Assessment Handbook 2013
**Introduction**

This handbook has been prepared as a guide for all members of the School of Nursing, Midwifery & Indigenous Health, both staff and students. The information it contains supports the information found in Subject Outlines. It is essential to read this carefully along with your Subject Outlines as together they document the School’s requirements for each individual assessment task.

**Section 1** outlines the School’s guidelines on a range of assessment matters. It includes information on plagiarism and student academic consideration.

**Section 2** provides information for students on School procedures relating to assessment issues.

**Section 3** contains information on documentation and referencing, and links to relevant websites.

**Section 4** contains marking criteria.

**Section 5** contains a list of definitions for key words commonly used in assignment questions.

This document is designed to provide students and teachers with clear directions that will improve the quality of submitted work and the consistency of marking. Any suggestions about the contents would be appreciated. The most appropriate route for students would be to notify their student representatives of any concerns so that these representatives can convey this to the staff at the next School Meeting.

Chairperson
School of Nursing, Midwifery & Indigenous Health Assessment Committee
Section 1: Policies

This section should be read in conjunction with the General Course Rules which is available via the Course Handbook link on the Current Students webpage – look under Rules & Policies. The General Course Rules and the University’s Code of Practice: Teaching & Assessment contain the procedures and regulations which apply to each faculty and school in regard to Assessment.

The HBS Central Student Guide available at http://www.uow.edu.au/content/groups/public/@web/@health/documents/doc/uow09 6366.pdf also provides a guide to finding policies relevant to students on this and other matters.

Student Academic Consideration Policy

Academic Consideration is a process intended to help minimise the impact of serious or extenuating circumstances beyond a student’s control which significantly impair a student’s ability to complete an assessment task on or by the due date as stipulated in the Subject Outline or to progress academically in a subject relevant to their course of study. Academic consideration may be granted on the basis of medical grounds, compassionate grounds and/or extenuating circumstances.

It is not possible for academic consideration to compensate for every consequence of illness, injury, other serious cause, or extenuating circumstance affecting a student’s academic progress. However, academic consideration, where appropriate, may help to minimise the impact of such circumstances by providing a mechanism to vary assessment requirements of a subject or to avoid some of the usual consequences of failure in a subject.

To apply for academic consideration you must submit an application via SOLS, as well as relevant documentation which is submitted in accordance with the process for each campus (eg Student Central in Bld 17 for Wollongong campus). The Subject Coordinator will be automatically notified of your request once you have submitted documentation and they will approve or decline your application. Students should log on to SOLS to see if their request has been approved. In the event of a genuine emergency, you must notify the Subject Coordinator as soon as possible by whatever means practical at the time, and follow with a formal academic consideration request as soon as you are able to.

The full policy on Student Academic Consideration is found in the Policy Directory on the UOW website.

Students who make five or more applications for academic consideration within six calendar months will be requested to contact the Sub Dean/Associate Dean of the Faculty for academic advice. Appointments to see the Sub-Dean can be made by emailing hbs-central@uow.edu.au or by phoning 02 4221 3492.

If a student is requesting Student Academic Consideration for a clinical component of a subject, they must state this in their application for Academic consideration.
Plagiarism

In a university, ideas are important, and it is also important to give people appropriate credit for having ideas.

There are several reasons why you should give people credit when using their ideas; three of the more important of those reasons are:

‘fairness to authors and other students, the responsibility of students to do independent work, and respect for ownership rights’ (Kroll 1998, p. 203).

If, in writing an assignment or report, you copy a passage from a book word-for-word and do not give a reference to the book, this is:

- unfair to the author who wrote the passage in the book;
- unfair to other students who do their own work without copying;
- failure to do independent work as expected in a university;
- a breach of copyright.

Giving and gaining credit for ideas is so important that a violation of established procedures has a special name: plagiarism.

