Grading Policy

Section 1 - Introduction

(1) The University is committed to the awarding of grades underpinned by robust and consistent criteria and standards. Assessors exercise professional judgement informed by well-designed assessment items that provide evidence of achievement of learning outcomes.

(2) All units offered from the 2023 academic calendar including Higher Education and VET units, including short courses, Tertiary Enabling Program (TEP), Preparation Tertiary Success (PTS) and credit transfers will have grades awarded in accordance with the new Grading Policy, effective 1 March 2023.

Section 2 - Statement of Authority

(3) The authority behind this policy is the Charles Darwin University Act 2003 part 3, section 15.

Section 3 - Compliance

(4) This is a compliance requirement under the:

a. Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021;
b. Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015; and
c. National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018.

Section 4 - Intent

(5) This document provides a fair and consistent grading schema, for determining the assessment results of both the University's higher education units and Vocational Education and Training (VET) units of competency.

Section 5 - Relevant Definitions

(6) In the context of this document:

a. Assessment means a process to determine a student's achievement of expected learning outcomes and may include a range of written and oral methods and practice or demonstration;
b. Capstone unit means a unit in the final year of a program of learning that provides students with opportunities to integrate their knowledge and experiences from their whole program of learning in preparation for the next stage of their careers;
c. Examination definitions are provided in the University's Higher Education Examination Policy;
d. Grade (for example Pass, Credit, Distinction etc.) means a symbol that indicates the level of student performance in a unit against specified standards. Grades are awarded for the purposes of summative assessment, to enable the University to provide a final statement for the student and the outside community of

the student's achievement of the learning outcomes in that unit;

e. GPA means Grade Point Average and is the average of the grades a student has achieved, weighed by the credit point of the units;
f. Honours class is a traditional grading scale used in recognition of achievement in an Honours degree;
g. Learning outcomes are the expression of the set of knowledge, skills and the application of the knowledge and skills a person has acquired and is able to demonstrate as a result of learning;
h. Program of learning is a course, curriculum, training package, unit of study or structured workplace learning that leads to the award of a qualification;
i. Qualification is the result of an accredited complete program of learning that leads to formal certification that a graduate has achieved learning outcomes as described in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF);
j. Summative assessment indicates students' attainment following a sustained period of learning. This type of assessment generally aggregates information from a number of sources, including results from formal written tests. These tests should reflect instructional and/or curriculum emphases. The relative weighting of the components to be aggregated is an important issue;
k. Table A provider is a higher education provider listed in Table A of the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Commonwealth);
l. Unit is a single component of a qualification, or a stand-alone unit, that has been approved/ accredited. A unit may also be called a 'module', 'subject', 'unit of competency' or 'accredited unit'; and
m. Unit outline is an official document that describes:
    i. the nature of the unit;
    ii. the learning outcomes of the unit;
    iii. how the unit is delivered and assessed;
    iv. the specific requirements students have to meet in order to complete the unit successfully;
    v. information specific to the unit; and
    vi. resources required.

Section 6 - Policy

(7) The results achieved by a student in each unit will be graded in accordance with the following tables:

Higher Education (HE) Grading Schema

Merit-based Assessment Grades

Notation	Grade and explanation	Range	Contribution to GPA*
HD	High Distinction Demonstrates imagination, originality or flair, based on proficiency in all aspects of the unit; work is interesting or surprisingly exciting, challenging, well read or scholarly.	85 to 100 0%	7
D	Distinction Demonstrates awareness and understanding of deeper and less obvious aspects of the unit, such as ability to identify and debate critical issues or problems, ability to solve non-routine problems, ability to adapt and apply ideas to new situations, and ability to evaluate new ideas.	75 to <85%	6

