QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST

QUB Handbook of ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

2024-25

Foreward

This Handbook provides an essential reference point for programme and module leaders, particularly in relation to assessment planning and design. The guidance within outlines the preferred practices of the University and draws upon the University's regulatory framework. The Handbook should be read and consulted by all staff who engage with student learning. The guidance will provide clarity around areas of our practice to ensure a transparent and consistent experience for our students.
The Handbook is also made available to students. This guidance applies to all primary degree courses offered by the University. Where individual programmes are required to have stricter regulations by validating/ accrediting bodies, these will be stated in the programme regulations and will take precedence over the Study Regulations. The Handbook does not deal with the assessment of research degrees.

This Handbook has been updated in September 2024 to ensure its relevance to the academic year 24/25. As such, the Handbook makes reference to generative AI and links to the Queen's AI Hub that can be found at https://go.qub.ac.uk/AI-Hub, as well the QAA Quality Code, Advice and Guidance for Assessment and the updated QAA Code of Practice (2024). The AI Hub is updated regularly throughout the year.

We also recommend that you consult the following guide by Jisc on the principles of good assessment and feedback. If you would like more assistance or guidance, please reach out to the team at ced@qub.ac.uk.

September 2024

Contents

Good Practice in Assessment and Feedback

Whilst there may be differences in assessment specific to discipline areas, there is also clear guidance on what is general good practice in Higher Education. It is important to be aware of good practice and to embed this in our programmes in order to ensure a transparent and consistent student experience. Good assessment is linked to considered planning for assessment and should be embedded in curriculum design. In particular, assessments should be clearly mapped to the learning outcomes of any programme or module.

The QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education (The Quality Assurance Agency, 2024) articulates the principles of UK higher education for securing academic standards and assuring and enhancing quality. The Code comprises two elements: Sector-Agreed Principles (The Quality Assurance Agency) that identify the features that are fundamental to securing academic standards and offering a high-quality student learning experience in the UK, and **Key Practices** that set out how a provider can demonstrate they are adhering to the Sector-Agreed Principles.

The Code will also be accompanied by a set of advice and guidance to align with each of the Sector-Agreed Principles. Transitional Advice and Guidance is currently being prepared and is expected to be published in October 2024. Principle 11 relates to Teaching, learning and assessment and includes 8 Key Practices.

University Assessment Policy (2012)

In 2012, the University agreed an Assessment Policy.

University Regulations

As well as drawing upon the QAA guidance, practice in the University is driven by the study regulations. In addition, many discipline areas now have accrediting professional bodies (PSRBs) which may shape practice around assessment. Colleagues should refer to these where relevant. The General Regulations are available on the Academic Affairs website.

Queen's University Code of Practice on Examinations and Assessment

This Code of Practice outlines Queen's procedures for the assessment and examination of students on undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes, including the taught elements of professional doctorates. This complements the Study Regulations for Undergraduate Programmes and Postgraduate Taught Programmes. In the event of any conflict of interpretation between the Code of Practice and the Regulations, the Regulations prevail.

It is important that all the sources above are consulted to inform good practice.

Introduction to Assessment

The QAA Code of Practice identifies key considerations which educators should consider when designing assessments.

QAA Quality Code for Higher Education (2024) Principle 11 – Teaching, learning and assessment:

> *Providers facilitate a collaborative and inclusive approach that enables students to have a high-quality learning experience and to progress through their studies. All students are supported to develop and demonstrate academic and professional skills and competencies. Assessment employs a variety of methods, embodying the values of academic integrity, producing outcomes that are comparable across the UK and recognised globally*.

Within the principle, 8 key practices "*set out how a provider can demonstrate that they are adhering to the sector-agreed principles*". These key practices ensure quality by aligning teaching with research, connecting outcomes to assessments, supporting staff, promoting student responsibility, and upholding academic integrity.

> *QAA Code of Practice (2024), Principle 11, Key Practice (f)*
> *Providers design assessments that test appropriate learning outcomes and are fair, reliable, accessible, authentic and inclusive. Where applicable, and sustainable, students are offered different options for undertaking assessments to promote accessibility and inclusion.*

What is assessment?

Assessment is the process of gathering and analysing information from multiple and diverse sources in order to develop a deep understanding of what students know, understand, and can do with their knowledge as a result of their educational experiences; the process culminates when assessment results are used to improve subsequent learning.

We assess students for a number of reasons, for example, to ensure that the planned learning is visible and that the stated learning has been achieved and to provide evidence of learning. We use it to provide feedback to enable further learning.

Assessment also helps educators understand the effectiveness of their planned learning process in achieving the desired outcomes. Assessment should focus on progression and be used as a dialogue to support a continuous learning process.

What are the types of assessment?

Assessment plays a crucial role in measuring and improving student learning. Two primary types of assessment - formative and summative - serve distinct yet complementary purposes in the educational process. The following section outlines the key differences between these assessment methods, as well as their characteristics, purposes, and impacts on both students and educators.

The learning environment differs significantly between formative and summative assessment types. Formative assessments are adaptive and provide frequent opportunities for feedback, fostering a dynamic learning experience. Summative assessments are fixed, evaluating cumulative learning with limited scope for further improvement. Both approaches are essential in education, as formative assessments inform the ongoing learning process, while summative assessments provide a final measure of achievement.

Aspect	Formative Assessment	Summative Assessment
Purpose	**Developmental:** to improve learning through feedback	**Evaluative**: to measure learning outcomes and achievement
Focus	**Process-oriented:** helps students identify areas for improvement	**Outcome-oriented:** evaluates the overall success in meeting learning objectives
Timing	**Ongoing:** throughout the module or course	**Final:** typically at the end of a module or course
Feedback	**Detailed and specific:** aimed at guiding improvement	**Limited:** usually focused on overall performance
Impact on Marks	**Low stakes:** typically does not contribute to final mark but feeds forward to help students develop their knowledge and understanding further for summative assessments	**High stakes:** contributes to final mark or qualification
Student Impact	Reduces anxiety, promotes deeper learning and self-reflection	Can increase anxiety, provides a clear measure of achievement
Reflective Practice	Often involves student reflection and self-assessment	Rarely involves reflection; focused on final outcomes

Staff Role	Facilitator of learning: provides continuous feedback and support	Evaluator: assesses final knowledge and skills
Learning Environment	Supportive and adaptive: adjusts to students' needs	Conclusive and fixed: assesses cumulative knowledge
Opportunities for Improvement	Frequent and iterative opportunities to improve before final assessment	Limited opportunity for improvement once assessment is completed
Examples	Self-grading quizzes, feedback on draft essays, peer reviews, in-class polling, concept maps, self assessment checklists	Final exams, dissertations, major essays, end-of-module projects, presentations

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is a continuous process that allows the assessor to monitor ongoing learning. This can be used to check on and amend teaching or help students improve their learning. For example, using a quick quiz at the start of a seminar or lecture might indicate that a key learning point of the previous lecture had been misunderstood and requires some repetition, possibly in another format, to embed a clearer understanding. In general, formative assessments help identify strengths and weaknesses and provide immediate, in-term support.

Formative assessments are low stakes and often carry no contribution to the final module mark. They can take any form, including, but not limited to, informal reflective practice, quick quizzes, and essays, so that student and lecturer feedback is timely. However, for formative feedback to be effective, it must be provided in a timely manner, in an appropriate format, and before any subsequent related submissions, ensuring that learners can use it to guide their next steps. For further discussion, refer to the Marking and Moderation and High Quality Feedback sections.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessments are used to contribute to the overall module mark. These assessments aim to evaluate students' learning by comparing their submitted work against a standard or benchmark. This can include a range of outcomes such as pass/fail and practice portfolios.

Assessment Design

When designing an assessment, it is important to consider what you need to assess and why. It should also inform student progress and next steps. HE level assignment

formats can often be new to students, and it is important, through dialogue and guidance, to ensure that students understand what is being assessed, how and why. Indeed, the opportunity for students to practice any assessment approach is to be encouraged.

Continuous assessment involves the evaluation of student progress throughout the course of study e.g., a module, rather than relying on a summative assessment e.g., an examination at the end of a course. Whilst this may apply to a standalone module it can also refer to an identified part of a degree programme, for example, the Honours year. Continuous assessment can be both formative and summative, and should be clearly linked to learning outcomes.

It is important to avoid over-assessment. In considering forms of assessment, it may be useful to refer to the University's Assessment Case Studies Hub, which provides a number of helpful examples. When considering the most appropriate forms of assessment, it is important to ensure that they are timely and enhance the learning process. Where possible, the bunching of assessments should be avoided (also refer to the section on Designing Assessment).

According to Race (Race, 2020) the most important thing lecturers do for their students is to assess (and provide feedback on) their work. There are many different forms of assessment used in Higher Education, and using a broad and diverse range of assessments is to be encouraged, below the advantages and disadvantages of a number of these are explored (adapted from Race 2020).

Of course, many of these can take a number of different outputs, for example, wikis, blogs, dissertations, posters, papers and video pitches.