Plagiarism means using the ideas of someone else without giving them proper credit. Reproducing the words of other people, either acknowledged or unacknowledged, is plagiarism. It does not matter if these words are re-produced exactly as they were originally published, or whether the person who uses these words alters them; if the ideas are unacknowledged, plagiarism has occurred.

That ‘someone else’ may be an author, critic, journalist, artist, composer, lecturer, tutor or another student. Intentional plagiarism is a serious form of cheating. Unintentional plagiarism can result if you do not understand and use the acceptable scholarly methods of acknowledgment. In either case, the University may impose penalties which can be very severe.

Using words within inverted commas and referenced is a quotation. Assignments are meant to be written in your own words. Direct quotation should only be used in circumstances where the quotation adds to the richness of the assignment.

Over many years, procedures have been developed for acknowledging ideas in all forms of expression. In published writing, for example, authors are expected to cite references from articles and books on which they have relied, and to give written thanks to people who have helped them in preparing their work.

There are several methods for giving credit in written work. The Section 3 of this handbook demonstrates methods that are acceptable to the School of Nursing, Midwifery & Indigenous Health. A good way to gain a better understanding of acknowledgement practice is to read articles published in quality academic journals.
Acknowledging Sources of Quotations

Students are required to access the University website on Plagiarism for examples of acknowledging sources of quotes, ideas, paraphrasing, and how to reference information that is common knowledge.


How to Avoid Plagiarism

Unwitting plagiarism is often the result of poor study methods. The habit of copying verbatim (word-for-word) from a source as you read is dangerous. It is easy to forget that the notes you make are verbatim and to later write them into an assignment or report. The only material you should write verbatim are those absolutely delightful, pithy, witty or incisive phrases which you need to make a special point in your assignment or report. The distinction between what needs to be acknowledged and what is common knowledge is not always clear. As you gain experience in expressing yourself, you will learn to discriminate and you will learn the acceptable practices for acknowledgment in the disciplines in which you study. But while you are learning, always play safe and acknowledge, acknowledge, acknowledge.

References:

Section 2: Assessment Information for Students

1. The assessment requirements for each subject are set down by the subject coordinator, in keeping with the University, Faculty and School policies. Where there is more than one lecturer/tutor involved in planning the subject, the assessment requirements have been determined by the teaching team concerned under the leadership of the subject coordinator, and must be implemented consistently across the subject.

2. All details of the assessment requirements for each subject will be communicated to the students in the subject outline provided to students through eLearning or USB stick. This information will include all assignments, tests, seminar papers, tutorial presentations, examinations, attendance requirements, distribution of marks, compulsory assessments, due dates and penalties.

3. Assessment in each subject will comprise at least two (2) separate pieces of work and satisfactory completion of the Clinical Assessment Profile in clinical subjects.

4. Unsatisfactory performance in, or non-completion of the clinical component of a subject, for any reason, will result in a Fail grade in the subject.

5. Clear written information will be given when it is necessary to pass every component of the assessment or any particular component(s) of the assessment. In order to be awarded a Pass for a subject, all minimum requirements for the subject must be met.

6. Unless otherwise specified, assignments are due by 4:00pm on the due date specified.

7. The responsibility for ensuring that work is submitted by the due date lies with the student. The onus of proof of submission is on the student, not the subject coordinator. Recognition of submission by the School resides in the student receipt which forms part of the assignment cover sheet. Students should retain the signed student copy as evidence of submission.

8. **Wollongong Campus assignment submission:** Each assignment should be submitted to HBS Central, 41.152, (9.00 am – 5.00 pm) or after hours placed in the assignment chute provided in the door of the Centre. If an assignment is placed in the chute after hours, students may collect the receipt from 41.152 the next working day after submission.

   **Bega Campus assignment submission:** Students should obtain a plain sheet of pink paper on top of the assignment box and attach it to the assignment so that it covers the HBS assignment submission cover sheet at the Bega Access Centre in Auckland Street.

