

## ELTU Policy on Assessment and Feedback Practices

### 1. Purpose of the Policy

This internal policy on assessment and feedback aims to provide a framework to guide and inform ELTU staff on the purpose, procedure and practices of assessment and its outcomes.

The policy aims to ensure that:

- Assessments are carried out with integrity and fairness and that they are valid, reliable and in line with best practice.
- Assessment feedback mechanisms and processes to promote learning are adopted across ELTU courses.
- Assessment administration is systematic and pedagogically sound; and
- Assessments within the ELTU align with the *CUHK Policy on Assessment of Student Learning in Taught Programmes*.<sup>1</sup>

### 2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all taught courses delivered by the ELTU.

### 3. Assessment Principles

Assessments should be designed with reference to the following principles.

3.1 Assessments should be valid. That is, they should be designed to measure intended learning outcomes at an appropriate level, and results should allow for meaningful inferences to be made about these outcomes for individual test-takers.

3.2 Assessments should be fair.

3.2.1 In the setting of assessments, coordinators will consider the complexity of the task and ensure that, through the course design, students will have had sufficient exposure (in-class or out-of-class opportunities) to the items or skills measured prior to the assessment. Assessment scheme weightings will roughly reflect the time spent in class focusing on the individual outcomes, with the understanding that some prerequisite skills, including language proficiency, may also be assessed.

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<sup>1</sup> The *CUHK Policy on Assessment of Student Learning in Taught Programmes* can be found here: <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/clear/qm/A5-1.pdf>. Additional Examples and Guidelines for Reference can be found here: <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/assessment/>.

- 3.2.2 Assessments will be designed and implemented with consideration to diversity within the student body.
  - 3.2.3 Assessment schemes will keep both workload and cognitive demand at a reasonable level for students. When creating or revising assessment schemes, Coordinators are advised to consider the demands of similar courses, and attempt to ensure that workloads are roughly comparable, taking into consideration the specific pedagogical factors of the situation.
  - 3.2.4 Coordinators may consider anonymizing grading where practical and beneficial, such as by having teachers grade students other than their own.
  - 3.2.5 Teachers will strive for transparency by
    - 3.2.5.1 providing students with access to assessment information at the start of each course; this information, including assessment description, marking criteria, weighting, submission requirements, and feedback channels and timelines will be included in course information booklets and on the class learning management system site; assessment schemes will not change within a teaching semester, except under extraordinary circumstances, on a team basis, as approved by the Director;
    - 3.2.5.2 providing students with rubrics and descriptors prior to the assessment, which will enable them to understand quality expectations at different grade levels;
    - 3.2.5.3 familiarizing students with assessment procedures prior to the assessment;
    - 3.2.5.4 explaining the relationship between assessments and learning outcomes; and,
    - 3.2.5.5 providing example responses to assessment tasks, when possible.
  - 3.2.6 The delivery of assessments will be standardized across different sections of a single course.
  - 3.2.7 Assessment prompts will be developed and reviewed by multiple teachers (or entire course teams) as a “check and balance,” to identify and remove prompts which are unclear, biased, or are at an inappropriate level in relation to the targeted cognitive load.
- 3.3 Assessments should be practical.
- 3.3.1 When assessments are designed, the demands of creating, administering, and marking these assessments on teaching staff, nonteaching staff, rooms and equipment will be considered.

