



Student Evaluation

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Executive Division:	Education
Department Responsible:	Education Council
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Policy Statement

BCIT aims to employ equitable, consistent, and fair marking practices. This provides an objective measurement of student learning for BCIT’s grading purposes, and timely, credible feedback to help direct students’ efforts.

Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide consistent guidance to individuals responsible for the evaluation of students at BCIT. This policy includes information on how students will be evaluated as well as complete definitions of each different grade notation that could appear on the transcript of a BCIT student or graduate.

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Application

This policy applies to BCIT students, instructors, and other employees.

Related Documents and Legislation

Policy 5100 – Glossary of Educational Policy Terms
BC College and Institute Act

Definitions

All terms and language used in this document are consistent with Policy 5100, Glossary of Educational Policy Terms.

Evaluation of Students

Deviations from this policy

Some external accrediting organizations (those from outside BCIT's jurisdiction) may impact the method used to evaluate a student's performance. Programs experiencing this situation may request an exemption from some sections of this policy. Any such requests must be made to Education Council, which will then decide on the matter. Any and all approved deviations from BCIT policy must be noted in the outline of any relevant course. Non-credit courses or pre-entry assessments may deviate from the evaluation criteria established in this policy without prior approval from Education Council.

1. Evaluation Criteria

Evaluations of students in a course will be based on the learning outcomes described in the course outline (see Policy 5004, Programming – Course Outlines).

Workplace Education programs that consist of a variety of on-the-job training components may have additional criteria and mechanisms for assessment, such as employer evaluations. These additional evaluation criteria may be included when calculating a student's grades and, when present, will be described in course outlines.

Where attendance, or in the case of on-line learning, presence, is mandatory or forms part of the evaluation criteria, the attendance/presence requirements will be detailed in the course outline. The department will inform students, in writing, at the commencement of any program/course in their jurisdiction, of the departmental marking policy with regards to missed or late assignments, tests, quizzes or examinations.

Final examinations will not constitute more than 50% of the overall mark for a course. Departments must submit requests for exemption from this requirement to the Education Council for approval.

Evaluation of a student's achievement of learning outcomes is normally based on objective criteria. Although subjective assessments are discouraged, they will be allowed if justified, and if the course outline indicates that a subjective evaluation will comprise part of the mark; the criteria to be used will be detailed in the course outline.

An accommodation for a documented disability, designed to meet the particular needs of a student, could potentially involve adaptation to, or modification of, the manner of evaluation or examination in a BCIT course or program, or a test or examination offered or administered by BCIT.

Detailed information regarding the calculation of final marks, and all requirements associated with passing the course, are to be listed in the course outline.

1.1 Frequency of Evaluation

The number and frequency of examinations will be detailed in the course outline.

1.2 Student Performance Deficiencies

A student who fails to demonstrate a satisfactory rate of progress or performance will be notified. Notification may be in the form of grades—during term or at the end of term, or through a Student Report. In some cases a Student Performance Contract may be implemented. Examples and further details regarding Student Reports and Student Performance Contracts may be found in Procedure 5100-PR1, Student Reports-Student Performance Contracts.

The dean with jurisdiction and control over a program may discontinue a student's registration in that program for reasons of academic non-performance.

1.3 Missed Exams and Assignments due to Illness

Occasionally BCIT students are absent from a mid-term or final examination or for other important forms of evaluation due to serious medical reasons. The procedure to be followed is described in Procedure 5101, Implementation of Student Regulations.

Final examinations and mid-terms notwithstanding, programs may limit the number of tests, quizzes or examinations a student may miss. Details of these limits, and the consequences associated with exceeding them, will be documented in the course outline.

2. Final Examinations

A student has the right to request a review of his or her completed and marked final examination with the course/program instructor or a designate. The instructor must notify the students of any designate to be used. If a student wishes to review his/her examination, he/she should present the request directly to the instructor or designate.

The full procedure for students to follow regarding a review/appeal of grade is described in Procedure 5104-PR1, Academic Decision Review Process.

3. Limits to Number of Attempts to Complete a Course

Students are allowed a maximum of three attempts to successfully complete a course.

An "attempt" consists of any registration which does not result in a grade of W (Approved Withdrawal) or LW (Late Withdrawal).

