



# Study Information

## Demand Hours

Demand Hours are the time to which each student is notionally committed.

### Full-time students

In the case of full-time students this is 44 hours per week. For each 9 credit point unit a typical break down is:

- 3 timetabled hours/week (time spent at lecturers, tutorials, engaged with online or
- other learning package, clinical or other placements)
- 8 hours/week devoted to assessable (4 hours) and non-assessable (4 hours) tasks
- 11 hours total workload/week
- 143 hours per 13 week semester

### Undergraduate program

Demand hours for assessment tasks in the undergraduate program are notionally allocated on the basis of:

- 12 demand hours per 1000 words
- 6 demand hours per 1 hour examination
- 12 demand hours per 15 mins of oral exam/class presentation

### Graduate program

Demand hours in graduate programs are notionally allocated on the basis of:

- 8 demand hours per 1000 words
- 8 demand hours per 15 mins oral exam/class presentation

# Assessments

Assessment of student performance in any unit is continuous or progressive and is determined at the end of the semester in which the unit is completed. The grade for that unit is based on the total marks gained. A grade is final when it has been approved by the Academic Board of the Sydney College of Divinity.

**Within the Sydney College of Divinity, the development of assessment packages is based on an understanding of demand hours derived from the following principles:**

1. The educational model used is that of adult learning. Each class is a community of adult learners, lecturer and students together. The desired end is not simply to impart information to students but for them to develop into self-directed, self-motivated learners. Their own experience and learning is an essential ingredient in the learning process.
2. Students have only a limited amount of time that can be expended on a course unit. No course unit is entitled to more student time than any other unit for equivalent credit. (Clearly there is some latitude for units with a large praxis component.) Overall student loads per semester can make demands on only a set amount of time in a student's week.
3. Each course unit involves a range of educational tasks: lectures, reading, note taking, tutorials, presentations, essays etc. Assessment tasks make up only a percentage of learning tasks, and can therefore demand only a corresponding percentage of the time allocated to that unit.

## Extensions of time for completion of assessment tasks

Students must submit all assignments by the due dates set by lecturers as published in the Course Unit Booklets.

### Late Penalty

Late assignments without an approved extension will attract an automatic penalty deduction of 5% of the

marks available for the item of assessment for every day (including weekends and holidays), or part thereof, beyond the date and time of submission (or any extension granted).

Assignments submitted without an approved extension beyond 10 days after the due date will receive a zero mark and NOT be annotated by the lecturer.

**Example** – Student submits an assignment worth 50 marks 4 days late:

Total mark available = 50

Penalty: 4 days late = 5% of 50 = 10 mark penalty

The student's original mark is 40

Final mark = 40 – 10 = 30

## Grounds for Extension

**An extension of an assignment's due date may be granted on the following grounds:**

- Medical illness (certified by Medical Certificate)
- Extreme hardship
- Compassionate grounds

In such cases an extension of up to 28 days may be granted without penalty but only if requested before the assignment due date. The student should submit an "Application for Extension" including supporting documentation to the Teaching Body for authorising and signing by the Lecturer/ Registrar/Academic Secretary prior to the due date. The student will then be informed of the result of the request.

In extreme cases, extensions beyond 28 days may be granted. Such extensions must be applied for in writing, including supporting documentation, to the Teaching Body setting out the extreme circumstances. The appropriate Teaching Body's committee will consider such an unusual extension and notify the student of the outcome in writing.

If the unit assessment includes an examination and an extension is granted arrangements will be made for an alternative examination to be given to the student within the extension period. This information is attached to all course unit guides given to SCD students.



## Weighing of Assessment Tasks

The overall length of assessment tasks are as follows for a 9 credit point unit:

- undergraduate programs: AQF 5, 6: 4,000 words or equivalent; AQF 7: 5000 words or equivalent
- postgraduate programs (AQF 8, 9): 6,000 words or equivalent

Assessment tasks, eg portfolios, that fall outside the items included in the grid require approval from the relevant Discipline Coordinator.

## Grading System

### **PASS (P) 50-64%**

The grade will be awarded where there is evidence that a student has undertaken the required core work for the topic and has demonstrated sound knowledge /understanding/competencies /skills required for meeting topic outcomes and satisfactorily completing essential assessment exercises. The student would normally have attained a sound knowledge of matter contained in set texts or reading materials, and demonstrated a good general level of familiarity with major academic debates, approaches, methodologies and conceptual tools.

### **CREDIT (C) 65-74%**

The grade will be awarded where there is evidence that a student has undertaken all of the required core work for the topic and additional work in wider areas relevant to the topic, and has demonstrated a sound level of knowledge /understanding /competencies/skills required for meeting topic outcomes and completing assessment exercises at a proficient standard. The student would normally have attained a sound knowledge of matter contained in set texts or reading materials and have done wider reading, and demonstrated familiarity with and the ability to apply a range of major academic debates, approaches, methodologies and conceptual tools. Students should have a reasonable opportunity of reaching this grade provided they have completed all course requirements, demonstrated proficiency in the full range of course objectives and shown considerable evidence of a sound capacity to work with the range of relevant subject matter.

