Weighted Average Mark (WAM) Calculation Guideline

Section 1 - Introduction

(1) A weighted average mark (WAM) is the average mark achieved across all completed units in a program, or a defined set of completed units, including fail grades, weighted according to the unit value and academic level of the particular course.

Section 2 - Purpose

(2) This guideline has been developed to assist staff and students to calculate a WAM.

Section 3 - Scope

(3) This guideline applies to all undergraduate and postgraduate coursework programs and courses.

Section 4 - Guidelines

(4) The WAM is calculated as:

a. a cumulative WAM, calculated over all units undertaken within a Program; or
b. a WAM calculated over a specified number of units or all units at or above a specified level;
    i. for calculation of Honours the weighted average mark calculated over all 2000, 3000, 4000, 5000 and 6000 level courses; or
c. a WAM calculated over an approved major; or
d. an annual WAM is the weighted average mark of the results of courses taken in a particular calendar year.

(5) The WAM can be expressed mathematically as:

> WAM = Σ (M V W)/Σ (V W)
> Where:
> M = the mark as defined below;
> V = the unit value of the course concerned; and
> W = the weighting of the course concerned as set out below.

(6) The value of “M” is defined as followed:

a. where the final result in a course is given in the range 50 to 100 inclusive, “M” is equal to that percentage mark;
b. where the final result in a course is a failing grade, in the range 45 to 49 inclusive, “M” is equal to that

percentage mark;

c. where the final result in a course is a failing grade, in the range of 0 to 44, “M” is equal to a mark of 44;
d. where the student has passed the course but the result is not provided as a percentage mark and the student receives a UP (ungraded pass) the mark demoted as “M” will be deemed to be as per Clause 10.

Table 1 – Course Mark Values for WAM

Grade	Percentage Mark	M
UP*	Not provided	58* (refer to Clause 9)
P,C,D,HD	50-100	Equal to the percentage mark
FF	45-49	Equal to the percentage mark
FF	0-44	44

(7) The first number of a course code indicates the level at which the course is offered regardless of the year of study in which it is undertaken and also indicates the weighting of the course in terms of the Weighted Average Mark (WAM) calculation. For example, if the course INFO1010 is undertaken in the fourth year of study, the course is still considered to be a 1000 level course and the weighting will be 1.

Table 2 Course Weightings (cumulative WAM)

Course Level	Weighting (W)
1000	1
2000	2
3000	3
4000, 5000 and 6000	4

(8) The WAM for Bachelor Honours is calculated on all courses above the 1000 level and weighted as per table 3:

Table 3 Course Weighting (Bachelor Honours – Embedded Honours)

Course Level	Weighting
2000	2
3000	3
4000, 5000 and 6000	4

(9) The determination of units to be included in the calculation of the WAM is as follows:

a. where all units have been completed at the University of Newcastle and within the same program, all units will be included in the WAM calculation;
b. where all units have been completed at the University of Newcastle but across different programs, all units that have contributed to the relevant program being awarded will be included in the WAM calculation

(including credit);

c. where a student has received credit from an external institution (including cross-institutional study) only those units completed at the University of Newcastle will be included in the WAM calculation;
d. where a student has completed more than the maximum units, only the approved units will be counted towards the WAM calculation. For example in a 240 unit program only 240 units of approved courses where the student has received a pass (or greater) plus all fail grades will be included in the WAM calculation. For students who over-enrol (i.e. extraneous enrolment in units additional to the overall program value) only the earliest completed courses are counted;
e. courses completed extraneously cannot be counted within the WAM calculation. Students who have successfully completed a course will not be permitted to undertake the same course again (see definition for Extraneous enrolment in a course);
f. where, through an administrative error, a student has passed the same course twice, the grade of the first completion, not the highest mark, will be utilised in the WAM calculation; and
g. where a student is studying a combined program, only those units which have contributed to the completion of each single program will be included in the WAM calculation for each of the program or the WAM may be calculated for the overall unit value for the combined programs, subject to the conditions outlined above.

