HU ASSESSMENT POLICY
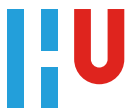## EXPLANATION AND SUBSTANTIATION

HU Services Education, Research and Student Affairs, may 2025

CONTENT

INTRODUCTION

The HU Assessment Policy consists of two documents: HU Assessment Policy: Quality Requirements and HU Assessment Policy: Explanation and substantiation. The HU Assessment Policy replaces the HU Assessment Framework (2017).

In this HU-wide policy document we lay down the joint agreements regarding assessment for all study programmes of HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht. These joint agreements are formulated as a set of quality requirements. Institutes and/or study programmes relate to the HU Assessment Policy and further implement the assessment policy at the institute and/or programme level.[1] For this elaboration at institute and/or study programme level, we provide a format at ÉÉN HU.

The quality requirements in the HU Assessment Policy apply to all minor degree programmes, associate degree programmes, bachelor's and master's degree programmes at the HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht. The quality requirements are also applicable to non-degree education, including micro-credentials, with each institute deciding whether a separate assessment policy for non-degree education is necessary or whether it is included in the regular assessment policy.

Student success and mission-driven assignments
In the coming years, HU will continue focussing primarily on the ambitions of student success and mission-driven assignments. When designing, implementing, and evaluating education and assessment, the central question is: does what we do contribute to the realisation of these ambitions?

Student success is the broader personal development that students go through during their studies. Without fixing the form or the outcome, student success is about developing the student's potential, about the student learning and flourishing from their own unique orientation and strengths, and about the student being optimally prepared for their future role as a committed professional in a complex and changing society (Schulte et al., 2023).

When designing and implementing education and assessment, it is important to reason from this pursuit of student success. Various working methods are possible. For example, which form of assessment provides room to develop the students potential as much as possible? That is how the pursuit of student success becomes a benchmark for quality.

Mission-driven assignments refer to concrete, ambitious societal issues, for example in the areas of climate, health, digitalisation, safety, and mobility. Students, lecturers,

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1 According to the Board and Administrative Regulations of the HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht, the term 'policy' is used for HU policy that has been adopted by the Executive Board and that serves as a framework for plans of institutes, research centres, and services. However, when it comes to assessment, the term 'policy' is generally used more broadly; at the institutional, institute, and programme level, the term 'assessment policy' is used (Martens, Moerkerke & Metz, 2023).
In addition, 'assessment policy' is one of the components of the assessment web and is as such interwoven with the other components (assessment programme, assessment task(s), assessment literacy and assessment organisation; Van Schilt-Mol & Joosten-ten Brinke, 2023). The term 'assessment policy' is therefore important when discussing and acting on assessment at programme and institute level.

researchers, and partners from the field, work together from different perspectives on solutions to current problems, which are often so complex that they cannot be solved from a single discipline or perspective. They require a smart and creative approach, and intensive collaboration between people and organisations (HU, 2023). An interdisciplinary approach and external focus are essential here.

When designing education and assessment, it is important to consider the extent to which a societal issue is being addressed and whether the possibilities of co-creation have been utilised sufficiently.

Structure of the HU Assessment Policy
We start the HU Assessment Policy with a chapter explaining a number of educational concepts. The objective of this is to arrive at a shared language regarding assessment. These concepts, such as constructive alignment, are important to understand each other in the discussion about assessment and assessment policy, even when different choices are made.

Chapter 2 contains the core of the HU Assessment Policy: the quality requirements. These are arranged around the different components of the assessment web. The quality requirements reflect the minimum requirements regarding assessment quality. Nevertheless, the 'comply or explain' principle applies here. When study programmes make different choices due to their professional context or specific educational vision, they must substantiate in their assessment policy how the quality requirements for assessment are met. Even then, it is important that the own approach is in line with the HU vision on education and research (HU, 2022a).

In Chapters 3 and 4 follow respectively:
- the formal and legal frameworks in relation to assessment (Chapter 3);
- a glossary, in which we describe what we mean within the HU by a number of frequently used terms (Chapter 4).

In Appendix A we describe the development perspective of assessment within the HU.[2] We discuss developmental assessment, rich learning environments, and flexible assessment. A large part of the HU works according to these principles; for other study programmes the development perspective is explained in more detail here.

Appendix B has been added for study programmes that work according to the principles of programmatic assessment. We want to emphasise that programmatic assessment is not an HU policy, but a possible choice of a study programme. It is important that the choice made aligns with the study programme's vision on education and assessment and the profession for which the student is being trained. There are several ways to shape developmental assessment. Programmatic assessment is one of them. Embedding in the HU requires some overarching agreements, because programmatic assessment is different from other types of assessment in a number of ways. These agreements are covered in Appendix B.

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2   Based on the HU vision on education and research, Together for the Future (2022a).

The HU employee's perspective

At the HU we work in a student-centred manner and we therefore use words that are as closely aligned with the student's perspective as possible. In the conversation about assessment, the focus is on 'demonstrating' or 'proving' learning outcomes. Because the HU Assessment Policy focuses on the roles of the employees who are responsible for either delivering or ensuring assessment quality, we address this here from the perspective of those employees. That is why we choose words such as 'value', 'validate', and 'assess' in the HU Assessment Policy.

Impact on other frameworks

The HU Assessment Policy serves as a policy basis for agreements in the Education and Examination Regulations and may also have an impact on the Examination Board Regulations (2024b), the Testing Regulations (2024d), and the Guideline on Irregularities CvE-HU (2024c).

The HU Assessment Policy has a duration of five years (2025-2030). The purpose is that institutes and/or study programmes update their own assessment policy in the period 2025-2028 based on this HU-wide assessment policy. This cannot be done without sufficient facilitation. It is important that the colleagues involved have the opportunity to share experience, knowledge, and insights within and between institutes. The conversation about assessment quality is part of the broader discussion about educational quality and quality policy. This broader conversation about quality is called a dialogue on quality; refer to the Handreiking Kwaliteitsdialoog [Dialogue on Quality Guidelines] on ÉÉN HU.

Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the HU Assessment Policy takes place in 2027 and 2029, based on the quality requirements in Chapter 2.

In conclusion

The HU Assessment Policy aims to:
- provide clarity about the minimum quality requirements for delivering and guaranteeing assessment quality;
- provide guidance with regard to the formulation of institute and/or programme assessment policy;
- be recognisable to the entire HU community and thus reflect the breadth and diversity of the HU with regard to the vision and elaboration of assessment;
- be readable for all colleagues within the HU who are involved in assessment in any way.

Many colleagues have worked on the HU Assessment Policy. Colleagues and students provided input via a questionnaire and in various brainstorming sessions. Students additionally shared various perspectives in a special workshop on assessment. Numerous individual interviews were held to explore subtopics in depth, and close to 40 colleagues provided feedback on the draft text. Finally, the text was submitted to all institute directors and examination boards for a feasibility check.

We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank everyone who contributed for all their dedication and commitment.

1. EXPLANATION AND SUBSTANTIATION OF HU ASSESSMENT POLICY

In this first Chapter we will discuss some important terms and concepts. This provides the substantiation for the policies presented in Chapter 2. In this way, we work on a shared language around education and assessment and provide context for the quality requirements.

1.1 Professional competence

In higher professional education we train students to become professionals for a specific professional context. By professional competence we mean that the student is sufficiently competent at the time of graduation to act at associate's, bachelor's, or master's degree level in situations that are representative of the core tasks of the intended profession and job level.

For many study programmes in higher professional education, professional competence has been defined nationally in professional and/or educational qualifications. In such a national profile, the relevant qualifications are operationalised in the form of, for example, competencies, task areas, professional roles or learning outcomes. Study programmes translate these professional and/or educational qualifications into their final qualifications. Following the Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatie Organisatie [The Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders], we speak of learning results (NVAO, n.d.; NVAO, 2024). At unit level we speak of learning outcomes.[3]

Generic competencies, such as research skills, are incorporated into the learning results of the study programme if they are missing in the national profile, so that these competencies are given a profession-specific interpretation (Munneke & Rozendaal, 2023). The final qualifications, or learning results, should also include international standards such as the Dublin descriptors, the European Qualifications Framework and the Master Standards, if these haven't already been included in the national profile.

If a student has sufficiently demonstrated all the learning results of the study programme, this means that the student is professionally competent at the relevant level. The examination board monitors, among other things, the final level and must determine whether the student meets the conditions set by the Education and Examination Regulations with regard to the necessary knowledge, insight, and skills required to obtain a degree (WHW [Higher Education and Research Act], article 7.12). The professional competence is reflected with the diploma.

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3 The English version of the NVAO-Assessment Framework does not distinguish between learning results and learning outcomes. At HU, we choose to identify learning results (final level) and learning outcomes (unit level) from each other.

To be able to responsibly determine professional competence, a balanced assessment programme is required, with performances[4] that are in line with professional practice and do justice to the diversity of talents among students. This includes practice-oriented professional assignments that fit in with the way in which professionals work in the associated professional practice, such as cases, practical simulations, various types of professional assignments, and authentic professional tasks.[5] Assessment formats in which knowledge is determined, or open forms of assessment can also be part of this.

Paragraph 2.2 defines the specific quality requirements for the assessment programme.

Co-creation with the professional field
Students develop the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes for their intended profession throughout their study programme. This professional practice is therefore an essential partner in educating our students. Throughout the study programme, the development and demonstration of (developing) professional competence takes place in collaboration with professionals from the work field. For example, authentic assignments and cases from the field form the basis for education and assessment. In the various phases of the design process of education and assessment, coordination with the professional field is therefore important.

Refer to paragraph 2.1 for quality requirements regarding the coordination between study programme and work field.

Collaboration with the professional field is increasingly taking place within the HU in 'rich learning environments'. This is where students, lecturers, researchers, and professionals from the field work intensively together on societal issues (HU, 2022a). Refer to Appendix A for assessment within rich learning environments.
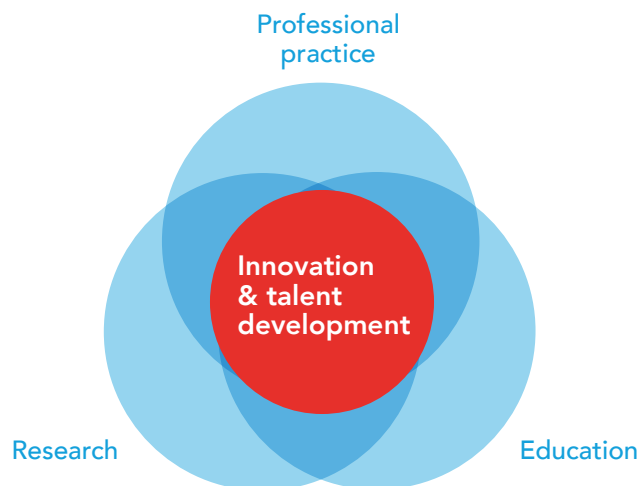

Figure 1. Co-creation of education, research, and professional practice

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4 A performance is the result of the completion of a professional assignment and reflects a result that actually occurs in the professional practice (Andriessen, 2017).
5 A number of sectors work with Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs).