The language of assessment is important to consider and Race (Race, 2020, p. 60) provides the following definitions:

Validity	Is about whether the particular assessment format under consideration is the *most appropriate for the intended purpose.* In other words, is it the best way of measuring evidence of achievement of the related intended learning outcomes?
Reliability	Is about how well different *assessors would agree on the mark or grade awarded* for a particular piece of students' work. This is also, of course, about fairness and, indeed, justice as perceived by students and others.
Authenticity	Is about how well the assessment correlates to the sorts of things that students need to be able to do in their careers after leaving the educational institution. It's about *the real-world relevance of the assessment activity*.
Academic integrity	Is about *whether or not the assessed work was done by the student* submitting it.
Transparency	Is about *how well students can see how the assessment works in practice and how marking occurs*.
Inclusiveness	Is about *how well the assessment can be taken fairly by a range of candidates with additional learning needs*, it is about minimising unfair discrimination towards students with particular needs.

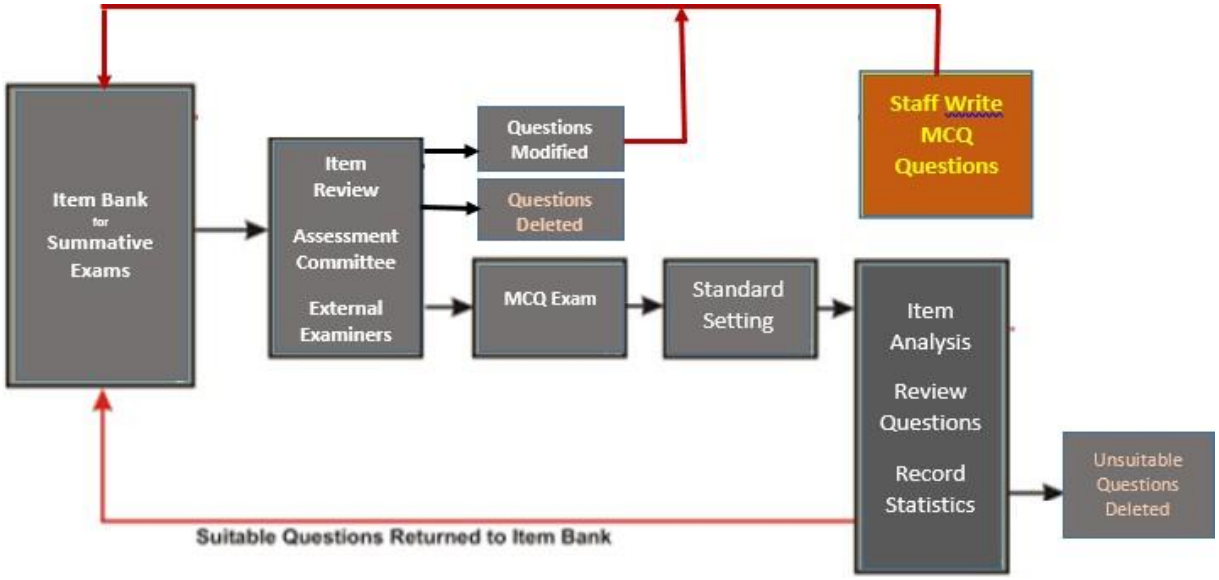
Examinations and Tests Involving Multiple-Choice Questions (MCQs)

This section covers both open and closed book exams. Exams are useful for reasons of veracity, in other words you can generally be sure that this is the work of the student. They can be conducted in-person or remotely. However, they are a snapshot of what a student can do at a set time and place. That said, open book exams can encourage higher-order skills rather than relying on reproducing knowledge. Often, exams are held at the end of a course or there can be issues around handwriting and so on. In addition, students do not often get feedback on their exam scripts.

MCQs can be both reliable and authentic. In addition, high-level thinking can be assessed. However, it is hard to write good MCQs, and there will always be the guess factor.

To prevent some of the disadvantages listed above, it is suggested that exam questions be written in teams. This helps ensure that no ambiguity of language is present, and validity and reliability can be taken into account. Also, consider the module or unit's learning outcomes. Use short sentences and ensure the question

layout is easy to follow. You also need to consider marking schemes, moderation and so on. You can also look to provide a bank of MCQ questions that are built up over a period of time. For more information on MCQs, see the diagram below and Appendix 2.



With thanks to L. Leonard and P. Haughian, School of Nursing and Midwifery

Continuous Assessment and Coursework

Continuous assessment and coursework components assess candidates' skills, knowledge, and understanding, which timed written papers may not readily assess. Continuous assessment/coursework will take many different forms and may include printouts, copies of presentations, charts, podcasts, photographs, letters, artefacts, videos, blogs/vlogs, recordings or transcripts of interviews, or be on-line in the form of an e-portfolio. This diversity will be reflected in any subject-specific requirements.

Types of continuous assessment and coursework may include:

Essays or other relevant assignments

While a familiar form of assessment, these are often harder to assess and require clear criteria for both students and staff. That said, essays do allow for individual expression as well as the in-depth exploration of an issue. However, implicit beliefs about writing can mean that technique is assessed more than thought or argument. Also, with the growth of essay mills and generative AI, ensuring that the student's work is their own

can be more difficult.

To help overcome the disadvantages associated with essay assignments, it is suggested that students are given essay-writing help by presenting examples of good and bad practices.

Staff should be transparent in the marking criteria so that students know what is expected of them, and it is helpful to show where the marks are allocated if the essay has several parts and provide word limits. This helps to avoid the quantity versus quality issue. Where possible, essays should be authentic to the student experience. Finally, offer relevant feedback and consider writing a statement of common mistakes for the whole class - this can minimise time spent writing similar comments on different student essays. Common mistakes could also include examples of poorly referenced assignments so that students know what constitutes unsubstantiated statements/ poor referencing in academic writing (see section on Academic Integrity).

Practical/Fieldwork

This approach is core to many disciplines. Many tasks in this category require students to learn as they do; therefore, formative feedback is central to the learning process. It can often be undertaken in groups, so it can be hard to assess an individual's input. This is why reports (see below) can become an important output of practical or fieldwork. The processes learnt are often central to skills development, but they can be hard to assess without a clear output.

Project work

Projects are an ideal assessment tool as learning by doing can be relevant to employability. Generally, the learning outcomes for project work are sufficiently broad, for example, design an experiment that meets the programme learning outcomes. However, the general nature of the learning outcomes allows students to demonstrate the integration of their learning on a more personal level. By letting the students select their own projects, scope for negotiation and discussion of learning outcomes can occur, if appropriate. Remember to involve Information and Library Services so students can access relevant resources.

Reports

Reports are often associated with practicals such as labs and fieldwork, and can include quite specific elements that make them difficult for students to get to grips with.

Reports often provide authentic assessments that provide core transferable skills into employment. They can also provide evidence of the successful completion of tasks, such as data analysis from lab work. On the downside, reports can have a 'black market' and often be overly formulaic. However, the formulaic nature is authentic for many. For example, in the School of Pharmacy, some reports follow the same structure as a journal article, while others follow a report sheet/template that mimics what would be used in the pharmaceutical industry. So, the ability to present information in this way is a skill in itself, even if the use of report sheets appears a little formulaic.

Presentations

Without a doubt, presentations can cause difficulties when used for assessment. However, they are a critical transferable skill for students. Students take presentations seriously but prefer individual rather than group presentations. Whilst presentations can lead to both peer and self-review, encouraging reflection, they can also instil fear in some students. Many processes for marking group presentations can lead to unhappiness in groups, especially where negative points are used. One solution might be to allocate a mark to each member based on their individual contribution, as well as a portion of the marks for how the overall presentation was put together – so each student is assessed on their individual presentation and the information in the slides accompanying it, but the group must work together to ensure that it all flows well both in narrative and in the formatting of the slides. Consideration should also be given to the use of peer assessment to contribute to the final mark.

Work-based Learning (WBL)

Increasing use is being made of assessments based on students in their workplace, and care must be taken to ensure that consistency of equity in practice is offered at each workplace or placement. In addition, it is important to have clear learning outcomes for any placements; these can be sufficiently broad to encompass a range of activities associated with the course, ensuring that students are undertaking relevant activities. Involve the placement providers themselves in the assessment process so that they will not only feel like they are part of the process but also understand what is expected of them and the student. Do assess different placements differently; some students will have had a good experience, while others may have had an unsatisfactory experience. It should be noted that both situations lead to useful learning experiences. Consider using mentors if staff are available and willing in the workplace; indeed, this

may be a requirement for some professional areas and longer placements. Using a reflective journal personalises the student learning experience and, to ensure there are no confidentiality issues, negotiate ground rules with the employer/student/mentor and tutor. Portfolios are a valid way to assess work-based learning, and these should be considered.