C	Credit Demonstrates ability to use and apply fundamental concepts and skills of the unit going beyond mere replication of content knowledge or skill to show understanding of key ideas, awareness of their relevance, some use of analytical skills, and some originality or insight.	65 to <75%	5
P	Pass Satisfies all of the basic learning requirements of the unit, such as knowledge of fundamental concepts and performance of basic skills; demonstrates satisfactory, adequate, competent, or capable achievement.	50 to <65%	4
PU	Pass Ungraded Indicates that the unit is assessed only a basis of pass or fail and that the student's work has achieved a pass level.		NA
PC	Pass Conceded A PC grade is awarded by the College Assessment Review Panel. A PC grade may be awarded in lieu of a composite mark in the range 45 to <50% when, in the view of the College Assessment Review Panel and taking into consideration the student's overall academic performance, the student falls short of satisfying all basic requirements for a Pass but can be granted concession for the deficiencies through: Having compensating strengths in some aspects of the unit; or Having compensating strengths in other units; or Other evidence of achievement in relation to the learning objectives of the program of learning. The grade of PC is not awarded in any AQF Level 5, 9 or 10 qualification. The grade of PC is only available in AQF qualifications at level 6 and 7, and level 8 where the qualification is a Bachelor Honours Degree (embedded). For these qualifications, a PC grade may be awarded for coursework units at 100, 200 and 300 level for awards, provided that: The PC grade is not otherwise restricted by the specific course rules; No more than 10 credit points PC credit may be counted towards completion of a level 6 qualification; No more than 20 credit points PC credit may be counted towards completion of a level 7 or level 8 Bachelor Hons (embedded) qualification; No more than 10CP PC may be received at the highest unit level of the program of learning. No PC grade will be offered if any of these limits would be breached. A PC is deemed to satisfy prerequisites for higher-level units.	May be used for a mark 45 to <50%	3
F	Fail Fails to satisfy the requirements of the unit.	<50%	0
FNS	Fail Not Submitted Fails to satisfy the requirements of the unit. Did not complete 50% or more of the assessment		0

* Contribution to GPA: NA indicates 'Not applicable' i.e. the grade is not included in GPA calculations

Continuing or Incomplete Grades

Notation	Grade and explanation	Contribution to GPA*
PO	Practicum Ongoing Indicates an administrative grade issued to a student who has commenced, but not completed a practicum or placement unit. The grade is applicable for two (2) semesters. If at the end of this time a grade has not been awarded the PO grade will automatically convert to a Fail (F) grade unless the College Dean (or delegate) approves in writing an extension of the PO grade.	NA

AC	Assessment Continues Indicates that the student has received a written extension by the relevant College Dean (or delegate) for a period of up to three (3) months from the end of the semester (teaching period) to submit outstanding assessment items towards the final grade for the unit. Extensions requested by students can only be approved if circumstances prevail indicating student disadvantage: For example: A student is suffering from an illness that prevents them from completing the unit within the timeline as stated in the unit outline; Personal circumstances based on written evidence by a counsellor, or medical practitioner; Work-related circumstance based on written evidence by their employer. Delays with the completion of assessment caused by external factors. Unit lecturers may make a request on behalf of the student, for a three (3) month extension at the relevant College Assessment Review Panel meeting. If the outstanding work is not completed by that time, or if no assessable work has been submitted by the student by the end of the following semester (teaching period), the result of F will be awarded. Students are required to re-enrol in the unit, should they wish to complete the unit attempt.	NA

* Contribution to GPA: NA indicates 'Not applicable' i.e. the grade is not included in GPA calculations

Advanced Standing Outcomes

Notation	Grade and explanation	Contribution to GPA*
CRDT-TRANS	Credit Transfer Used to indicate that credit has been given for a unit, based on successful completion of equivalent study. Credit for units should only be granted for units completed within the past five (5) years, however, should professional practice and personal development have been undertaken within the field, then this could be extended to ten (10) years. The unit/s do not need to be completed by the student.	NA
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning This is a process of Advanced Standing where credit is granted at the University based upon the assessment of an individual's prior formal, non-formal and informal learning (or a combination thereof) to determine the extent to which that individual has achieved the required learning outcomes of a specified unit. Fees may be applicable	NA

* Contribution to GPA: NA indicates 'Not applicable' i.e. the grade is not included in GPA calculations

(8) Refer to the University's Advanced Standing Policy for more information on applying for Credit Transfer or Recognition of Prior Learning.

Honours Class

(9) Honours Class is based on the mean (average) percentage over the total number of graded credit points attempted in the Honours degree (see 'Calculation of Honours Class'). Where the Honours degree is embedded in a four (4) year degree, only the Honours degree units will be included in the Honours Class calculations.

Notation	Mean percentage
H1 (Honours First Class)	80 to – 100%

H2A (Honours Second Class Group A)	70 to <80%
H2B (Honours Second Class Group B)	60 to <70%
H3 (Honours Third Class)	50 to <60%

Calculation of Honours Class

(10) The calculation of Honours Class is used to determine which Honours Class is to be awarded. It may also be used to rank student achievement e.g. for scholarships, awards or competitive entry to other programs.

(11) The Honours Class will be based on the mean percentage over the total number of graded credit points attempted in the Honours degree as per the following formula:

(12) Mean percentage = Sum (Unit percentage X unit credit points) / Total graded credit points

(13) An Ungraded Pass and Advanced Standing grades are not included in the above Honours Class calculation.

(14) The Honours Class is calculated by averaging the percentage achieved in all attempts at all units except those indicated by NA above.