Students who have not successfully completed a course within the allowed number of attempts will not be eligible to graduate from their respective programs unless special permission is granted by the program dean.

A student, who has attempted a course twice, will only be allowed to attempt it a third time with written permission from the associate dean, who will detail any special considerations or conditions in a written contract with the student. The associate dean may identify to the registrar's office those students who are not permitted to attempt a course for a third time, and/or those who are not permitted to continue in the program.

Education Council will consider departmental requests to alter the maximum number of attempts students will be allowed to successfully complete a course. Completion requirements different from those outlined in this policy must be published on the BCIT web site, and in each of the relevant course outlines.

4. Recognition of Excellence

Students attending BCIT may be recognized for excellent academic performance. The words "With Distinction" will be inscribed on any relevant certification. The Statement of Completion and Statement of Attendance are excluded from this recognition.

This standing is awarded by the Registrar to a graduating student whose weighted grade point average (GPA) is 80% or greater in an approved Technology program or 90% or greater in an approved Trades program of study that leads to a BCIT credential. Transfer credit marks will not be included in the GPA calculation.

The designation “With Distinction” replaces the term “With Honours” that was formerly used for the same purpose and with the same definition.

Procedures, and detailed criteria, for recognition of excellence are found in Procedure 5103-PR1, Grading.

5. Time Limit to Complete a Credential

To ensure the quality of BCIT graduates, BCIT programs may establish a maximum time limitation for students to complete a credential. The time limitation begins on the date of the program approval or the starting date of the first course towards the credential, whichever is more beneficial to the student. The credential time limitation must be published on the program web site.

Where time limitations do not exist, BCIT’s default time limitation to complete a credential is seven years.

Programs wishing to establish time limitations other than seven years must seek approval from Education Council.

Student requests for exceptions from a maximum time limitation will be reviewed by the appropriate associate dean and dean. Final decision rests with the Vice-President, Education.

6. Evaluation Methodologies

A variety of evaluation methodologies may be used to assess a student’s performance. These include, but are not limited to:

- Assignments
- Tests & quizzes
- Lab performance
- Workplace education (e.g., practicum experiences, clinical work)
- Thesis

The number and complexity of assignments are at the discretion of the instructor, in accordance with the course outline.

Tests and quizzes may be given throughout the term, in accordance with the course outline.

Assignments, tests, and quizzes are effective methods of providing to students feedback on their performance. Instructors should review and provide results to students in a timely fashion that will allow them adequate time to incorporate feedback into their learning and examination preparation.

6.1 Examination Development

Learning outcomes are to be appropriate given the subject matter and the level of the course. Examinations should measure these outcomes effectively. Expectations concerning performance should be clear and should adhere to standards that promote effective and relevant evaluation. Examinations should be meaningful for the purposes of advancing learning and for providing feedback to students. The marking system should be clearly stated in the course outline.

6.2 Final Examinations

Final examinations are to be given in all credit courses unless an exemption has been approved. Instructors must apply for exemption to the appropriate teaching associate dean through their program head/chief instructor. A report on exemptions granted (or not) shall be sent to the appropriate dean by the associate dean(s).

Departments are responsible for ensuring written final examinations (paper and electronic) are retained and available at any time during business hours for a period of thirteen months following the conclusion of a course. (Directory of Records Classification 7010-15).

6.3 Marking

1. Marking is to a standard and not to a curve.
2. Marking will be on a percentage basis whenever possible.
3. Where a percentage grade cannot be granted, as might be the case of practical work, the following system will be used:
 - “S” – satisfactory completion
 - “U” – unsatisfactory completion
 - Procedures for submission of student grades are found in Procedure 5103-PR1.

6.4 Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)

BCIT may provide students with the opportunity to be granted access to courses, programs and credentials based on their skills, knowledge and professional values acquired through life experiences, work, and academic achievement. These assessment opportunities are known as Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR).

PLAR involves the use of various assessment tools and techniques to determine whether an individual has achieved the learning outcomes associated with one or more specific courses. Program areas will determine which of their courses are to be made available for challenge through PLAR. The program area will be responsible for the determination of the appropriate assessment techniques to be used in each course. PLAR is not intended to be available to individuals who have previously received a failing grade in the course they wish to challenge.