Portfolios/e-portfolios

Essentially, this is a process whereby students build up a collection of authentic evidence. It is important that all students being assessed by this means have a shared understanding of the level expected of their work. It is good practice to show students relevant examples and suggest a proposed format, including suggesting a physical size. More recently, there has also been a move towards e-portfolios. If the nature of the evidence needed from students is transparent, this can aid the marking and go towards reliability between staff. Also, preparing a marking proforma for all staff should help as portfolios can be hard to assess objectively. As portfolio building is usually time consuming, offer interim formative assessment opportunities so that students can receive feedback on whether the evidence they are assembling is appropriate. Consider assessing the portfolios as a team, with each member giving comments, as this aids feedback for students.

Reviews and Annotated Bibliographies

Learning to review is a key academic skill, and the review process, once learnt, can lead to learning. An annotated bibliography can be a useful assessment tool as it is a list of citations to texts. A brief descriptive and evaluative paragraph follows each text. The purpose of this annotation is to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy and quality of the sources cited. Both reviews and annotated bibliographies are active processes. They also encourage the development of critical skills, for example, the decision to include or exclude a certain text. These tasks can be overly individualistic, and setting a tight word limit is important.

Online assessment

The platforms used to support online learning mean that there are a number of assessment options available to online learners. For example, learners can be assessed based on their contribution to an online discussion forum. Other options include e-portfolios, wikis and blogs.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Why are learning outcomes needed?

Assessment should ensure that qualifications are awarded only to those students who meet specified learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are specified for each programme, which are consistent with the relevant national qualification frameworks' descriptors, and assessment determines whether each student has achieved them.

What are intended learning outcomes?

An intended learning outcome is what the student should know, or be able to do, as a result of a course of study. There should be a strong link between what we intend students to learn and be able to do and the assessments set to gather evidence that they have met the learning outcomes (see Section on Designing Assessment for details).

When planning learning outcomes, you should consider some, but not necessarily all, of the following:

- Knowledge and understanding
- Cognitive/intellectual skills
- Key/transferrable skills
- Practical skills
- Professional/employment skills and behaviours
- Ethical considerations

It is important that there is a connection between module and programme learning outcomes.

The award of higher education qualifications is premised on the demonstrated achievement of outcomes rather than years of study. There should be a clear mapping between module and programme learning outcomes.

The table below may help:

Programme learning outcomes/aims	LO1	LO2	LO3	LO4	LO5
Module 1	✓		✓		
Module 2	✓	✓		✓	
Module 3		✓	✓	✓	
Module 4	✓			✓	✓
Module 5		✓			✓

Programme learning outcomes

These are statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completion of a designated programme of study (which leads to a qualification). They are statements of holistic outcomes and not simply the sum of the parts (the learning outcomes of individual modules). Such learning outcomes tend to be broader and more general.

The outcomes and attributes described in qualification descriptors (QAA) as well as the programme specification result from learning acquired on completion of coherent programmes of study. These programmes, which develop high-level analytical skills and a broad range of competences, are distinct from training or solely acquiring higher-level skills.

The programmes that we offer are based on the UK's Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), published by the QAA (The Quality Assurance Agency, 2024).

FHEQ defines UK qualifications and programmes in terms of academic levels:

Level	Qualification
8	• Doctoral degrees
7	• Master's degrees • Primary qualifications (or first degrees) in medicine, dentistry and veterinary science • Postgraduate Diplomas
6	• Bachelors degrees with honours/ Bachelor's degrees • Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland • PGCE in England, Wales and Northern Ireland • Graduate Diplomas • Graduate Certificates
5	• Foundation degrees • Diplomas of Higher Education • Higher National Diplomas awarded by degree-awarding bodies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland under licence from Pearson
4	• Higher National Certificates awarded by degree-awarding bodies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland under licence from Pearson • Certificates of Higher Education

For each individual programme of study and qualification, specific statements about the intended learning outcomes are drawn up and approved by the programme team. These include separate statements of outcomes for any intermediate or exit qualifications associated with the programme of study.

The FHEQ notes that:

At level 4 (Level 1 QUB) students demonstrate:	• Knowledge of underlying concepts and principles • An ability to evaluate and interpret these concepts and principles • An ability to present, evaluate and interpret quantitative and qualitative data • An ability to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements
At level 5 (Level 2 QUB) students demonstrate:	• Knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of their area of study, and the way in which those principles have developed. • An ability to apply concepts and principles outside the context in which they were studied. • Knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the subject(s) relevant to the named award. • An ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems. • An understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge.
At level 6 (Level 3 QUB) students demonstrate	• A systematic understanding of the key aspects in their subject • Coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which is at the forefront of subject knowledge • An ability to use accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry • A conceptual understanding that enables a student to devise and sustain arguments and solve problems using techniques, some of which are at the forefront of a discipline, and describe and comment on aspects of current research or advanced scholarship within a subject • An appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge. • An ability to manage their own learning and to make use of

	scholarly reviews and primary sources such as refereed research articles and original material
At level 7 (Level 4 QUB / Masters QUB) students demonstrate	• A systematic understanding of knowledge and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice • A comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship • Originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline • Conceptual understanding that enables the student to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline; to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.
At level 8 (Doctoral study QUB) students demonstrate	• The creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication. • A systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice • The general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems • A detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry

This reflects the language that is seen around conceptual equivalents (link provided in Appendix 1) and in the writing of learning outcomes.

Module Learning Outcomes

Writing clear learning outcomes can take time. However, one advantage of taking time over this is the ability to link your learning outcomes for a module to the learning that takes place and, ultimately, the assessment. You are required to assess a module's learning outcomes to demonstrate their achievement and provide feedback / feedforward.

Each learning outcome has three parts:

Learning Outcome Component	Example
What the learner will **do** to demonstrate learning e.g., at the end of this course, you will be able to…	Explain the fundamental mechanisms of planktonic ecosystems.
The **context** in which the student will demonstrate learning using an active verb	Show how they adapt to ocean biogeography as determined by species distribution, physical and chemical environment.
How well learning has to be demonstrated	Be able to predict likely outcomes to scenarios/problems posed.

Further advice on writing learning outcomes from Advance HE (AdvanceHE, 2010) flags that learning outcomes should:

- be written in the future tense;
- identify important learning requirements;
- be achievable and assessable;
- use clear language that is easily understandable to students.

Within the Higher Education sector, you will find that in order to encourage critical thinking and engagement you will be working with the use of the verbs ‘apply’, ‘analyse’, ‘evaluate’ and ‘create’, although there is still a need to remember knowledge and develop understanding, particularly of new facts and concepts.

As such, Bloom’s Taxonomy (Blooms Taxonomy, 2001) helps us to write more complex learning outcomes as his work describes how learners build upon former learning to inform more complex levels of understanding:

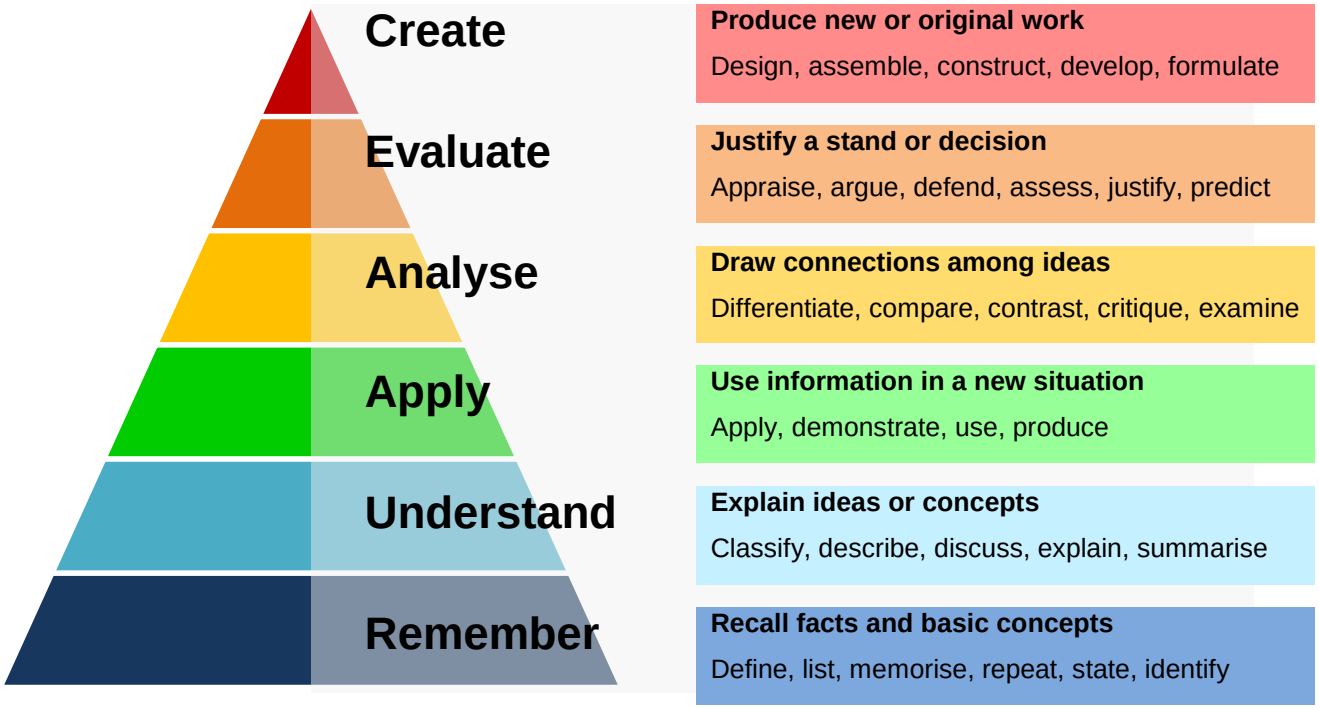


Figure 1 Bloom's Taxonomy (2001)

Using verbs aligned with the levels of Bloom's Taxonomy can help describe activities required for achieving educational objectives corresponding to each level.

Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyse	Evaluate	Create
Arrange, define, describe, duplicate, identify, label, list, match, memorise, name, order, outline, reorganise, reproduce, recall, record, recount, relate, repeat, reproduce, select, state	Clarify, classify, convert, describe, discuss, distinguish, estimate, explain, express, generalise, give examples of, indicate, locate, paraphrase, predict, recognise, report, review, select, translate, summarise	Apply, choose, demonstrate, dramatise, employ, illustrate, interpret, intervene, manipulate, modify, operate, practice, predict, prepare, produce, relate, schedule, sketch, solve, use	Analyse, appraise, break down, calculate, categorise, compare, contrast, criticise, debate, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, examine, experiment, inspect, infer, investigate, outline, test question, relate	Appraise, argue, assess, choose, compare, conclude, contrast, create, criticise, defend, discriminate, estimate, evaluate, interpret, judge, justify, measure, predict, rate, relate, revise, select, support, summarise, value	Develop, adapt, arrange, collect, combine, design, modify, organise, plan, propose, construct, generate

As a rough guide, it is unlikely that a module would have fewer than three, or more than a dozen, learning and skills outcomes. Learning outcomes and module aims and objectives are ***not*** the same thing.

Aims

Broad statements are used to lay out your intentions – not necessarily what the students will learn or do but rather what the purpose of the module is and where it sits inside the programme.

Objectives

Spring directly from aims and identify steps towards the goal. They are statements of the specific things the academics intend to achieve during the course, which can lead directly to desired learning outcomes.

Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes are the skills and knowledge that successful students will be able to demonstrate upon completion of the learning process:

- normally, there are between 3 and 6 per module;
- where appropriate, they should map to your professional body learning outcomes;
- they should map to your programme outcomes;
- all learning outcomes should all be summatively assessed;
- all learning outcomes all need to be achieved (passed) to pass the module;
- learning outcomes should help you design appropriate assessments and evaluation tools that accurately reflect the curriculum;
- students will know exactly what they are expected to learn, thus avoiding ambiguity, this should be true of both the aim and the language.

Designing Assessment

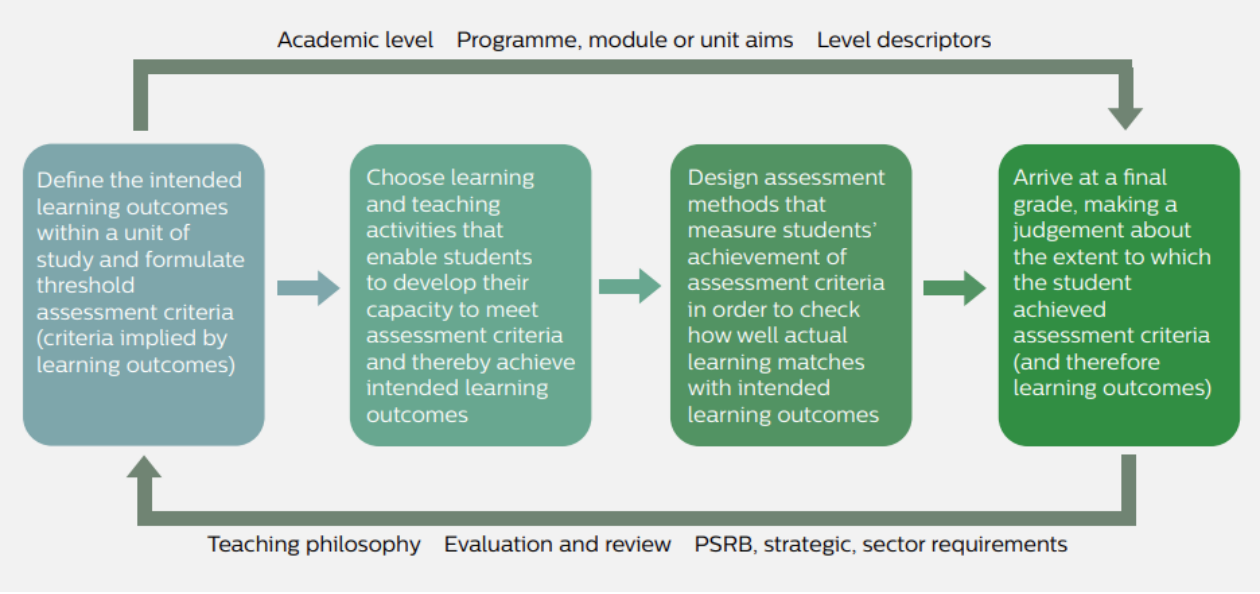
QAA Quality Code for Higher Education (2024) states that:

> "Providers [should] design assessments that test appropriate learning outcomes and are fair, reliable, accessible, authentic and inclusive. Where applicable, and sustainable, students are offered different options for undertaking assessments to promote accessibility and inclusion".

Good assessment design takes place in a system comprising three main components:

Learners construct meaning through the learning activities they engage in (learning system). Staff provide a learning environment that supports the learning activities that are appropriate to the intended learning outcomes. The key here is that the teaching methods employed and the assessment to be undertaken are aligned to the learning activities assumed in the intended learning outcomes. Biggs (Biggs, 2015) calls this **constructive alignment**.

QAA advice and guidance on assessment offers the following diagram:



To enable this, four main questions should be considered when designing an academic programme, and the modules that comprise it. These questions and the steps to address each question are detailed in the table below.

Questions to consider and the steps to take in addressing each question when designing programmes and modules

Question to consider	Action to take
What do we/I want the students to be able to do as a result of undertaking this programme or module?	Define the intended outcomes for the programme and then for the modules.
What teaching methods will we / I use to encourage students to achieve these outcomes?	Choose teaching/learning activities likely to help and encourage students to attain these outcomes. Engage students in these learning activities through the teaching process.
What assessment task(s) will tell us/me that the students have achieved the intended learning outcomes? Has the learning outcome been assessed elsewhere? Could you create a blueprint of learning outcomes mapped to the assessment(s) for the module?	Assess students' learning outcomes using methods that enable students to demonstrate the intended learning outcome and evaluate how well they match what was intended.
What criteria will we / I use to judge the students' achievement in the assessment tasks?	Ensure that you design appropriate marking criteria that provides feedback to improve learning.

There should be alignment between level descriptors, intended learning outcomes, teaching strategies, methods of assessment and assessment criteria. Learning outcomes, assessment criteria and learning and teaching activities are developed in accordance with the academic level of study, using appropriate descriptors and consistent language (see the previous section on Learning Outcomes). In total, these elements reflect course and module aims as well as other factors where appropriate, such as professional, statutory and regulatory body (PSRB) requirements.

Norm-referenced and criterion-referenced assessment

Unless required for PSRB reasons, assessments should be criterion-referenced, allowing them to align with both the module's learning outcomes and the conceptual

equivalents used at Queen's. This means that students are assessed against clear outcomes and not against each other (norm-referenced).

Formative and summative assessment

Whilst we can focus on the difference between formative and summative assessment, the key actually lies in when assessments take place and how feedback (formative) is given. In other words, summative assessment tends to provide a *comment* or *summary* on how students have done, whilst formative assessment is about informing the learning process. Formative assessment needs to have timely feedback during the learning cycle as otherwise it holds no value to the student and their learning as it relies on providing prompts. Formative feedback provided at the end of a module may hold little or no value to the student. A summative assessment can be formative, and the key here is in the balance of the summative and formative and how this is fed back to students.

An example of how this might work is through a patchwork assessment. Students could write pieces throughout a course for which they receive formative feedback. At the end of the course, the summative grade can be derived from submitting the separate pieces that have been used to create/answer a final assignment question. QAA advice and guidance on assessment defines Formative and Summative as assessment below:

Formative assessment: *Assessment with a developmental purpose, designed to help learners learn more effectively by giving them feedback on their performance and how it can be improved and/or maintained. Reflective practice by students sometimes contributes to formative assessment.*

Summative assessment: *Used to indicate the extent of a learner's success in meeting the assessment criteria to gauge the intended learning outcomes of a module or course. Typically, within summative assessment, the marks awarded count towards the final mark of the course/module/award.*

Ipsative assessment

This is when a student or a tutor can consider a student's progress against their previous skills or knowledge, for example, an IT skills test that you can repeat and

measure skills development over time. It is worth noting that Ipsative assessment may be useful during transition periods, such as starting a new course or moving to the next level.