### **DISTINCTION (D) 75-84%**

The grade will be awarded where there is evidence that a student has undertaken all of the required core work for the topic at a high level and considerable additional work in wider areas relevant to the topic, has demonstrated advanced knowledge /understanding/competencies/skills required for meeting topic outcomes and completing assessment exercises at a high standard.

The student would normally have attained an advanced knowledge of matter beyond that contained in set texts or reading materials and have done considerable wider reading, and have demonstrated a broad familiarity with and facility at applying a range of major academic debates, approaches, methodologies and conceptual tools. The grade should reflect very high quality work which shows the student generally works at a level which is beyond the requirements of the assessment exercise and is developing a capacity for original and creative thinking.

**HIGH DISTINCTION (H) 85-100%**

The grade will be awarded where there is evidence that a student has undertaken the required core work for the topic at a high level and considerable additional work in wider areas relevant to the topic, has demonstrated the acquisition of an advanced level of knowledge/ understanding/ competencies/skills required for meeting topic outcomes and passing the range of topic elements at the highest level. The student would normally have attained an in-depth knowledge of matter contained in set texts or reading materials and undertaken extensive wider reading beyond that which is required or expected. The student would have consistently demonstrated a high level of proficiency at applying a range of major academic debates, approaches, methodologies and conceptual tools and combining a knowledge of the subject matter of the topic with original and creative thinking. The grade is reserved for recognition of the highest level of academic achievement expected of a student at a given topic level.

**SATISFACTORY (S)**

The grade will be awarded in a topic that is assessed only on a pass or fail basis, where a satisfactory level of performance and participation has been achieved. The grade may be awarded to reflect:

- that the student has achieved mastery of the topic content; and
- that the student has satisfactorily completed topic requirements or contractual requirements where these form a prerequisite or condition of passing, or continuing with a program of study.

Satisfactory is awarded on a pass/fail basis and a score would not normally be assigned.

**FAIL (N) 0-49%**

The grade will be awarded if a student is unable to demonstrate satisfactory academic performance in the topic or has failed to complete essential topic elements or required assessment tasks at an acceptable level, in accordance with topic objectives.

This grade also applies where there is evidence of gross errors, plagiarism or negligence in regard to the course requirements.

**EXTENSION (E)**

This grade may be given under extenuating circumstances, such as illness, accident, misadventure or any other serious problem which make it impossible for the student to complete assignment(s) by the end of the semester. An overall extension for a unit may be given when the student has completed at least one of the prescribed assessment tasks.

The fact that several pieces of written work for different units are due within a short period is not a valid excuse for the granting of an extension. Students are expected to plan their study, employment and extracurricular activities so that they are able to submit work by the due date. Upon completion of the work any grade can be given. The date of completion is determined by the relevant lecturer, in light of the relevant SCD policy, normally within a month of the commencement of the following semester. The revised final grade will be submitted to the Coursework Committee with the results for the following semester. For the purposes of monitoring, an 'Explanation of Grades' ProForma should be submitted. A student's request for an extension, in writing, should be available to the monitor.

**INCOMPLETE (I)**

This grade is used when normally one of the assessment tasks for a unit is incomplete. The student will have previously provided an explanation to the Teaching Body Academic Board in writing clearly stating the reasons that extra time is being sought. It will lead to no grade higher than a pass upon the completion of the work by the student. The date of completion will be determined by the relevant lecturer, in light of the relevant SCD policy, normally within a month of the commencement of the following semester. The revised final grade will be submitted to the Academic Standards Committee with the results for the following semester. For the purposes of monitoring, an 'Explanation of Grades' ProForma together with student's request in writing needs to be attached.

**UNAVAILABLE RESULTS (U)**

This grade is given where grades are unavailable at the time of monitoring of results through no fault of the student. A covering letter by the Teaching Body explaining the reasons for U results must be submitted during the Semester Monitoring of Results.

**WITHDRAWAL (W)**

The Withdrawal grade is awarded where the student withdraws from a unit in accordance with the rules governing withdrawal.

**SATISFACTORY PROGRESS (SP)**

The Satisfactory Progress grade is used where a unit of study, requiring one piece of assessment (eg. Research Essay, Research Project), extends across more than one semester. This will automatically flag that no final result is due until a later semester, which will be an amended grade. This grade is also used when a research essay or thesis has been submitted for examination and the final result is still to be resolved. Coursework units that extend across more than one semester will be required to submit a grade for monitoring at the completion of the unit.

**UNSATISFACTORY PROGRESS (UP)**

The Unsatisfactory progress grade is used where a unit of study continues into the following semester and a student is judged to not be progressing satisfactorily. If a student receives this grade, he or she, in consultation with his or her lecturer/supervisor, will be required to submit a plan to the Academic Dean detailing how the student intends to complete the unit on time. The study plan must be received by the Academic Dean before the commencement of the following semester.