1.2 Coherence between education and assessment

A study programme always elaborates the vision on education and assessment in coherence. The HU Assessment Policy sets out the agreements regarding assessment; in practice, these agreements are related to the way in which you structured your education. This coherence is reflected in the assessment web (Van Schilt-Mol, 2022).
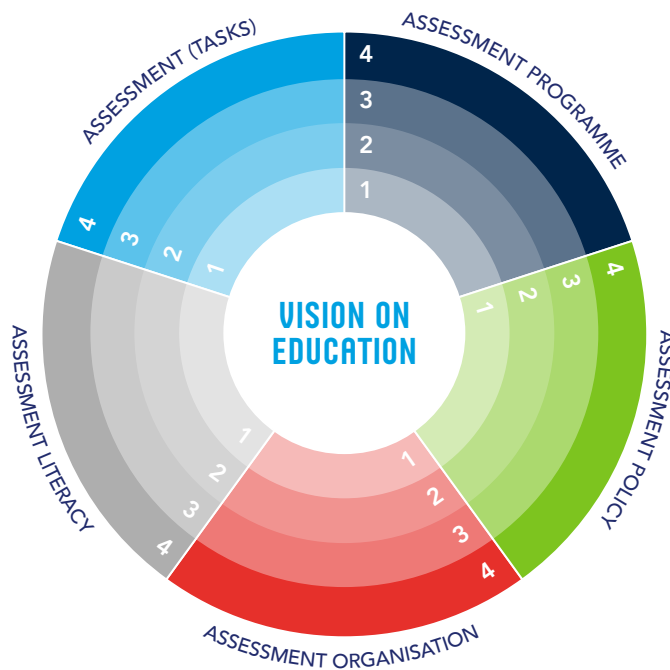
Figure 2. Assessment web (Van Schilt-Mol, 2022)

The way in which assessment is organised is a means to realise the vision on education, rather than an end in itself. The vision on assessment, which is part of the vision on education, forms the foundation for guaranteeing the quality of assessment and will ensure that assessment becomes part of the educational concept (Biggs, 2011). This of course assumes that having a vision on education is a prerequisite for being able to meaningfully implement assessment.

The core of the assessment web, vision on education, answers the question of what the study programme understands as good education. At HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht, the educational vision on education is in line with the HU vision on education and research, *Together for the Future (2022a)*.

When designing education and assessment, we use outcome-oriented design through the backward design methodology (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005), as shown in the image below.
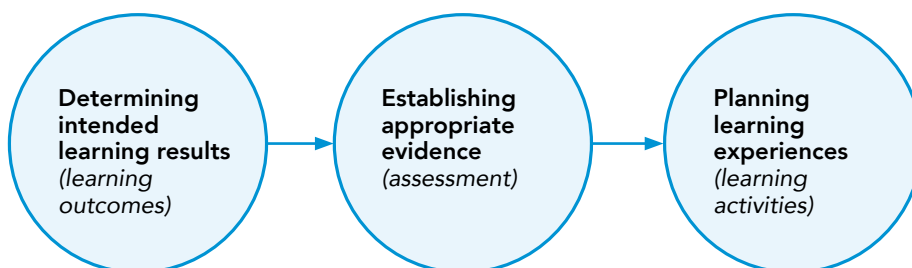

Figure 3. Backward design (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005)

This means that a study programme first determines the intended learning results at the final level, followed by the formulation of the learning outcomes of the individual units based on these learning results. This generally includes a progression in level with increasing independence and complexity. More information regarding this topic can be found in paragraph 2.3.2 Learning outcomes.

Once the learning outcomes have been determined, the assessment programme and, by extension, the assessments and education can be designed. The design starts at graduation and works back to the beginning of the study programme. Constructive alignment between assessment design and educational design is important in this respect, meaning that the educational and assessment programme is designed in such a way that the student is enabled to acquire and demonstrate the intended learning outcomes. For the purpose of flexible assessment, it is then important to design the assessment in such a way that it is possible to demonstrate learning outcomes independently of the learning path. More information on flexible assessment can be found in Appendix A.
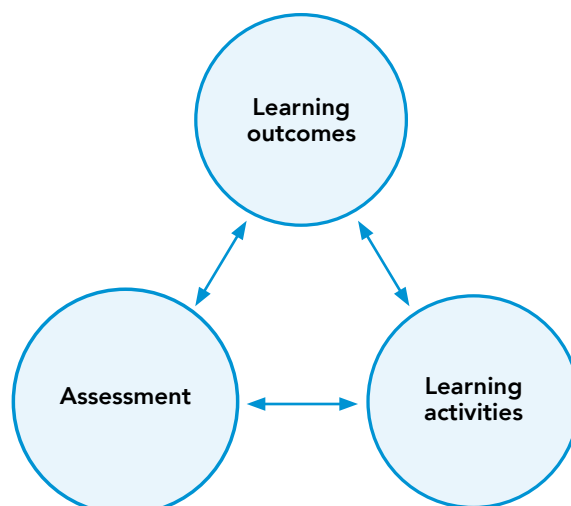

Figure 4. Constructive alignment

1.3 Assessment functions

Assessments have several functions in education: guiding the development of students (assessment for learning) and making decisions about the development of students (assessment of learning). In addition, tests also provide information about the quality of the study programme itself. We therefore distinguish three functions[6] of assessment: stimulating student learning, making decisions about student achievement and gathering information about the quality of the curriculum. One test can have several functions (Gulikers et al., 2023).

Assessment for learning: taking a test to learn from it

Within HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht, there is a shift in emphasis from 'learning to take a test' to 'taking a test in order to learn from it'. This movement fits with the shift from study success (focus on qualification) to broader student success: the broader development of the student as a person and professional.

Assessment for learning is central when the information provided by the test is primarily used to guide and stimulate the learning process of students. Assessment for learning therefore requires intensive and well-considered interaction between lecturers and students. The essence of this way of working is the process of feed-up, feedback and feed forward: which learning outcomes is the student working on, where is the student currently at, and what is the next step? (Gulikers, et al., 2023) Feedback literacy[7], both from lecturers and students, is of great importance.

When 'assessment for learning' is expressed in the curriculum design and assessment programme, there is, for example, repetition and further development of knowledge, skills, and attitude aspects. Diagnostic tests, cumulative interim tests and/or progress tests can be part of this (Dirkx & Joosten-ten Brinke, 2023). Another way is to set up a learning environment and learning activities, including tests, aimed at encouraging desired behaviour. The cycle of formative assessment provides tools to do just that. It is important in this respect that lecturers and students take an active role and that students learn to gain insight into their own development (Gulikers et al., 2023).

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We distinguish three functions of assessment: stimulating student learning, making decisions about student achievement and gathering information about the quality of the curriculum.

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6   There are other functions of tests that can be distinguished, such as the guidance function. Some institutes within HU use this.
7   The terms feedback skill and feedback competence are also used for this purpose.

Assessment of learning

Assessment of learning is central when the information is used to make a decision. At the HU, when it comes to assessment, we only use the word 'decision' for tests where results are registered in Osiris. We do this, among other things, to guarantee the legal equality of students and to provide clarity about appeal options .

Functions in balance

It is important that assessment for learning and assessment of learning are in balance within the study programme. An assessment programme as a whole must demonstrate that assessment provides meaningful feedback and stimulates the learning processes on the one hand, and enables valid and reliable decisions on the other. Some of the tests are primarily intended to yield decisions about credits. Other tests provide rich feedback for students (Baartman & Prins, 2023).

It is important to indicate in the assessment programme whether the test primarily is intended to stimulate student learning or whether the intention is to make decisions about student achievement.

The **evaluative** function of tests is secondary in nature. This involves information that tests provide about the quality of the test and the educational activities, or more broadly: the curriculum and corresponding assessment programme. The teaching staff can use this (indirect) feedback to make decisions about educational improvements.

2. DELIVERING AND ENSURING ASSESSMENT QUALITY

This Chapter describes the quality and equity requirements for delivering and ensuring assessment quality. We do this using the components of the assessment web (Van Schilt-Mol, 2022). In addition, we highlight some topics in separate subparagraphs. Each paragraph contains a list of quality requirements, which indicate the conditions that the assessment must meet. Finally, in the last paragraph we will outline quality assurance in assessment.

The quality requirements in this Chapter reflect the minimum requirements around test quality. Nevertheless, the 'comply or explain' principle applies here. When study programmes make different choices due to their professional context or specific educational vision, they must substantiate in their assessment policy how the quality requirements for assessment are met.

2.1 Assessment policy

This HU Assessment Policy is the foundation for assessment policy at institute and/or educational level. At HU we only work with policy at an institutional level. At the level of the institutes and study programmes, the focus is on planning for the realisation of policy. For assessment policies, however, we make an explicit exception, since this is basically the only form of policy that is drawn up in a decentralised manner.

Due to the importance of assessment policy and assessment quality within the institutional audit, national agreements on assessment quality, and from the point of view of efficiency, it is preferable to develop assessment policy at institute level. If there are major differences between study programmes at one institute, policy can be developed at the programme level. Cross-institutional assessment policy, in which multiple HU institutes jointly develop assessment policy, is also possible and can serve the development of rich learning environments.

An up to date assessment policy must be available for each associate's, bachelor's, master's and minor degree programme.[8] This also applies to non-degree education and micro-credentials.

The assessment policy at institute level forms a coherent set of activities and facilities with which the quality of assessment and the vision(s) on assessment can be realised within the study programmes of that institute. The institute's assessment policy serves as the starting point for the translation into the study programme. This translation may differ depending on the context of the study programme. It is conceivable to have a general elaboration for the entire institute with, where relevant, a specific elaboration per study programme. The assessment policy at institute and/or programme level then forms the basis for the development of the assessment programme[9], which in turn forms the basis for the development of assessments.