Assessment criteria

Assessment criteria outline the qualities expected in the work to complete the assessment successfully and should reflect the module's learning outcomes. In other words, the assessment criteria should define the attributes to be assessed as well as define the levels of performance through reference to the language of the conceptual equivalents.

The University's study regulations provide details of the conceptual equivalents. These can also be found in Appendix 1. Conceptual Equivalents are important to consider in designing assessments as the language of the conceptual equivalents reflects the learner's achievement level. In designing an assessment, learners should have scope to achieve the full range of marks.

Conceptual equivalent scales/descriptors are most appropriate for less quantitative modules, and their use is mandatory unless answers are clearly right or wrong, such as multiple choice and numerical assessments. The scale can be considered either a set of discrete marks or defined bands of marks. Discrete marks are most appropriate for less quantitative assessments and their use is mandatory.

Rubrics

Rubrics allow for a more consistent, and often quicker, marking process. A good example of a holistic rubric is our conceptual equivalents. However, an analytical rubric can be more useful because it defines the competence level for each assessment criterion for every grade or mark level. A well-developed rubric provides a better starting point for a feedback conversation with students. An example of a rubric is provided in Appendix 8.

The Student Voice

It is considered good practice to involve students in discussion around their assessment. There are a number of processes through which learners can input the design of

assessments, for example, module reviews and the Student Voice Committees.

Managing assessments

Assessment Load

The overall assessment load should be commensurate with the module credit value. In general, one credit is worth ten hours of student work. For example, a 20-credit module would be attributed to 200 hours of work, split between class time, study time and assessment. How much of this time allocation is required to demonstrate achievement of the module outcomes needs to be considered in relation to this.

Typically, coursework would require 2000 words (or equivalent) per 10 credit points. This might mean that in a 20-credit module, you have two assignments, each of 2000 words. Some variations may exist, particularly with PSRB guidance or national standards, such as those of the Nursing and Midwifery Council. For example, word count can vary in relation to the level of study: Level 1 - 2000, Level 2 - 2500 and Level 3 - 3000 are typical for 20 credits in the School of Nursing and Midwifery. Where individual programmes are required to have stricter regulations by validating /accrediting bodies, these will be stated in the programme regulations and will take precedence over the Study Regulations.

Assessment guidance for students should detail how to complete an assignment including the nature of the task, presentation format, assessment criteria and marking schemes. The guidance should also identify any weighting in the assessment. The learning outcomes being addressed should also be clear.

Generally speaking, learning outcomes for a module should not be assessed more than once. In particular, this may relate to curriculum knowledge. Other learning outcomes, such as those that are skills-based and develop throughout a programme, may require to be assessed throughout a programme as difficulty develops. It should be clear to the student when pieces of qualitative/quantitative coursework are combined to make up assessable components and how these relate to learning outcomes.

Module Size and Workloads

20 Credit Module		
200 notional learning hours (comprises contact time, directed study, independent study including assessment preparation)	Assessment learning hours/preparation constitutes approx. 20% of notional module learning hours	40 hours notional 4000-word count equivalence

Assessment equivalence examples:

Assessment Type	WCE	Notional Assessment Work Hours	Credits
Written Essay	1000 words	10 h	5
Exam/test	1 hour	10 h	5
Reflective journal/log	1000 words	10 h	5
Lab/practical report	1000 words	10 h	5
Group assignment	750 words per member	10 h	5
Individual presentation	15 minutes	20 h	10
Viva/oral exam	20-30 minutes	20 h	10
Small Group presentation	10 minutes per member	20 h	10
Portfolio of evidence	6000 words	40 h	20
Research proposal, small project	4000 words	40 h	20
Research project/dissertation	8000 words	80 h	40

Note: where there is more than one item of assessment per module, the assessment workload will be divided between items, for example:
Item 1: 2-hour exam (measures LO 1&2), Item 2: 2000-word essay (measures LO 3&4) for 20 credits
In relation to a staged/cumulative assessment where there is more than one assessment task within a single assessment item, the assessment workload will be divided across multiple tasks, for example:

Item 1: staged assessment comprising 3 tasks (100%) for 20 credits.

- 1 hour class test (foundation knowledge before placement)
- 1000-word reflective log (reflections of placement experience)
- 30-minute viva (synthesis of experience and application of theory to practice)

Ulster University Assessment Workload Equivalence Guide (Ulster University, 2018)

Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (CATS)

The CATS scheme allows credit for modules to be transferable between HEIs. One module at Queen's is worth 20 CATS points. The University Regulations refers to this as follows:

The University operates a Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (CATS) under which each undergraduate module or other course unit is assigned a level (1 to 4) and a number of credit points reflecting the value of the module or unit.

The scale, which is based on 120 credit points for each academic year of full-time undergraduate study, is widely accepted in universities throughout the United Kingdom and is intended to facilitate transfer between institutions. It is also compatible with the European Credit Transfer Accumulation System (ECTS), which uses a scale of 60 credit points for each academic year of study. Queen's University CATS points are converted to ECTS points by dividing the Queen's points by two. ECTS points are converted to Queen's points by multiplying the ECTS points by two.

Completion of a stage involves a notional 1200 hours of student engagement. This includes timetabled sessions, independent study, directed learning and assessment. It

also includes time allocated to personal, academic and career development.

Word limits

Where a word limit is applied, the preferred practice in the University, and therefore recommended guidance, is to allow a **10% over or under leeway for word limits.** The purpose of a word count is to give all students a clear indication of the level of work required for an assessment. Assessment briefs should clearly state a maximum word count. Good practice can include approaches such as a 10% over/under margin. 10% under, and the students tend to self-penalise. Anything over the 10% word limit should receive a 10% deduction, over 20% of the word limit, a 20% deduction and so on, of the total word count of the assignment. However, any deduction should not take the assignment grade below that of the pass mark of the assignment. Other approaches may be acceptable but should be clearly outlined in any guidance to students.

The word count should normally refer to everything in the main body of the text. Everything before (for example, an abstract or contents) or after (for example, references) is NOT included in the word count. Where there are exceptions, these should be outlined in the assignment criteria, for example, where an abstract is included in the word count.

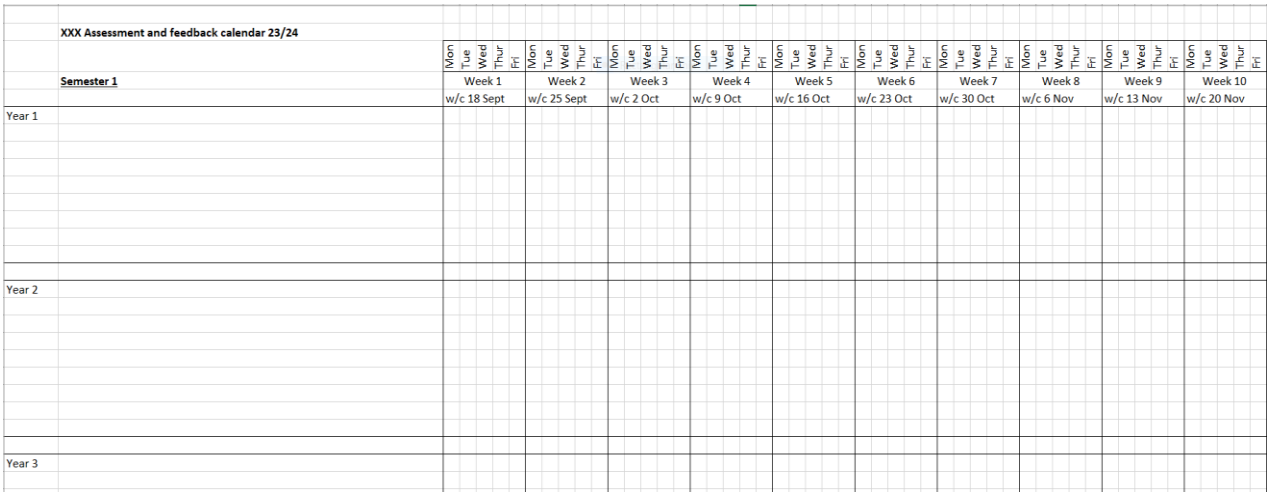
Assessment scheduling

In order to avoid over-assessment, it is good practice to plan your summative assessments for a module using a table such as the example provided below. This is not a rigid example and can be adapted. This table should be included in any module or assessment information provided to students and must include details around the return of feedback and grades. It should be planned that **feedback and grades are received before any further assessments that are similar in nature, or are of the same type, are submitted for the module.**

Assessment item	Due date of assessment	Indicative word or time length	Weighting	Learning outcomes to be assessed	Moderation process	Return date of feedback & any associated grade.

If the total assessment items for a module look to assess learning outcomes more than once, it is advisable to consider whether the format and/or number of assessments needs to be reduced.