   **Shoalhaven Campus assignment submission:** Each assignment should be submitted to the Administration Assistant in the Nursing Education Centre (NU.03) (9.30am-4pm) and placed in the Nursing Assignment Box. If an assignment is placed in the Assignment Box after hours, students may collect the receipt from the Nursing Administration Officer in NU.03 the next working day after submission.

   **Southern Sydney Education Centre assignment submission:** Coversheets are available from either room G01 or next to the assignment box which is located next to the back door on the ground floor. Assignments may be submitted between 9am-5pm Mondays-Thursdays and 9am-2pm Fridays. An after hours submission box is located on the ground floor at the back door. Receipts will be
issued on submission. Students may collect a receipt from G01 the following working day for assignments submitted after hours.

*Hong Kong assignment submission and collection of receipts:* Please contact Hong Kong Programs Offices 852 2314 9222.

9. Assessments will be marked and assessment results and marked assignments will be available to students by 21 days after the date of submission. In exceptional circumstances, Subject Coordinators may notify of an extension to this timeframe via SOLS mail and in this case assessments will be returned no later than 28 days after submission. Marked assignments will be handed out in class or be available for collection during academic consultation hours OR according to the arrangement announced by the Subject Coordinator. In accordance with University Policy marked assignments will usually only be retained by the Subject Coordinator/Tutor for 21 days after the declaration of the marks for that assignment. After that time any uncollected assignments will be destroyed.

10. Students are required to make a **copy** of each assignment prior to submission. This copy is to be retained until the assignment is returned to the student with feedback.

11. Students attending distant clinical placement when an assignment is due may post their assignments in to their local campus. The date of submission by post will be considered to be the postmark date stamped on the assignment envelope. Note that it is not generally necessary to use Express Post as long as the envelope is clearly postmarked. However, approved late submission or other requirements of the Subject Coordinator may necessitate use of Express Post. If Express Post is used you will need to specifically request that the Post Office postmark your envelope, as Express Post envelopes do not normally carry a postmark.

12. Late submission of an assessment task without an approved extension of the deadline is not acceptable. Marks will be deducted for late submission at the rate of 5% of the total possible marks for that particular assessment task per day. This means that if a piece of work is marked out of 100, then the late penalty will be 5 marks per day (5% of 100 possible marks per day). The formula for calculating the late penalty is the total possible marks x 0.05 x number of days late. For example:

   Student A submits an assignment which is marked out of 100. The assignment is submitted 7 days late. This means that a late penalty of 35 marks will apply (100 x 0.05 x 7). The assignment is marked as per normal out of 100 and is given a mark of 85/100, and then the late penalty is applied. The result is that the student receives a final mark of 50/100 for the assignment (85 (original mark) – 35 marks (late penalty) = 50/100 (final mark)).

   Student B submits a report which is marked out of 20. The report is submitted three days late. This means that a late penalty of 3 marks will apply ((20 x 0.05 x 3). The report is marked as per normal out of 20 and is given a mark of 17/20, and then the late penalty is applied. The result is that the student receives a final mark of 14/20 for the report (17 (original mark) – 3 marks (late penalty) = 14/20 (final mark)).

   For the purposes of this policy a weekend (Saturday and Sunday) will be regarded as two days.

13. No marks will be awarded for work submitted either: a) after the assessment has been returned to the students or b) more than two weeks after the due
date, whichever is the sooner. Notwithstanding this, students must complete all assessment tasks to a satisfactory standard and submit them, regardless of lateness or loss of marks, where submission is a condition of satisfactorily completing the subject.

14. Fail grades are arrived at after consultation with at least one other marker, except where those grades result directly from a penalty. Both markers will print their names and sign the marking sheet(s) before returning the assignment to the student.

15. Subject Coordinators will advise when and where marked assignments can be collected. It is the student’s responsibility to collect marked assignments. Students are strongly advised to collect all marked assignments and read the feedback provided.