Reassessments and Appeals – Participants in the PLAR process will have access to the normal reassessment and appeal process associated with academic decisions. Reassessments that involve appeals of PLAR activities shall include at least one person with knowledge of the policies and procedures relevant to PLAR.

Where applicable, credits are awarded.

Normally, a fee is levied for challenges under PLAR.

7. Examination Scheduling

7.1 Full-Time Technology Courses

Final examinations are normally held during the published final exam period. In some circumstances where this is impractical, the associate dean may approve

examinations to be scheduled in the week immediately prior to the exam period. Laboratory practical finals may be scheduled for the week prior to the final examination period.

BCIT's final examination period will be set prior to the start of the academic year. When an individual student is scheduled to write exams in consecutive time slots, he or she will be given a break of one hour minimum between exams. No exam timetable changes will be allowed after posting, unless approved by the associate dean.

Assignment and monitoring of invigilators is the responsibility of the Program associate dean. For invigilation guidelines, see Procedure 5103-PR1– Grading. Instructors, or those in charge of administering examinations, are responsible for ensuring that proper security precautions are employed regarding the custody of examinations. A student with a disability, who has an approved accommodation plan, is responsible for scheduling his/her exams with the instructor(s) and the Disability Resource Centre (DRC).

7.2 Full-Time Trades/Technical Courses

The department and/or instructor will ensure that students are notified in writing of the examination schedule at the commencement of the course.

7.3 Part-Time Studies, Distance Education and On-Line Programs

The teaching department will ensure that the course outline details the examination schedule.

8. Retention of Student Works by BCIT

Students produce works as assignments, exams, etc. As per policy 5101, Student Regulations, students own the copyright of their works. BCIT has the right to retain these works for evaluation purposes. Students must authorize the retention of their works for any other educational use (e.g., as a model assignment). When BCIT keeps such works, it must maintain confidentiality when such works are produced for a third party such as a sponsor. See Policy 5101, and the section, Uses of Student Works, in Procedure 5101-PR1, Implementation of Student Regulations.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Associate Deans

Associate deans:

- Are authorized to make exceptions to the requirement for final examinations for credit courses
- Will send a report on such exceptions granted or refused, to the appropriate dean
- May approve the scheduling of examinations to be held prior to the published (normal) exam period, if an instructor indicates a legitimate need
- Are authorized to approve of exceptions (changes) to exam timetables after posting of the timetables
- Assign and monitor invigilators for exams

2. Deans

The dean with jurisdiction and control over a program has the authority to discontinue a student's registration in that program for reasons of academic non-performance.

3. Deans and Associate Deans

Deans and associate deans:

- Are responsible to see that instructors employ equitable, consistent, and fair marking practices
- Are authorized to make exceptions to the maximum number of times a student may attempt a course
- May review requests to make exceptions to the time limit for completing a credential

4. Education Council

Education Council will consider departmental requests for exemptions from requirements regarding:

- The weighting of final exams
- The number of times students may attempt a course

5. Instructors

- Instructors are required to employ equitable, consistent, and fair marking practices.
- Instructors must schedule evaluation to allow students to utilize the feedback in subsequent learning and exam preparation.
- Instructors wishing for exemptions to the requirement for exams for credit courses must apply for this exception to their teaching associate dean through their program head or chief instructor.
- Instructors are responsible for maintaining the security and custody of examinations.

6. Instructors of full-time trades/technical courses

Instructors of full-time trades/technical courses will ensure that students are notified in writing of the examination schedule at the commencement of the course.

7. The Registrar

The Registrar awards graduating students with recognitions of excellence.
The Registrar communicates grades to the students.

8. Students

Students are required to notify instructors if they are going to miss exams, quizzes, or assignments due to illnesses, emergencies, or other legitimate personal reasons. See policy 5101, Student Regulations, for details.

9. Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are responsible for scheduling their exams with their instructors and with the Disability Resources Centre (DRC).

10. Vice President, Education

The Vice-President, Education is authorized to make exceptions to the time limit for completing a credential.

Procedures Associated With This Policy

5103-PR1, Grading
5100-PR1, Student Reports / Student Performance Contracts

Forms Associated With This Policy

None

Special Situations

None

Amendment History

Policy 5002 was retired January 2009, and this policy 5103 is one of a series of policies and procedures created to replace it.

1. Created 2009 Jan 27

Scheduled Review Date

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