The above table should also allow bunching of assignments across modules to be avoided. Programme teams should ensure that all assessments for the programme are not due on the same date. The following is an example of this:



Consider providing two weeks without classes in the timetable to allow time for coursework completion. This has been undertaken in Psychology, and feedback has been positive. Students report liking the time to focus on assessments. Schools should consider staggering 'reading weeks' between modules in order to avoid bunching of assessment submission dates. Students must normally have time between the feedback and marks on one assignment before submitting a second, related assignment (see above). This precludes extensions and exceptional circumstances whereby the timelines become unrealistic.

It is good practice for modules to have up to two items of assessment. One assessment can comprise a number of components, but it should result in one overall mark.

The regulation regarding formal examinations is as follows:

3.1.2 *Formal examinations shall be held during the designated assessment period and in August/September, except where professional bodies require formal examinations to be scheduled outside these periods, or where otherwise approved by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education and Students.*

3.1.3 *Forms of assessment other than formal examinations may occur at any point in the academic year.*

Submission of Work

It is advisable to set deadlines for online submissions during working hours on a normal working day i.e., Monday-Friday. This is to ensure someone is available to help if there are any submission issues and to allow time to take action within a working day. In the case of distance learning, a deadline of midnight is acceptable to allow for learners in different time zones to submit.

Late submission of work is dealt with as outlined in Marking Procedures.

Inclusive Assessment

The QAA's UK Quality Code, Advice and Guidance: Assessment (2018) states that:

> *Every student has an equal opportunity to demonstrate their achievement through the assessment process, with no group or individual disadvantaged. In designing assessments, the needs of students are considered, including those studying at different locations, from different cultural/ educational backgrounds, with additional learning needs, or with protected characteristics. Assessment procedures and methods are flexible enough to allow adjustments to overcome any substantial disadvantage that individual students could experience*

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an approach to planning and developing curricula in ways that promote access, participation, and progress in the general education curriculum for all learners. (CAST, 2006).

To achieve inclusivity, we first need to get to grips with the three key components that form Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles. In short, these are referred to as the what, how and why of learning (Meyer et al., 2014).

•Principle I	•Principle II	•Principle III
• Provide multiple means of representation • (the "what" of	• Provide multiple means of action and expression • (the "how" of learning)	• Provide multiple means of engagement • (the "why" of learning).

It can mean giving learners options to demonstrate mastery of the learning outcomes over a number of different types of assessment over a programme. In addition, materials and content can be provided in a number of formats, for example, an audio file to explain a major assignment.

What it really means is the availability of options: providing students with multiple and varied opportunities to participate in learning, and to demonstrate their understanding across the programme (Bublitz et al., 2015).

UDL is an approach to teaching, learning and assessment that supports inclusivity. Good Practice means of achieving this include:

- clear and contextualised marking descriptors, module handbooks, assessment
- criteria are available to students at the beginning of term
- a variety of assessment besides timed, unseen exams that provide flexible, varied ways to meet the learning outcomes over the course of the programme (e.g., videos/podcasts, practicals, presentations, labs, blogs, internet, tasks, mini vivas and reflections)
- formative assessments are timely, specific feedback and feed forward to help students excel and improve
- assessments only test the learning outcomes
- students are guided to set aspirational goals and track their own progress; students are encouraged to learn from their mistakes
- assessment tasks are accessible; scaffolding and allowance for development is embedded in the process to allow for student progression
- assessments test 'real world' problems: assessment are socially, culturally and globally relevant and are sensitive to learners' identities, experience and history, where appropriate.

10 Ways to Ensure Online Assessment is Accessible and Inclusive

These tips below outline some of the ways you can ensure, as far as possible, that the online assessments you plan are accessible to and inclusive of all your students. This resource was compiled by AHEAD, (AHEAD, n.d.) in partnership with the National Forum.

1. Liaise with your institution to discover what tools and resources are readily available in your virtual learning environment and recommended by your institution.
2. Make a clear statement to students that you are open to hearing their concerns regarding any proposed alternative assessment methods (especially where accessibility is concerned) and provide a clear channel of contact for them to communicate with you about it. If accessibility concerns are raised, liaise with the Accessible Learning Support Office for advice. Let students know that you are trying your best in a tough situation, that you know that you won't get everything right, but that you are willing to listen and respond to their concerns.

3. Offer students a choice in how they reach the learning outcomes in line with the principles of Universal Design for Learning, e.g., the choice to either submit a written assignment or deliver a video or audio presentation. This will support equity for students with disabilities and guarantee that students have options should they meet technical/accessibility challenges with a particular format.
4. Where possible, create and provide students with a sample assessment submission for any alternative assessments you are developing so that they have clarity on what is expected of them.
5. To support students in choosing an assessment method and making a quality submission, provide simple guidelines on the use of any tools or techniques which must be used to create new types of assessment formats. If possible, provide a trial/demonstration of unfamiliar technologies to be used.
6. When sharing assessment briefs, ensure these documents are in accessible formats and basic digital accessibility principles are applied, e.g., use sans serif fonts, apply headings, use good colour contrast and add alternative text to images. Use Word docs rather than PDFs where possible as they are more accessibility friendly and allow students to customise their experience to a far greater extent (e.g., fonts, colours, read aloud).
7. Be aware that the use of timed online testing is highly problematic for many students with disabilities. If using this method of alternative assessment, please liaise with your Accessible Learning Support Office concerning any exam accommodations (e.g., extra time) which may be required for students with disabilities on your programme and the accessibility of the platform you are intending to use. If a platform is not digitally accessible and students require the use of assistive technologies, the only equitable solution may be to offer the student(s) an alternative assessment mechanism.
8. Try to provide students with opportunities to support each other in preparing, discussing and developing their assessment submissions. Enable students to connect and support each other in online settings using discussion forums, live chat facilities and peer support groups.
9. Remember equity in terms of assessment type does not mean that the assessment and marking criteria and workload have to be the same for each type of assessment they can be different, but they do have to be equitable.

Information for Students

The QAA's UK Quality Code, Advice and Guidance: Assessment (2018) issues two guiding principles in relation to information for students:

Principle 5: *Assessment is explicit and transparent*

Principle 9: *Students are supported and prepared for assessment*

The Guidelines for Student Handbooks provide a University template for the production of student handbooks for all taught students, in order to ensure that students receive clear and reliable information relevant to them. The information provided below suggests further advice around assessment practices.

For each module, there should be clear statements in relation to the following:

- the forms of assessment which are used and general statements of the standards of performance required at each level (see the information on conceptual equivalents scale);
- clearly state if individual submissions must be passed independently, or if it is just that the coursework or module as a whole that must be passed;
- how they assist in demonstrating achievement of the learning outcomes of the course;
- the overall assessment load, weighting and its timing;
- when the marked assignments and associated feedback will be available for accessing;
- any process of calibration and/or moderation that is in place for the module, including where and when the External Examiner is involved in the QA process.

In addition, students should know:

- to whom to submit work;
- where to submit work (either in person or electronically);
- when to submit work, including both the date and time of acceptance;
- acceptable forms of submission and any associated paperwork, such as Coversheets;
- requirements to use the University's preferred similarity checking tool;
- how to apply for an extension or any exceptional circumstances;
- any penalties;

- any requirements which elements of the module must be passed independently.

These statements should be provided in the module handbook or on any other platforms students can access, for example, Canvas.

It is important to note that the Study Regulations for Undergraduate Programmes/ Postgraduate Taught Programmes state that:

2.3.2 *Heads of School are responsible for ensuring that students are informed of the requirements for passing a module not later than the first lecture of the module. No change may be made to either the contents or assessment after this without the written permission of the Director of Academic Services and a revised statement must then be issued to students.*

2.3.3 *A Head of School is responsible for ensuring that procedures are in place to monitor the progress of students taking modules taught by the School whether or not they are registered for a programme in the School, for example, in the case of joint programmes. The Head of School within which students are registered for a programme is responsible for monitoring the progress of students on that programme.*

Academic Integrity

The QAA's UK Quality Code, Advice and Guidance: Assessment (2018) issues the following:

> ***Guiding Principle 10:*** *Assessment encourages academic integrity*

Academic honesty is fundamental to the values of Queen's and the University takes any instances of academic misconduct very seriously. Students should not be allowed to obtain for themselves, or for anyone else, an unfair advantage as a result of academic misconduct.

This is a growing area of concern across the sector as essay mills, paraphrasing software and AI, more generally, are increasingly undetectable. Often, students see these as supportive tools that help them with their studies.

As part of developing good academic skills, students should be supported to understand and display academic integrity in their work. Preventative action that helps students recognise academic misconduct is much preferable, but there are methods that staff may use to make it more difficult for students to engage in such practices.

What does academic misconduct mean?

Academic misconduct includes (see Section 2 of the Procedures for Dealing with Academic Offences), but is not limited to:

- Plagiarism: presenting the work of others as your own. This includes self-plagiarism which is generally considered poor academic practice. In this context, self-plagiarism is using your own work to gain double credit. No more than 10% of any assessment should be from the student's previous work.
- Collusion: working on an assignment with anyone else if that assignment is meant to be done individually. It is expected that the work being assessed unless specifically designated as a group assessment, will have been done by the student alone. Collusion is different to collaboration when a group of students have been

asked to work together. Indeed, one definition of collusion is that it does not acknowledge collaboration.

