

Assessment Of Studies

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1 Summary

This guideline defines HAMK's unified principles for assessing students' competence acquired in their studies. The guideline describes the assessment of studies, the improvement of grades and the reassessment procedures of grades. A course is the basic unit of assessment, improvement and reassessment. This guideline applies to Bachelor's and Master's degree studies and open university studies completed by students at HAMK.

A separate guideline governs the recognition and accreditation of prior learning, but demonstration-based competence is assessed based on this Assessment of Studies guideline.

This guideline does not apply to the School of Professional Teacher Education.

2 Assessment-related definitions

EQF - The European Quality Framework is the European framework of degrees and other competences. Each country joining the European education area creates its own national framework of degrees and competences based on the EQF.

FiNQF - The National Quality Framework is the national framework of degrees and competences, which is based on the EQF. The NQF describes the level of degrees and competences nationally. The Finnish Government Decree on the National Framework for Qualifications and Other Competence Modules (120/2017) entered into force on 1 March 2017. The Bachelor's degree is at the FiNQF level 6 and Master's degree is at the FiNQF level 7.

Module - The curriculum consists of modules. The extent of a module is mainly 15 credits and it can consist of one or more courses in the revised curriculum of 2021. As from 2021 modules are study entities in the curriculum. In older curricula of 2014-2020, modules are courses and it was possible to complete implementation parts (assessable parts).

Course - A course is the basic unit of study administration and planning. Implementation and implementation plans are created for courses. Students enrol on the course implementation and are graded course by course.

Learning outcomes - Learning outcomes are specified for each module and courses of the modules. The learning outcomes describe clearly what the students are expected to know upon completion of the module to pass the module. The learning outcomes must be in line with the FiNQF level of degree, be achievable to the student and it must be possible to assess their implementation.

Object of assessment - The objects of assessment are based on the learning outcomes of a course / module. Assessment is targeted at knowledge, skills and working methods, which are described in the learning outcomes.

Assessment criteria - The criteria for assessment describe on which level or how well the student achieves the learning outcomes of the module / course. Teachers mainly define the assessment criteria on an assessment scale of 1–5. In exceptional cases, the criteria for assessment is specified on the level of pass (HYV = passing grade). Assessment criteria are included in the curriculum of each module / course.

Assessment methods - The assessment methods describe which methods teachers use to collect reliable data about the student's competence. In addition to the teacher, the student, peer students and labour market contacts may take part in the assessment.

Study register - The study register is a database of an electronic system that stores data related to the student's study history. At HAMK, the study register system is part of the Peppi system. All completed studies and their grades will be available in the study register system. The student will see the grades in Pakki student desktop or in the Tuudo mobile app.

3 Principles of competence assessment

HAMK applies phenomenon-based learning that includes competence-based curricula and competence-based assessment ideas. The competence-based thinking has been adopted from the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). Degree learning outcomes are defined based on the legislation that guides the operations of universities of applied sciences as well as the National Framework for Qualifications and Other Competence Modules (FiNQF). In addition, the degree learning outcomes are created based on the needs of the Finnish labour market and foresight analyses.

The teachers assess the students' competence in theoretical and practical knowledge and skills. In addition, they assess and support the development of students' expertise. At HAMK, we value student-centred approach, community spirit and inquisitive approach to the recognition of modern and future phenomena in the world of work.

The curriculum specifies the degree learning outcomes, which are visible in the module and course learning outcomes. The principles for assessment of modules and other studies are as follows:

- Assess competence, not performance
- Assessment is based on learning outcomes and assessment criteria written in the curriculum
- The level of degree will be taken into account (FiNQF 6 or 7) and also the development of common competences (lifelong learning, ethical competence, work community skills, innovativeness) according to the degree objectives (generic competences)
- Teachers plan the competence assessment based on the curriculum assessment criteria and as part of the module implementation. They document it in the course implementation plan.
- Assessment objects and methods are chosen so that they can be used to make a competence assessment based on the assessment criteria.
- The students will be awarded grades that match their module competence, i.e., the fulfilment of learning outcomes set for that module.
- The scale used for module assessment is usually 5-HYL (failed), in exceptional cases HYV-HYL (approved-failed)
- The modules in the curricula used before autumn 2021 may include competences (assessment items) that are assessed separately. They may relate to a certain profession, further studies or

qualifications. These assessment items (competences) may be awarded with a grade on a scale of HYV-HYL (passed – failed) or 5-HYL (failed) If necessary, assessment item (competences) may be created for an implementation as parts of an implementation. These parts will be added to all students on the implementation. The head of the degree programme is responsible for the implementation made up of implementation parts

- In the new curricula 2021, assessment is only for separate courses included in the module, there is no assessment for the module as earlier.
- HAMK uses multimethod assessment that reflects the learning outcomes

4 Grading

Students receive grades for modules that they have completed. The teacher gives each student an individual grade even if the studies were carried out in a group or as project assignments. Students have the right to know how assessment criteria are applied to assessing their competence.

Module grades and grades of assessment items are given no later than one calendar month after the implementation plan's end date. Grades are entered in the study register. Students who have not completed the whole module will be awarded grades and credits for the parts they have completed with an acceptable grade.

The teachers will find detailed, technical instructions on entering grades and other assessment information to the study register in the study assessment instructions in the HAMK intra.

Assessment documentation used as a basis for grading must be retained by the degree programme for at least one year from the course / module implementation end date. The student is responsible for saving documents of partially completed studies if it takes more than a year to complete them after the implementation has ended.

The student must complete the module according to the schedule that is indicated in the implementation plan. If the student does not complete the module according to the schedule, s/he must agree with the module teachers on how to complete the module.

Module assessment is teamwork. Each teacher is responsible for assessing their part and entering possible partial completions in the student record on the Peppi Teacher's desktop. During the module implementation, the teachers will enter assessments into Moodle. In the 2021 curricula where modules are sets of studies, each course is graded separately and not the module as a whole.

In 2020 or older modules where the module is a course, the teacher responsible for the module compiles the assessments, gives the overall grade and enters the grade and the credits in the study register immediately when all module parts have been completed with an approved grade, but still within one month during the grading period. If some part of the module is failed, the student needs to agree with the module teachers on how to complete the module.

Grades are usually recorded on the date that the teacher gives the grades. However, the ends of semesters are exceptions. In January, the grades earned during the previous calendar year must be recorded for 31 December. In August, the grades of previous academic year are recorded for 31 July. Recording grades for the right calendar year and academic year is statistically relevant and important for the Kela's monitoring of students' progress.

The thesis supervisor enters the grades for each part of the thesis in the study register as the thesis advances. Eventually, the supervisor also enters the overall grade of the completed thesis. Thesis parts have been defined in the Thesis guideline and detailed, technical instructions on how to enter grades into the study register are available in the Peppi Teacher's desktop instructions.

Procedures for situations where students have prior learning that they wish to have recognised as part of their degree with credit transfer or skills demonstration are included in the guideline governing recognition and accreditation of prior learning (RPL).

5 Assessment scales

There are two valid assessment scales. Assessment scales always include module / course assessment criteria, which describe the competence related to that grade. All students taking the same module or course are assessed on the same scale.

5.1 Scale of 5 – HYL

Generally, grading is based on a numerical scale from 5 to HYL (failed).

Assessment items of a module can be assessed on either the 5–HYL scale or the HYV-HYL (approved-failed) scale. The deciding factor is the significance of the assessment from the perspective of further studies, employment or official regulations. Studies assessed on the 5–HYL scale may be improved with retakes.

- 5 (excellent)
- 4 - 3 (good)
- 2 -1 (satisfactory)
- HYL (failed) the reason for a failed grade must be recorded in the study register

5.2 Scale of HYV – HYL

The HYV-HYL (approved-failed) scale may be used for the module part assessment and for the assessment of a student's first module:

- HYV (approved)
- HYL (failed) the reason for a failed grade must be recorded in the study register

A work placement included in a degree is assessed using the HYV (approved) - HYL (failed) scale.

Professional skills module may be assessed on a HYV-HYL scale of a numeric grade cannot be awarded.

In addition, other studies may be assessed on the HYV–HYL scale if it is not possible to award numeric grades. This must be agreed on before the implementation of studies and it must be mentioned in the implementation plan.

The teacher(s) will tell the students about assessment (scale, criteria, methods) in the beginning of each module when the implementation plan is presented.