Example 1: Degree ABC (Honours) (80CP)

	Unit credit points	Grade	Percentage	Unit percentage X unit credit points
Unit 1	10CP	HD	91	91 x 10 = 910
Unit 2	10CP	C	73	73 x 10 = 730
Unit 3	20CP	D	78	78 x 20 = 1560
Unit 4	10CP	F	48	48 x 10 = 480
Unit 4 repeat	10CP	C	67	67 x 10 = 670
Unit 5	10CP	D	82	82 x 10 = 820
Unit 6	10CP	HD	87	87 x 10 = 870
Unit 7	10CP	PU	NA	NA
TOTAL	80CP			6040

(15) Note: Unit 7 is an Ungraded Pass therefore neither the percentage nor the credit points are included in the calculation of Honours class.

> Mean percentage = 6040/80 = 75.5 - Honours Second Class Group A

Example 2: Degree DEF (Honours) (80CP)

	Unit credit points	Grade	Percentage	Unit percentage X unit credit points
Unit 1	40CP	HD	90	90 x 40 = 3600
Unit 2	20CP	C	69	69 x 20 = 1380
Unit 3	20CP	D	78	78 x 20 = 1560
TOTAL	80CP			6540

(16) Mean percentage = 6540/80 = 81.75 - Honours First Class

(17) Honours Class calculations will be:

a. completed by the Honours Coordinator of the relevant College; and
b. confirmed by the relevant College Dean (or delegate); and
c. recommended to Academic Board, through the Board of Graduate Studies.

Administrative Grades

Notation	Grade and explanation	Contribution to GPA*
WF	Withdrawn Fail A result given where a student has formally withdrawn from a unit after the census date (with academic penalty).	0
W	Withdrawn without Penalty A result given where a student formally withdraws from a unit prior to the Census Date	NA
WW	Withdrawn without Academic Penalty A result given where a student has formally withdrawn from a unit after the census date for enrolments without academic penalty. A result of WW can only be approved by the College Dean (or delegate).	NA
SPEC	Special Examination Approved Indicates that a special examination has been approved. The result of SPEC is appropriate where a special examination has been approved but not yet undertaken. If no results are recorded within six (6) months of the SPEC grade being notified to the student, the result of F must be awarded.	NA
NE	Not Examinable - Research Is an administrative grade and indicates that a person has commenced a research unit and is eligible to continue.	NA
NA	Not Available Is an administrative grade only and will be issued by Student Administration when the result for a unit is not available. The use of NA will enable a student to re-enrol in a unit previously undertaken, but where no grade has been issued by the unit lecturer.	NA

(18) * Contribution to GPA: NA indicates ‘Not applicable’ i.e. the grade is not included in GPA calculations

Grades from other Higher Education Providers

(19) Where a student is required to complete a core unit or specialist elective through another Higher Education provider who is a Table A provider and that unit has been accredited by the University for inclusion on the student’s transcript, the partner institution’s grading system may be honoured if it uses the same grading schema letters as the University. Where different grading schema letters exist, these may be translated into the University’s grading

schema.

Calculation of Grade Point Average

(20) The Grade Point Average (GPA) is used, for example, to calculate University and Chancellor's Medal recipients.

(21) The GPA will be calculated according to the following formula:

> GPA = Sum (Unit contribution to GPA X unit credit points)/Total Credit points

(22) An Ungraded Pass or other grades indicated by NA above are not included in the GPA calculation. The standard GPA is calculated by averaging all attempts at all units except those indicated by NA above.

Example: Program of learning ABC (80CP)

	Unit credit points	Grade	Contribution to GPA	Unit contribution to GPA X unit credit points
Unit 1	10CP	HD	7	7 x 10 = 70
Unit 2	10CP	C	5	5 x 10 = 50
Unit 3	20CP	D	6	6 x 20 = 120
Unit 4	10CP	F	0	0 x 10 = 0
Unit 4 repeat	10CP	C	5	5 x 10 = 50
Unit 5	10CP	C	5	5 x 10 = 50
Unit 6	10CP	HD	7	7 x 10 = 70
Unit 7	10CP - NA	PU	NA	NA
TOTAL	80CP			410

(23) GPA = 410/80 = 5.125

Publication of Higher Education Results

(24) A students' final result in any unit will be awarded by the College Assessment Review Panel. Once the Panel has awarded the final grade, the Director, Student Administration will release final unit results to each student in a form and at a time determined by the Director.

(25) Grade Release Dates are set no later than eighteen (18) calendar days following the last day of a Central Examination Period or a Special Examination period.