- Fabrication: claiming to have carried out experiments, interviews or any form of research which you have not in fact carried out, or if you invent or falsify data, evidence or experimental results. It is also an academic offence if you knowingly make use of falsified data as described above.
- Cheating: The term 'cheating' normally describes behaviour that takes place in an examination. It is considered to be cheating if a student:
  a) has any form of notes, or any items or texts other than those that are specifically permitted for that examination, at their desk in an examination hall during an examination. It is the student's responsibility to establish what the permitted items are for each examination;
  b) makes use or attempts to make use of unauthorised items as described above and/or any form of technology, including mobile telephones, smart phones, earpieces (though not authorised hearing aids), cameras or other devices;
  c) copies or attempts to copy from another student's examination script;
  d) obtains or attempts to obtain assistance from another student or from any other person which leads to an unfair advantage;
  e) impersonates another examination student, or to allow yourself to be impersonated;
  f) provides or attempts to provide unfair assistance to another student;
  g) permits another student to copy from your examination script;
  h) knowingly assists any student in making use of unfair means in a university examination;
  i) outsources work submitted for assessment: is where a student commissions or seeks to commission another party (either paid or unpaid) to perform academic work on their behalf. This would include essay mills and sites that provide answers to uploaded questions.

Open Book assessments under examination conditions

Academic Misconduct and Open Book Exams

Open book exams can create the opportunity for authentic, contextual assessments and assess students' ability to apply their knowledge. If these assessments are well-designed then it is hard to fall foul of academic misconduct. However, students must

be well-prepared for such assessments. This includes understanding that collusion or the use of contract-cheating websites is academic misconduct and that a 'copy and paste' approach should not be used.

It is important that you firstly consider whether an open book assessment is appropriate to the assessment for which you intend to use it. For example, if you are assessing the 'knowledge' of the student, then you are likely to be testing information that can be easily 'Googled' or lifted directly from a textbook. Open book is appropriate where the assessment focuses on higher order thinking skills, critical reflection or application of practical skills and core knowledge.

There must also be consideration given as to whether the assessment is entirely unsupervised whilst allowing an open book approach, or whether there will be some form of invigilation to reduce the risk of collusion whilst allowing the use of all materials through the open book approach.

If you decide that the use of open book is appropriate to the assessment type that you are designing, then you should also consider:

•Using problem-based or real-world scenarios, for example, provide a case study to which students can apply their knowledge and skills;
•Linking to a data set and ask students to interpret and apply the data;
•Avoiding questions that you could answer from a book and therefore will be 'google-able';
•Creating assessment items as a programme team or use a critical friend to help develop any assessment items;
•Stating a word count range and provide clear recommendations for how long a student should take to complete an exam. There is a risk that some students will spend a disproportionate time writing and over-produce.
•Explaining in general terms what key qualities you are looking for in answers.
•Providing clear instructions and communications about how long they are supposed to spend on this form of exam and how their work will be marked (QAA 5 February 2021).
•Ensuring that students are able to practice the new assessment format.

This section is informed by Designing open book exams | Teaching & Learning - UCL – University College London (UCL, 2024)

Type of Socratic question	Example questions and starters
Clarification questions	• What do you mean by...? • Could you put this another way? • What do you think is the main issue? • Could you provide an example? • Could you expand upon that point further?
Assumption questions	• Why would someone make this assumption? • What could we assume instead? • You seem to be assuming... • Do I understand you correctly?
Reason and evidence questions	• What would be an example? • Why do you think this is true? • What other information do we need? • Could you explain your reason to us? • By what reasoning did you come to that conclusion? • Is there reason to doubt that evidence? • What led you to that belief?
Origin or source questions	• Is this your idea or did you hear it from someplace else? • Have you always felt this way? • Has your opinion been influenced by something or • someone? • Where did you get that idea? • What caused you to feel that way?
Implications and consequence questions	• What effect would that have? • Could that really happen or probably happen? • What is an alternative? • What are you implying by that? • If that happened, what else would happen as a result? Why?
Viewpoint questions	• How would other groups of people respond to this question? Why? • How could you answer the objection that _____would make? • What might someone who believed _____ think? • What is an alternative? • How are ____ and ____'s ideas alike? Different?

Figure 1: Designing more authentic assessment tasks

Verb/ educational outcome	What? ie object	Outcome/evidence of achievement	Modifiers/ developments/ range statements
Interpret	Complex and sometimes incomplete or conflicting data	Compile a summary meaningful for experts and laypersons	Leading to a viable action plan for a team to implement
Review	Data from a variety of sources	Produce an executive summary	For a specific audience of employers
Set up	Specialised equipment appropriately	Draw up a 'quick guide' for peers	To enable them to use it safely and appropriately
Evaluate	Three proposed solutions to a problem	Propose a further two of your own	With suggestions about what might work best
Compile	Contingency plans for a professional environment	Produce disaster recovery in case of a serious emergency	Leading to mitigations and remediation

Taken from AdvanceHE (AdvanceHE, 2024)

Preparing students for open book exams

Start by ensuring that students understand what an open book or remote online exam is and how this differs from other forms of assessment. The following advice is useful for students (University of Oxford, 2021):

Students are expected to act as responsible members of the University's community. In the context of open book examination, this means students are:

(a) Permitted to:

- refer to their own course and revision notes; and,
- access offline or online resources, for example textbooks or online journals.

(b) Expected to:

- submit work which has not been submitted, either partially or in full, either for their current Honour School or qualification, or for another Honour School or qualification of this University (except where the Special Regulations for the subject permit this), or for a qualification at any other institution;
- indicate clearly the presence of all material they have quoted from other sources, including any diagrams, charts, tables or graphs. Students are not expected to reference, however if you provide a direct quote, or copy a diagram or chart, you are expected to make some mention of the source material as you would in a typical invigilated exam;
- paraphrase adequately all material in their own words.

Students need to know that preparation is as important, if not more important for an open book exam. The quality of the notes taken in advance and preparation of referenced material are key to success. Under open book exam conditions, there may be a greater temptation to copy and paste from the resources students have to hand. Students should take an academic approach to drawing upon quotes and data to support their answers or argument.

Students should be aware that they must not wait until the very end of their exam time to submit their response, as they may exceed the allocated time and incur a penalty. The exact amount of technical time will depend on the standard 'writing' duration of your exam and other factors such as:

- whether the responses are submitted automatically once the allotted time is up;
- how many documents / digital artefacts are students required to submit;
- whether the student submissions are to be handwritten and scanned or word-processed;
- whether submission relies on more than one software application;
- the volume of student submissions to the system at the time of submission.

It is important that students familiarise themselves with the processes of downloading/uploading and so on. Schools should also ensure that they have support in place should any technical problems occur. In the context of open-book examinations, students are not permitted to discuss the exam with other students or post on social media or other fora within 36 hours of the UK start time.

Deterring and managing academic misconduct

Students will need to agree to a declaration of integrity before they submit any assessment; this includes the submission of open book or remote online assessments. This can take the form of ticking a box to agree to a pre-supplied statement. For example:

I hereby confirm that the submitted work is entirely my own and I have not (i) used the services of any agency or person(s) providing specimen, model or ghostwritten work in the preparation of the work I submit for this open book examination; (ii) given assistance in accessing this paper or in providing specimen, model or ghostwritten work to other candidates submitting for this open-book examination.

Proctoring

At this point in time the University does not support the use of proctoring to support the remote invigilation, either via software or remote human supervision, of exams. Where PSRBs require an invigilated exam, every effort will be made to accommodate this on campus.

Assessment design

There are several approaches that staff can apply when designing assessment that lessens the likelihood of students engaging in plagiarism, for example:

- regularly revising the titles and/or briefs of assessment tasks lessens the risk of students copying from or resubmitting submissions from previous cohorts;
- requiring students to choose information from several different sources on a specific topic in order to compare, contrast and criticise each source;
- creating hypothetical scenarios which require students to plan actions and write reports in response to the scenario as well as real-life contexts and scenarios (authentic assessment);
- diversifying assessment methods and moving away from using assignment titles that could easily be copied (or bought) from websites;
- incorporating elements of self-reflection within existing assignments, where appropriate;
- asking students to give evidence of their processes, for example, draft versions or copies of research materials.

Additional mitigations may need to be considered to account for recent developments regarding generative AI. You should consult the AI Hub for the latest information on AI in Education.

Education and information should be integrated into any programme to inform and educate students on academic misconduct, what they are, how they are detected and what penalties are incurred. Key questions to address include:

- types of academic misconduct and how we define them;
- how to avoid plagiarism;
- the difference between collaborative work and collusion;
- how to address cultural issues that may inadvertently lead to plagiarism;
- the appropriate regulations pertaining to academic offences.