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8   The assessment policy for minors falls within the assessment policy of the programme responsible for the minor.
9   In some study programmes the term 'assessment plan' is used for the translation of the institute policy into the programme level and the assessment programme combined. In this Chapter we use the term 'assessment plan' for the elaboration at assessment level.

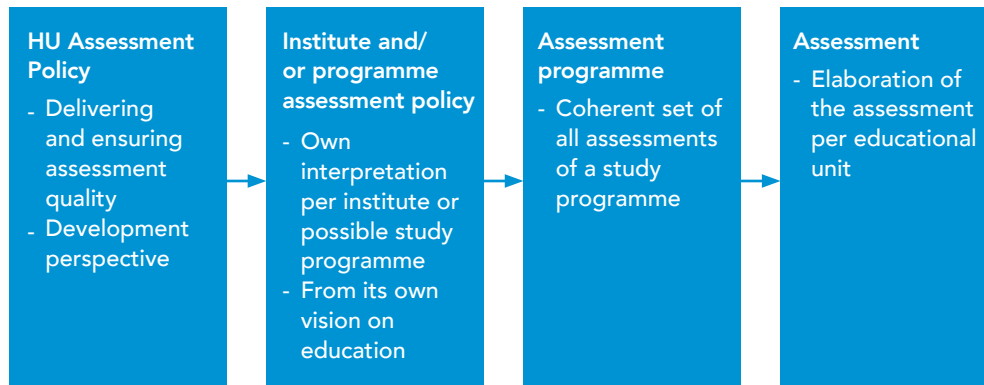| HU Assessment Policy	Institute and/ or programme assessment policy	Assessment programme	Assessment
- Delivering and ensuring assessment quality - Development perspective	- Own interpretation per institute or possible study programme - From its own vision on education	- Coherent set of all assessments of a study programme	- Elaboration of the assessment per educational unit

Figure 5. Translation of the HU Assessment Policy into actual assessments

To formulate the assessment policy at institute and programme level, a non-binding format is available at ÉÉN HU.

2.2 Assessment programme

A study programme describes and argues in its assessment programme how learning results and learning outcomes are determined by means of a coherent combination of assessment forms and assessment functions.[10] This is how the assessment programme makes visible how the study programme determines the final level and supports students on their way to achieving it. In the assessment programme, decisions made based on the assessment policy are elaborated, such as collaboration with the professional practice or the selection of a specific assessment scale.[11]

Each study programme must have an up to date assessment programme. The examination board guarantees the quality (WHW, Section 7.12b, Subsection 1, under e). The assessment programme plays a central role in justifying decisions about the professional competence of students. The assessment programme is also an instrument for the study programme to evaluate to what extent and in what way the learning outcomes and thus the intended learning results are covered by all the assessments, to map the coherence within the study programme, and to refine it where necessary. At the same time, a coherent assessment programme makes it possible to monitor and direct the student's development. For example, certain decisions in the design of the assessment programme can increase the learning effect of tests.

Student success is stimulated by taking into account factors in the design of the assessment programme that positively influence the studyability and student autonomy. For example, you could spread out submission deadlines, offer a choice of several forms of assessment and/or assessment moments, or consciously opt for anonymous assessment.[12] This also increases the accessibility of the study programme (Ecio, 2020). Due to HU's focus on student success, this is strongly encouraged.

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10 Van Berkel et al. (2023)
11 The examination programme is the translation of the assessment programme into the programme of an individual student.
12 HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht (2025a). *Guide for grading scales*.
13 Anonymous assessment is currently possible in a limited number of assessment systems.

Quality requirements for assessment policy at institute and/or programme level

- An up to date assessment policy must be available for each associate's, bachelor's, master's and minor degree programme. This also applies to non-degree education and micro-credentials. Where possible, joint policies have been formulated at institute level, valid for all study programmes in that institute or those institutes.
- The institute and/or programme assessment policy is developed in line with and in addition to the HU Assessment Policy.
- The structure of the assessment policy at institute and/or programme level follows the layout of the assessment web or a similar model.
- The institute and/or programme assessment policy describes the institutes and/or programme's interpretation of the HU vision on education and research, *Together for the Future* (2022a), and the derived vision on assessment.
- The assessment policy at institute and/or programme level includes at least an explanation of:
  - the way in which final qualifications are operationalised into learning outcomes;
  - options regarding the elaboration of the HU vision on education and research, *Together for the Future* (2022a): development-oriented assessment, rich learning environments, flexible assessment (Appendix A);
  - options with regard to the facilitation of assessment in time, resources, and money within the institute;
  - the organisation of the collaboration with the professional practice in the various components of the assessment web and in the various phases of the assessment cycle;
  - options with regard to the use of grading scales;
  - options with regard to assessment knowledge, skills, and attitudes, workfield-oriented assessment, assessment research skills;
  - agreements regarding sustainable assessment literacy;
  - the agreements regarding quality assurance around assessment, including assessment organisation and assessment competence, are recorded in a quality paragraph of the assessment policy.
  - agreements on how the examination board and programme management consult;
  - policy regarding generative AI & assessment;
  - the manner that the quality requirements for assessments , feasibility, validity and reliability[13]) are monitored;
  - the manner that the four-eyes principle is applied;
  - the manner that transient tests such as presentations or skills tests are handled;
  - agreements on grading standards and pass marks;
  - measures in the various educational components and the associated assessment to prevent fraud, plagiarism or free-rider behaviour;
  - the manner that the individual development of students is monitored and guided.

(Continuation 2.2 Assessment programme)

Questions surrounding validity and reliability arise both at the level of individual tests and at the programme level. Coordination and collaboration within teaching staff is necessary to achieve quality at programme level. Continuous quality assurance is important in this regard, refer to paragraph 2.6. For evaluation, you can use KIT 2.0 (Baartman, n.d.) or a similar instrument.

Quality requirements for the assessment programme

- The study programme must develop the assessment programme in accordance with the decisions and agreements laid down in the assessment policy at institute and/or programme level.
- The design of the assessment programme takes factors into account that positively influence studyability and student success.
- The assessment programme offers sufficient variation in assessment formats.
- The structure of the assessment programme allows for learning path-independent assessment.
- The assessment programme seeks to find a balance between test quality and feasibility.
- The assessment programme is periodically evaluated against current quality standards, such as KIT 2.0.
- The programme manager is responsible for determining the assessment programme. The assessment programme is submitted to the examination board for advice.

2.2.1 Graduation

One part of the assessment programme that we would like to pay special attention to is graduation. By demonstrating the learning results of the study programme, the students show that they are ready for graduation at the relevant level. Research skills are part of the learning results. The learning results reflect the role that research skills play in the professional context.

Due to the diverse nature of a professional's tasks, a single assignment/performance cannot be representative of the final level of the study programme. In order to reliably determine whether the student is professionally competent, a set of achievements is therefore required. Together, they form a representative reflection of the work required of the starting professional at the relevant level.

Validity, generalisability, completeness and feasibility are important criteria in this regard. It is also important to determine what requirements are imposed on examiners with regard to graduation.

Graduation component

For accreditation and archiving purposes (The Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences, 2022) the graduation component is marked. This concerns a selection of components that provide a representative picture of the final level and, in many cases, form the final part of the study programme. This graduation component may include all final level learning results or a representative selection. The Education and Examination Regulations impose specific requirements on the graduation component. Due to the importance of the graduation component for securing the final level, no exemption is possible for the graduation component or parts of it. This applies to bachelor's, associate's and master's degree programmes.

The study programme itself periodically submits a number of final projects to a related study programme, a research group or the professional field in order to validate the level achieved. The examination board conducts random checks on a number of final projects.

Graduation protocol

Protocol Afstuderen 2.0 [The Graduation Protocol 2.0] is a conceptual framework that describes the key elements to achieve a coherent and consistent graduation programme (Andriessen et al., 2017). The study programme must relate to this model in the composition and evaluation of graduation. The protocol assists the study programme in operationalising the final level step by step in a way that is appropriate to the professional context: which professional tasks and learning outcomes are involved and by means of which products or achievements can a student demonstrate them?

Quality requirements for graduation

- In associate degree, bachelor's, and master's programs, the assessment program specifies which assessments are part of the graduation unit, including those related to exemption policies, accreditation procedures, and archival retention periods.
- When developing the entire programme, and the graduation component in particular, the study programme relates to the Protocol Afstuderen 2.0 [The Graduation Protocol 2.0].
- The graduation component is always assessed by two examiners. This also applies to any sub-tests within the graduation component.
- The study programme itself periodically submits a number of final projects to a related study programme, a research group or the professional field in order to validate the level achieved. The Examination Board conducts random checks on a number of final projects.

2.3 Assessments (tasks)

In this section, we discuss assessments along the lines of the assessment cycle, which includes the different steps in the assessment process. Two topics, namely learning outcomes and generative AI, are additionally explained separately. In this paragraph we define quality requirements for assesments intended to yield decisions about credits.

Assessments are (learning) activities/measurement instruments that are used to determine whether the intended learning results have been achieved (Joosten-ten Brinke & Draaier, 2015). The quality of the test as a whole also includes the design of assessment models and student and assessor instructions.

2.3.1 Assessment cycle

In order to develop, administer and evaluate high-quality assessments, we at HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht use the assessment cycle with various phases. This is part of the broader PDCA cycle of education. This cycle is completed annually for each educational unit. Feasibility, validity, and reliability (Van Berkel et. al, 2024) are important quality aspects that are addressed here.
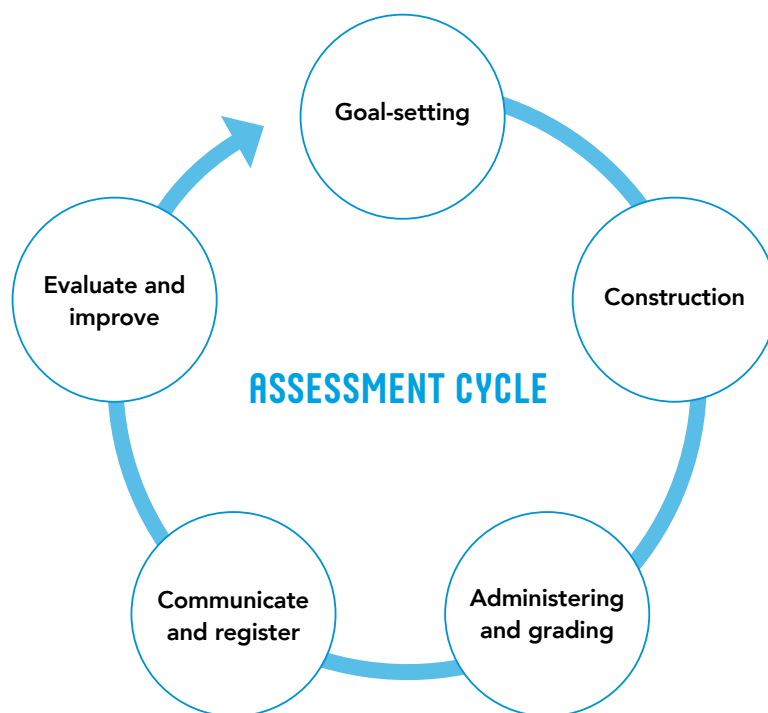

Figure 6. Assessment cycle

Goal-setting
This first step concerns the framework within which you construct assessments or in which the assessment is embedded. A test never stands alone, but is part of

an assessment programme and contributes to achieving the final qualifications as included in the professional and programme profile.