- 3.3.2 Rubrics and their descriptors will be designed to expedite the grading process for teachers. Rubrics should make the task of grading easier, not harder.
- 3.4 Assessments should be reliable. The reliability of an assessment and the grading thereof is achieved through the use of assessment tools and adherence to assessment procedures.
  - 3.4.1 Assessment criteria. Assessment criteria will be developed for each assessment and discussed within teams before the start of term to ensure all teachers have a clear understanding of the relationship between the assessment, the criteria and the course content.
  - 3.4.2 Criterion referencing. All assessments will be criterion-referenced with scales and descriptors developed to ensure a common understanding of what constitutes students' performance levels. These descriptors should be developed for all new assessments.
  - 3.4.3 Standardization. Standardization is carried out prior to marking to align teachers to performance levels and familiarize teachers with the use of scales and descriptors. Teachers may be asked to grade several sample scripts prior to the standardization meeting.
  - 3.4.4 Double marking. Coordinators are encouraged to verify interrater reliability by double-marking a sample of assessments. Teachers are encouraged to check their own reliability by double marking the same script on different days/at different times of the day. In cases where grade distributions are unusual, double marking should be implemented more aggressively.
  - 3.4.5 Moderation of marks. At the end of the course, Coordinators are responsible for checking and moderating all course marks submitted by course teachers. This may include asking teachers to double mark a small sample of assessments, chosen randomly or from sections which lie at the extremities of the overall course grade distribution.
  - 3.4.6 Review of assessment practices. The effectiveness of assessments in measuring attainment of course learning outcomes will be reviewed and revised if necessary at the end of the teaching and learning cycle. When assessments are leading to skewed grading results (high percentages of extreme grades), Coordinators will review the cognitive load required by the assessment tasks, appropriateness of descriptors, and overall assessment workload and revise as appropriate.
- 3.5 Assessments should be authentic. For skills-based outcomes, where applicable, assessment design will strive to contextualize tasks to replicate the real-world experience for which the learner is being prepared, as far as is practical.

#### **4. Types of Assessment**

- 4.1 Coordinators and teaching teams have the discretion to decide on the types and number of assessments included in a course and to evaluate how combinations of assessment can both promote student learning and achieve assessment purposes of measuring proficiency and skill development.
- 4.2 For courses assessing students on group work, assessment schemes should employ a variety of assessment types, such that marks for group work are balanced by marks for individual work.
- 4.3 Assessments can be summative or formative, standalone or inter-related.

#### **5. Feedback Practices**

- 5.1 In general, students should receive feedback on all assessments, whether formative or summative.
- 5.2 Purpose and quality of feedback: Feedback aims to support student learning by encouraging reflection and self-directed learning and by initiating discussion between teachers and students. Feedback should thus clearly highlight gaps in a student's knowledge or performance and be worded to support ongoing learning. Feedback should also refer back to assessment domains and scales and performance levels.
- 5.3 Types of feedback: Feedback can be written (on a written assignment, a feedback sheet or via LMS feedback) or verbal (face-to-face or recorded using a feedback tool such as Camtasia).
- 5.4 Timeliness of feedback: Students should receive feedback soon after an assessment so that they have sufficient time to make improvement. Coordinators should ensure the timeliness of the feedback loop by planning sufficient feedback time or consultation sessions when preparing course schedules.

#### **6. Assignment Submission, Collection, and Return**

- 6.1 All assignments submitted must be accompanied by a signed declaration of originality. In the case of group work, all students of the same group should sign the declaration. All students in the group will be responsible should there be any plagiarized contents in the group project.
- 6.2 Assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based (e.g. essays, presentation outlines, etc.) must be submitted via VeriGuide (unless directed otherwise by course requirements), where the declaration, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. The receipt should be printed, signed, and submitted by the student(s).
- 6.3 Any assignments submitted without the VeriGuide receipt or properly signed declaration will not be graded by teachers and will receive a zero mark. At the teacher's discretion, students can submit their assignments electronically, place

them in the teachers' mailboxes (during office hours) or the ELTU assignment drop box (outside office hours). Teachers may also identify particular office hours when students can submit assignments in person.

## **7. Late Submission of Assignments**

Late submission without prior approval from the teacher will lead to a deduction of 3 marks (out of 100) per day of lateness for the assignment concerned. The teacher reserves the right not to accept any assignments submitted 10 calendar days beyond the given deadline.

## **8. Absence from Assessments**

Students who have been absent from in-class assessments without prior approval from the teacher and are unable to present an appropriate medical certificate in support of physician-recommended sick leave will be given a zero mark to the assessment concerned and not be allowed to sit for a make-up test. Students absent from an assessment must send any supporting evidence to the teachers within five working days for the teacher's consideration. The teacher reserves the right not to grant any make-up assessments after that.

## **9. Plagiarised Assessments<sup>2</sup>**

9.1 When a teacher detects plagiarism in a student assignment, the teacher will consider the type and extent of the plagiarism, as well as the nature of the assessment.

