

Frequently Asked Questions for the ACT Certification System (ACS) October 2020



**Board of Senior Secondary Studies
ACT Certification System (ACS)**

ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies Certification System

This software enables teachers to enter the college data required for the certification of students in their senior secondary years.

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Accessing ACS Frequently Asked Questions

What is the ACS web address?

The web address for [ACS](https://acs.bsss.act.edu.au) is <https://acs.bsss.act.edu.au>
Encourage users to save this address in their 'favourites'.

How do I find out my username and password?

The User Control user in your school can tell you your username. This is normally the college certification officer. The format should be `firstname_lastname`.
It is not possible to determine a password if it has been lost or forgotten. The User Control user in your school can reset a password.

Why do I keep getting logged out of ACS?

If there is no activity ACS will log you out after five minutes.

Markbook Frequently Asked Questions

Why can't I see my Markbooks?

View your Markbooks by accessing the Markbook list. The default display is for Markbooks from the current year and semester. To see all of your Markbooks clear the default search criteria by clicking the clear button. If you have Basic access you will not see a Markbook unless you have been given access.

How can I find my Markbook?

At the top of the Markbook List clear the search criteria by clicking the Clear button. To search for a particular Markbook, type into the Markbook Name, Course and Unit fields. Cohort and Scaling Group criteria are selected from the drop down menus. Click the Find button to run your search. Click the Clear button to clear the filters. If you need to know the scaling group of a particular course view the Courses in Scaling Groups report in Reports > College > Courses in Scaling Groups.

How do I enter results into a Markbook?

See **5. Markbooks** on the main ACS help page.

What is a notional zero?

A notional zero is a mark awarded for an assessment item in situations including

- when an assessment item is
 - not submitted,
 - seven or more days late
 - is late and when the late penalty is applied the adjusted mark falls below the maximum notional zero value for the assessment item.
- work that has been plagiarised.
- work that has been judged as a non-genuine attempt.

A notional zero is a score below the lowest genuine score. It can be anywhere in a range from just below the lowest genuine score (0.1 of a standard deviation) down to zero.

When should I set notional zeroes?

Because the maximum notional zero value is calculated from all of the other genuine scores these must be entered into the Markbook first. All V and S grades for that Markbook must be awarded and explained. The **Set Notional Zero** button can be pressed at any time.

What is a genuine mark?

A genuine mark is the mark the student achieved for that item before any adjustment has been made. If a mark of zero is entered then that is considered a genuine mark. Genuine marks are used to calculate the maximum notional zero value. Note that a zero is a genuine mark. Do not enter zero in cases where students have not submitted work; leave the cell blank.

What do I enter for a student who does not submit an item?

The calculation of raw unit scores will not be possible until each cell has a mark. Click on the student name and select the Not Submitted adjustment type. The maximum notional zero value will be copied into the adjusted mark cell – this can be changed to a lesser value down to zero.

Why are my notional zeroes zero?

The maximum notional zero value is calculated as being 0.1 standard deviation below the lowest genuine score. If a zero has been entered as a genuine score then the maximum notional zero value will be zero.

Why does my notional zero value keep changing?

The maximum notional zero value is calculated as being 0.1 standard deviation below the lowest genuine score. As more genuine marks are entered this calculation will change, especially if a new mark is the lowest mark. Ensure you click the **Set Notional Zero** button to change notional zero marks to the final notional zero before calculating unit scores.

How do I delete assessment item scores?

In data entry mode the marks can be deleted from the Markbook by selecting the mark and pressing the delete key. If a mark has been adjusted the adjustment will need to be removed (see below) before the original mark can be removed. Do not enter a zero if the student has not submitted assessment – this should have the Not Submitted adjustment type.

How do I delete adjustments?

In the Markbook Results screen select the student adjustment screen by clicking on the hyperlinked student name. Adjustments are deleted by clicking the **Remove** hyperlink in the Mark Adjustments screen adjacent to the assessment item. Note that clicking twice will remove the original mark.

How do I delete assessment items?

Assessment items can only be removed provided there are no results against that assessment item in the Markbook. Once all results for that assessment item have been removed the assessment item can be removed but the Markbook cannot be saved unless the assessment item weightings add to 100%. Further adjustment to weightings is required.

What marks are used in calculating the mean and standard deviation of an assessment item?