16. Marked assignments will include feedback which takes the form of a grade (pass, credit, etc), a mark (sometimes in the form of a percentage), and sufficient comments and directions to enable the student to further develop academic skills and knowledge. In addition, the name of the assignment marker will be printed on the marking sheet.

17. Students are encouraged to discuss their assignments with teaching staff prior to submission. The purpose of the exercise is to develop the student’s understanding of what the assignment entails. This will usually occur via the eLearning space.

18. Where students wish to prepare their assignment after individual consultation with a member of academic staff, this discussion should take place early and take the form of the student asking questions for clarification. Write the questions down. Give a copy to the academic staff member who may offer suggestions eg. regarding further reading. It is not meant to be a rehearsal of what to write, nor is it intended to provide a preliminary marking or a proof reading. The students should provide the teacher with a copy of an outline of the assignment’s introduction and plan of development plus some, if not all, of the reference list. The teacher will note this copy and keep it for comparison with the actual submission. In this way, both the teacher and student can reflect on the usefulness of the exercise and trace student academic growth. A full draft of the assignment is not required. A first meeting the day before the assignment is due is not appropriate.

19. It is essential that students maintain a University email account. An active email account means that students and lecturers can communicate with each other through this medium. Students are required to consult SOLS at least once a week, preferably more frequently.

20. Students who consider that the mark they have received for a piece of written work or the final grade in a subject does not reflect the quality of their work, and who wish to have the mark reviewed, are encouraged to initiate a student academic grievance procedure, by contacting the marker or subject coordinator as soon as possible. Information on this process is available in the University Course Handbook and detailed in the link below.

21. Engagement with lectures is not mandatory but is highly recommended. Participation in tutorials is considered compulsory. Students must attend 80% of tutorials. Absences of greater than 20% will require appropriate supporting documentation. Students who do not meet the minimum performance level requirements may be given a TF (Technical Fail) grade on their Academic Transcript. For long absences, the student should consult the subject coordinator. In such cases, the recommended course of action may be withdrawal of enrolment from the subject.

Help with writing

The ability to write well is essential for University study. Many students find that they need to improve their writing skills and all students should work at developing more sophisticated writing skills as they progress through their program of academic study. Students who have difficulties with writing that require regular, intensive work need resources that cannot be provided within the School. These students will be referred to, and strongly encouraged to consult, Learning Development, Learning Resource Centre.

The Centre provides information on a range of writing skills required for University study and conducts classes in these skills. The Centre at Wollongong Campus is located Level 3, Building 11.209, phone 4221-3977. Learning Resource Services are also available at:

- **Bega Education Centre** – contact Judy Couchman, ph. 02 6494 7037, email judyc@uow.edu.au or Centre Manager, ph. 02 6494 7035.
- **Shoalhaven Campus** – contact Jeannette Stirling, Ray Cleary Building, Room UG13, ph. 4448 0888, email jstirl@uow.edu.au
- **Southern Sydney Campus** – Joanne Dearlove is available one day per week, ph. 8536 2000 or 0408 635 689, email dearlove@uow.edu.au

Students are strongly encouraged to access the UniLearning website, http://unilearning.uow.edu.au/ This website provides information and demonstrates to students how to write effectively from sentence structure to critical thinking.

Presentation

Presentation of your assignment is very important. There are good reasons for presenting a paper neatly:

1. **So as not to undermine the ideas or argument presented:**
   - Proof-read the script before handing it in. Carelessness costs marks - for example, by leaving out one word you can inadvertently say the opposite of what you intended. It is a good idea to have another person also proof-read your work (this person should not be a fellow student).
   - Make sure your assignment has an appropriate School of Nursing, Midwifery & Indigenous Health cover sheet with the required information supplied. DO NOT use plastic envelopes or folders.
   - Do not put headings, lists, etc. in assignments unless advised otherwise. If you are not clear about this, please check with your Subject Coordinator.
   - Do not use footnotes in undergraduate level assignments.
2. To enable you to gain maximum feedback on your work, you need to give the marker opportunity to comment (see requirements for presentation below).

