



Cardiff  
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University

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## 04.0

# ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK POLICY

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## **BACKGROUND**

The revised 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.

The policy is designed as a key reference document and has been informed by the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

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.

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 OF ASSESSMENT**

### **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.

## **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

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

- Assessment will be of and for learning.
- 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 Equal Opportunity 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.

## **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 is highlighted in our Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy 2015-20; p.21 and the 'Curriculum Development' thematic priority in the Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy promotes improving the timeliness and quality of feedback to students.

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.

## **DEFINITION OF FEEDBACK**

Three aspects of feedback can be distinguished.

1. *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.
2. *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.

### 3. *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.

## **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 4 weeks 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.

• **Electronic Feedback.** 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').

### **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.