All genuine scores are used to calculate the mean and standard deviation of an assessment items. Adjusted scores are not used. Students who have been awarded a V or S grade are excluded from calculations.

How do I enter a late penalty?

Mark the late work without penalty and enter the genuine score in the Markbook. Then click on the hyperlinked student name and adjust the genuine mark by applying the late penalty adjustment type, the number of days late and a comment.

How do I enter a mark for work that has been plagiarised?

Refer to the section 4.3.12 in the Policy and Procedures Manual to ensure you understand the assessment and penalty policies regarding plagiarism. Add an Academic Integrity adjustment type and add the adjusted mark and a comment. The adjusted mark can range from the genuine mark (if the student is to receive a warning and no penalty) to a notional zero. If the item is not to count for a student for the 70% rule, select a Not Submitted adjustment type with a notional zero value and add a comment to explain.

How do I calculate an estimate for an assessment item?

Leave the cell in the Markbook blank. Adjust the score and apply the Estimate adjustment type. Enter the estimate mark. Note that Markbook does calculate a suggested estimate mark. This estimate mark is based on a weighted Z score in this markbook. Note that the adjusted mark cell is blank. You must type in an adjusted mark.

What is the correct order to enter an Assessment Item?

When a Markbook is created it can be saved without assessment items. When assessment items are added there must be at least two items and the weightings must add to 100 before the Markbook can be saved. The maximum mark can be added at a later date but must be entered before marks are entered for that item. After marks are entered the maximum mark cannot be changed. To change the maximum mark remove all of the marks entered.

What do I do at the end of the Assessment Period?

1. End of Assessment Period (Basic role)
 - a. After all marks for all assessment items have been entered calculate raw unit scores. For T markbooks, weighted z is the preferred method in most circumstances.
 - b. Award grades. The grade cut-off facility can be used.
2. End of Assessment Period (Edit role)
 - a. Using the scaling group list for the Markbook move raw scores to Temp to lock the Markbook

How do I add a V, S or Z grade for a unit?

V, S or Z grades can be added in the Mark Adjustment screen. Click on the hyperlinked student name to access this screen. A comment is required. Any grade entered in the school administration system will sweep through to ACS (and be displayed in the Markbook) provided there is no existing grade in ACS.

How do I remove a V, S or Z grade?

V, S or Z grades can be removed in the mark adjustment screen – a comment is required. If no other grade is entered, and the grade exists in the school administration system, this grade will sweep back into ACS.

How do I calculate unit scores for half standard units?

When a half standard unit is added to a Markbook the user is prompted to allocate the 'Half Unit AIs'. This is the process of specifying which of the assessment item marks are used to calculate the half standard unit scores. This can be done when the half standard units are added to a Markbook or later by clicking on the Half Unit AIs button in the Manage Markbook screen. Once Half Unit AIs have been allocated marks will only be able to be entered for the appropriate assessment items for students enrolled in half standard units. Half standard unit standardised scores will be calculated from the assessment item marks specified in the Half Unit AIs on a 'pro rata' weighting basis. If Half Unit AIs are not allocated, the Markbook will expect all assessment items for students enrolled in half standard units to be entered before calculating any unit scores.

How do I calculate a unit score?

Once all marks are entered for all assessment items a raw unit score can be calculated by clicking either the Use Weighted Raw or the Use Weighted Z button in the Markbook Results screen. The Use Weighted Raw button calculates the raw unit score by adding the weighted raw marks for each assessment item. The Use Weighted Z button adds the weighted Z scores and then rescales them to the parameters entered in the Markbook definition. If markbook parameters have not been set (0) then the scaled raw unit scores will be zero. Raw unit scores can be re-calculated at any time.

How do I change a unit score?

In the Markbook Results screen access the adjustment screen by clicking on the hyperlinked student name. Adjust the unit score, add a comment and click on Save and then Close.

How do I change an incorrect assessment item mark?

In the Markbook Results screen select an original (genuine) mark and change it at any time by going into data entry mode and retyping the new mark. If an adjustment has been applied to the genuine mark this adjustment must first be removed before the genuine mark can be changed. Be careful to record the details of the adjustment before it is removed in case it needs to be reapplied.

What happens to a student who changes to a half standard unit?

