Report to the Teaching and Learning Policy Committee

Discussion Item

Topic: Reweighting assessments following the use of the Student Absence Self-Declaration Form

Date of Meeting: November 17th, 2026

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Reweighting assessments following the use of the Student Absence Self-Declaration Form

The Student Absence Self-Declaration Form (SASDF) is used in cases where a short-term medical condition or personal events or circumstances beyond the control of the student seriously impair the student's ability to meet academic obligations. The form may only be used to address short-term absences of up to 72 hours (including weekends) and may only be used once per course per term.

Following the use of the SASDF, the specific accommodation a student may receive is determined by the instructor. As per the form, "accommodation may include: an excused absence; an extended or deferred deadline; a modified schedule for assignments, labs, placements, projects or comprehensive exams; a deferred project; an alternative assignment; or a re-weighting of marks."

Recently, a policy interpretation gap has come to light concerning re-weighting of marks following the use of the SASDF. Specifically, whereas many units and instructors have interpreted the re-weighting as being possible up to the maximum allowable weight for a single assessment for undergraduate students (i.e. 50%, as per FHB III C.10.1.2), some others have understood that the stipulation that a single item cannot count for more than 50 percent of the final grade applies to the original course assessment plan, prior to a student submitting a SASDF. The same question arises with other undergraduate evaluation policies, such as the requirement that the final grade reflects grades from no fewer than 3 assessments (FHB III

C.10.1.2) and the norm that undergraduate students should generally receive notification of 15 percent of their final grade by the withdrawal date (FHB III C.10.1.3).

Appreciating the need to balance student flexibility and instructor workload while at the same time ensuring that undergraduate student evaluation is conducted in a manner that is reliable and valid, we seek feedback from members of the Teaching and Learning Policy Committee on this question, with the possibility of returning with draft policy language that will close this policy interpretation gap and provide clarity to instructors and academic support units.