5.3 Thesis assessment

On 1 August 2020, the management of theses was transferred to Peppi plugin Wihi. If the student has already received assessments through the implementation, the thesis cannot be continued in Wihi and the assessments are given through existing implementations. Theses not yet assessed through implementations can be started in Wihi and assessed only in Wihi.

Assessment of work started in Wihi are created automatically from the stages of the thesis and transferred to the study register (Peppi) automatically. The final assessment of the thesis is done in Wihi with an assessment form, which gives sub-assessments according to the type of the thesis, which form the final grade of the whole thesis. First the thesis supervisor gives their own assessments and then the 2nd examiner gives their own assessments. Finally, the thesis supervisor modifies their own assessments if necessary and finalizes the thesis statement with an assessment form.

The completed thesis is assessed on the scale of 5–HYL (failed). For further instructions on assessment of theses, see the Thesis Guides.

5.4 Work placement assessment

A work placement that is part of the degree is assessed on the HYV-HYL (approved-failed) scale. For more information on work placement, see a guideline called Work placement in Bachelor's degree programmes.

5.5 Language skill assessment required of employees in the public sector

Both written and oral language skills of employees in the public sector are assessed on a scale of good/satisfactory (Decree 1129/2014, section 7, and act 424/2003, section 6).

6 Public access to grades

Legislation on the openness of government activities and data protection defines access to grades. Numeric grades are publicly available. Written verbal assessments concerning studies completed by

students must not be made publicly accessible nor distributed generally on the information network. The students may view their records in their PSPs.

7 Replacing a failed grade and raising approved grades

Improvement of both failed and approved grades is based on the module learning outcomes; the implementation plan is the basis for competence assessment. The module's teachers use the implementation plan to define the ways to improve a failed or an approved grade.

7.1 Replacing failed grades

Replacing a failed grade may either relate to an entire course or a failed part of an assessment item (competence). Students are entitled to two retakes to replace a failed grade. The retakes should be scheduled to take place as soon as possible after the completion of the course, to ensure that studies progress in due course. A failed grade should be improved at the latest within one year of the completion of the course. If the student does not, despite multiple attempts, achieve an approved grade, they must negotiate with the teacher(s) on the completion of the module or its part and, if necessary, retake the module from the beginning.

It is not possible to improve an approved grade that has been achieved after a failed grade.

If a student registers for a retake of a failed grade and then wishes to cancel it, this must be done at least four working days before the retake date. If a student fails to cancel the registration, that counts as one retake, unless the student produces a valid sick leave certificate.

7.2 Improving approved grades

Improving approved grades generally relates to the entire course. Students may try to improve the grade of a successfully completed module once and it must be done within one year after the completion of studies. The teacher has one month to assess the retake. If the module's themes have been assessed on the 5–HYL (failed) scale, the student can also attempt to improve them once. A failed attempt to improve the grade does not affect the existing grade.

You cannot improve an approved thesis grade.

8 Reassessment procedures

A student dissatisfied with a grade for a module included in a Bachelor's or Master's degree or open university studies or some other studies may request reassessment.

Students not satisfied with their grades for modules or other studies may request reassessment from the teacher concerned. The reassessment request must be made, in written or spoken form, within 14 days of being informed of a grade. The student is considered to have received the grade 24 hours after its entry into the study register.

The teacher(s) deals with the request without delay. A student not satisfied with the teacher's reply may appeal to HAMK's Board of Examiners. The appeal must be made within 14 days of being informed of the teacher's reply concerning the reassessment request.

For further information on filing an appeal to the Board of Examiners, see the Degree Regulations.

9 Dishonesty in module / course completion

Dishonesty in course or module completion, such as cheating in an exam or plagiarism, will always result in failure of the exam, thesis or other project as well as disciplinary hearings, where appropriate disciplinary actions for the student will be decided on. The disciplinary measures are determined in HAMK's Degree Regulations.

10 Guidelines and instructions that complement this Assessment of studies guideline including the Degree Regulations

- Students' guidelines for assessment and Degree Regulations are in pages www.hamk.fi > Students > Studying with us
- Teacher's guidelines and instructions for assessment and Degree Regulations are in HAMK Intra