Construction

When constructing the test, the focus lies on what you want to hear, see and/or read from the student. This step consists of several sub-steps that you can find on the assessment site. When determining and selecting appropriate assessment formats, take the diversity of talents among students into account and determine, in line with the Testing Regulations (2024d), which formats, facilities, and resources are permitted.

Administering and grading

When administering the test, it is important for validity and reliability that matters such as location, instructions, circumstances, examiners, and resources are properly arranged. For more information we refer you to the Testing Regulations (2024d). Many knowledge tests take place through a digital test. The Assessment Centre facilitates this.[14]

For units of 15 EC, assessment takes place by at least two examiners and/or on the basis of multiple sub-tests and/or measurement moments. This can be organised in different ways, for example two sub-tests, each with its own examiner, a portfolio with multiple assignments and two examiners or a portfolio in which data-points (performance + feedback) are collected.

For units of 30 EC or more, assessment will be carried out by at least two examiners and on the basis of multiple sub-tests and/or measurement moments.

For each unit of 15 EC, the test may consist of a maximum of three sub-tests and for each unit of 30 EC or more, a maximum of four sub- tests. A portfolio consists of multiple data-points or assignments.

Examiners calibrate on a regular basis. For example, prior to the assessment, they review one or more projects and share their findings with each other. The aim of this is to achieve alignment in the assessment. You can also calibrate together before, for example, a new assessment, using the assessment model: when do we consider something good, and when do we not? What do you look for in each criterion? Based on the outcomes, you can refine the assessment form if necessary. Outcomes of the calibration and any resulting adjustments are recorded. For support, you can use the Handreiking kalibreersessies (Andriessen, 2015) [Calibration Sessions Guidelines].

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Examiners calibrate on a regular basis.

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14   Currently, tests that primarily have a decision-making function are supported by the Assessment Centre. Tests that focus on the learning function are organised by the study programme itself. The HU has the ambition to also support certain tests with a primary learning function in a centralised manner. Experience with how this works will be gained in the coming period.

Irregularities
It is possible that irregularities occur during the administration of a test, such as fraud or plagiarism. To prevent this where possible and to make clear agreements on how to act in the event of suspected irregularities, the Guideline on Irregularities CvE-HU (2024c) was drawn up.

Communicating and registering
Once the assessment has been checked and marked, students are informed and the results are recorded. In the case of an oral test, the results will be given on the same day (OER article 4.10). Assessment results are recorded in Osiris within the deadline of 15 working days. Students are entitled to inspect a test within 15 working days of the announcement of the results. The tests themselves must then be archived. To determine the archival retention period, a distinction is made between graduate and non-graduate projects. The descriptions and deadlines in the higher professional education selection list are leading in this respect (The Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences, 2022).

Evaluation and improvement
Each assessment is adjusted periodically and where necessary. Validity, reliability, functions, and conditions are important quality aspects in this regard. Procedures for this are agreed in the institutes' or programme assessment policy.

2.3.2 Learning outcomes
All study programmes of HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht describe their education in terms of learning outcomes. Study programmes that choose to do so can also, in accordance with Wet leeruitkomsten [Learning Outcomes Act], specify educational units into units of learning outcomes. More information about this topic can be found in Appendix A. By a learning outcome we mean:

Learning outcomes are what a student should know, understand or be able to apply after a learning period (NVAO, n.d.).

A learning outcome is therefore a *measurable result of learning experiences* that allows us to be certain to what extent/level/standard a learning result has been formed or improved. Learning outcomes are not unique characteristics of a student but statements that enable higher education institutions to measure whether students have developed their competencies to the required level. Learning outcomes are formulated in relation to the professional practice. When formulating learning outcomes, a taxonomy can be helpful, such as Miller or Bloom.

The final qualifications or learning results of the study programme are used as a starting point to formulate the various learning outcomes. Study programmes periodically validate their intended learning results with the professional practice.

2.3.3 Generative AI

Technological developments in the form of generative AI have taken off in recent years and have consequences for the professions we train for, the way we design our education, and the way we test. When students use generative AI when creating reports or products, the question arises whether the assessment is still valid.

The use of generative AI will change the content of the job for many professions. For example, Generative AI generates policy advice, programming code or statements of objection and will become increasingly better at this. The emphasis in the learning process may therefore be more on specialist knowledge to assess the value of generated texts, on knowledge about the ethically responsible and efficient application of generative AI in the professional context and on professional activities that do not take place behind a computer. Study programmes incorporate this into their intended learning outcomes.

We believe it is important that students show authentic work when tested. That is why we opt for conscious and responsible use of generative AI. When designing an assessment, we consider whether or not generative AI may be used in relation to the intended learning outcomes. The form of assessment chosen also plays a role here. For assessment formats that test specific knowledge and where the student is not allowed to use generative AI, this means that the test should be administered in a controlled environment. For more advice on this, you can use the Generative AI and Assessment Guideline at ÉÉN HU (HU, 2024a). This guideline is periodically revised based on new developments.

When a study programme or examination board determines that an assessment in its current format is no longer reliable because students can use generative AI in an unwanted way, and when taking the test in a controlled environment is practically impossible, the assessment format must be adjusted. Please note that there is sufficient variation in the assessment formats throughout the entire assessment programme.

It is important that there is sufficient knowledge and expertise within the study programme to responsibly and meaningfully integrate (generative) AI into the assessment programme and design. If a student is allowed or required to use generative AI in a particular test because the skill of working with generative AI tools is part of the learning outcomes, then the lecturers and examiners involved must be able to translate this appropriately into the assessment design. AI literacy, referring to familiarity with the operation and output of AI applications, of examiners does not guarantee that they are able to assess a student's work on authenticity. This requires other interventions, such as closely monitoring students in their learning process (for example through formative assessment moments), so that an examiner can better assess whether the work has actually been done by the student in question during a test with a decision-making function.

Quality requirements for assessments

- In order to develop, administer and evaluate high-quality assessments, HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht uses an assessment cycle with different phases.
- For units of 15 EC, assessment takes place by at least two examiners and/or on the basis of multiple sub-tests and/or measurement moments. Per unit of 15 EC, the assessment can consist of a maximum of three sub-tests.
- For units of 30 EC or more, assessment will be carried out by at least two examiners and on the basis of multiple sub-tests and/or measurement moments. For each unit of 30 EC or more, the test may consist of a maximum of four sub-tests.
- Assessment results must be recorded in Osiris within 15 working days.
- It is important that students show authentic work when assessed. That is why we opt for conscious and responsible use of generative AI. When designing a test, we consider whether or not generative AI may be used in relation to the intended learning results and we adapt test formats if generative AI no longer allows for reliable administration.
- Each student is entitled to two assessment opportunities per year, the number of assessment opportunities can be freely determined by the study programme.[15]
- Examiners calibrate on a regular basis.

2.4 Assessment organisation

At HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht, we distinguish between delivering and ensuring assessment quality. The tasks and roles with regard to delivery and assurance are assigned at different levels. The figure below outlines this. This is further detailed in the table below.[16] We deliberately chose to describe this at the level of tasks and roles because this can be assigned to different functions or committees within the institutes.

Many, but not all, institutes work with an assessment expert group that is responsible for a number of cross-course assessment activities, such as managing the assessment programme, drafting policy, and supporting examiners. Because not everywhere an assessment expert group is installed, we listed the responsibilities in the table with, in addition to the assessment expert group, other possible responsible stakeholders.

The distinction between delivering and ensuring assessment quality is intended to clarify that these are two different responsibilities, namely that of programme management (delivery) and that of the examination board (assurance). This distinction

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15 For some practical tests, such as a work placement, it is reasonably possible to offer only one test opportunity per year. If this is the case, it will be stated in the study guide. In specific cases, the study programme may also offer more than two test opportunities, if this is part of established policy. (OER, article 4.3)

16 This table is based on Martens, Moerkerke and Metz (2023) and Van Berkel, Bax and Joosten- ten Brinke (2023) and the WHW. The table describes the tasks and responsibilities in the assessment process at HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht.

makes it possible to clearly distinguish and optimally coordinate activities between programme management and the examination board.

Participatory bodies also play an important role with regard to assessment quality. The (G)OC has the right to be consulted on assessment policy and assessment programme (Participatory Decision-making Regulations, article 3.1.1. under 4). The Institute Council has the right to approve the assessment policy at institute and/or programme level (Participatory Decision-making Regulations, article 3.2.1. sub 2). Refer to Participatory Decision-making Regulations.

