

The Assured Assessment Standard

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Preamble

- 1) The Assured Assessment Standard is a joint initiative of the University of Tasmania (as the Lead Design Partner) and Proudly Human (as the Independent Auditor). It addresses the problem that generative AI is being used by university students to substantially or in whole write their assignments. This situation undermines the confidence of students, communities and employers in the value of university awards.
- 2) In most jurisdictions, accredited universities are obliged by their regulators to ensure that all graduates have personally earned their degree.
 - a) In Australia, universities operate within the Higher Education Standards Framework, and in the United Kingdom, within the requirements of the Office for Students.
 - b) Across the world degrees are offered to meet additional standards issued by professional accrediting bodies.
 - c) These obligations have been increasingly difficult to fulfill given the shift to working from home and take-home assignments, where in the privacy of their own room students can instantly use generative AI to do their assignments, at no cost, in minutes. Students who use AI this way are not achieving the expected learning outcomes.
 - d) Universities cannot prevent the use of AI through the use of AI detection tools because of the risk of incorrect accusations and the likelihood of facilitating a race between the AI-powered generation tools and the AI-powered detection tools.

Regulatory bodies have made it clear that institutions must assure learning by design and not through detection.

- 3) Surveys have shown that more than 90% of students are using AI to help with their assignments, despite the regulatory obligations on universities.¹
 - a) Some of this use is legitimate, and allowed by educators with appropriate acknowledgement.
 - b) The problem arises when AI is used as a substitute for what needs to be the student's own demonstration of learning through assessment. The extent of the problem varies by faculty and by university, but without explicit effort to obviate the problem no university is immune to the unauthorised use of AI by students.
 - c) Detection tools are inappropriate in the light of the possibly high rates of generative AI use by students in preparation of their assignments. Instead, the focus must be on implementing and maintaining the secured conditions that assure learning.

- 4) A related problem is that a university that implements policies and procedures to ensure that every graduate achieves every learning outcome has no simple way to indicate to the local community and to global employers that the testamurs (degree certificates) they issue are faithful proof of the graduates' achievements.
 - a) The Assured Assessment certification mark displayed on testamurs and marketing materials solves this problem by providing independent, instant, confirmation to regulators, communities and employers that every graduate has personally earned their award.
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The Certification Claim

- 5) Simply put, the Assured Assessment Standard is expressed in a certification claim that:

Every graduate has personally demonstrated every Course Learning Outcome (CLO) under secured conditions.

- a) The evidence that substantiates this claim helps with related regulatory requirements such as course approval, accreditation, external referencing and regulatory assurance.
- 6) **Secured conditions** are identity-verified, directly supervised demonstrations such as observed skill demonstrations, oral assessment or viva voce, invigilated examinations, supervised practicals, laboratory demonstrations, and in-class presentations with live questioning. Online assessment must be designed and tested to ensure secured conditions.
- 7) University autonomy is deeply respected. It is up to universities to design their own courses and assessments, consistent with government regulations and professional accreditations. The Assured Assessment audit evaluates internally designed programs against the Assured Assessment Standard.
- 8) To earn the Assured Assessment certification mark, the university accepts an external audit, performed by Proudly Human. The audit process verifies the university's methodology, records and appeals processes. Staff training against the Assured Assessment Standard is assessed, and courses and assessments are randomly sampled and evaluated.

The Certification Tests

- 9) The certification claim is held to four tests
 - a) **Coverage.** For every course approved by the university's peak academic body (including nested and exit awards), staff provide a curriculum map that shows how every CLO is verified at least once, by a secured, must-pass task or secured decision point. A Course Coverage Matrix is derived from the curriculum mapping, showing the

nature of the assessment tasks used to verify each CLO. If the mapping surfaces gaps, they must be remediated.

- b) **Sufficiency.** Every CLO is verified at the Advanced stage, being the exit level of the award calibrated in Australia to the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), ranging from Level 5 for a Diploma to Level 10 for a doctorate.
- c) **Progression.** Key Assessment Tasks are the culmination of a staged sequence of learning rather than a one-off event.
- d) **No exceptions.** Every Key Assessment Task must be passed. It is not sufficient to look at aggregate marks, allow substitution of tasks or units, or condone a fail. Reasonable adjustments can be made if they do not alter secured conditions, developmental staging or the must-pass status of the task.

10) A **Key Assessment Task** is a secured task or secured decision point in which the student personally demonstrates the outcome at the exit level of the award. It is a must-pass hurdle, regardless of graded weight. A secured hurdle below the exit level is not a Key Assessment Task, although it still counts towards Coverage. In the case of programmatic assessment, evidence accumulates across many low-stakes assessments leading to a high-stakes progression decision, made at a secured decision point, that serves as the Key Assessment Task.

11) The Assured Assessment Standard works with the Two-Lane Approach pioneered at the University of Sydney.

- a) Lane 1 assessment is the opportunity to evaluate each student's knowledge, discipline-specific skills, and 21st century skills assessed under secured, supervised conditions. Students may use generative AI only where its use is directly observed and forms part of what the task assesses.
- b) Lane 2 develops the capability that Lane 1 independently verifies, supporting open, developmental learning where students may use AI if its use is acknowledged.

The dividing line between the two lanes is observation and authorship, not the presence of AI.

¹ Student Generative Artificial Intelligence Survey 2026, Higher Education Policy Institute, 12 March 2026, <https://www.hepi.ac.uk/reports/student-generative-ai-survey-2026/>