

Assessment and Feedback Policy

POLICY COVERSHEET

# Key Details

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Assessment and Feedback Policy

# Introduction

## **Purpose**

## The Assessment and Feedback Policy builds upon established principles underpinning assessment within the institution in order to foster a consistent and high quality student centered approach to assessment and feedback, enabling all students to reach their academic potential.

## **Scope**

The policy is designed as a key reference document and has been informed by the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. This is intended to ensure that assessment processes underpin the setting and maintenance of academic standards with reference to the relevant higher education qualifications framework and subject benchmarks and where applicable take account of PSRB requirements.

## **Definitions**

### **Assessment**

### Assessment is a generic term for the set of processes that measure and appraise the outcomes of a student’s learning in terms of knowledge acquired, understanding developed and skills and abilities gained.

### **Formative Assessment**

### Formative assessment is designed to provide learners with feedback on progress and inform development helping learners to learn more effectively.

### **Summative Assessment**

### Summative assessment provides a measure of achievement or failure in respect of a learner’s performance in relation to the achievement of intended learning outcomes of a programme of study.

### **Assessment Criteria**

### Assessment criteria are linked to the knowledge, understanding and skills that markers expect a student to display in the assessment task and which are taken into account in marking the work, based on the learning outcomes being assessed. The weighting given to assessment tasks and associated assessment criteria will be clearly set out in the assignment brief.

### **Formative Assessment Feedback**

### Formative assessment feedback provides students with information on their performance in a specified assessment task and helps them identify how to improve and develop.

### **Summative Assessment Feedback**

### Summative assessment feedback measures student performance against learning outcomes in order to make decisions on progression and awards. Summative feedback can provide formative information.

### **Feedforward**

### The term ‘feedforward’ is used to denote advice regarding possible strengthening of students’ next work and encourages students to use tutors’ comments to inform future assignments.

# Assessment

## 2.1 **General Principles**

The principles below will be addressed in the design, validation and implementation of all modules.

### Assessment will be of and for learning.

## 2.1.2 Assessment will be designed so as to maximise the opportunities for students to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do.

### Assessment will be informed by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and will seek to be inclusive.

### The rationale for a particular type of assessment will be clear to staff and students.

### Assessment tasks will be derived from the learning outcomes and allow them to be measured with reliability and consistency.

### The form of assessment will be appropriate to the academic level of the module ensuring that the standard of each award and award element is set and maintained.

### The amount and timing of assessment will be realistic and manageable and relate to notional learning hours.

### All summative assessment will be subject to moderation and external examination as appropriate.

### Assessment decisions will be recorded and documented accurately and systematically and communicated in a timely manner.

### Assessment items will have clear assessment criteria and explicit weightings for components clearly and accurately communicated to students.

### Opportunities for formative assessment will be provided to students.

### Students will be encouraged to adopt good academic conduct in respect of assessment and will be made aware of their responsibilities.

### Assessment will be conducted with rigour, probity and fairness and with due regard for security.

### Where appropriate for the type of assessment, assessments shall be submitted electronically via the University’s VLE facility. Students should not additionally be required to submit a hard copy version unless it forms a material part of the assessment, such as in the case of a Poster or an Artist Book.

## 2.2 **Methods of Assessment**

## The performance of students may be assessed by any combination of assessment methods as appropriate to the level and learning outcome of the assessment exercise. Common examples are given in the table below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Assessment Type** | **Description** | **Types/Examples** |
| CTEST | Class test:  a written assessment coordinated by the School to be taken under controlled conditions | Seen/unseen  Closed-book/ open-book  Timed/untimed  Online  Multiple choice questions  Laboratory-based  Problem-based |
| EXAM | Examination:  An in-person written examination\* coordinated by Registry Services to be taken under controlled conditions in a designated examination venue | Seen/unseen  Closed-book/ open-book  Timed/untimed  Online  Multiple choice questions  Laboratory-based  Problem-based |
| EXHI | Exhibition |  |
| OTHR | Other assessment | Abstract  Animation  Blog  Leaflet  Laboratory logbook  Observation  Podcast  Wiki |
| PLAC | Placement | Clinical placement  School placement  Workplace experience |
| PORT | Portfolio | Collection of evidence, frequently including a contextual statement  Poster  Website |
| PRAC | Practical assessment | Individual/group assessment  Coaching  Fieldwork  Laboratory technique  OSCE  OSPE  Performance  Phonetics |
| PRES | Presentation | Individual/group  Seminar |
| VIVA | Viva voce or verbal examination | Oral  Language |
| WRIT | Written assessment | Analysis  Case study  Design  Dissertation  Essay  Evaluation  Laboratory report  Practical report  Project  Project or research proposal Reflection (journal)  Research  Review |