9.1.1 In cases of obvious, severe plagiarism, the case should be referred to the Faculty Disciplinary Committee.

9.1.2 For cases of minor, unintentional plagiarism, and for formative assessments, teachers may consider penalizing student marks, including the possibility of zero marks for an entire assessment, without necessarily referring the case to the Faculty Disciplinary Committee.

9.1.3 Teachers should speak directly with students about the issue to ensure a clear understanding of why their work is considered plagiarized, as well as to advise about avoiding such problems in future work.

9.2 Teachers will consult their Coordinators prior to referring any case to the Faculty Disciplinary Committee. Coordinators can also be consulted if teachers feel uncertain how to handle a specific case. Coordinators may in turn consult the Assessment Committee or the Director if they are unsure how to proceed.

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<sup>2</sup> CUHK Policy and Regulation on honesty in academic work can be found here: [http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academic\\_honesty/](http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academic_honesty/).

9.3 Students will be informed if their cases are being referred to the Faculty Disciplinary Committee.

## 10 Return of Assignments

10.1 Individual teachers are responsible for returning graded assignments to students either in class, through the LMS, or through arrangements made directly with students. In special circumstances when students need to collect their assignments outside class time, teachers are advised to do so by making special arrangement with the General Office staff.

10.2 General turnaround time across the Unit should be within 4 weeks, as noted in the "Policy on Assessment of Student Learning in Taught Programmes", p.9, Paragraph 39.

## 11 Grade Calculation

11.1 The ELTU Mark Grade Conversion Table will be used to calculate final assessment grades. (Appendix 1a)

## 12 Release of Grades

Students will be informed that all provisional grades/marks received during the course are subject to revision until the ELTU Assessment Panel has endorsed the final grades. Registry is solely responsible for the release of grades.

## 13 Grade Appeal Guidelines<sup>3</sup>

13.1 The University categorises student complaints as *formal* and *informal*. Informal complaints are handled at the department/unit level. If an informal complaint is not resolved, a formal complaint can be lodged, but these would be handled by the Chairman of the student's Major Department, rather than the ELTU. The procedures in this document are designed to address informal complaints which are received by the ELTU. These procedures have been visualized in a flow chart for ease of reference (Appendix 1b).

13.2 The University distinguishes between appeals based on procedural errors (such as incorrect calculations) and errors that question the academic judgement of the marker. While formal complaints can only be lodged based on procedural issues, the ELTU will consider other grade-related issues in informal complaints as a non-obligatory service to students.

13.3 Students who wish to appeal their grade on an individual assignment may do so by following these steps:

13.3.1 Step 1: The student should approach the teacher who assigned the grade. The teacher should verify that no error was made, and explain

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<sup>3</sup> These procedures reference University policies which can be found in *Procedures for dealing with Student Complaints*, available at <https://www.gs.cuhk.edu.hk/download/ComplaintProcedures.pdf>

any feedback as the student requires to help the student understand the factors contributing to the grade.

13.3.1.1 Unless the complaint concerns a procedural issue, this step must be done within two weeks of the date on which the graded assignment was made available to the student. Procedural issues can be appealed until two weeks after final course grades are released.

13.3.1.2 If the student is unable to contact their teacher because of extraordinary circumstances, he/she may approach the Course Coordinator regarding the appeal.

13.3.2 Step 2: If the complaint remains unresolved after the meeting with the teacher, the student may approach the Course Coordinator.

13.3.2.1 The student should provide justification for a grade change which refers to the rubric and is specific.

13.3.2.2 In cases where the Course Coordinator was the original marker, the student should approach the Director instead.

13.3.3 Upon receiving a grade appeal, the Course Coordinator should take the following steps:

13.3.3.1 The Course Coordinator should verify that the student has already approached the teacher, unless there are in exceptional circumstances, and should inform the teacher concerned of the appeal.

13.3.3.2 Students should be informed that the appeal may result in an increase in grade level, an unchanged grade, or a drop in grade level.

13.3.3.3 If the grade appeal is based on a procedural issue, the Course Coordinator should consult the Director and/or the Assessment Committee to advise on a fair solution.

13.3.3.4 In cases where the issue is not procedural, the Course Coordinator should re-mark the assessment or ask an experienced team member to re-mark the assessment.

13.3.3.5 Group projects can be appealed by a single member if all members of the group agree. The Course Coordinator should inform all group members of the appeal to allow for objections prior to re-marking; any dissenting members would lead to the appeal being denied. In cases where assessment marks are a combination of individual and group components, all components should be re-marked for all group members.