## Table of Grade descriptors

The general description of each of the grades in the following table is the overarching statement of the principles that discriminate between each of the grades.

The subsidiary descriptions (*Reading, Knowledge of topic, Articulation of argument, Analytical and evaluative skills, Problem solving, Expression and presentation appropriate to the discipline, Oral presentation skills, Tutorial preparation, Participation and interaction with others*) amplify the general description. The subsidiary descriptions are guides to the general description. Student work at any grade will satisfy some of the subsidiary descriptions without necessarily satisfying all subsidiary descriptions.

Descriptor	High Distinction (H) 85-100%	Distinction (D) 75-84%	Credit (C) 65-74%	Pass (P) 50-64%	Fail (N) 0-49%
<b>General Description</b>	Outstanding work that comprehensively attains the required outcome(s) showing superior knowledge, understanding, analysis, critical interpretation, presentation, and originality.	Excellent work that substantially attains the required outcome(s) showing a high level of knowledge, understanding, analysis, critical interpretation, presentation, and some originality.	Work that soundly attains the required outcome(s) showing a good level of knowledge, understanding, analysis, presentation, and some evidence of critical interpretation.	Work that satisfactorily attains the required outcome(s), with adequate knowledge, understanding, analysis, and presentation.	Work that fails to attain the required outcome(s), lacking in basic knowledge, understanding, analysis, and presentation.
<b>Reading</b>	Evidence of wide, relevant, and independent reading beyond core texts and materials.	Evidence of relevant reading beyond core texts and materials.	Evidence of sound understanding of core texts and materials.	Evidence of having read core texts and materials.	Inadequate evidence of having read any of the core texts and materials.
<b>Knowledge of topic</b>	Outstanding factual and conceptual knowledge incorporating highly distinctive insight into deeper and more subtle aspects of the topic.	Substantial factual and conceptual knowledge incorporating distinctive insight into deeper and more subtle aspects of the topic.	Extensive factual and conceptual knowledge.	Satisfactory factual and conceptual knowledge to serve as a basis for further study.	Inadequate factual and conceptual knowledge.
<b>Articulation of argument</b>	Sustained evidence of imagination, originality, and independent thought.	Evidence of imagination, originality, and independent thought.	Ability to construct well-reasoned and coherent argument based on discriminating use of evidence.	Ability to construct sound argument based on evidence.	Inability to construct coherent argument.
<b>Analytical and evaluative skills</b>	Evidence of highly developed analytical and evaluative skills.	Evidence of well-developed analytical and evaluative skills.	Evidence of developed analytical and evaluative skills.	Evidence of analytical and evaluative skills.	Insufficient evidence of analytical and evaluative skills.

<b>Problem solving</b>	Ability to solve or resolve non routine or very challenging problems.	Ability to solve or resolve routine or challenging problems.	Ability to use and apply fundamental concepts and skills to basic problems.	Evidence of problem solving skills.	Insufficient evidence of problem solving skills.
<b>Expression and presentation appropriate to the discipline</b>	Highly developed skills in expression, presentation, and documentation appropriate to wider audiences.	Well developed skills in expression, presentation, and documentation appropriate to the discipline and audience.	Good skills in expression, presentation, and documentation.	Adequate skills in expression, presentation, and documentation.	Inadequate skills in expression, presentation, and documentation.
<b>Oral presentation skills</b>	Highly developed skills in Delivery; Content; Structure; Use of Visual Aids and Response to Questions.	Well developed skills in Delivery, Content, Structure, Use of Visual Aids and Response to Questions.	Good skills in Delivery, Content, Structure, Use of Visual Aids, and Response to Questions.	Adequate skills in Delivery, Content, Structure, Use of Visual Aids and Response to Questions.	Inadequate skills in Delivery, Content, Structure, Use of Visual Aids and Response to Questions.
<b>Tutorial preparation, participation and interaction with others</b>	Evidence of outstanding preparation, highly developed skills in making focused and constructive contributions to discussion, in listening to and responding to the contributions of fellow members of the group.	Evidence of thorough preparation, well developed skills in making a constructive contribution to discussion, in working well with other members of the group and in valuing their contributions.	Evidence of sound preparation, good skills in actively contributing to discussion and in responding positively to the views of others.	Evidence of adequate preparation, adequate skills in participating and in listening to others while relying on others to do most of the work.	Insufficient evidence of preparation, participation, and interaction with others.

## Grade point average (GPA)

The grade point average is calculated as follows:

$$\text{GPA} = (4H + 3D + 2C + 1P + 0N) \div E$$

where H is the number of credit points gained at H grade

D is the number of credit points gained at D grade

C is the number of credit points gained at C grade

P is the number of credit points gained at P grade

N is the number of credit points attempted but which earned an N grade

E is the total number of credit points attempted, excluding units with W and S