When the enrolment is changed in either the school administration system or ACS this change will be reflected in the Markbook. If the half standard unit is in the same Markbook then the student will be listed in the half unit. You will need to copy the assessment item marks from the one standard unit to the half standard unit. Then go back and delete the assessment item marks for the full standard unit. The half standard unit raw score will be calculated according to the unit exceptions.

How do I set up Markbooks?

1. Determine which units will be in the same Markbook (see below).
 - a. Create the Markbooks with a definition including historical parameters.
 - b. Add the units to the Markbooks. Check the report Unit Studied Records without a Markbook to review your progress.
2. Prepare the Markbooks (Basic)
 - a. Add assessment items (at least two) with weightings which add to 100
3. Prepare the Markbooks (Edit)
 - a. Apply unit exceptions

What units can I have in the same Markbook?

A Markbook is created with a Markbook definition. The rules are:

- Year 11 and Year 12 students must be in separate Markbooks for T units
- Only units from course(s) within the same scaling group can be in the same Markbook.
- A Markbook is defined for a given calendar year and assessment period
- All units in a Markbook must have the same number of assessment items and have the same names, weightings and maximum marks for each assessment item
- The marks for each assessment item must be comparable (achieved via meshing/moderating).

How do I archive my Markbooks?

Markbooks will be archived by the BSSS when the database is archived each year – Markbooks are part of the database. Should colleges need to refer back to Markbooks for students who have left the system these will be made available.

Markbooks can also be archived by exporting to an Excel spreadsheet.

How do I delete a Markbook?

To delete a Markbook complete the following in order

1. Delete adjustments and then original assessment marks.
2. Delete unit scores by recalculating
3. Delete unit exceptions (assessment item allocation to term units)
4. Remove any teachers who have been specifically granted access in Markbook security
5. Remove the assessment items (and save)
6. Delete the Markbook

Can two people access the same Markbook?

Yes, and they can update different records and both will save. If they edit the same mark (that is, the same student in the same assessment item) at the same time the user who saves last will keep the changes, the other user will have their changes overwritten.

How will new enrolments be added to my Markbook?

As a unit studied record is added to ACS the student appears in the Markbook automatically provided that unit, cohort and assessment period in the Markbook match the unit studied record.

What happens in a Markbook when a student leaves the unit?

If the student has no assessment item results then they will disappear from the Markbook.

If the student does have assessment item results that unit will not delete. The assessment item marks will need to be removed from the Markbook first.

Alternatively, the student can be V graded from the unit.

Why can I no longer enter marks into my Markbook?

When the certification co-ordinator begins the scaling or backscaling process in a scaling group, all Markbooks in that scaling group will be automatically locked, allowing no further data entry or adjustments to assessment results in a markbook. If you need to make a further adjustment contact the certification co-ordinator.

Why do I see negative red TIDs in Markbooks?

A unit's TID will change to a negative and be written in red when a student has been removed from a unit but it still contains AI results in ACS. When all AI results are removed from ACS the entry should remove itself in the next sweep.

VET Frequently Asked Questions

How do I enter a RPL or Direct Credit competency?

Only users with SchoolVET access will be able to enter competencies as RPL or Direct Credit. Other users will be able to view these competencies from the Competencies by Unit page. To give a student a RPL or Direct Credit competency, a VET teacher will need to see the school VET Co-ordinator for approval and entry into the database.

A competency is missing from the Competencies by Unit screen. What should I do?

Does the school have appropriate scope for the competency? If it does, there may be an error in the mapping or the scope table. Contact your school VET co-ordinator with the problem and have them contact the Certification team at the BSSS.

My course/unit/student is missing from the Competencies by Unit screen.

What should I do?

Are students correctly enrolled in the unit in both your school admin system and ACS? ie. are they appearing in the appropriate Markbook? If so, contact your school VET co-ordinator with the problem and have them contact the Certification team at the BSSS.

Do I need a Markbook for a C unit?

Yes. Although grades can be entered by the Competencies by Unit page to make it easier for teachers, a markbook with defined assessment items will still be needed in order to create Moderation Day materials.

How do SWL units work?

SWLs are normal BSSS units that students get enrolled in. When enrolled they should appear in the Competencies by Unit screen. Grades (P, Q or V) can be entered from this screen as well. The packaging rules as seen in the Qualification Progress screen should show SWL units and state whether any are compulsory for a certificate.