13.3.4 When the assessment has been re-marked, the following procedures should be implemented:

13.3.4.1 If the re-marked grade is within one letter sub-grade of the original mark, the appeal is denied and the original grade stands.

13.3.4.2 If the remark is not within one letter sub-grade of the original mark, the student is awarded the re-marked grade. The new, re-marked numeric grade should be used for the calculation of the final course grade.

13.3.4.3 For group assessments which include both an individual and group component, each of these components will be considered separately when applying these standards. That is, if either component is assigned a grade more than one sub-grade different than the original, the re-marked numeric score will be used for that component when calculating the final course grade.

13.3.4.4 The Course Coordinator should inform the student(s) of the outcome, keeping a written record of the case, and informing the Director. This should normally be done within ten working days of the Course Coordinator having received the complaint.

13.3.4.5 For grade adjustment of a final course grade that has already been submitted, the course teacher would need to prepare a letter addressed to the Head of Registration and Examinations Section (RES) for his/her follow-up actions. This needs to be endorsed by the Director of ELTU before onward submission to RES.

## **14 Student Confidentiality and Data Protection**

Students' data should be respected in all aspects related to assessment.

14.1 Teachers will not leave any graded or ungraded assignments unattended.

14.2 Teachers will remove students' names and SIDs from all written or speaking samples used for moderation or standardization purposes.

14.3 Students' consent will be sought if the assessment will be used for course materials development and/or research purposes.

14.4 Students should collect the graded assignments within one month upon their availability, unless otherwise agreed between the teachers and the students.

14.5 Students' assignments submitted electronically are to be stored for 6-7 years on ELTU servers.

Endorsed on 25 September 2020

## ELTU Assessment Guide for Teachers: Mark-Grade Conversion Table

Mark-Grade Conversion		100 marks	50 marks	40 marks	35 marks	30 marks	25 marks	20 marks	15 marks	
Score Range	Excellent	A*	90 – 100*	45 – 50*	36 – 40*	31.5 – 35*	27 – 30*	22.5 – 25*	18 – 20*	13.5 – 15*
			86 – 90	43 – 45	34.4 – 36	30.1 – 31.5	25.8 – 27	21.5 – 22.5	17.2 – 18	12.9 – 13.5
	Very Good	A-	80 – 85.5	40 – 42.8	32 – 34.2	28 – 29.9	24 – 25.7	20 – 21.4	16 – 17.1	12 – 12.8
	Good	B+	76 – 79.5	38 – 39.8	30.4 – 31.8	26.6 – 27.8	22.8 – 23.9	19 – 19.9	15.2 – 15.9	11.4 – 11.9
		B	72 – 75.5	36 – 37.8	28.8 – 30.2	25.2 – 26.4	21.6 – 22.7	18 – 18.9	14.4 – 15.1	10.8 – 11.3
		B-	68 – 71.5	34 – 35.8	27.2 – 28.6	23.8 – 25	20.4 – 21.5	17 – 17.9	13.6 – 14.3	10.2 – 10.7
	Fair	C+	64 – 67.5	32 – 33.8	25.6 – 27	22.4 – 23.6	19.2 – 20.3	16 – 16.9	12.8 – 13.5	9.6 – 10.1
		C	60 – 63.5	30 – 31.8	24 – 25.4	21 – 22.2	18 – 19	15 – 15.9	12 – 12.7	9 – 9.5
		C-	56 – 59.5	28 – 29.8	22.4 – 23.8	19.6 – 20.8	16.8 – 17.9	14 – 14.9	11.2 – 11.9	8.4 – 8.9
	Pass	D+	53 – 55.5	26.5 – 27.8	21.2 – 22.2	18.6 – 19.4	15.9 – 16.7	13.3 – 13.9	10.6 – 11.1	7.9 – 8.3
		D	50 – 52.5	25 – 26.3	20 – 21	17.5 – 18.4	15 – 15.8	12.5 – 13.1	10 – 10.5	7.5 – 7.8
	Failure	F	0 – 49.5	0 – 24.3	0 – 19.8	0 – 17.3	0 – 14.9	0 – 12.4	0 – 9.9	0 – 7.4

