

Assessment and Feedback Policy for Taught Programmes

1. For each programme, an assessment and feedback strategy is developed and implemented to maximise the opportunities for students to engage deeply with assessment and feedback to support their learning and development. This strategy involves developing assessment and feedback practices that are:
 - fair, inclusive and accessible;
 - appropriate to disciplinary and/or professional contexts;
 - designed to measure when intended learning outcomes are met, by aligning learning outcomes with the teaching and learning methods, the assessment criteria and the marking rubrics.
2. For each programme, an assessment and feedback schedule is shared with students at the start of each year or semester. Its development and publication helps to ensure students have sufficient time to complete concurrent assessment tasks without being over-burdened. It explains how feedback that has been received can be used to feed-forward into students' self-awareness of skills and knowledge and therefore act as a learning tool for subsequent assessments.
3. When designing assessments across programmes and single assessment tasks, staff are attentive to the need to provide our diverse student body with opportunities to demonstrate their learning in ways that avoid systematic disadvantage to groups or individuals.
4. The type of assessment tasks and the format used to provide feedback will be adjusted when necessary to overcome individual disadvantage.
5. Within subject areas or across a programme, staff are expected to engage with activities that support consistency of academic standards across modules and marking teams, for example, linked to grade boundaries and the use of common criteria and marking rubrics for assessment tasks, numbers of assessment tasks, word counts for written tasks or the methods of assessment.
6. Staff involve students actively in the development of assessment and feedback strategies and practices at the programme level through established processes including the student representative system.
7. For each module, expected word counts for written assessment tasks are published for students to read in the module descriptor and on the assignment brief. Direct penalty (the deduction of marks) is not applied to written work that does not meet the word count or that exceeds it; locally calibrated marking practices may mean there are indirect penalties for deviation from the set word count. Word counts and marking practices vary among programmes and these are authorised at the Faculty level.

8. The module descriptor describes the notional learning hours that are attributed to each assessment task and the word count for written assessment tasks. Assignment briefs may be used to let students know that the notional learning hours to complete an assessment task are indicative and will vary from student to student.
9. Staff prepare students for assessment and this means students are made aware of the criteria and marking rubrics that will be used to assess and provide feedback on their work at the beginning of each module, of the purpose, weighting and timing of assessment and of the format, location and timing of feedback.
10. Staff support students to understand assessment for and of their learning by the use of in-class activities. This can include the encouragement of reflection, self- and peer-assessment using the published criteria and marking rubrics for the assessment task.
11. For each assessment task the processes for submission, marking, moderation, and feedback are appropriate, fair and explained to students and staff. Students are made aware of the use of anonymity and external scrutiny in marking practices and how professional judgements about their work are made.
12. Staff provide students with opportunities to develop an understanding of, and the necessary skills to demonstrate, good academic practice and to approach assessment with academic integrity (doing one's own work and giving credit to others for using their work).
13. Supportive, constructive and timely feedback is an essential part of student learning and students can normally expect to receive it within three weeks of a submission deadline.
14. Staff present feedback to students in such a way that it recognises the emotional need for students to receive clear, honest and constructive comments on their work. The feedback should also aim to lead to a sustained improvement in performance and achievement on future assessments if it were acted upon.

Approved by Academic Board, 22 April 2020

Updates (*new paragraphs 7 and 8*) approved by Teaching and Learning Enhancement Committee, 16 March 2021