

## Test and Examination timetable

### Providing information on scheduling the test and examination timetable

The SU Assessment Policy allows for a flexible assessment approach, whereby assessment can be considered as a two-way conversation between the student and lecturer to enhance learning. "Assessment is probably the most powerful influence on what students do, so it is important that it is carefully designed to have desirable effects on student learning and effectively portray what students can do" (Ashwin et al. 2015, p. 301). However, to ensure that assessment is not simply added to the module/curriculum, but purposefully designed, careful planning is required. This includes the consideration of *constructive alignment* (Biggs, 2012), i.e. how assessment opportunities (and criteria) are used to ascertain whether a student achieved the identified learning outcomes.

An element of the design of the assessment, is to plan for the formal assessment opportunities and considering **when** and **where** these assessments will occur.

Information provided in the module specification document (also referred to as [Form B](#)) aims to capture information required for scheduling test and examination dates and venues for the general timetable.

The information captured to schedule test and examination venues and dates should align with the information provided in the *Assessment Strategy*, i.e. if the assessment strategy refers to written, invigilated examinations, it should be indicated when this examination should be scheduled and the venue requirements for such an examination.



#### **Take note:**

*Indicating that the timetable scheduling will not be required is allowed, however:*

- *a clear motivation should be provided for not using the general timetable*
- *it should be indicated who will take responsibility for the scheduling of the assessment opportunities*



#### **References**

Ashwin, P. (2015). How do students develop their understanding? In Ashwin et al., *Reflective teaching in higher education* (pp. 21 – 40). London: Bloomsbury

Biggs, J.B. (2012). What the student does: Teaching for enhanced learning. *Higher Education Research & Development*. 31(1), 39-55.



## Formal assessment periods

At SU, there are three formal assessment periods per semester:

<b>A1</b>	Mid-semester. Although different assessment methods can be used, this assessment period is usually scheduled formally on the test and examination timetable with a specific time and venue scheduled for the completion of an invigilated assessment. Some faculties might use a test week.
<b>A2</b>	First examination opportunity (May/June and November/December). A formal timetable is compiled for invigilated examination opportunities, with papers written either in the morning (09:00) or afternoon (14:00). Special arrangements are made for students with concessions (i.e. some students might write their examinations separately).
<b>A3</b>	Second examination opportunity (May/June and November/December). A formal timetable is compiled for invigilated examination opportunities, with papers written either in the morning (09:00) or afternoon (14:00). Special arrangements are made for students with concessions (i.e. some students might write their examinations separately).

## FM, A1, AF, A2, A3, A4, MY and DCA marks

Different types of marks are associated with the different assessment opportunities. Please remember that assessments should be scheduled either in Semester 1 (S1) or Semester 2 (S2). Therefore, for any of the different types of assessment opportunities (apart from the Dean's Concession), it should also be considered whether the assessment opportunity will be scheduled/completed in S1 or S2.

For each of the different "types" of marks prescribed below, multiple assessment opportunities can be offered, with a single combined mark uploaded to SUNStudent for each type of mark.

The regulations related to all of the different types of marks are available in the *Assessment Chapter* ([General Calendar](#), Part 1).

<b>A1</b>	Assessments completed during the mid-semester block, usually in March/April and again in August/September.
<b>AF</b>	Also referred to as "further assessment" opportunities. These are assessment opportunities that can usually not be completed during the scheduled A1 period, i.e. practical/laboratory work, written assignment, etc. Dates for the submission/completion of these assessments should be clearly communicated in the <b>Module Framework</b> .
<b>A2</b>	First examination opportunity (May/June and November/December)
<b>A3</b>	Second examination opportunity (May/June and November/December)
<b>MY</b>	Mid-year marks. These are a culmination of the assessment opportunities completed during the first semester.



<b>A4</b>	January/February assessment opportunity (third examination) that might be scheduled under special circumstances. These do not include Dean's concessions. A programme can create assessment opportunities for both the A4 and DCA (see below), or use one of the options.
<b>DCA</b>	Dean's Concessionary Assessment
<b>FM</b>	Final mark for a module. This mark is indicated out of a 100



### Hyperlinks to other sources

#### Other documents that should be consulted:

- Please see the general calendar [Part 1](#) (i.e. Assessment Chapter) for more information related to the different kinds of marks and general rules related to assessment at SU.
- Each faculty has an approved **Assessment Plan** (please see faculty website)
- [Stellenbosch University Assessment Policy](#)

### Assessment timetable provisions in the module specification document (Form B)

For the formal timetable, only information related to the three formal assessment opportunities are required, i.e. A1, A2, A3. The scheduling of all other assessment opportunities are dealt with by the academic department/faculty.



