the values the University espouses, the North-West University has adopted this Assessment and Moderation Policy on 22 June 2007.

2 Premise

The Assessment and Moderation Policy of the North-West University is based on the following premise:

> *In agreement with the National Education Policy for Outcomes-based Education and the level descriptors of the National Qualifications Framework, the assessment approach of the NWU is one of appropriate, continuous formative and summative assessment activities within an outcomes- and programme-based higher education environment.*

3 Aim of the Policy

To support the Teaching and Learning Policy of the NWU in ensuring that teaching, learning and assessment practices adhere to national statutory criteria for effective outcomes-based education in the Higher Education Sector, as stipulated by Act 101 of 1997, the Criteria for Programme Accreditation (HEQC 2004), the Draft National Qualifications Framework (SAQA 2004) and the Draft Higher Education Qualifications Framework (HEQF) (Department of Education, 2006).

4 Definition of terms

In this document terms are defined in accordance with the General Academic Rules (specifically Rule A.1) of the NWU.

5 Leading Principles

5.1 Programme and module outcomes are formulated clearly and correctly communicated to students and guide all assessment practices at the NWU.

5.2 Assessment instruments at the NWU are appropriate, valid and reliable in measuring the stated programme and module outcomes.

5.3 Assessment instruments at the NWU adhere to the requirements of the relevant NQF level descriptor.

5.4 Assessment criteria are formulated clearly and correctly and are communicated to students explicitly.

5.5 At least one opportunity for integrated assessment, where the main objective and key purpose of the programme is assessed, is included in the assessment activities for all programmes.

5.6 A memorandum with correct and/or examples of model answers is compiled for every formal formative and every summative assessment activity undertaken by students.

5.7 Co-assessors and/or markers utilise the memorandums for formal formative and summative assessment activities effectively, as monitored by means of moderation activities described in this Policy.

5.8 Student assessment records at the NWU are reliable, safe and accessible to programme and module co-ordinators, lecturers who offer modules in the programme, administrative officials, and affected students.

5.9 Prior learning is recognised at the NWU as described in the Policy for the Recognition of Prior Learning.

5.10 Formative or continuous assessment serves as a monitoring instrument to enable students to determine their progress in the learning process and to enable lecturers to determine the effectiveness of their teaching, in order that adjustments can be made in time to make the teaching and learning process more effective.

6 Policy

6.1 Informal formative assessment opportunities are included in as many as possible contact sessions. Feedback from informal formative assessment opportunities in contact sessions are utilised by the lecturer for improvement of the teaching.

6.2 The number of formal formative assessment opportunities per module depends on the module credits, and should correspond with the following guidelines:

- 8 credit modules: 2-3 formal formative assessment opportunities per module
- 12 credit modules: 2-3 formal formative assessment opportunities per module
- 16 credit modules: 3-4 formal formative assessment opportunities per module
- 24 and 32 credit modules: 4-5 formal formative assessment opportunities per module

6.3 Memorandums with correct responses and/or examples of model answers are compiled for all formal formative assessment activities.

6.4 Feedback and marks for formal formative assessment opportunities are communicated to students within 15 working days, unless written permission is given by the dean and/or school director to extend the time.

6.5 Summative assessment in all modules is regulated by the General Academic Rules, specifically A.5.4.4.

6.6 For all written formal assessments (formative as well as summative) examiners and moderators are appointed according to the General Academic Rules.

6.7 The moderator's report covers the validity of the assessment instruments, performance of the students, standard of student competencies, reliability of the marking and any irregularities in terms of University/professional regulations.

6.8 Oral assessment, where additional proof of the competencies of a candidate is required for the sake of promotion, is conducted by panels which have been approved by the School Director, and/or Research Focus Area Director, and/or Dean.

6.9 Panels for oral assessment are thoroughly prepared for the assessment session by meetings in advance.

6.10 Oral assessments are conducted according to well-structured questions and assessment criteria (similar to a memorandum for written assessments).

6.11 Assessment of work-based or experiential learning takes place through co-operation between the University, the employer, the mentor and the student about the method, assessment and recognition after achievement of the outcomes.

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