The term assessment organisation refers to the way in which lecturers, assessment expert group, examination board, assessment board, management, and support staff work together in a goal-oriented manner to achieve the desired assessment quality on all components of the assessment web (Van Deursen & Van Zijl, 2015). Hence, the term therefore does not refer to the Assessment Centre of HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht.
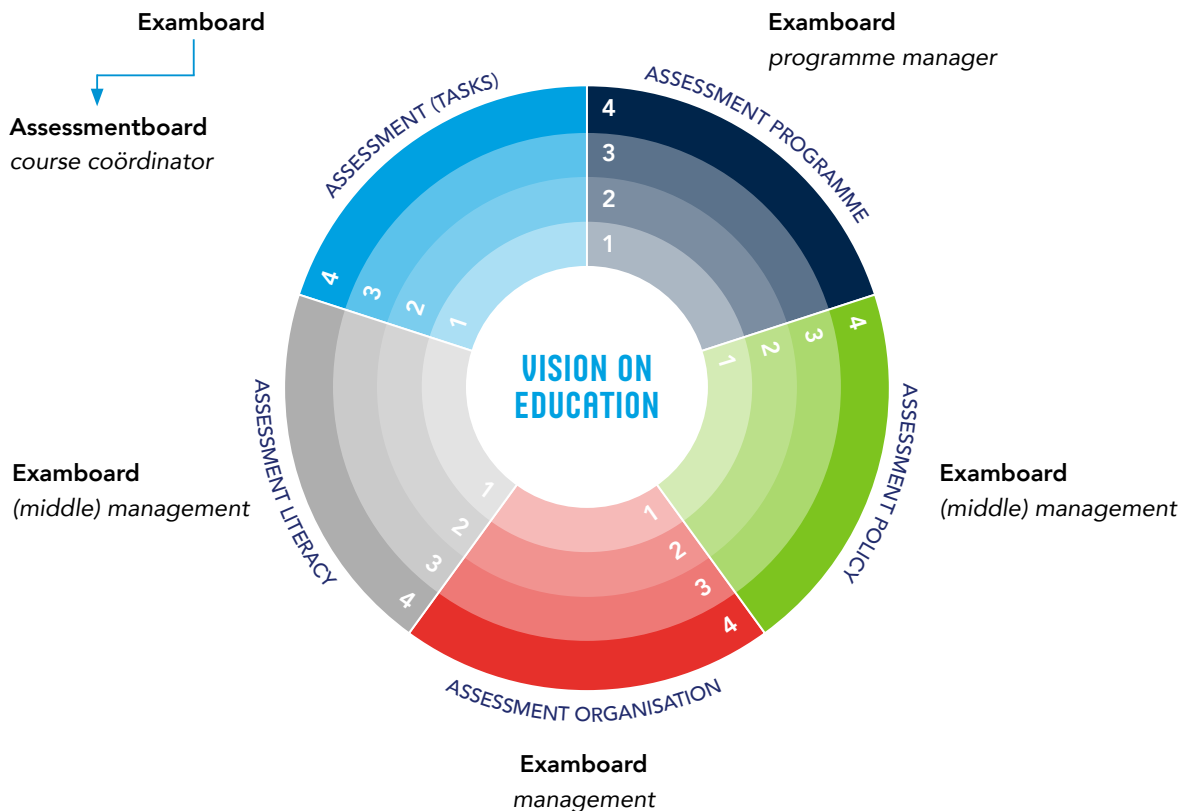
Figure 7. Tasks and roles relating to the assessment web

	DELIVERING ASSESSMENT QUALITY Final responsibility: Programme/ institute management	**ENSURING ASSESSMENT QUALITY** Final responsibility: Examination board
	Frameworks and guidelines for internal roles (institute):	**Frameworks and guidelines for internal roles (institute):**
Assessment policy	**Objective:** policy that provides direction and framework for delivering assessment quality (system of measures and facilities). **Responsibility:** defining the vision/design for assessment as well as appropriate policy decisions. **Mandate:** drafting and establishing assessment policy. *For example, programme manager, management, core team, curriculum committee, assessment expert group.*	**Objective:** contributing to the development of appropriate assessment policy. **Responsibility:** advising on the development of assessment policy, checking the feasibility of the assessment policy. **Mandate:** advising on the assessment policy. *For example (delegation of) examination board.*
Assessment programme	**Objective**: conscious composition of assessments, appropriate to the objectives, content, structure, and composition of the curriculum. **Responsibility:** appropriate assessment at every stage of the student's learning process, based on learning outcomes, position in the curriculum, and relevant quality indicators. **Mandate:** establishing the assessment programme. *Programme manager, e.g. core team, curriculum committee, assessment expert group.*	**Objective:** monitoring the quality of the assessment programme. **Responsibility:** ex-ante evaluation of constructive alignment, feasibility, and quality of the assessment programme. **Mandate:** advising on the assessment programme; determining the examination programme of the individual student. *For example (delegation of) examination board.*
Assessment (tasks)	**Objective:** 'proper assessment'. **Responsibility:** adequately completing the assessment cycle at test/learning unit level, applying the four-eyes principle. **Mandate:** decisions regarding construction, implementation, pass marks, etc. *For example, course coordinator, examiner, quality coordinator, assessment expert group.*	**Objective:** monitoring the quality of individual tests. **Responsibility:** checking whether an assessment meets relevant quality criteria. **Mandate:** discussing observed assessment quality with those involved and taking appropriate measures if necessary. *For example assessment board, examination board.*

(Continuation Table 1	DELIVERING ASSESSMENT QUALITY Final responsibility: Programme/ institute management	ENSURING ASSESSMENT QUALITY Final responsibility: Examination board
	Frameworks and guidelines for internal roles (institute):	**Frameworks and guidelines for internal roles (institute):**
Assessment organisation	**Objective:** organisational embedding of roles and processes. **Responsibility:** necessary processes are fully implemented, essential roles are assigned and are adequately facilitated. **Mandate:** deciding on role assignment and facilitation with regard to delivering assessment quality. *For example, institute director, programme manager, management, portfolio holder, core team, assessment expert group.*	**Objective:** ensuring that essential roles and processes are adequately organised. **Responsibility:** checking the embedding of roles and processes within the institute/ study programme. **Mandate:** advising (institutional) management on the organisation and allocation of roles. Identifying omissions in processes and the allocation/facilitation of roles. *For example examination board, assessment board.*
Assessment literacy	**Objective:** essential roles with regard to delivering test quality are assigned to employees who are sufficiently qualified to do so. **Responsibility:** appropriate division of tasks, professionalisation of employees (including BKE). **Mandate:** deciding on role/task assignment and/or frameworks for this. Nominating examiners. *For example, programme manager, management, portfolio holder, core team, curriculum committee, assessment expert group.*	**Objective:** ensuring professionalism in essential assessment processes. **Responsibility:** determining whether the competence of employees matches the role/task in test processes. **Mandate:** advising on role/task allocation, appoint examiners. *For example, examination board.*

Table 1. Fulfilling roles and responsibilities in the testing process

> ## Quality requirements for the assessment organisation
>
> - An examiner is responsible for conducting and assessing the tests for which they are appointed by the examination board.
> - At the educational unit level, assessment is always a team responsibility, with the course coordinator as the ultimate responsible party.
> - The assessment cycle is completed annually for each assessment, and a report is submitted to the programme manager. They report to the programme manager or to the core team on the assessment programme as a whole.
> - At programme level, the programme manager or a core team is responsible for delivering assessment quality. This may involve assigning tasks to the curriculum committee and/or assessment expert group for support purposes. The institute director is responsible for nominating examiners.
> - The examination board is responsible for ensuring assessment quality. It may establish an assessment board to conduct supporting investigations. The examination board is responsible for appointing examiners. For a complete overview of the responsibilities of the examination boards, refer to the Examination Board Regulations (2024b).

2.5 Assessment literacy

When testing and assessing, all components of the assessment web require assessment literacy from the various parties involved.

2.5.1 BKE/SKE

The examination board appoints examiners in accordance with the WHW. An examiner is responsible for administering the tests to which they are assigned and for determining the results.

Within higher professional education, basis- & seniorkwalificatie examinering [basic and senior examination qualification] is the standard for the qualification of examiners (Van Schilt-Mol et al., 2020). This is also the standard for our examiners at HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht.

The basic examination qualification (BKE) focuses on lecturers acting competently within the context of a course. The senior qualification examination (SKE) focuses on the context of the study programme as a whole. All HU examiners are BKE qualified.[17] In the coming period (2025-2026) we are going to explore whether a limited BKE focused on administering and assessing tests can be developed for specific target groups (such as small appointments and new study programmes), working under the supervision of a BKE-qualified examiner for a limited period.

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17   The examination board may also appoint experts from outside the study programme as examiners. This is possible if at least the following requirements are met: The person concerned has completed at least a master's degree programme; the person concerned demonstrates that, based on previous experience, they are able to test and assess whether a student meets the required higher professional education level, or has obtained the basic examiner qualification (BKE) (Examination Board Regulations, 2024b).

When participating in an assessment expert group or an examination board, it is recommended to obtain the SKE. At HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht we expect that at least one of the institute's employees involved in delivering assessment quality (e.g. TEG or curriculum committee) has demonstrated the SKE. In addition, at least one member of the examination board must have the SKE.

As an internal trainer, the Teaching & Learning Network (TLN) provides the BKE and SKE training and certification programmes for HU lecturers. In addition, certificates from other providers are also recognised. This is recorded in the Certification Committee Exemption Policy (HU, 2022c). TLN also provides specific training for members of examination boards and other training in the field of assessment.

2.5.2 Sustainable assessment literacy

At HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht we value sustainable assessment literacy and consider this a team responsibility. How do lecturers remain competent assessors once they have obtained the BKE/SKE?

We see sustainable assessment literacy as an ongoing process that is not just about assessment knowledge and skills (Pastore & Andrade, 2019). Sustainable assessment literacy also includes awareness of one's own professional identity as an assessment developer or examiner, the ability to integrate education and assessment, and social and emotional aspects of assessment. This concerns, for example, ethical aspects and the impact of assessment (Meijer et al., 2020). We expect examiners to continue reflecting on their own actions, to continue developing themselves, and to continue discussing assessment quality as part of a team.

At the institute level, it is recorded how sustainable assessment literacy is implemented concretely. This could include a development path for examiners, training for holistic assessment, assessor training or a calibration cycle. Developing feedback literacy and AI literacy should be addressed in this respect. Sustainable assessment literacy is a topic of discussion with the examination board: how is this process set up?

Study programmes focus on training new lecturers in the field of assessment, for example in a programme for new employees. New lecturers who do not have the BKE must complete the BKE/BDB programme. New lecturers who already possess the BKE and who are appointed as examiners by the examination board, are trained in the specific assessment vision and working methods within the study programme. For example, it is possible to do this by pairing this new examiner with an experienced colleague.

Quality requirements for assessment literacy

- In order to be appointed as an examiner, an HU employee must have demonstrated the basic examination qualification (BKE). Additional expertise and study programme requirements may also be imposed on an examiner.
- At least one of the institute's staff members involved in delivering assessment quality (e.g. TEG or curriculum committee) has demonstrated the SKE.
- At least one member of the examination board must have the SKE.
- At the HU we strive for sustainable assessment literacy. At the institute level, it has been established what is meant by sustainable assessment literacy.