Requirements for Presentation

- As a graduate of the University of Wollongong you must be computer literate and because of the excellent computer facilities in the university it is expected that **ALL ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE WORD PROCESSED**.
- The main text of the assignment should be presented in Portrait Orientation **not** Landscape.
- The line spacing of the text of the assignment (in English) must be one-and-a-half.
- The print size of the text in the main body of the assignment should be **12 point** (with serif style, such as Times New Roman or Palatino preferred).
- The size of the paper should be International Standards Organisation paper size A4 (297mm x 210mm).
- The paper used should be white opaque paper of good quality.
- The margins on each sheet should be not less than **40mm on the left, 20mm on the right, 30mm at the top and 20mm at the bottom**.
- Place a ‘double return’ before starting a new paragraph and do not use indenting to signify the start of a new paragraph.
- All pages of an assignment, apart from the title page, should be numbered sequentially.
- A Health and Behavioural Sciences assignment cover sheet must be attached to all assignments. The cover sheet is available from HBS Central Webpage
- Assignments should be collated and fastened at the top left-hand corner.
- Use clear simple English.
- Be concise.
- Apply the rules of grammar.
- Check syntax, spelling and punctuation before submitting work.
- Use abbreviations correctly (see Style Manual).
- Avoid jargon, clichés and made-up words.
- Comply with the word limit (+ or - 10%).
- **Type on ONE SIDE OF PAPER ONLY**.
- If the assignment has a marking sheet in the subject outline collate it as the page following the last page of the assignment.
- Assignments should be collated and fastened at the top left-hand corner. **DO NOT PUT ASSIGNMENT(S) IN FANCY FOLDER(S) OR PLASTIC ENVELOPE(S), THE ONLY REQUIREMENT IS THAT THEY BY STAPLED WITH A COVER SHEET AND MARKING SHEET**.
- Give references (author, title, page) to any work of which you make use. See Sections 3 and 4.
Do not use more than 10% of direct quotations in any piece of work. When direct quotes are used of more than 25 to 30 words do not enclose within quotation marks, indent by 1 cm left and 1 cm right margins, and decrease the font size of the quote to 11 point. If the quotation is 25 to 30 words or less put all of the quoted material in single inverted commas and do not indent from the main paragraph, just incorporate the quote into the text of your assignment.


List references cited in the text of the assignment in alphabetical order (using the surname of the first author) on a separate page titled ‘References’ after the text of the assignment, but before any appendices. Do not change the order of authors for a particular source. For example if the authors of a journal article are Wallace, MC, Shorten, A & Russell, KG, DO NOT alter this to Russell, KG, Shorten, A & Wallace, MC.

Do not include a bibliography – only a reference list is required.

Use a variety of sources and include current journal articles as well as books and credible websites.
Section 3: Documentation

The following notes are designed to assist students with the mechanical aspects of their assignment writing. Proper use of these techniques for citation may enable you to avoid any suspicion of plagiarism (see Section 1).

Documentation should be used to refer to the source of, and authority for, statements in the rest of your assignment; or to indicate where fuller details can be found.

In your early assignments you may find it challenging to find a good balance in the amount of ‘documentation of sources’ you provide. It is better to give too much documentation rather than too little.

Citation and referencing are often used interchangeably with the term ‘documentation’.

When to document

Full documentation is an essential part of any assignment. It enables the reader to follow up the source of ideas, interpretations and information in the assignment and it makes clear when you are drawing your own conclusions for the evidence presented. Failure to document adequately and fully is to ignore scholarly rules and may mean that you may not receive full recognition for originality.

Documentation should be used not only to provide the source of a direct quotation but also to give the source for any information, ideas or interpretation that you use.

You must give your source for any direct quotation, but it is equally important when you are paraphrasing another person’s ideas to give your source.

