

College Appeals Committee
School of Health Science
RMIT University

Dear College Appeal Committee Members

Re: Assessment appeals and Mis-calculation of grades

I respectfully would like to put forward an 'Appeal against Assessment' for my final grade in the course MEDS 2103 Integrated Assessment and Diagnosis, which is under the BP187 Bachelor of Health Science (Chiropractic) program, owned by the School of Health Science.

I am appealing based on the following grounds outlined in Section 4 of the **Assessment: Conduct of Assessment and Appeals Policy**.

- Section 4.3.1 The student has evidence that an error has occurred in the calculation of the grade.
- Section 4.3.4 The student has evidence that the assessment did not comply with the University Policies on assessment.

I have already sought a review of my assessment on the 9th December, 2014. I met with Dr. XX who was the course coordinator of MEDS 2103 Integrated Assessment and Diagnosis to discuss the possibility of reviewing the papers and to seek for explanations on the tutorials grades (one of the major assessment in the course). Dr. XX explained that the exam papers were all multiple choices so there would be of less use of reviewing the paper and I accepted his advice. He also explained that his hands were tied and therefore could not change the grade of my assessment unless I got valid grounds that there was a miscalculation of them. I also got feedbacks on components where I lost marks from in the tutorial.

Dr. XX continued explaining that my group had lost **two component scores** in the tutorials, **one on missing classes** and **the other on chatting during tutorials**. I explained to him that I didn't miss any tutorials and I eventually interacted with him the most in class. Dr. XX said that it was unfortunate but he had mentioned in the first class of the tutorials that he was going to assess us as a group, so because one of my group mates had missed classes and there were some unprofessional behaviors (chatting) of my other group mates, the entire group suffered. He also mentioned that he is going to change the assessment criteria next year to have our peers assessing each other's. I thanked him and requested for the marks break down. He said that he was going to send it to me. I thanked him again and left his office.

On the 15th December, 2014, I still hadn't received any marks break down from Dr. XX. Therefore, I sent a follow up email to remind him of the marks break down. Dr. XX sent me the break down at around 10:00am. I immediately calculated my score by adding up the total score of each module. I then realized that there was a calculation error on my score. I scored 79 marks originally, but according to the marks break down, I should be getting 80 (HD). I acted promptly by going to Dr. XX office again and informed him that there was a miscalculation of the grade. He promised that he was going to send an email to help me to amend the grade. He also mentioned that he was not sure whether the people higher up were going to accept it. I haven't received any updates on my marks since then.

I approached the Student Rights Officer on the 17th of December, 2014 at 3:55pm, in the City campus. She explained that the amendment of grade could take up to 6 weeks to be processed and evidenced on blackboard and by that time I would have already missed the deadline of the assessment appeal. She further explained that it would be better if I lodged an appeal based on the other grounds (section 4.3.4) to secure a chance to be fairly assessed.

Besides the mis-calculation of grades which should hypothetically be processing right now, I would also like to submit an appeal as I believed that one of the major assessments has already breached the University Policies on assessment. I would like to give a brief layout of the course outline before I start.

The MEDS 2103 Integrated Assessment and Diagnosis course was made up of 3 parts (Diagnostic Imaging, Neuro-muscular assessment and Integrated Physical Examination-tutorials) and each part was accounted for 33.3% (Except the diagnostic imaging module which accounts for 33.4%). One of the above parts, the Integrated Physical Examination, was an assessment based on continuous performance in the tutorials run by the course coordinator, Dr. XX. First of all, the tutorial assessment was subjective and there were no objective assessment to measure our progress in the tutorials. Secondly, we were assessed as a group which means that everyone in the group is going to get the same mark.

Throughout the course, there were insufficient feedbacks given based on the assessment criteria and the group performance, because we spent majority of our time focusing on the enquiring patient history and management of patients. There was no doubt that we had gained numerous of experience in the tutorials. However, **we didn't know how our group performed in terms of attendance, interaction, misconducts etc.** I believed that this has breached *Assessment policy 1.3 Assessment develops students' abilities to evaluate their own and others' work against agreed standards*

a) *Student develop reflective practices which equip them both to generate and act on feedback according to a set of clearly defined criteria or standards*

d) *Assessment tasks encourage students to reflect on their learning as a lifelong process*
AND

Assessment policy 1.2 d) Where appropriate, assessment feedback informs students of how they can improve

In fact, **the only time** that Dr. XX talked about our performance in the tutorial was in week 4, near to the end of the tutorial. He mentioned that each groups performed pretty okay but there were chatting in classes which wasn't a professional behavior. He then specifically pointed out a group. He also said that there would be a mark deduction to that group. By that time, he wasn't pointing at our group, so there were sufficient reasons to believe that we shouldn't get a mark deduction in chatting. It was possible that we might have marks deducted from week 4 onwards, but there were neither feedback on our performance nor feedback on how we could improve in terms of the assessing criteria (eg. misconduct, attendance, participation etc.).

In addition, according to the Course guide of MEDS 2103 Integrated Assessment and Diagnosis, Assessment Component which suggested that *'100% (of the 33.3%) is allocated to weekly class participation exercises. Each student will be assign to a group. **The grade allocated to the group as a whole will determine the grade of individual group member**'*. I believe that this is a direct breach of *Assessment policy 1.5 a,c*

*Assessment provides an **authentic representation** of student achievement.*

a) *Student can demonstrate their learning competencies and capabilities through their assessment.*

c) *Assessment tasks are evaluated using a criterion-referenced approached; that is, according to specific criteria that are clearly articulated and communicated to students and **are not dependent upon performance of their cohort.***

It was very unfair to have marks lost because of the mis-behaviours of other students. It was even more unfair to have marks taken off because of the absence of one student. Among all the assessment criteria in the tutorial, **attendance was the most quantifiable criterion which can be used to differentiate students' grade.** However, because of the absence of one student, the entire group suffered the consequence of it. This made the assessment unauthentic and is very discouraging to group members that have attended classes.

Lastly, I believed that *Assessment policy 1.6 Assessment is fair and provides for student diversity has been breached*

b) *Assessment tasks are **varied, authentic** and increase in complexity as students progress through their programs.*

As per I mentioned above, our group were marked down because of the misconducts and the absence of a student. Our tutorial group was diverse and there were 2 mature age students which had families to look after. That was the reasons why one of them missed classes. Based on that, I believed that the tutorials did not provide an environment to accommodate the needs of parenting. In fact, our group were marked down because of an absent of a dad. It was really ironic to hear that our group had marks deducted because a dad was trying to fulfil his family commitment.

I am a diligent student and I have devoted most of my time on studying. I am highly aware of my performance because of many scholarships opportunities and awards that I may be eligible of. It is therefore very important for me to maintain a certain GPA score. In the MEDS 2103 course, I scored 85% on the other two components; however, because of the tutorials, my marks were pulled down to 79% (DI). I sincerely hope that the College appeal committee can **rectify the problem with the 1) mis-calculation of grade and 2) review the Integrated Physical Examination component assessment** based on the information that I supplied.

Thank you very much for your consideration
Sincerely,

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