2.6 Quality assurance in assessment

Paragraphs 2.1 to 2.5 describe the quality requirements for the various components of the assessment web. Various instruments and methods to evaluate and improve the quality of the different components were discussed. In this concluding paragraph we list the instruments and explain how they are embedded in the broader quality assurance within the study programme.

The following instruments can be used:

Component assessment web	Evaluation by	Instruments	Report to
Assessment policy	Programme manager, management, core team, curriculum committee, assessment expert group.	PDCA	Institute director
Assessment programme	Programme manager	KIT 2.0 Graduation Protocol (for graduation programme)	Programme manager / Core team
	Examination board	Annual report KIT plus	Executive Board
Assessment	Examiner / course manager	Assessment cycle Course evaluation	Programme manager

Table 2. Tools for evaluation

The agreements regarding quality assurance around assessment, including assessment organisation and assessment literacy, are recorded in a quality paragraph of the assessment policy.

The manner that the four-eyes principle is implemented is part of the agreements regarding quality assurance. Various working methods are possible, whereby the weight of the decision in question (number of ECs or weight of the sub-test) and the training phase are decisive. The agreements made at institute or programme level must be in line with three related quality requirements:
- For units of 15 EC, assessment will be carried out by at least two examiners and/or on the basis of multiple sub-tests and/or measurement moments (refer to assessment).
- For units of 30 EC or more, assessment will be carried out by at least two examiners and on the basis of multiple sub-tests and/or measurement moments.
- The graduation component is always assessed by two examiners, regardless of the scope. This also applies to any sub-tests within the graduation component (refer to graduating).

It is important to complete the quality cycle: the actual adjustment of, for example, assessment policy, assessment programme or assessment based on evaluation and analysis. The exact working method describes the study programme in the institute and/or programme assessment policy, based on current quality policy.

“

It is important to complete the quality cycle: the actual adjustment of, for example, assessment policy, assessment programme or assessment based on evaluation and analysis.

Quality assurance around assessment is embedded in the broader quality assurance within the study programme. The model below shows the various quality cycles in relation to each other.
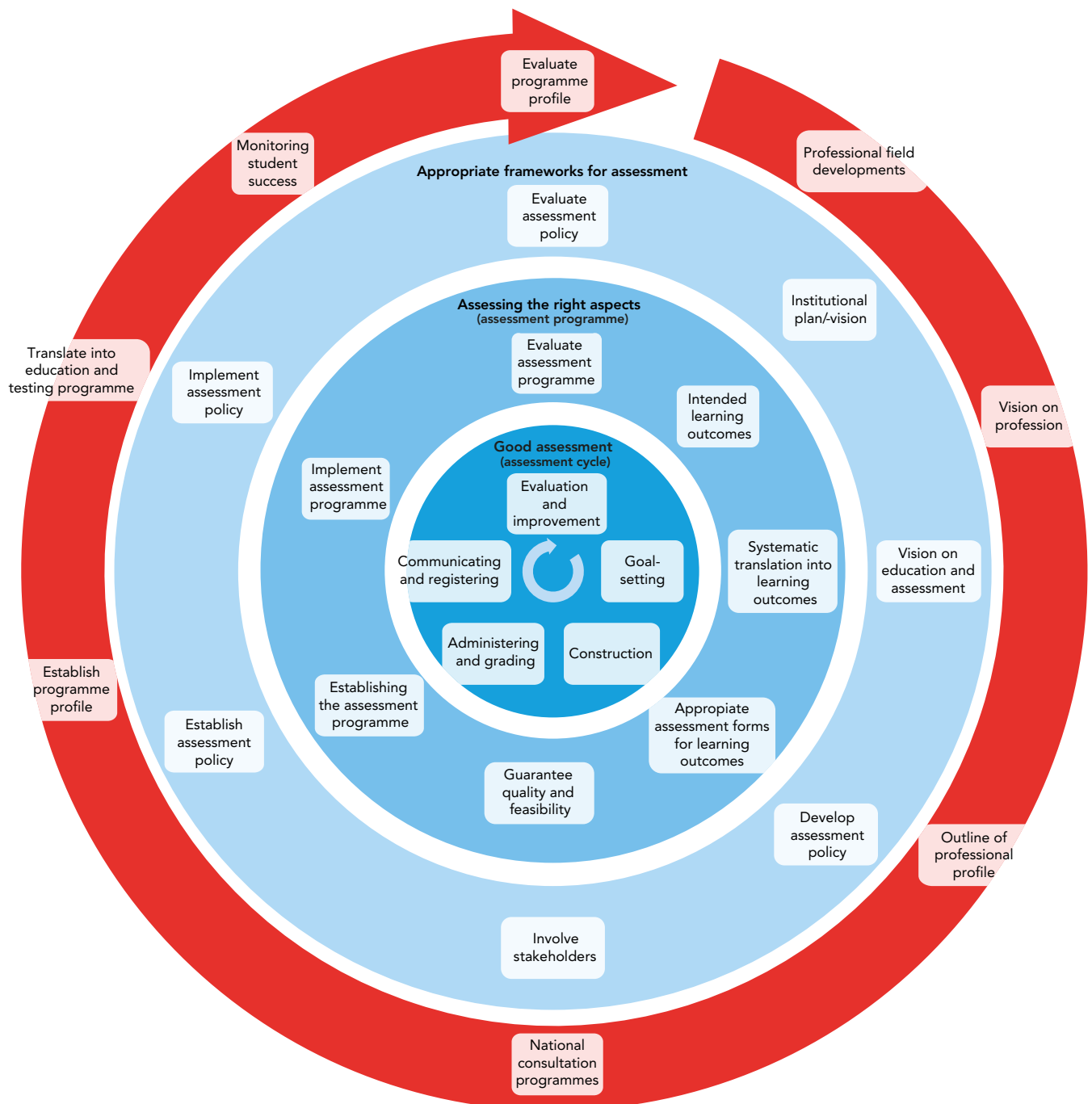
Figure 8. Quality cycles in context

Quality requirements for quality assurance

- All agreements on assessment regarding quality assurance, on all components of the assessment web, are recorded in a quality paragraph of the assessment policy at institute or programme level.
- The components assessment policy, assessment programme and assessment are worked on according to a PDCA cycle.
- The institute or programme assessment policy describes how this PDCA cycle is designed: the roles of those involved, the instruments used, how often evaluation takes place and to whom one reports.

3. FORMAL FRAMEWORKS

Frameworks that determine the HU Assessment Policy

- European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)
- The Higher Education and Research Act
- Together for the Future, HU vision on education and research
  (HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht, 2022)
- Selection List Universities of Applied Sciences (The Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences, 2022)
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Frameworks that determine assessment policy at institute and/or programme level

- The professional master's standard (The Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences, 2019)
- Dublin descriptors bachelor's and master's
- NVAO (n.d.). Assessment framework accreditation system Netherlands Higher Education
- Education and Examination Regulations, via HU Education and Examination Regulations (OER) and study guides · HU
- Examination Board Regulations
- Testing Regulations
- Guideline on Irregularities CvE-HU
- Student Charter

4. GLOSSARY

In conversations about assessment we strive for a common language, with the objective of understanding each other better, even when different decisions are made. Shared language enables broader collaboration between study programmes and helps to support study programmes effectively. We hope to contribute to this with the following glossary.

Assessment / test

A measuring instrument to assess whether a student has achieved a learning outcome, for example an interim examination, professional product or performance assessment. An assessment/ test involves an examination of the student's knowledge, understanding, and skills, as well as the results of that examination. An assessment/ test can be used primarily to make a decision about results or to promote student development. Assessments/ tests programmed to make decisions about student achievement are what the WHW defines as 'interim examination'. Assessments/ tests can have different formats, refer to 'assessment format/ forms of assessments'.

Assessment cycle

Quality model for assessment. To develop, administer, and evaluate high-quality assessment, the assessment cycle is used, which includes the various assessment phases. Validity, reliability, functions, and conditions are important quality aspects that are addressed in every phase.

Assessment expert group

Organisational unit responsible for a number of cross-course test activities, such as managing the assessment programme, drafting policy, and supporting examiners. Many, but not all, institutes work with an assessment expert group.

Assessment format / forms of assessment

A test always has a specific assessment format. The selection of an assessment format depends on:
• the learning outcomes of a educational unit;
• the assessment programme and the place of the relevant test within it;
• the function of the test.

Examples of commonly used assessment formats are: multiple choice interim examination, interim examination with open questions, assessment, professional product, portfolio, oral test, case study, reflection report.

Assessment literacy

The expertise that must be present among those involved within the study programme to achieve quality across all components of the assessment web. Within higher professional education, the basic and senior examination qualification (BKE/SKE) is the standard for assessment literacy. The basic examination qualification (BKE) focuses on the competent actions of an examiner within the context of a course. The Senior Qualification Examination (SKE) focuses on competent actions within the context of the study programme as a whole.

Assessment organisation

The term assessment organisation refers to the manner that lecturers, test expert group, examination board, assessment board, management, and support staff work together in a goal-oriented manner to achieve the desired test quality on all components of the assessment web. Hence, the term therefore does not refer to the Assessment Centre of HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht.

Assessment policy

The assessment policy forms a coherent set of measures and facilities with which test quality and the vision on assessment within a study programme can be realised. Assessment policy is formulated at various levels (HU-wide, institute, possibly study programme), with the policy at the higher level being leading for the lower level.

Assessment programme

The overview of the conscious and substantiated combination of assessment formats and assessment functions that provide a coherent picture of the final qualifications of the study programme.

Assessment web

The assessment web is a theoretical model that provides insight into which aspects play a role in test quality, how they are related, and how you can sustainably anchor test quality.

Backward design

Design methodology in which a study programme first determines the intended learning results at the final level and subsequently formulates the learning outcomes of the individual units on the basis of these learning results.

BKE/SKE

Basic and senior qualification examination (Basis- en Seniorkwalificatie Examinering). Professionalisation for lecturers in higher professional education in the field of assessment, part of the basic and senior qualification didactic skills. Having obtained the BKE is mandatory to be appointed as an examiner.

Constructive alignment

This principle states that all learning and assessment activities, at both programme and course level, should be in constructive alignment with the intended learning outcomes. In an optimal educational design, proper alignment between the intended learning outcomes, learning activities, and assessment is crucial.

