





## IMPLEMENTING THE SENATE DECISIONS OF 2 JUNE 2010 *RE* ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES AND TOOLS

Proposed by Prof Divya Singh (Deputy Registrar), Mr Robert Bezuidenhout (DSAA) and Dr Paul Prinsloo (ODL Coordinator) at a meeting on 24 August 2010. It is suggested that all of the follow-up actions be completed by **March 2011** and phased-in implementation to be completed by mid 2012 (unless indicated with )

RECOMMENDATIONS	FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS
<p><b>Recommendation 1:</b> Noting that the frequency of formative assessment is a problem, we recommend that <b>self assessment</b> be promoted in modules with few (two) assessment opportunities. Quality standards and procedures to be developed.</p>	<p>The DCLD be tasked to develop specific guidelines regarding the purpose, format and quality criteria for the use of self-assessment activities in study materials.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 2:</b> Possibility of using <i>myUnisa</i> for the implementation of peer assessment be investigated. Quality standards and procedures to be developed.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Referred to the <i>myUnisa</i> team to develop principles for peer assessment on <i>myUnisa</i>. If the purpose of peer assessment is formative and informal, the principles will be sufficient to provide guidance to academic departments and students.</li> <li>2. Should the peer assessment however be envisaged to form part of the formal (and therefore marks are recorded) formative assessment, DSAA will develop procedures based on the principles.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Recommendation 3:</b> Noting that portfolios are currently being used a means of assessment, we recommend that at least one module per college using portfolios, be used as test cases for the tool. Training should also be provided.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Procedures are currently in place. DSAA will provide a narrative to provide guidance to academic departments.</li> <li>2. The DCLD and School Tuition and Learner Support Committees are encouraged to increase the use of portfolios (formative and summative) by 10 % in 2011 where at all appropriate.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Recommendation 4: Case studies</b>                      A description of an event concerning a real-life or simulated situation, usually in the form of a paragraph or text, a video, a picture or a role-play exercise. This is followed by a series of instructions to elicit responses from learners. Individuals or small groups may undertake case studies. Used in Analyses of situations; Drawing conclusions; Reports on possible courses of action. <i>MyUnisa</i> implementation of case studies to be explored.</p>	<p>The DCLD be tasked to develop specific guidelines regarding the purpose, format and quality criteria for the use of case study activities in study materials, and in formative and summative assessment.</p>

<p><b><u>Recommendation 5: Re weighted discussion forums</u></b> Reflection, used as a learning and assessment tool, promotes students-interaction. The discussions have to be graded to allow for more assessment opportunities and to maximize student participation.</p>	<p>Referred to DSAR. Key stakeholders to be involved.</p>
<p><b><u>Recommendation 6: Re Projects and Capstone Projects</u></b> A project is any exercise or investigation in which the time constraints are more relaxed. Projects are: practical, comprehensive, and open-ended, and tackled with assessor guidance and support. Projects can involve individuals or a group of students. The choice of the project is directed by the assessor, usually by providing the learner with a topic or brief for the investigation. It should be noted that comprehensive range of skills can be assessed. The use of Capstone projects must be investigated to allow for integrated assessment; especially at qualification level.</p>	<p>The issue of capstone projects is primarily a curriculum issue and is therefore referred to the DCLD to develop specific guidelines regarding the purpose, format and quality criteria for capstone projects in qualifications. Colleges should be consulted.</p>
<p><b><u>Recommendation 7: Re Simulations</u></b> Simulations mirror actual activities or conditions. They are suitable for assessments where demonstrations and observation will provide reliable and valid results, but where, for a number of reasons, it is difficult or not practicable to assess under actual conditions. <i>Possible uses:</i> Online practicals for the experimental sciences. Proprietary software exists for such activities. Appropriate departments to identify modules that might benefit from such innovation.</p>	<p>Part of Simulated Work Experience (SWE) which will be included in the revised Work-Integrated Learning Policy.</p>
<p><b><u>Recommendation 8: Re Alternative MCQs used by the Department of Decision Sciences</u></b> These provide students with options beyond the usual all or nothing approach. Students receive partial credit for other responses. The model to be revisited and used as a test case.</p>	<p>DSAA to follow up with the Department of Decision Sciences, develop guidelines and training for implementation by departments where appropriate.</p>
<p><b><u>Recommendation 9:</u></b> Use of Rubrics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Rating scales or scoring guides that consist of specific pre-defined performance criteria used in assessing student performances.</li> <li>ii. Two types Identified: Holistic rubrics and Analytic rubrics</li> <li>iii. Use online tools such as Rubistar</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The DCLD be tasked to develop specific guidelines regarding the purpose, format and quality criteria for the use of rubrics in formative and summative assessment as well as develop a number of examples of holistic and analytic rubrics.</li> <li>2. ICT and Dr Gugu Moche to develop a proposal regarding the use of Rubistar.</li> <li>3. The Unisa Assessor training to include reference to and training in the use of rubrics.</li> <li>4. School Tuition and Learner Support Committees to increase the use of rubrics in formative and summative assessment where</li> </ol>

