Assignment and Result Submission Review

Background
The assignment and result submission process within the Clayton School of Information Technology has undergone a review. This was necessary as the two merged Schools had significantly different procedures, and in addition, result processes previously handled within the Faculty Office have now been devolved to the School.

In conducting the review, key considerations include the following two issues:

1. Resources
   - There are currently seven staff in Academic Programs Support on the Clayton campus, compared to fifteen across campus in the past (ex-CSSE, ex-BusSys, ex-Faculty Office). Each of these seven staff members must significantly expand their roles to take on a greater range of tasks. While student numbers have reduced, the number of processes has not, and it is the range that takes the most time, not the volume.
   - In Building 75 (ex-CSSE), the major proportion (75%) of the Senior Administrative Officer’s role was dedicated to the results process and its various components throughout the semester. At times, this increased to greater than 100%, requiring considerable additional hours. 30% of the Administrative Assistant’s role was also allocated to this process. Substantial casual resources were also devoted to this process, particularly at the end of each semester. It is also important to note that experienced staff members are carrying out these functions. The resource needs would be greater for staff unfamiliar with the process.

2. Current systems
   - The current MARKS system used by ex-CSSE is not user-friendly, and only one staff member knows how to operate this. The system is unstable, as there is no technical support for this program, as remaining staff do not have expertise in this area.

Process
The Review was conducted by Leisa McGuinness (School Manager), Caitlin Slattery (Academic Programs Manager), Karen Fenwick (Senior Administrative Officer), Michelle Kozel (Senior Administrative Officer), Ann Nicholson (Associate Head of School) and Sue Bedingfield (BBIS Program Director). Input was also sought from Malaysia and South Africa prior to finalisation of the process.

Current processes undertaken by both ex-Schools were reviewed, and key differences highlighted. Processes used by different Schools within the Faculty, and more broadly throughout the University were also reviewed.

Revised procedures to be implemented in the School are detailed below.
Assignment Process

Purpose:
The purpose of this procedure is to outline the assignment submission and return process, and the assignment result recording responsibility.

Scope:
This will apply to all units coordinated by the Clayton School of Information Technology that are offered on the Clayton campus.

Quality assurance:
Assignments are date stamped. Late assignments are submitted directly to the lecturer/tutor for appropriate penalties. Submitted assignments are checked off, to ensure all submitted work is assessed. Assignments are returned to students in accordance with privacy legislation.

Procedure:
1. All assignment due dates (electronic and hard copy) will be collected by the Academic Programs Support (APS) office. Dates to be checked and revised if necessary to ensure there are not too many assignments due around the same time.

2. All hard-copy assignments will be due at 12 noon across the School. In practice, APS will continue to collect these until 5pm on that day and will stamp them as late. All hard-copy assignments submitted after this time will need to be submitted to the lecturer/tutor. Academic staff should advise students of this requirement, and also of what late penalties will be applied.

3. APS will collect assignments from assignment boxes, date stamp and mark off on a class list (APS staff retain original).

4. Assignments will be passed on to academic staff (or representative), along with a copy of the marked class list.

5. Academic staff to develop procedure for handling late assignments, which should include keeping a record of when they are received. If students do not submit these in person directly to the academic staff member, but leave the late assignment in mailbox or under office door, they should be advised to email lecturer.

6. Assignment mark and feedback should be returned to students within two weeks of submission. Staff should advise students of submission and return dates at the commencement of semester.

7. Where possible, assignment marks and feedback are to be returned to students during tutorials. If not possible, assignments are to be returned to APS. APS will file and return to students on request.

8. Academics to record all assignment results on results spreadsheets, or in MESS. To do this, the MESS configuration files will need to be updated by the academic staff member.
**Variations from current process:**

**Building 75:**
- Currently, assignment details are checked against handbooks.
- Marks database – Senior Administrative Officer enters assignment information, uploads all student names and unit details, maintains student enrolment information in Marks, and then uploads results into MARKS, or manually keys.

**Building 63:**
- Assignment submission time was previously 4pm.
- Did not previously record electronic submission assignment due dates.
Lab marks

Purpose:
To ensure lab marks are recorded, and considered in overall unit assessment.

Scope:
This will apply to all units coordinated by the Clayton School of Information Technology which are offered on the Clayton campus, and which have an assessable lab component.

Quality assurance:
Academic (head tutor) records lab/prac marks directly, therefore, no dual handling of this information. All absentee forms submitted to admin office, to ensure all are accounted for and considered in assessment.

Procedure:
1. Academics (head tutors) record lab/prac marks.
2. APS will collect absentee forms, and academics (head tutors) to finalise.
3. Academics finalise overall lab marks, and build this into their own spreadsheet OR can use MESS to record this information. To do this, the MESS configuration files will need to be updated by the academic staff member.
4. Lab/prac marks are to be made available to students. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all lab marks and absentee forms have been correctly recorded.

Variations from current process:
Building 75:
- Senior Administrative Officer currently configures MESS to take individual unit marking schemes into account, and to allow for absentees. This will return overall mark for this component of assessment.
- Senior Administrative Officer and the head tutors review at the end of semester.
- Senior Administrative Officer extracts this assessment component from MESS, and uploads into MARKS.

Building 63:
- Not applicable
Examination and results submission process

**Purpose:**
The purpose of this procedure is to record the overall unit results in Callista, for publication to students.