Data-point

Concept within programmatic assessment. Data-points are meaningful activities that direct the student's learning process and development. Other words that are used instead of 'data-point': evidence, performance, product. It is essential that feedback on the student's work is also linked to a 'data-point'.

Examiner

A lecturer or expert appointed by the examination board who is responsible for administering tests and determining their results.

Feedback literacy

Feedback literacy in students is the ability to receive, interpret, and use feedback to learn from it. It concerns a set of skills and attitudes to recognise the learning value of feedback and to connect consequences to this. A lecturer is feedback literate when they can design, evaluate, and redesign effective feedback processes and are able to stimulate quality awareness and feedback use among students.

Graduation component

A selection of units that provides a representative picture of the final level and, in many cases, forms the final project of the study programme. This graduation component may include all final level learning outcomes or a representative selection thereof. The Education and Examination Regulations impose specific requirements on the graduation component. All associate's, bachelor's and master's degree programmes of the HU indicate a graduation component.

High stakes moment

Concept within programmatic assessment. During the high stakes moment a decision is made by the decision committee. To this end, the student submits a portfolio containing (a selection of) the data-points, including the feedback obtained during the low stakes and medium stakes moments. During the high stakes moment, a decision is made on whether the learning outcomes are being managed at the desired level based on the content, number, and comprehensiveness of the data-points, including feedback, and the variety of feedback perspectives. This decision leads to the (not) awarding of a certain number of ECs. The high stakes decision is an interim examination in the legal sense and falls under the safeguarding task of the examination board (Biemond & Heeneman, 2024). This decision is subject to appeal.

Learning outcome

Learning outcomes are what a student should know, understand, or be able to apply after a learning period.

Learning path-independent assessment

With learning path-independent assessment, the learning outcomes are fixed and the path to them, the learning path, can differ. In this way, a student can capitalize on acquired work experience by having it assessed by means of a so-called learning path-independent assessment.

Low stakes moment

Concept within programmatic assessment. During a low stakes moment, a data-point is provided with rich feedback to direct the learning process and provide insight into the development of the student. During this low stakes moment, the learning function is central.

Medium stakes moment

Concept within programmatic assessment. Interim meeting in which the trainer and the student evaluate the information collected at a number of low stakes moments. This medium stakes moment focuses on diagnosis and feed forward: where is the student at and what is the next step in the learning process?

Performance

A performance is the result of the execution of a professional assignment and reflects a result that actually occurs in the professional practice.

Programmatic assessment

Educational concept that considers the entire development of a student from a holistic perspective. The objectives of programmatic assessment are to optimise the reliability of decisions and to stimulate the student's learning process.
Programmatic assessment provides insight into student development by using a mix of data-points. Data-points are feedback-oriented and are not linked to the awarding of credits. Decisions are only made when sufficient so-called data-points have been collected to guarantee a reliable or robust decision.

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research: impact on assessment

APPENDIX A
HU VISION ON EDUCATION AND RESEARCH: IMPACT ON ASSESSMENT

The HU vision on education and research *Together for the Future* (HU, 2022a) offers a development direction for education. In this Chapter we follow up on this by outlining a development perspective for assessment. This development perspective focuses on three themes: development-oriented assessment, assessment in rich learning environments, and flexible assessment. The impact on assessment for these topics is elaborated in broad terms.

Assessment for learning

Within HU, the emphasis is shifting from 'learning to take a test' to 'taking a test to learn from it', or 'assessment for learning'. This implies that the assessment itself becomes increasingly more development-oriented.

Developmental assessment can be done in many ways. The essence of this way of working is the process of feed-up, feedback and feed forward: which learning outcomes is the student working on, where is the student currently at, and what is the next step? This requires intensive interaction between lecturer and student.

Another characteristic of developmental assessment is that the assessment method stimulates the desired learning processes. For example, the assessment programme can be designed in such a way that knowledge, skills and attitude aspects are repeated and further developed. Possible test formats that can contribute to more developmental assessment are diagnostic tests and progress tests (Dirkx & Joosten-ten Brinke, 2023). Structurally embedding feedback on students' draft work or providing development advice in the assessment can also be a way to work towards more developmental assessment.

For developmental assessment to be effective, feedback literacy, both from the lecturer and the student, is essential, as are a learning environment and learning activities that are designed to challenge and support students to take an active role in the feedback process (Gulikers, et al., 2023). The formative assessment cycle can be helpful in this regard.

Programmatic assessment is a concept that can be used to design developmental assessment. For programmes that work according to the principles of programme-based testing, this is discussed in more detail in Appendix B.

Rich learning environments and assessment

In *Together for the Future*, the HU vision on education and research (HU, 2022a), it is outlined that we will increasingly work with mission-driven education in rich learning environments. In this Chapter we describe what we mean by this and what the implications are for assessment.

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We are increasingly confronted with complex societal issues, such as the energy transition and the health gap. Learning, working, innovating, and conducting research together on these types of complex issues takes place in diverse environments.

Addressing these mission-driven challenges requires a rich range of methodologies and approaches, as well as input from partners across disciplines. With such a transdisciplinary approach we want to contribute to the social transitions that are needed.

Bringing together education, research, and practice to collaborate on these issues requires different ways of learning and working, incorporating research and innovation. To achieve this, so-called 'rich learning environments' are increasingly emerging within HU education.

What do we mean by a rich learning environment?
We define a learning environment as the physical and digital environment in which learners are active, including all materials that can be found in that environment and the associated socio-cultural context (Van Onselen et al., 2023).

There is no consensus in the literature on what makes a learning environment rich. Based on the HU vision, we assume a learning environment that centres on a societal issue, that requires multiple methodologies and approaches, with input from partners from different fields and disciplines. A characteristic of rich learning environments is that they work on developing new solutions for complex societal issues. This can be done within existing study programmes or across study programme boundaries. Zitter (2021) describes how to design richer learning environments in professional education.

Role of assessment in a rich learning environment
The new solutions that are being worked on in practice mean that the outcome of a student learning process cannot be fully determined in advance. After all, students contribute to current issues that are still developing. In addition to the outcome of the learning process, the creation of that outcome and the competencies that the student needs to achieve that outcome play an important role in assessment. Assessment is therefore becoming increasingly process-oriented.

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In formulating learning outcomes, the issue of the rich learning environment is leading and this is aligned with the learning outcomes of the programmes participating in the learning environment.

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It is challenging to formulate learning outcomes when the intended output is not yet established. Here, the rich learning environment issue is leading and this is aligned with the learning outcomes of the study programmes participating in the learning environment.

If you do not yet know what solution or contribution the student makes to a societal issue, a more open assessment format or selection from a number of formats is required. In this respect, the student, professional partners, and study programme must jointly come to appropriate agreements that tie in with both the issue and the development needs of the student as also with the objectives and learning outcomes of the study programme. Developing an appropriate assessment model will be done differently in this regard. For example, a methodological approach or work process from the professional context or an overarching issue can form the basis of the learning outcomes here. In consultation, it is determined which learning outcomes will be tested where and by whom. This requires a more open test format, such as a performance assessment.

Assessment in a rich learning environment with global learning outcomes and more open forms of assessment is changing. This does not require an analytical assessment, but rather a holistic view from different perspectives. Moreover, a student's answer is not always right or wrong; as an examiner you check whether the choices made by the student can be justified. When assessing in such a context, it is especially important for assessors to calibrate with each other.

Rich learning environments additionally require a review of various tasks and roles in the assessment process. Besides the examiner from the own study programme, several stakeholders are involved in the learning environment, people from the professional practice and/or from research, other students or lecturers from other study programmes. What role do they have in the assessment process? In this regard, those involved make and record decisions in consultation with each other. For example, study programmes can see whether it is possible to appoint examiners from another study programme for the rich learning environment. When ensuring test quality in a rich learning environment, examination boards check whether the tasks and roles for all steps in the assessment process are well described for all stakeholders.

Flexible assessment

In *Together for the Future*, the HU vision on education and assessment (2022a), it is described that we will make it possible for students to follow education that matches their personal preferences. In addition to a well-defined educational programme range, we also create more space and flexibility for students who need it. In this respect, it is important that ambition and organisational feasibility are balanced.

More flexible assessment is possible for study programmes that work with regular educational units, as well as study programmes that specify educational units according to units of learning outcomes (refer to *Wet Leeruitkomsten Hoger Onderwijs* [Higher Education Learning Outcomes Act] below).

When designing education that allows room to connect with the personal preferences of the student, assessment and learning outcomes play an important role. We thus

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ensure the quality of personal educational pathways, and we therefore set a number of quality requirements for the formulation of learning outcomes. What exactly we mean by learning outcomes is described in paragraph 2.3.2.

Student need for flexibility can be viewed along four dimensions (Litjens, 2024). For assessment you look at the following aspects:
- *What:* the content of what is being tested
- *Where:* place where the assessment takes place
- *When:* time or moment of the assessment
- *How:* form of the assessment

For example, to promote student success and foster inclusion, you could offer by default multiple options for demonstrating learning outcomes. This could be a professional assignment where the form can be decided by the student, or multiple test times.

Formulating learning outcomes in a learning path-independent manner makes it possible to also carry out assessment independently of the learning path.
Study programmes may choose to offer students the opportunity to demonstrate learning outcomes based on evidence from their own professional practice. In this way, a student can capitalize on acquired work experience by having it assessed by means of a so-called learning path-independent assessment.

Learning Outcomes Act (2024)
In September 2024, the Dutch Senate approved the bill *Wet Leeruitkomsten Hoger Onderwijs* [Higher Education Learning Outcomes Act]. his new legislation enables higher education institutions to implement units of learning outcomes (ELUs, *eenheden van leeruitkomsten*), alongside the traditional educational units. Traditional educational units link learning outcomes (what students need to know and be able to do), learning activities (how they can acquire those learning outcomes), and assessment (how they can demonstrate that they have mastered the learning outcomes). In other words, students register for an educational unit, then follow (more or less fixed) learning activities, and then take the corresponding test.

The new Learning Outcomes Act allows these 'building blocks' to be detached, so to speak. Students can still choose the fixed route, with the learning activities and fixed assessments offered by the study programme, but also have the opportunity to bring in work experience and make their own choices in learning activities. Because the assessment has been made independent of the learning path, it is possible to actually demonstrate the developed learning outcomes. A study programme can choose to switch completely or partially to units of learning outcomes. In all cases, at least one fully developed route must be available to students.

