

# Assessment\* Compact

[\* Assessment encompasses all judgements made about the work of a student and/or their skills, abilities and progress, and the associated provision of feedback.]

## 1. There are five fundamental tenets behind this compact, namely that:

- 1.1 Effective assessment is central to learning.
- 1.2 To be effective the relational nature of the assessment and feedback process needs to be emphasised, particularly in terms of the need for active dialogue between students and staff.
- 1.3 To be effective, assessment must be recognised as a joint responsibility between staff and students.
- 1.4 The ability to assess, the work of both self and others, is an essential skill for all graduates.
- 1.5 For the above tenets to be met in full, students and staff need to be 'assessment literate' and actively participate in disciplinary communities of assessment practice.

## 2. The University will therefore ensure that:

- 2.1 Assessment is central to the curriculum, and there should be no distinct boundary between assessment, teaching and learning. All academic staff will therefore be encouraged to regard assessment as a fundamental and integral part of programme design, and one that is intended to shape and develop learning, as much as to judge and measure it.
- 2.2 Assessment is designed at programme level, to integrate module assessment and ensure that assessment shapes learning in a coherent and holistic fashion, consistent with the aims and learning outcomes of the programme so that identified knowledge, skills and qualities can be developed and recognised, and validly assessed, whilst recognising progressive levels of attainment and different modes of study.
- 2.3 The relationship between learning outcomes and assessment tasks is made explicit. In addition, clear assessment criteria should be provided whenever possible, and always when the assessment contributes to marks, grades, or decisions about progression. Assessment judgements must focus on the achievement of the learning outcomes against the assessment criteria, and this achievement authenticated as the student's own.
- 2.4 Every effort is taken to ensure that there is no bias in the type of assessment task, or method chosen, or the criteria applied, that would unfairly disadvantage any student.
- 2.5 Students are given supportive, constructive and timely feedback as an essential part of their learning. Such feedback will enable students to build on their positive achievements and have a clear sense of what they need to do to improve, with subsequent opportunities provided to act on the feedback and to put the advice given into practice.
- 2.6 Programmes include activities (e.g. marking exercises, self and peer-assessment, etc.) specifically designed to involve students in assessment, to encourage dialogue between students and their tutors, and students and their peers, and to develop their abilities to make their own informed judgements (assessment literacy).
- 2.7 Programmes produce assessment schedules of summative assessment, and make every effort to avoid the concentration of assessment deadlines.
- 2.8 Academic staff are provided with staff development in assessment literacy, and awareness of new ideas and techniques.
- 2.9 Disciplinary communities of assessment practice are developed through, for example, regular peer discussion and student involvement.
- 2.10 Institutional values and policies consistently support this compact, and adequate resources are provided.

### **3. Students will be expected to take responsibility for their own learning through:**

- 3.1 Actively engaging with assessment tasks, including carefully reading the guidance provided, spending sufficient time on the task, ensuring their work is authentic and their own (whether individual or groupwork), and by handing work in on time.
  - 3.2 Actively engaging in activities designed to develop assessment literacy, including taking the initiative when appropriate (e.g. asking for clarification or advice).
  - 3.3 Actively engaging with, and acting on, feedback provided.
  - 3.4 Actively engaging in the development of assessment policy at course and programme level through the established processes and student representative system.
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