**Scope:**
This will apply to all units coordinated by the Clayton School of Information Technology, including those in Malaysia and South Africa.

**Quality assurance:**
Examination papers are moderated for content and grammar. Unit leaders and Chief Examiners jointly finalise results across all offerings of the unit. Results are reviewed prior to upload into Callista, and distributions examined.

**Procedure:**

1. APS will develop a results timeline for each semester, and distribute reminders to academic staff of key dates.
2. All examination papers must be moderated, for both content and grammar, by another academic staff member. The moderator should be familiar with the unit content.
3. Original examination papers submitted to admin for printing and retention, along with completed and signed examination moderation form.
4. Classlists (.CSV files) distributed to lecturers at the start of semester, after the census date, and at the end of semester.
5. Attendance lists separated from papers prior to marking, in accordance with the policy on [Blind Marking of Examinations](#).
6. During the marking process, it is expected that all University and Faculty policies regarding assessment will be adhered to, particularly the requirement for automatic remarking of any component of assessment worth 10% or more, as detailed in the [Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) policy. In addition, academic staff need to ensure that papers are checked for addition, and that all answers have been marked.
7. APS collate special consideration and deferred exam applications, and distribute log to academics.
8. Lecturers check applications, and apply special consideration to the students results.
9. Deferred exam applications are assessed by Course Directors. These applications are discussed and DEF grades recorded by the administrator for those approved at the Results Review.
10. If the unit is being offered in more than one location, the Chief Examiner liaises with other lecturers, ensuring that special consideration and scaling is applied consistently, and returns overall results in one complete file to administration.
11. Lecturers return .csv files to APS, along with a copy of their own detailed results spreadsheet, listing all assessment components, including raw marks, adjustments and scaling (for filing and
retention).

12. School holds Results Review, using .csv files. Scaling and distributions discussed. Changes to marks are agreed on at this meeting, and updated by the administrator in the original .csv files concurrently.

13. APS upload results to Callista.

14. APS print Unit Review Reports for academic signature.

15. Student queries on final results to academics.

Variations from current process:

Building 75:
- APS prepare front cover of exam papers.
- APS have marking guidelines to facilitate checking process, which they distribute with papers.
- APS have form for markers to record what portion of each paper they marked.
- Head tutor totals paper.
- Permanent admin staff or casuals hired to check that all answers have been considered/marked and to check addition.
- APS enters result in MARKS, and double check this.
- APS runs MARKS reports per unit (alpha and ranked), and distributes to lecturers (Clayton and Malaysia).
- APS collates results separately from Clayton and Malaysia.
- School results review – adjustments made in MARKS (no field to record comment, manually recorded on hard copy).
- Chief Examiners (year level coordinators) make special consideration adjustments, allowing consistent handling of each student regardless of how many units involved in special consideration.
- APS extracts final results from MARKS into .csv, and uploads in Callista.
- Student queries on final results go to APS.

Building 63:
- In some units, tutors assist with exam marking, check that all answers have been marked, and check addition; in other cases, no results checking applied.
- Results are currently uploaded into Callista prior to the School Results Review.
- Requirement to provide breakdown of marks, adjustments for late penalties, etc, and scaling not enforced.
- No cross-validation process for consistency of adjustments or scaling.
- Special consideration applied by individual lecturers.
Units offered in more than one location:

Guidelines for units offered in South Africa, Malaysia, or in streams at the Clayton campus are as follows:

- If the unit is being offered in more than one location, the Chief Examiner liaises with other lecturers, and returns overall results in one complete file to administration. The individual unit lecturers should retain their own detailed results spreadsheets, and submit this overall document to the Chief Examiner.

- Exam questions are to be formulated in a consultative process with unit leaders in other locations, and approved by the Chief Examiner.

- A single exam marking scheme must be used. Marking scheme to be developed by unit leaders and approved by the Chief Examiner. The marking scheme must be finalised and copies made available to all lecturers.

- Where units are taught across more than one campus, including overseas campuses and offshore partnered institutions, there is cross-checking of sample of papers to ensure consistency of standards.

- Unit leaders in Malaysia and South Africa will now need to retain their own results spreadsheets, and record of marks for assignments, labs and examinations, if they did not already do so before.

Implementation:

To facilitate implementation of these revised processes, the following will be developed:

- An exam moderation template will be available, and all academic staff will need to submit this with the original examination for printing.

- A marking assistance policy will be formalised. All lecturers will need to submit a form at the commencement of semester, requesting an estimate of what marking assistance will be required. Once approved, this will be compared against actual results at the end of semester. Staff may wish to use this to review assessment methods.

- Scaling guidelines will be developed.

- A detailed results spreadsheet template will be developed for academic staff to refer to. This must be submitted with the final results for record-keeping purposes.

- Academic staff will need to record both raw marks, and any adjustments made on the detailed results spreadsheet, detailing the reason for the adjustment.

- The School Results Review process will be revised early in Semester 1, to include appropriate quality assurance mechanisms. Academic and general staff will be involved in this review.

- Method of submission of .csv files will be investigated. Currently, this is done on disk. Possibility of using shared files with permissions to be investigated.
• If staff wish to use MESS to record non-examination assessment items, they can extract this into .csv format, and feed this into their own detailed results spreadsheets.

• Since academic staff will now be required to set up MESS, documentation and training will need to be provided.

• At present, MESS is only available to on-campus Clayton staff.