	appropriate.
<p><b>Recommendation 10:</b> Development of a Scientific Editor</p> <p>Such a tool is necessary for scientific modules. This will allow for effective online assessment and online submissions.</p>	<p>The Deputy Registrar, DSAA, Dr Moche and ICT to meet as soon as possible to include the use of Scientific Editor in the broader initiative of onscreen marking at Unisa.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 11:</b> Provision of laptops to students</p> <p>To allow for online submissions and effective timely feedback, we recommend that a phased-in approach to supplying students with laptops be investigated. Such an approach can start with post-graduate students followed by final year students and other cluster of students.</p>	<p>Prof Havenga to convene a meeting with stakeholders to finalise the proposal and prepare the process for going out on tender.</p> <p> <b>Due date:</b> By latest June 2011.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 12:</b> Use of podcasts</p> <p>To allow for feedback on assessed objects, we recommend the use of podcasts to be downloaded on MyUnisa. Noting that the download is immediate, lecturers can provide commentary on assessed objects with immediate effect.</p>	<p>Referred to the myUnisa team. The possibility should be investigated on how to use student podcasts in teaching as well as allow students to submit podcasts as part of their formative and summative assessment.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 13:</b> The Deputy Registrar and DSAA ensure the implementation and tracking of assessment initiatives.</p>	<p>Currently underway.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 14:</b> The comprehensive list provided by ODL Task Team 3: Assessment is accepted as broad starting framework for guiding colleges in exploring the appropriateness of alternative assessment practices.</p>	<p>The list should become part of the Unisa Assessor training.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 15:</b> A task team convened by the Deputy Registrar to draw up standards and procedures for the alternative assessment practices listed by ODL Task Team 3.</p>	<p>The Deputy Registrar and DSAA will convene a meeting as soon as possible with a number of stakeholders to finalise issues regarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turnaround time</li> <li>• The role of 2<sup>nd</sup> examiners</li> </ul> <p> <b>Due date:</b> By 4 October (date when the agenda for the STLSC of 18 October closes.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 16: ISSUES TO BE INCLUDED FOR CONSIDERATION:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Oral exams</li> <li>2. Take home examinations</li> <li>3. Group assessment practices</li> </ol>	<p><b>Re Oral Exams:</b> Procedures are already in place. DSAA to finalise a narrative to provide guidelines to academic departments.</p> <p><b>Re Take home examinations:</b> The same procedures that apply to projects and portfolios will apply to take-home examinations. DSAA to</p>

	<p>provide narrative guidelines.</p> <p><b>Re Group assessment practices:</b> There are already examples of group assessment practices at Unisa (eg the SBL). Two scenarios exist:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <i>Where students self-organise</i> and choose to submit a formative assignment as a group. Guidelines need to be developed in case where students are requested to grade each others contributions.</li><li>2. <i>Where Unisa accepts the responsibility to allocate students to groups for specific assignments online:</i> referred to the myUnisa team for developing guidelines after which DSAA will develop the procedures. The same guidelines and procedures may apply in non-online group assignments.</li></ol>
<p><b>Extra 1:</b> The use of mobile technologies in MCQ assessment.</p>	<p>DSAA to compile a report on the first pilot in the School of Law.</p> <p> <b>Due date:</b> By 4 October (date when the agenda for the STLSC of 18 October closes.</p>

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