- For a student to be awarded an overall 'A' grade for a course, s/he should demonstrate consistently outstanding performance in various assessment tasks throughout the semester.
- Please refer to the ELTU Grade Descriptors for a more detailed account of general performance characteristics for each grade range.
- Please refer to (i) assessment forms/rubrics for individual assignments provided by course coordinators and (ii) results of standardization exercises of each course for a more detailed account of specific performance characteristics for each grade range when assessing students' work.
- Under normal circumstances, for any student to achieve a particular course grade, s/he should have achieved a total course score reaching the 'lower bound' of the corresponding grade-range (e.g. A student must reach 80.0 marks or above to get an A-). However, should there be marginal cases where a student scores between two grade-ranges (e.g. a total score of 79.7 marks), the teacher may request upgrading the student's overall course grade by providing justifications for the coordinator's consideration and approval. Generally speaking, such discretion may be exercised when the student is considered to have performed consistently at the higher grade level in most of the assessment tasks throughout the course.

\* The conversion table is based on the CUHK Guide to Grading System for Undergraduate Programmes. Since the 'A' grade covers a much wider score range than any other grade along the spectrum, teachers are advised to avoid scoring any component above the 90 percentile in order to avoid obscuring the weighting among various components in a task.

## ELTU Assessment Guide for Teachers: Grade Descriptors

<p><b><u>Excellent</u></b> <b>Grade A (86 – 100)</b></p>	<p><b>Outstanding performance on ALL learning outcomes.</b> Demonstrates the ability to synthesize and apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would surpass the normal expectations at this level and typical of standards that may be common at higher levels of study. The ‘A’ grade should be reserved for truly excellent work that exceeds the level expected for the majority of students and are expected to be achieved only by a small minority (Senate paper, p.5; p.15).</p>		
<p><b><u>Very Good</u></b> <b>Grade A- (80 – 85.5)</b></p>	<p><b>Generally outstanding performance on all or almost all learning outcomes.</b> Demonstrates the ability to synthesize and apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would fully fulfill the normal expectations at this level and occasionally reaches standards that may be common at higher levels of study.</p>		
<b>Essay/Writing</b>			<b>Presentation/Speaking</b>
<b>Content</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Coherence</b>	
<p>The A essay fully addresses all parts of the writing task. It includes a clear and well-elaborated thesis; offers rich content by demonstrating remarkable research efforts through judicious selection of quality materials and wide reading from various academic sources; and shows a strong ability to synthesize ideas, analyze issues and express original or critical thinking in a sophisticated and cogent manner. The content is ‘meaty’ and ‘packed’ such that the reader feels significantly taught by the author, sentence after sentence, paragraph after paragraph.</p>	<p>The A essay reaches a high level of eloquence and sophistication. It is marked by stylistic finesse, showcasing an excellent command of language use through employing an extensive range of syntactic structures and vocabulary with full flexibility and high precision as well as appropriate tone that best fulfills the intended writing purpose.</p>	<p>The A essay is well-structured and carefully organized. The title and introduction are engaging; paragraphing is aided by effective topic sentences; the transitions are skillfully and seamlessly done without necessarily employing explicit cohesive markers but rather through accurate exposition of material and logical development of argument characterized by depth and complexity. The essay imparts a feeling of wholeness and unusual clarity.</p>	<p>The A presentation encompasses similar features to the A essay in that it is well-structured and clearly developed; delivered in accurate and sophisticated language; supported by remarkable research efforts; and presented in a professional layout.</p> <p>The A-grade verbal delivery is articulate, eloquent and highly fluent. Phrasing and chunking are used skillfully to achieve fluency while the use of stress and intonation fully supports the expression of meaning. Speech is very fluid and spontaneous.</p>

