

PI Guidelines for Teachers

These guidelines shall supplement, specify and illustrate the examination regulations regarding courses with continuous assessment of student performance (PI courses). The aim is to provide all teachers and administrators with guidance for the various questions that may arise when designing and subsequently teaching PI courses. The present guidelines focus on issues such as assessment and attendance, since PI regulations tend to be particular in this regard. Information about other related topics such as [course administration](#) (only available in German), [student registration for courses](#) or [legal protection & cheating](#), can be found on the [WU website](#) (only available in German).

What is a PI course?

PI courses (courses with continuous assessment of student performance) are courses with compulsory attendance. The final grade is based on at least three student performance components that are assessed separately throughout the course.

How do I communicate the assessment criteria?

The assessment criteria have to be published in the [electronic course catalog](#) in good time before the start of the course. It is essential to clearly communicate the different performance components as well as their relative share in the overall performance. Without any exception, only assessment criteria published in the course catalog can be used for grading purposes.

How do I deal with absence in a PI course?

Basically, attendance is mandatory in PI courses since this is a prerequisite for successful completion. However, mere attendance does not represent a valid performance criterion, but is rather a basic requirement for completing the course altogether. The Vice-Rector for Academic Programs and Student Affairs recommends that the attendance requirement shall be met when students attend at least 80 percent of the contact hours. You are free to opt for a stricter/ less strict approach but please bear in mind that such deviations have to be communicated explicitly and timely, e.g. in advance in the electronic course catalog.

Please also note that a requirement of 100 percent class attendance for the successful completion of a PI course may cause problems. If there is a valid reason for absence (e.g. in case of an accident or illness upon submission of a doctor's certificate), depriving students of the possibility to complete the course could be contested.

Absence in the first session

It is recommended to deregister students from a course if they miss the first session without a properly excused absence. When this happens, please send your students an email informing them of the course deregistration. If you do this timely, deregistered students may still complete another course of the same module in the very same semester (given that appropriate courses are offered).

Absences during the PI course

As long as the minimum attendance requirement is fulfilled, absences may not directly affect the final grade. However, there might still be indirect effects sometimes. This is the case, for instance, when students can achieve bonus points for active participation in each session. If a student is absent from one session, he/she cannot achieve 100 percent of the overall performance level anymore.

If the minimum attendance requirement is not met but the student has completed at least one performance component, he/she shall still receive a failing grade (“insufficient”) regardless of his/her performance. Students who fail a PI course have to repeat the entire course and a transfer of individual performance components to another semester or course is not a valid option.

Students who do not meet the minimum attendance requirement and/or do not complete any performance components shall be withdrawn from the course and cannot be graded at all.

Repetition of a missed performance component

If a particular performance component is essential for successful completion of a PI course (e.g. an exam with a share in the overall performance of more than 50 percent) and the student misses out on it for a valid reason (e.g. illness or accident confirmed by a doctor’s certificate), the student must be given an opportunity to repeat or compensate for the missed performance component in an adequate way. This should be done within the very same semester in order to avoid a delay in the study progress. However, such an opportunity must be offered only once and if students do not take this opportunity, there is no need to give them any further repetition or compensation options.

In case of a performance component that has a high share in overall performance but is not necessarily tied to a pre-defined deadline (e.g. a comprehensive essay), it is sufficient to come to an individual agreement with the student concerned.

If students miss out on a performance component that is not crucial for successful completion of the course, they can still be given an opportunity to repeat this component or compensate for it accordingly. Such an offer is at your own discretion though and it is completely voluntary.

How can performance components and their relative weightings be designed?

A performance component is a distinctive student performance which is graded independently. Typical performance components are, for instance, assignments, proposals, project reports, term papers, presentations, intermediate and final exams or active course participation.

The respective weightings of the different performance components of a PI course can be based on students’ workload and/or their relative importance for the intended learning outcomes. Basically, students’ performance is assessed continuously throughout the PI course. Therefore, designing performance components with a share of 70 percent or more in overall performance would be inconsistent with the foregoing intent (Nevertheless, there might still be some cases in which such a design makes sense for pedagogical and/or logistical reasons).

Information on the type and relative share of the performance components shall be announced in the electronic course catalog before the start of the PI course. Components of the same kind (e.g. short quizzes at the beginning of each session) can be grouped according to their relative share in

overall performance (e.g. 60 percent term paper, 30 percent weekly assignments and 10 percent participation).

How is the final grade calculated in case of PI courses?

The final PI course grade reflects the overall achievement and results from the total of the weighted grades of the different performance components. A student must be graded if he/she has completed at least one performance element. If the student does not complete any coursework at all, he/she has to be deregistered from the course as no grading is possible. Conversely, if a performance element is not essential for the successful completion of a PI course, it is not an option to deregister students from the course if they do not complete or even fail this particular task (considering the common grading system at WU, this would be the case, for instance, if the concerned component counts for less than 50 percent of the final grade).

If a particular component is not completed, it shall account for 0 percent in overall performance (corresponding to "insufficient").

Here is an example of the calculation of the final grade if one performance component was missed:

<i>performance component</i>	<i>weighting</i>	<i>grading of the performance component</i>	<i>weighted grading</i>
assignment (1 st component)	30%	80 % (2)	24%
final exam (2 nd component)	40%	70 % (3)	28%
intermediate exam (3 rd component)	20%	not completed (5)	0%
participation (4 th component)	10%	100 % (1)	10%
Sum total	100%	sufficient	62%

Grading scale used above:	100% - 90%	=	excellent
	89% - 80%	=	good
	79% - 70%	=	satisfactory
	69% - 60%	=	sufficient
	<59%	=	insufficient

If a grade is obtained by fraudulent means, it has to be annulled and the PI course cannot be graded at all. Furthermore, such cases shall be reported to the examination office (pruefungsorganisation@wu.ac.at).