*\*In-person examinations will usually be the validated method of assessment due to a Professional or Statutory Body requirement.*

## 2.3 **Scheduling and Amount of Assessment**

### 2.3.1 It is a University expectation that all taught modules will be 20 credits or multiples there-of and each module will contain two points of summative assessment. Where there is a need for programmes to deviate from these parameters they should contact the Quality Enhancement Directorate in the first instance.

### The volume of summative assessment required by a programme undertaken by students should be fair and reasonable and should present a workload and challenge which is, as far as is possible, similar to that experienced by students on comparable programmes across the University and other UK universities.

### Assessment is intended to cover work completed, in relation to specified learning outcomes, over a module or part of a module, and may take place at any appropriate time during a module. An assessment, which takes place mid-way through a module, should, therefore, be scaled with regard to the guidance given below.

### Assessments should be scheduled across the programme in a coordinated manner wherever possible such that students are not subjected to an undue workload at particular points in the term: in particular, no student should normally be expected to sit more than two formal examinations in any one day, and five formal examinations in any one week.

### Formal examinations which are designed to assess students on a whole module or the latter part of a module shall take place normally no earlier than the last two weeks of a module.

### It is not possible to be entirely prescriptive with regards to an institutional specification of the assessment workload associated with a module because of the varying nature of the subject areas involved. As such, the below set of parameters for assessment loading are to be used during programme and assessment design and are intended to be representative of a wide range of possible calculations and viewed as indicative upper limits, not prescriptive or rigid targets.

### In order to design assessments that offer comparable effort and learning activity time, it can be helpful to first consider the notional student hours expended by each mode. The following should be considered indicative for guidance purposes:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Standard 20 Credit Module (undergraduate)** | | |
| 200 notional learning hours allocated, to include all elements of scheduled learning and independent study activities. | Assessment related activities should comprise around 20% of this time. | 20 credits = 40 notional hours, indicative time spent by student = 4, 000 words. |

### Following consideration of notional study hours, programme teams should then consider the word count/activity time that will make up those hours. The word count guidance below should be applied across a range of modes for each module, and a spread of assessment type and load be considered at every stage of programme design and scrutiny. Programme teams should consider carefully whether the resulting combination at both Module and Programme Level is fair, meaningful, and conducive to improved student experience. Where there is a need for programmes to deviate from the parameters below (for example within disciplines where written work is not the norm and other factors influence scope of projects – such as large coding projects in Computer Sciences) it should be expected that the colleagues approving the Curriculum at Validation, Review or Modification will expect a rationale for the deviation.

**Notional learning hours equivalences example for 20 credit modules:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Assessment Mode** | **Word count parameters** | **Notional assessment activity hours** | **Indicative credit breakdown** |
| **Written essays** | 2,000 words | 20 hours | 10 credits/50% |
| **Exams** | 2 hours (guide for content not suggested time restrictions) | 20 hours | 10 credits/50% |
| **Lab report and logs** | 2,000 words | 20 hours | 10 credits/50% |
| **Written group assignment** | Up to 1,200 words each | 20 hours | 10 credits/50% |
| **Reflective or professional logs** | 2,000 words | 20 hours | 10 credits/50% |
| **Individual presentations** | 15-20 minutes | 20 hours | 10 credits/50% |
| **Poster presentations** | Limits set at module level | 20 hours | 10 credits/50% |
| **Standard Dissertation** | Up to 12,000 words | N/A | 40 credits/100% |

# Feedback

## Feedback on assessment plays a crucial part in supporting learning. The policy regarding assessment feedback aims to provide a common understanding across Cardiff Metropolitan University and to support the enhancement of feedback practices.