(10) *Ungraded pass (UP) Grades are not included in the calculation of a WAM, except:

a. where the inclusion of the ungraded pass grade in the calculation will advantage the student, ie when the student has a WAM of less than 58. In this instance the WAM is recalculated including the value of the ungraded pass grades; or
b. when more than 50% of the grades presented are ungraded pass grades. In this instance, the WAM would be calculated with the ungraded pass grades included in the calculation.

(11) The following will be taken into account when calculating the WAM:

a. students re-enrolling after leave of absence will retain their previous WAM as the basis of future calculations;
b. if grades of 'Incomplete' (I) or 'Special Consideration' (S) are awarded to a student, the WAM will remain uncalculated until the final marks are awarded.

(12) Multi-term sequence courses:

a. upon completion of Part A of a multi-term sequence course students will be awarded an NA grade, NA grades are not included in WAM calculations;
b. upon completion of Part B of a multi-term sequence course students will be awarded a percentage mark and grade, weighted according to the unit value of Part A and B, this mark will be included in the WAM calculation.

Rounding

(13) For consideration of honours, a WAM is rounded as follows:

a. a maximum of two decimal points in a WAM is used;
b. a WAM at or below xx.49 will be rounded down to the previous full decimal; and
c. a WAM at or above xx.50 will be rounded up to the next full decimal.

Table 4 – Rounding Examples

WAM (to 2 decimal points)	Rounded WAM
76.49	76

WAM (to 2 decimal points)	Rounded WAM
76.51	77

Section 5 - Roles and Responsibilities

(14) University staff must calculate a student's WAM in accordance with these Guidelines.

(15) Students may calculate their WAM using these Guidelines.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	8th November 2022
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Approval Authority	Academic Senate
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Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Belinda Yourn Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic & Global)
Enquiries Contact	John Radvan Senior Manager, Academic Governance & Compliance Student Central

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"University" - The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Course" - When referring to a course offered by the University, a course is a set of learning activities or learning opportunities with defined, assessed and recorded learning outcomes. A course will be identified by an alphanumeric course code and course title. Course types include core courses, compulsory courses, directed courses, capstone courses and electives. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Credit" - When referring to course credit, credit is the recognition of equivalence in content and learning outcomes between different types of learning and/or qualifications. Credit can reduce the amount of learning required to achieve a qualification. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Student" - A person formally enrolled in a course or active in a program offered by the University or affiliated entity.

"Extraneous enrolment" - In a course, means a student has: a) enrolled in a course which is not required for their program; or b) already successfully completed the course and been awarded a pass mark, or greater; or c) enrolled in a course, and that enrolment will result in the student completing units in excess of that required for their program.

"Postgraduate" - Any qualification being at the level of Graduate Certificate or above.

"Program" - When referring to learning, a program is a sequence of approved learning, usually leading to an Award. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Staff" - Means a person who was at the relevant time employed by the University and includes professional and academic staff of the University, by contract or ongoing, as well as conjoint staff but does not include visitors to the University.

"Term" - When referring to an academic period, term means a period of time aligned to an academic year for the delivery of a course in which students enrol and for which they are usually charged fees for example semesters, trimesters, summer, winter or full-year term. The academic year for a term is determined by the academic year in which the course commences, not concludes. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Undergraduate" - Refers to any qualification up to and including the level of a Bachelor Honours degree.

"Unit" - When referring to an academic unit, unit means the proportional amount of academic credit allotted to a course. This term is used to define the requirements for a program award of the University and indicate a student's enrolment load. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Major" - When referring to a program major, this is a sequence of courses approved by the Program and Course Approval Committee, which students may be required to complete as part of their undergraduate program (except undergraduate Diplomas). Each major will contain at least 80 units with at least 60 unique units. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

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