#### Suggestions:

1. When compiling the **Assessment Strategy**, highlight the assessment opportunities that should be scheduled during a formal assessment period. This will help you to compile the information needed for the timetable.
2. Take cognisance of the semester during which the assessment should be scheduled (i.e. alignment with when the module is offered).
3. Clearly identify venue requirements if a specific type of venue will be needed (i.e. a computer user area), as this could influence the scheduling of the assessment opportunity.



#### Take note:

- The information used for the assessment timetable should align to the Assessment Strategy, i.e. if the assessment strategy does not refer to any sit-down invigilated examinations or formally scheduled assessment opportunities during the formal examination period, then A2 and A3 should not be selected as an option.



- o The information included in the **timetable** summary should align with the **assessment strategy** of the module.
- o Confirm with the head of the department what assessment regulations are followed, i.e. does the department administer the examination themselves, including making copies and arranging for invigilation. If that is the case, it is the responsibility of the department to ensure that the copies of papers are kept securely.



### For example

#### Example A:

The following is an example of **first semester** module that will not be using the A1 opportunity, but will incorporate an examination requiring invigilation. As approximately 200 students are usually enrolled for this module, a large venue will be needed. The examination paper is copied and secured by the examinations department, not by the faculty. Both the A2 and A3 opportunities will be used, with similar information.

Semester 1			Semester 2		
A1 <input type="checkbox"/>	A2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A1 <input type="checkbox"/>	A2 <input type="checkbox"/>	A3 <input type="checkbox"/>
If A2 will be used in the first semester, will it be administered by the department or the faculty?	Responsibility of Examination office		If A2 will be used in the first semester, will it be administered by the department or the faculty?		
What type of venue will be required for the A2 assessment?	Big lecture venue		What type of venue will be required for the A2 assessment?		
If other (type of venue) was selected above, please provide more information:	NA		If other (type of venue) was selected above, please provide more information:		
If A3 will be used in the first semester, will it be administered by the department or the faculty?	Responsibility of Examination office		If A3 will be used in the first semester, will it be administered by the department or the faculty?		
What type of venue will be required for the A3 assessment?	Big lecture venue		What type of venue will be required for the A3 assessment?		
if other (type of venue) was selected above, please provide more information:	NA		if other (type of venue) was selected above, please provide more information:		

#### Example B:

The following is an example of a **year** module that will be using a formal assessment during the A1 period, requiring students to complete an examination on a computer (under supervision) during the June examination and writing a sit-down examination during the A2 and A3 examination period. This is a relatively small class requiring seats for approximately 30 students.

Semester 1			Semester 2		
A1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A3 <input type="checkbox"/>	A1 <input type="checkbox"/>	A2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



If A2 will be used in the first semester, will it be administered by the department or the faculty?	Responsibility of Examination office	If A2 will be used in the first semester, will it be administered by the department or the faculty?	Responsibility of Examination office
What type of venue will be required for the A2 assessment?	Computer user area	What type of venue will be required for the A2 assessment?	Small lecture venue
If other (type of venue) was selected above, please provide more information:	NA	if other (type of venue) was selected above, please provide more information:	NA
If A3 will be used in the first semester, will it be administered by the department or the faculty?	Responsibility of Examination office	If A3 will be used in the first semester, will it be administered by the department or the faculty?	Responsibility of Examination office
What type of venue will be required for the A3 assessment?	Big lecture venue	What type of venue will be required for the A3 assessment?	Small lecture venue
if other (type of venue) was selected above, please provide more information:	NA	if other (type of venue) was selected above, please provide more information:	NA

**The following are examples of motivations that can be provided if formal test- and examination dates are not required for the test and examination timetable.**

**Example C:**

No invigilated sit-down tests or examinations are required for this module. All dates for submission of assessments (in class or online) will be communicated with students at the start of the module and via the Module Framework.

**Example D:**

Scheduling of assessments for this honours module is dealt with by the department. All assessment dates are communicated with students at the start of the module and via the Module Framework. Where sit-down invigilated assessments are used, these will be accommodated during the lecture blocks.

**Example E:**

All assessment opportunities for this module are completed online via SUNLearn and Turnitin. Assessment dates are discussed with students at the start of the module and recorded via the Module Framework.