## As already noted assessment is a particularly important aspect of the student experience and feedback is argued to be one of the most influential factors in the improvement of student achievement.

## This emphasis on effective feedback for students supports our learning- oriented approach to assessment which emphasises that assessment not only measures but also contributes to learning.

## Feedback provides students with the opportunity to reflect on their current or recent level of attainment. It can be provided individually or to groups and can take many forms. Therefore opportunities for the receipt of feedback by students will vary, across the University and at different stages of students’ programmes.

## There are no circumstances in which assessment feedback will not be made available. Students can also request feedback on examinations or modules which take place at the end of a programme.

## **General Principles**

## Cardiff Metropolitan University promotes the following principles regarding feedback on assessment.

### Formative feedback will be built into each programme of study.

### There will be no pre-marking of final summative written assessments, although in the case of Dissertations or Projects there will be opportunity for the supervisor to comment on a draft of each section as appropriate.

### Feedback should be provided to students as soon as possible after the assessment has been completed.

### Students need to know when to expect their feedback. For this reason it has been agreed that the timing of assessments and feedback shall be made explicit in all programme handbooks/module handbooks. Feedback will normally be issued within 20 working days of submission.

### It is University policy that assessment feedback is made available to students in all cases.

### For modules that occur at the end of the programme, students are entitled to request and receive assessment feedback on their work over and above the marks awarded. Students may make this request for assessment feedback at the end of the programme directly to the programme director, module leader or other designated member of staff.

### More information about this entitlement and how to go about making such requests will be provided during taught sessions and/or plenary sessions. This entitlement extends to feedback on performance in examinations.

### Student engagement with feedback should be strongly encouraged.

### Tutors should use feed-forward in order that students are encouraged to engage with their feedback in ways that result in improvements in their satisfaction and their performance.

### All feedback on summative assessments should be provided electronically via the University’s Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

### The form in which feedback is offered should be appropriate to the module and assessment task.

### Different forms of feedback may be made available to students and feedback may not be restricted to written comments on essays. For example, feedback may be offered electronically, by audio file, and by video file. Feedback may also be provided individually i.e. identifying specific issues relating to one student’s work, and/or generically, i.e. referring to general points about the assessment as a whole, arising from an overview of the work produced by the student group.

### Where appropriate such generic feedback may also be given to the student group ahead of the formal submission date based on drafts submitted by an agreed draft deadline. Module assessments where this is to occur should be clearly identified in the relevant module assessment brief and this practice should be applied consistently across all delivery instances of the module.

### The feedback provided should be relevant, motivating, and constructive.

### Feedback should be seen to relate to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria and should enable students to consolidate and develop their learning. Grade Band Descriptors provide guidance for markers in deciding the level of student attainment and will indicate how well the assessment criteria have been met (see Academic Handbook, 04.3 ‘Guidance on Assessment Marking’).

# Roles and Responsibilities

The following responsibilities have been identified in relation to Assessment and Feedback:

## Academic Staff should:

* Endeavour to meet all the principles contained in this policy.
* Seek to continually develop their assessment and feedback practice through relevant professional development.
* Regularly review and evaluate their own assessment and feedback practices and make any necessary improvements.

## Students should:

* Use the feedback they receive to help develop their learning and improve their assessment performance.
* Participate fully with all assessment and feedback opportunities provided, including discussions about learning and progression.
* Work with staff to make constructive improvements to assessment and feedback.

## Academic Managers should:

* Provide opportunities for appropriate professional development relevant to assessment and feedback.
* Ensure that programme documentation provides students with appropriate information on assessment and feedback.
* Regularly monitor and review the implementation of the assessment and feedback policy.

# Related Policies and Procedures

## The policy is supported by comprehensive guidance for staff on the development and implementation of inclusive assessment and effective feedback in order to ensure that everyone involved in the assessment of student work is competent to undertake their role.

## It also underpins the Regulatory Framework as included in the Academic Handbook Section 4, as well as being in line with the commitments of the Student Charter.

# Review and Approval

## This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and approved by the University’s Learning, Teaching and Student Engagement Committee.