Vocational Education and Training (VET) Grading Schema

Competency-Based Assessment Grades

Notation	Grade and explanation
CA	Competency Achieved The person being assessed has demonstrated competence against all requirements detailed in the unit of competency.

NYC	Not Yet Competent The person being assessed has attempted all of the requirements for the assessment and has been assessed as not competent, or as not satisfying one or more of the requirements for the unit of competency or module.
CE	Continuing Enrolment CE is not a final grade. It is an administrative grade used in lieu of a competency grade when it is not appropriate to provide a final grade. There must be evidence of participation in the current academic year. CE grade must be converted to a final grade when the "Activity End Date" for the unit occurs. This normally corresponds with the end date of the teaching period. Where the end date is extended past 30 December of the current academic year, a CE grade can be carried into the next year, but must be resulted by the activity end date.
OWA	Ongoing Workplace Assessment OWA is not a final grade. It is an administrative grade used in lieu of a competency grade to identify students who have completed the 'off the job' requirements of a unit of competency but have yet to complete the 'on the job' requirements. There must be evidence of participation in the current academic year. OWA grade must be converted to a final grade when the "activity end date" for the unit occurs. This normally corresponds with the end date of the teaching period. Where the end date is extended past 30 December of the current academic year, a OWA grade can be carried into the next year, but must be resulted by the activity end date.
IP	Insufficient Participation This indicates that a person has not participated sufficiently to attempt all assessment requirements for the unit. No formal withdrawal has taken place. There must be evidence of at least one (1) valid participation. Valid participation occurs when a person is engaged with the learning process specifically related to the elements and performance criteria detailed in the unit of competency. Evidence of participation needs to be provided.
SP	Successful Participation This grade is used for resulting a Learner Support unit where the student has successfully participated in the Learner Support activities, thereby increasing the likelihood of successful outcomes for units of competency within the associated VET qualification in which they were enrolled. The grade may only be used for resulting Learner Support units of competency.
UP	Unsuccessful Participation This grade is used for the result in a Learner Support unit where the student has not successfully participated in the Learner Support activities, thereby reducing the likelihood of successful outcomes for units of competency within the associated VET qualification in which they were enrolled. The grade may only be used for resulting Learner Support units of competency.

Advanced Standing Outcomes

Notation	Grade and explanation
CRDT-TRANS	Credit Transfer Used to indicate that credit has been given for a specified unit based on successful completion of equivalent study. Credit for units should only be granted for units completed within the past (5) five years, however, should professional practice and personal development have been undertaken within the field, then this could be extended to (10) ten years. The unit/units do not need to be completed by the student. Evidence is required. Fees are not applicable. Funding is not applicable.
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning (VET) The process where credit can be given towards a program of learning based on skills attained through employment and/or life skills. Current competence needs to be demonstrated. Evidence is required. Fees are applicable. Funding is applicable.
RPL-NOT	Recognition of Prior Learning Not Granted (VET) The process where recognition of prior learning is applied for but not granted. Fees are applicable. Funding is applicable.

Administrative Grades

Notation	Grade and explanation
W	Withdrawn without Financial Penalty A result given when a student formally withdraws from a unit within fourteen (14) days of commencement of the unit and has valid participation in that unit.
WW	Withdrawn with Financial Penalty A result given when a student formally withdraws from a unit after fourteen (14) days from commencement of the unit and has valid participation in that unit.
SW	Special Withdrawal A result given when a student has not validly participated in a unit and did formally withdraw.
NS	Never Started A result given when a student has not validly participated in a unit and did not formally withdraw.
NA	Not Available Is an administrative grade only and will be issued by Student Administration when results for a unit are not available. The use of NA will enable a student to re-enrol in a unit previously undertaken, but where no grade has been issued by the unit lecturer.

Publication of Vocational Education and Training Results

(26) A student's final result in any unit is available on the "My Student Info" site as soon as it is finalised by the delivery team. For most units this will be within four (4) weeks of the end of training. Formal notification of results is sent to a student in a form and at a time determined by the Associate Director Student Management Systems. The formal notification dates are set no less than eighteen (18) calendar days following the end of the relevant teaching period (31 March, 30 June, 30 September, and 31 December).

Review of Result

(27) The University is committed to providing a fair and transparent procedure through which students may seek to lodge a complaint against an academic action or appeal an academic decision.

(28) Students who have a concern about their overall result in a unit are encouraged to refer to the Complaints Policy - Students.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	15th January 2022
Review Date	15th January 2022
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Approval Date	14th December 2021
Expiry Date	27th July 2022
Responsible Executive	Louise King Provost
Implementation Officer	Lisa-Marie Stones Director Student and Academic Services
Enquiries Contact	Lisa-Marie Stones Director Student and Academic Services