Students always make their choices in consultation with the study programme and record this in a study plan. Naturally, proper guidance from the study programme is crucial in this regard, whereby, among other things, it is examined whether the student's choices fit the relevant learning outcome.

For more information, refer to the FAQ Wet leeruitkomsten (2025) [FAQ Learning Outcomes Act] at ÉÉN HU.

APPENDIX B
PROGRAMMATIC ASSESSMENT

This text only applies to study programmes that work according to the principles of programmatic assessment. We want to emphasise that programmatic assessment is not an HU policy, but a possible choice of a study programme. It is important that the choice made aligns with the study programme's vision on education and assessment and the profession for which the student is being trained.

In this Chapter we zoom in on one of the possible ways to perform development-oriented assessment, namely programmatic assessment. This way of assessment is so different from other ways of assessment that additional policy agreements are necessary.

Introduction

Programmatic assessment is an educational concept that takes a holistic view of a student's entire development (Van Schilt-Mol & Baartman, 2023). The objectives of programmatic assessment are to optimise the reliability of decisions and to stimulate the student's learning process.

Programmatic assessment provides insight into student development by using a mix of different so-called data-points. Characteristic of the individual data-points (such as test scores, reflection reports, peer evaluations, professional tasks, etc.) is that they are feedback-oriented and not linked to the award of credits. Decisions are only made when sufficient so-called data-points have been collected to guarantee a reliable or robust decision. The multitude of feedback perspectives taken into account during the decision increases the reliability of the decision (Van Schilt-Mol & Baartman, 2024).

Paragraph 1.3 describes three functions of assessment: stimulating student learning, making decisions about student achievement and gathering information about the quality of the curriculum. In programmatic assessment there is a continuum of assessment for learning and assessment of learning. In this paragraph we discuss the consequences of this for the assurance of test quality, for the appointment of examiners, appeal options for students, dealing with (suspicions of) fraud and the mandatory archival retention periods.

Definitions[18]

In order to ensure assessment quality, to obtain clarity with regard to the appeal procedure and to set up the necessary systems, we use the following definitions for data-points, low stakes moments, medium stakes moments, and high stakes moments for programmatic assessment:

Data-points are meaningful activities that direct the student's learning process and development. *Other words that are used instead of 'data-point' within study programmes that work with programmatic assessment: evidence, performance, product.*

It is essential that feedback on the student's work is also linked to a 'data-point'. This feedback, on one data-point, is provided during a *low stakes moment*. During a **low stakes moment**, a data-point is provided with rich feedback to direct the learning process and provide insight into student development. During this low stakes moment, the focus is on learning.

Medium stakes moment: interim meeting in which the trainer and the student evaluate the information collected at a number of low stakes moments. This medium stakes moment focuses on diagnosis and feed forward: where is the student at and what is the next step in the learning process?

High stakes moment: During the high stakes moment a **decision** is made by the decision committee consisting of one or more examiners. To this end, the student submits a portfolio containing (a selection of) the data-points, including the feedback obtained during the low stakes and medium stakes moments. During the high stakes moment, a decision is made on whether the learning outcomes are being managed at the required level based on the content, number, and comprehensiveness of the data-points, including feedback, and the variety of feedback perspectives. This decision leads to the (not) awarding of a certain number of ECs. The high stakes decision is an *interim examination* in the legal sense and falls under the safeguarding task of the examination board (Biemond & Heeneman, 2024). This decision is subject to appeal.

Examiners, decision committee, and decision process

The examination board appoints examiners to make high stakes decisions (Biemond and Heeneman, 2024). For units of 15 EC, the high stakes decision is made by one or more examiners. For units of 30 EC or more, the high stakes decision is made by multiple examiners. This also applies to (parts of) the graduation component.

Programmatic assessment also refers to a decision committee making the high-stakes decision. This decision committee consists of one or more examiners. For units of 30 EC or more, the decision committee always consists of several examiners.

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18 One of the characteristics of programmatic assessment is the intertwining of education and assessment. There is a continuum in which assessment for learning and assessment of learning merge. In programmatic assessment, for example, we speak of low stakes and medium stakes decisions. At the HU, when it comes to assessment, we only use the word and 'decision' for tests where results are registered in Osiris. We do this, among other things, to provide clarity about appeal options and to provide clarity about setting up the necessary systems and archival retention periods.

It is appropriate for the responsibility of the examination board to provide the study programme with guidelines/directions for the composition of the decision committee and the careful design of the decision process (Section 7.12b Subsection 1 under a WHW; Biemond & Heeneman 2024). Requirements may be imposed with regard to sustainable professionalisation, for example with regard to holistic assessment.

Feedback literacy

The objectives of programmatic assessment are to support student learning and optimise the reliability of decisions. For both objectives, the process of feed-up, feedback and feed forward is essential. It is therefore important to pay attention to feedback literacy of feedback providers: including HU supervisors, subject lecturers and feedback providers from the work field. Professionalisation on feedback literacy is therefore crucial.[19]

It is also important that students learn to seek, value, understand, use, and give feedback (Gulikers et al., 2023). Education should therefore pay ample attention to feedback literacy.

Archiving

All data-points used in a high-stakes decision, including feedback, should be archived. In addition, the completed decision form is archived. To determine the archival retention period, a distinction is made between graduate and non-graduate projects. The descriptions and deadlines in the higher professional education selection list are leading in this respect (Selectielijst, (The Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences, 2022).

Remedying

If the high stakes decision during the first test opportunity is 'not at required level', 'not passed' or numerically insufficient (lower than 5.5), the student can submit improved or additional evidence during test opportunity 2. To this end, the student will receive a remedial assignment from the decision committee. It is up to the study programme to ensure clear remedial procedures. It is the responsibility of the examination board to monitor this.

Delivering and ensuring assessment quality

When ensuring test quality in programmatic assessment, examination boards look at, among other things, whether the tasks and roles for all steps in the assessment process are properly described for all those involved and whether procedures are clear and are being followed.

The following also applies to both the study programme and the examination board: When delivering and ensuring test quality, the quality of the assessment programme is relevant (see paragraph 2.2, assessment programme). In programmatic assessment, the assessment programme is the deliberately composed combination of data-points and high stakes decisions. The quality of individual data-points remains important, but ultimately the quality of the whole must be in order. The KIT 2.0 (Baartman, n.d.) is a valuable instrument to evaluate the quality of the assessment programme.

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19 Customers, clients and patients can also provide valuable feedback from the perspective of the user or recipient. For this feedback perspective, professionalisation is not an issue.

When it comes to data points, the following can be considered in the context of quality assurance:
- to what extent the data-points and feedback provide insight into achieving a learning outcome, and the communication to the student about this;
- whether there are clear agreements that guarantee that the set of data-points is a good reflection of the learning outcomes and whether it is clearly communicated to students within which frameworks they may fill in data-points themselves, for example in terms of content and form;
- whether there are clear agreements that minimise fraud risks, such as data-points where the students themselves are visible/audible (presentations, conversations, recordings, etc.);
- to what extent it is clear where, when, and in what form the data-points in the portfolio are submitted and to what extent a plagiarism scan is used for this;
- whether there are clear agreements about providing feedback;
- the quality of the feedback forms;
- the guidelines for feedback;
- compliance with the guidelines and procedures.

Fraud prevention

The study programme must describe in its assessment policy the methods used to prevent fraud. One possibility, for example, is to link a criterion-based interview to the high stakes moment, in which the student's knowledge and skills are questioned further. The examination board should evaluate the measures taken by a study programme to prevent fraud. Explaining authentic evidence, sanctions, and ethical conduct within study programmes and profession, should be part of education.

Dealing with suspected irregularities

The low stakes and medium stakes moments are not interim examinations in the legal sense. Therefore, the examination board has no legal authority in this regard. However, irregularities in one or more individual data-points may prevent the decision committee from making a correct decision about the student's performance (Biemond and Heenemans, 2024).
If there is a suspicion that a student is committing an irregularity in respect of an individual data-point, it is primarily the study programme's responsibility to take action.

The study programme can then take measures based on the students' charter (Guideline on Irregularities CvE-HU, 2024c). Consider a reporting procedure for counsellors and recording the suspicion on the feedback form (Biemond and Heenemans, 2024). It is important that the student is informed of the suspicion at an early stage, so that they become aware.

If there are any suspicions of irregularities during the high stakes moment, the examiners will report this to the examination board.

Legal frameworks and programmatic assessment

The Higher Education Act stipulates that ensuring the quality of interim examinations and examinations is a task of the examination board. The Act defines 'interim

examination' as follows: an investigation into the knowledge, understanding, and skills of the examinee,[20] as well as the assessment of the results of that investigation (Section 7.10 Subsection 1 WHW). All interim examinations combined constitute the 'examination': If the interim examinations were completed successfully, the examination has been completed, unless the examination board has determined that the examination also includes an investigation to be carried out by itself as referred to in the first Subsection (Section 7.10 Subsection 2 WHW).

What does this mean for assessment quality assurance in programmatic assessment? An 'interim examination' in the legal sense of the word can have all kinds of formats. We speak here of assessment formats, or performances, such as a professional product, a knowledge test, an assessment or a portfolio. Programmatic assessment often uses a digital portfolio in which both the student's work and the feedback provided are collected (Biemond & Heeneman, 2024).

According to the Act, the assessment of the results of the investigation is part of the interim examination (Section 7.10 Subsection 1 WHW). Administering interim examinations and determining the results must be done by an examiner[21] (Section 7.12c WHW) and is legally valid. In programmatic assessment, the high stakes decision, which is made based on the portfolio, is an interim examination *in the legal sense.* This decision falls under the ensuring task of the examination board. Making the high stakes decision and determining the outcome is therefore up to one or more examiners.

In programmatic assessment, this decision is based on information obtained from a large number of data-points with associated feedback, for example from lecturers, professionals from the field, clients or fellow students. The feedback given in this learning process on individual data-points is not an assessment in the legal sense. The low stakes and medium stakes moments are equally not an assessment in the legal sense. The low stakes and medium stakes centre on the learning function.

It is the responsibility of the study programme to organise the teaching and feedback process in such a way that a high stakes decision does not come as a surprise to the student.

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20 Examinee: student
21 The examination board appoints examiners to administer interim examinations and determine their results (Section 7.12c WHW).

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