<p><b>Good</b>  <b>Grade B+ (76 – 79.5)</b>  <b>Grade B (72 – 75.5)</b>  <b>Grade B- (68 – 71.5)</b></p>	<p><b>Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, <u>OR</u> high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for slightly less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.</b> Demonstrates the ability to apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a comprehensive manner that would sufficiently fulfill the normal expectations at this level.</p>		
<p><b>Essay/Writing</b></p>			<p><b>Presentation/Speaking</b></p>
<p><b>Content</b></p>	<p><b>Language</b></p>	<p><b>Coherence</b></p>	
<p>The B essay is generally effective in addressing all parts of the writing task. It includes a clear thesis; offers substantial content by demonstrating considerable research efforts through appropriate use of a good range of academic sources; shows a good ability to discuss ideas in a clear manner. On the whole, a B essay renders the reading experience a pleasurable one for it offers relevant information in both quantity and interest-value with few distractions.</p>	<p>The B essay is marked by generally good mastery of grammar and lexis. Sentence structure and range of vocabulary are pleasingly varied. Sentences produced are frequently grammatically or lexically error-free. While occasional errors may occur, they do not seriously affect readers' understanding of meaning.</p>	<p>The B essay is generally well organized. The opening serves to draw the reader in; the specific points are logically ordered, well-developed and unified around a clearly organization principle that is apparent throughout the text. The transitions between paragraphs are mostly smooth with good control over a range of cohesive devices. The closing paragraph is conclusive and thematically related to the opening.</p>	<p>The B presentation encompasses similar features to the B essay in that it is generally well-structured and clearly developed; showcases generally a good mastery of grammar and lexis; supported by considerable research efforts; and presented in a clear and consistent layout.</p> <p>The B-grade verbal delivery is mostly done fluently and skillfully while hesitations are infrequent. Minor lapses such as pronunciation errors or awkward chunking are detectable but such inaccuracies are rare and do not impede comprehension of the listener.</p>

<p><b><u>Fair</u></b>  <b>Grade C+ (64 – 67.5)</b>  <b>Grade C (60 – 63.5)</b>  <b>Grade C- (56 – 59.5)</b></p>	<p><b>Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes.</b> Demonstrates the ability to partially apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would meet the basic requirement at this level.</p>		
<p><b>Essay/Writing</b></p>			<p><b>Presentation/Speaking</b></p>
<p><b>Content</b></p>	<p><b>Language</b></p>	<p><b>Coherence</b></p>	
<p>The C essay fulfills the basic requirement by addressing all parts of the writing task, although some parts may be more adequately covered than others. Its research efforts are evident and sources selected are appropriate but the reader finds the information delivered to be thin and commonplace. One reason for such impression is that the ideas are typically cast in the form of vague generalities that prompt the confused readers to ask: “In every case?” “Exactly how large?” “Why?” “But how many?” Overall speaking, the C essay, though gets the job done, lacks both imagination and intellectual rigor.</p>	<p>The C essay shows a fairly acceptable command of language use: it relies rather heavily on simple syntactic structures and operates within a limited range of vocabulary. Besides being a bit choppy, a C essay tends to follow a predictable (hence monotonous) subject-verb-object pattern. Grammatical errors occur when attempting more complex structures, which often results in vagueness or confusion and causes the reader to shift focus from the intended meaning. The choice of words is occasionally marred by unconscious repetitions, redundancy and imprecision.</p>	<p>Overall speaking, the C essay is reasonably well-organized. However, it is evident that despite its ability to express separate pieces of information in an unambiguous manner, there is often weak or unclear linkage among materials. The use of cohesive devices is limited, resulting in unclear or confusing relationships. The transitions between paragraphs are often bumpy; the final paragraph offers only a perfunctory wrap-up.</p>	<p>The C presentation encompasses similar features to the C essay in that it gives an acceptably clear exposition of material but weak development of ideas; operates within limited grammatical and lexical range; and is presented in a fairly consistent layout.</p> <p>The C-grade verbal delivery is generally comprehensible but unnatural at times. Hesitation appears to be frequent and inaccuracies are noticeable. Errors may cause some difficulty for the listener.</p>

<p><b>Pass</b>  <b>Grade D+ (53 – 55.5)</b>  <b>Grade D (50 – 52.5)</b></p>	<p><b>Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes.</b> Addresses the task inadequately by meeting the basic requirement at this level only in some areas while responding minimally with possibly tangential content in others.</p>		
<p><b>Essay/Writing</b></p>			<p><b>Presentation/Speaking</b></p>
<p><b>Content</b></p>	<p><b>Language</b></p>	<p><b>Coherence</b></p>	
<p>The D essay is marked with insufficient or inappropriate content. It lacks a developed introduction; has an unclear thesis; and addresses only some parts of the writing task with little support from literature. Its treatment and development of the subject are as yet only rudimentary. The whole piece, in fact, often gives the impression of having been conceived and written in haste.</p>	<p>The D essay shows a weak control of language: it relies entirely on simple syntactic structures; operates within a very limited range of vocabulary; and states ideas or makes arguments in simple terms. Sentences are frequently awkward and ambiguous while errors are very noticeable and repetitive, often rendering ideas incomprehensible and causing tremendous difficulty for the reader. Evidence of careful proofreading is scanty, if not nonexistent.</p>	<p>The D essay has a poor essay structure where the same ideas may be restated in different ways at different places and coherence is poorly managed. It lacks topic sentences and supporting details. While organization may be present, it is neither clear nor effective.</p>	<p>The D presentation encompasses similar features to the D essay in that it has an unclear structure with inaccurate exposition of material and weak development of ideas; it is delivered in very simple language characterized by grammatical and lexical errors; and its layout lacks consistency and clarity.</p> <p>The D-grade verbal delivery is often incomprehensible and unnatural with frequent hesitations and errors that cause difficulty for the listener. The lack of a rehearsal is evident.</p>

<p><b><u>Failure</u></b> <b>Grade F (0 – 49.5)</b></p>	<p><b>Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.</b> Fails to address the task and likely does not understand what the task requires. In other words, the work completely misses the point.</p>		
<p><b>Essay/Writing</b></p>			<p><b>Presentation/Speaking</b></p>
<p><b>Content</b></p>	<p><b>Language</b></p>	<p><b>Coherence</b></p>	
<p>The F essay demonstrates an inability to grasp the essence of the topic and its treatment of the subject is superficial. It shows a poor structure and offers irrelevant or illogical details, possibly a result of minimal research efforts. In short, the essay falls short of normal expectations of acceptable university writing.</p>	<p>The F essay demonstrates extremely limited control of the language. Its prose is garbled or stylistically primitive. Mechanical errors are frequent and systematic, leading to communication breakdown.</p>	<p>Its theme lacks discernible organization and it has little sense of making a meaningful connection between ideas and paragraphs.</p>	<p>Similar to the F essay, the F presentation shows an illogical structure and inaccurate exposition of material. There is no development of a clear argument. In general, research efforts are minimal if not absent; the layout lacks coherence and clarity; and control of the language is extremely limited.</p> <p>The F-grade verbal delivery is incomprehensible and unnatural with frequent errors, leading to communication breakdown.</p>

- The ELTU grade descriptors are intended to serve as a general guide to assist teachers in interpreting the expected student performance in writing and speaking tasks corresponding to each grade, namely, Excellent (A), Very good (A-), Good (B-range), Fair (C-range), Pass (D-range) and Failure (F) as stipulated by the University’s undergraduate course assessment guide. On the left of the table, a score range is provided for each grade; on the right, you may find first a short description summarizing the overarching characteristics of performance at that grade-range, followed by four more detailed descriptions, for writing and speaking performances typical at the said range.
- The descriptors are meant to help teachers of ELTU courses gain a general understanding of typical performance characteristics in essay writing and presentation tasks. For assessment exercises to be conducted effectively, teachers should always refer to assessment forms/rubrics for individual assignments provided by their course coordinators and results of standardization meetings in each course, which would provide more solid information on the specific assessment criteria based on the targeted learning outcomes and samples of student work of the said course.
- The descriptors are prepared by Olive Cheung and Pauline Tam with reference to “*Assessment of Student Learning in Taught Programmes*” (approved by the Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning in June 2010); “*Sample Grade Descriptors*” by Carmel McNaught and Keith Thomas (published by CLEAR in April 2011); “*Course Assessment Guidelines for Undergraduate Programmes*” (updated on CUSIS in Feb 2014); “*Guide to Grading System for Undergraduate Programmes*” (updated on CUSIS in Nov 2013); and Gong, G., & Dragga, S. (1995). *A writer’s repertoire*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.
- For an updated version of CUHK’s Assessment Policy, please visit <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/assessment/> and <https://www.cuhk.edu.hk/clear/qm/>

ELTU Guidelines for Dealing With Informal Student Grade Appeals (Summary)