How to set out quotations

Refer:


The Harvard System

In the Harvard System you document your reference by including in brackets after the reference the author who is the source of the idea, followed by the year of publication and the page on which the reference is found, if directly quoting the author. When acknowledging a source of information, the author and year of publication are given. However, this school (along with some other schools and universities) also requires a page number to be given in this situation. The full citation of the work is then given in the reference list, as explained in UOW Library homepage, Related Links, Referencing and citing: http://public01.library.uow.edu.au/refcite/style-guides/html/
Section 4: Marking Criteria

Students should be aware that markers usually look for the following qualities in a written piece of work:

- evidence of appropriate reading
- understanding of the relevant aspects
- depth of analysis
- logical development of your arguments
- relevance of the argument to the topic
- clarity of expression
- correct spelling and grammar

Students should refer to individual assessment criteria in the Subject Outline for each subject for details of the particular criteria that will be applied to each assessment task.
Section 5: Glossary of Terms

Analyse
Separate or break the subject matter into its parts to discover their nature, proportion, function and relationships.

Argue
Systematically support or reject a position by presenting reasons and evidence for acceptance or rejection, while indicating your awareness of opposing points of view.

Comment
Make a critical observation about the subject matter; be careful not to cast too wide a net here, or to write in too many generalisations.

Compare
Find similarities and differences between two or more ideas, events, interpretations etc. Ensure that you understand exactly what you are being asked to compare. For example, if asked to compare two nursing theories, on which aspects should you focus? Should you be concerned with the details of the theories and how they apply clinically? Should you include a comparison of the influences that shaped the development of each theory?

Contrast
The remarks on ‘compare’ also apply to ‘contrast’. Usually the difference is that you should concentrate on dissimilarities.

Critique
A critique is a kind of analysis, but being ‘critical’ implies something more than merely analysing. Criticising implies making judgements, expressing opinions. Specifically, a critique is an evaluation. In an analysis we ask What are the components? How is it put together? but in a critique we ask What is its value? To evaluate anything implies judging it. In a critique, you must not only give your judgement, you must say why (substantiate it).

Define
Provide clear, concise, authoritative meanings, in which you address the nature or essential qualities. Details are not necessarily required, but you may wish to cite the boundaries or limitations of the definition, since meanings can extend beyond simple definitions. Consider the ‘class’ to which a concept belongs and whatever differentiates it from all others in that class (for example, a nursing diagnosis).

Describe
Recall facts, processes or events. You are not asked to explain or interpret. Try to provide a thorough description, emphasising the most important points.

Discuss
Present a view, that of others and/or your own. This is likely to entail both description and interpretation. Your opinion should be supported by arguments and evidence.

Enumerate
Provide a list or outline form of reply. In such assignments, you should recount, one by one, but concisely, the points required.

Evaluate
Here you are asked to appraise in order to make a judgement, which means considering both strengths and weaknesses.
**Explain**

This will require you to analyse in order to assign or interpret meanings clearly. You should avoid merely describing or summarising, for your focus should be on the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of a particular issue, with the aim of clarifying reasons, causes, effects.

**Illustrate**

Clarify, exemplify or elucidate by presenting a figure, picture, diagram or concrete example.

**List**

Provide an itemised series or tabulation, which may often be expressed in point form.

**Outline**

Give an organised description or an ordering of information in which you state the main point, but omit details. Present the information in a systematic arrangement or classification.

**Prove**

Confirm or verify. You should establish something with certainty by citing and evaluating evidence, or by logical reasoning.

**Relate**

When showing relationships, your answer should emphasise connections and associations in a descriptive manner.

**Review**

Re-examine, analyse and comment briefly (in an organised sequence) on the major points of an issue.

**State**

Formally set forth a position or declare definitely. Usually details and examples can be omitted.

**Summarise**

Provide a brief statement or an account covering the main points in sequence or by assimilating parts into a general comment: omit details.

**Trace**

Give the development, process or history of a thing, event or idea, usually by proceeding from the latest to the earliest evidence or development.

Reference: