ASSESSMENT @ SYDNEY
PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

PREAMBLE
Assessment practice at Sydney is recognised as central to our students’ learning and achievement of unit and program/course learning outcomes. Assessment practices promote academic integrity and ethical behaviour for both students and staff.

The Principles apply at both unit and program/course level, individual and group assessment tasks:

- **PROGRAM FOCUS**
  Assessment strategies for each unit will include consideration of the assessment profile across the whole program to ensure that these skills/knowledge/attributes expressed in program learning outcomes are introduced, developed and mastered.

- **FIRST YEAR FOCUS**
  Specific attention needs to be given to first year coursework (undergraduate and postgraduate) to induct students into the assessment practices and culture of higher education.

- **LEADERSHIP**
  Those responsible/accountable at program/year and unit coordination level have a vital leadership role to play in the design and implementation of assessment tasks and overall strategies.

**PRINCIPLE 1:**
ASSESSMENT PRACTICES MUST ADVANCE STUDENT LEARNING
- Assessment practices align with goals, context, learning activities and learning outcomes
- A variety of assessment tasks are used, while ensuring that student and staff workloads are considered
- Assessment tasks reflect increasing levels of complexity across a program and foster enquiry-based learning
- Constructive, timely and respectful feedback develops student skills of self and peer evaluation and guides the development of future student work

**PRINCIPLE 2:**
ASSESSMENT PRACTICES MUST BE COMMUNICATED CLEARLY TO STUDENTS AND STAFF
- Unit of study outlines are available in week 1 and communicate the purposes, timing, weighting and extent of assessment in sufficient detail to allow students to plan their approach to assessment
- Unit of study outlines explain the rationale for the selection of assessment tasks (e.g. group task) in relation to learning outcomes
- Procedures exist to ensure that all staff involved in teaching of a unit share a common understanding of assessment practices
- The process of marking and of combining individual task marks is explicitly explained in the unit outline

**PRINCIPLE 3:**
ASSESSMENT PRACTICES MUST BE VALID AND FAIR
- Assessment tasks are authentic and appropriate to disciplinary and/or professional context
- Assessment incorporates rigorous academic standards related to the discipline(s) and is based on pre-determined, clearly articulated criteria that students actively engage with
- Assessment will be evaluated solely on the basis of students’ achievement against criteria and standards specified to align with learning outcomes
- Assessment practices address issues of equity and inclusiveness to accommodate and build upon the diversity of the student body so as not to disadvantage any student

**PRINCIPLE 4:**
ASSESSMENT PRACTICES MUST BE CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVED AND UPDATED
- Assessment tasks and outcomes are moderated through academic peer review and used to inform subsequent practice
- Assessment is regularly updated to ensure alignment with program learning outcomes or graduate attributes
- Professional development opportunities that are related to design, implementation and moderation of assessment are provided to staff