Detecting plagiarism

Certain indicators may indicate the likelihood of plagiarism:

- the language and content are unduly sophisticated;
- discrepancy in terms of the level and use of language between the plagiarised elements and original work, or
- discrepancy in terms of the level and use of language between different sections of the work, or when compared with other submissions from that student;
- the work may seem unfocussed as it moves from paragraph to paragraph or sentence to sentence from diverse sources;
- Queen's subscribes to an electronic originality checking service, provided by Iparadigms called TurnitinUK. This is a similarity checking system, and whilst its use is not compulsory, it is strongly advised. However, it is important to remember that this is just a tool. For guidance purposes, scores above 20% may need to be explored further, this would exclude references and direct quotes. The Student Guide to using Turnitin in Canvas and Staff Guide for Turnitin provide further information.

Differentiating between Plagiarism and Poor Referencing

It is important to differentiate between plagiarism and poor referencing.

Plagiarism covers a wide range of academic offences, and there is no one legal definition, so it can cause problems for students. Plagiarism in its broadest sense does, however, constitute a student passing off someone else's work as their own and for this reason it is a serious academic offence. Therefore, it is important that academics are aware of the following guidance:

Poor academic writing is different to plagiarism. Incorrect, incomplete or non-referencing, for example, the poor use of footnotes, should be flagged to the student with specific guidance and support as to where the errors occurred and how these can be resolved. In instances where the student has not referenced correctly, the academic mark should be reflective of this and feedback to students should indicate that poor referencing has impacted the academic credibility of the work and thence a lower mark has been awarded. That said, this should only be downgraded in one criteria of the assessment item. Furthermore, there should be no double-penalty, for example, a reduced grade and a referral for academic misconduct. The rigour around correct referencing should be

implemented from Year 1 of the course with no exceptions.

In incidences where an academic has concerns regarding plagiarism then the School policy should be followed. This will almost always involve a second senior academic reviewing the work and making the decision to:

(1) refer the work back to the original marker with feedback on why there is no offence
or
(2) refer the work to Head of School for investigation as a potential academic offence.

Academic skills should always be built into courses, and the appropriate guidance should be clearly provided to students, for example, in a module handbook.

Procedures for dealing with academic malpractice

The Academic Affairs website provides further details on how to deal with academic offences, including the Fitness to practise procedure. Furthermore, where there is concern that there may be evidence of academic malpractice (that must be clearly evidenced), a viva voce exam may help determine whether this is the case or not.

Generative AI and Assessment

AI and Assessment

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, especially generative AI, such as Large Language Models (LLMs), are rapidly transforming the landscape of higher education. As these tools become more sophisticated, universities need to adapt their assessment strategies to ensure academic integrity, authenticity, and relevance in preparing students for their future careers.

AI brings both opportunities and challenges to assessment for both staff and students. In line with the **Russell Group's published stance on AI** , (Russell Group) we are committed to the ethical and responsible use of generative AI. At Queen's, we have a university position on the use of AI in education (RAISE principles: Responsible use, AI best practice, Integrity, Support and Equitable Access), and developed resources and training to support you in using AI in education, including assessment. All relevant guidance, and resources are available on our AI Hub, and the Assessment Support Hub offers guidance to students.

Marking and Moderation

The QAA UK Quality Code, Advice and Guidance: Assessment (2018) issues the following guiding principles:

QAA Code Guiding Principle 2: Assessment is reliable, consistent, fair and valid

QAA Code Guiding Principle 5: Assessment is explicit and transparent

QAA Code Guiding Principle 6: Assessment and feedback is purposeful and supports the learning process

QAA Code Guiding Principle 7: Assessment is timely

Marking procedures

The nature of the assessment and its context within the module will determine the marking procedures. Whatever approaches are employed, it is important that all examiners, including external examiners, are clear on what and how marks have been allocated to an individual item of assessment.

Late submission of continuous assessment/coursework is dealt with as outlined in the Study Regulations for Undergraduate Programmes / Postgraduate Taught Programmes as follows:

3.2.1 *Continuous assessment/course work submitted after the deadline will be penalised at the rate of 5% of the total marks available for each calendar day late up to a maximum of five calendar days, after which a mark of zero shall be awarded, i.e., up to one calendar day is 100% - 5%; up to two calendar days is 100% -10%; up to three calendar days is 100% - 15%, etc. The late penalty will apply to the continuous assessment/coursework mark only and not to the overall module mark.*

3.2.2 *Exemptions shall be granted to regulation 3.2.1 only if there are exceptional circumstances, and where the student has made a case in writing to the School Office within three working days of the deadline for submission or where a concession has been agreed on the grounds of a student's disability. A list of guidelines on acceptable exceptional circumstances is contained in the* Exceptional Circumstances Procedure *Extensions to deadlines shall be proportionate to the impact of the exceptional circumstances.*

Important note: Study Regulations for Undergraduate Programmes/ Postgraduate Taught Programmes, Regulation 3.2 Late Submission of Continuous Assessment/ Coursework has been updated to base the penalty on calendar days. This should be used to calculate late submission penalties going forward.

The University also has Guidelines in place for marking the work of students with a specific learning difficulty.

Marking schemes

Marking schemes should reflect how the marks for any given assessment are broken down. It should reflect the elements of the assessment and how they are balanced. In many ways, this is a more detailed version of the assignment criteria.

Draft marking schemes should be prepared at the same time as the assessment is designed. Comparisons between what the students have been requested to do in the assessment and the associated marking scheme will often highlight areas of ambiguity in the question or task. Marking schemes also help with consistency where there is more than one first marking or where the assessment has to be double marked.

Marks

Study Regulations for Undergraduate Programmes:

7.1.1 The pass mark for undergraduate University examinations shall be 40%, except for professional examinations in Medicine and Dentistry, the School of Nursing and Midwifery and the School of Pharmacy. Further details are available in the relevant Programme Specification.

Study Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Programmes:

7.1.1 The pass marks for taught postgraduate University examinations are as follows:

- 40% Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma
- 50% Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma and Master's Degree

All assessed elements of modules should be marked to an integer on a scale of 0-100. For quantitative elements, this will be any integer on the scale. For qualitative elements

of undergraduate modules, this will be one of the discrete points on the conceptual equivalents scale (see Appendix 1).

Module marks are calculated from the weighted average of the assessment components. Individual module marks must be rounded up or down in the usual way and returned by the Board of Examiners as integers. The integer is the final mark that is released to the student and that is used in calculating the final overall mark for classification purposes.

Further details on Mark Schemes and Classifications can be found on the Academic Affairs website.

> Normally moderation of any summative assessment, must take place before any marks are released to students, be these provisional or otherwise. Exceptions to this case may include assessments such as OSCEs with a clear rationale being provided as to why this is the case. In addition, all marks must be released with the associated feedback before the Exam Board, except the final summative assessment for a module where the grade and feedback is not required for the submission of a follow-on assessment. In this case, the feedback and grade can be released after the Exam Board. In most cases, this will apply to exams.

Anonymous marking

Where possible, the anonymity of students in the marking process should be maintained. No student should have their identity made known to any marker or examiner at the time of assessment. This is to ensure that students and markers are protected against the possibility of bias, whether conscious or unconscious. Once an item has been assessed, the marking process is concluded and anonymity can be lifted. Carrying out assessment in Canvas can cause some issues with anonymity and the following steps are suggested;

1. mark anonymously in Canvas;
2. release the marks to students (anonymity turns off);
3. turn back on anonymity for the exam board.

Whilst the student mark for the first assessment has been released, the second assessment is still done anonymously, reducing the chances of bias. In addition, there

may be times in the assessment process whereby individual identity may need to be flagged. This will mainly be around extenuating circumstances. Once anonymity is lifted, an opportunity exists to support the welfare and progression of individual students.

You can find out more information about anonymous marking in Canvas in this blog post.

Moderation processes

Any calibration and/or moderation process must be shared with students through their module handbooks and other relevant fora. Appendix 3 may be useful for sharing this information with students. There are a number of approaches that can be taken as part of the moderation process. The important thing is to be certain that any system is consistent, fair and robust.

Calibration

Any calibration process should take place before the marking process. As a marking team, you can take a few scripts that you all mark on your own before coming together as a team to discuss your feedback and grades on these scripts. It can be easy to simply take the first three submitted assignments for example. The team should agree on a mark for each script and note any specific actions for assessing all scripts. This is a useful way in which to ensure standardisation across a team. This ensures that all markers in a team have a common understanding of the marking standards and conventions as well as feedback protocols.

Internal moderation

Internal moderation is the process that you set up at the School or programme level to demonstrate that the grades awarded are reliable and consistent to ensure parity of standards. This is normally carried out through a blind or double-blind marking of a sample of scripts.

Blind marking is where one assessor marks and provides feedback on a script. A second assessor considers the script having seen the grade and feedback and then agrees a mark.

Double-blind marking requires two separate assessors to mark a script independently.

They then share their grades and feedback in order to agree on a final mark.

All examinations and sets of assignments are subject to internal moderation. Once all marking is complete, a sample of all broad grade categories can be double marked through either a buddying process or by the course leader. Any significant differences in marks will need discussed.

Examples of internal moderation processes, as well as the associated reporting proformas, can be found in Appendices 3, 4, 5 and 6 (with thanks to the School of Nursing and Midwifery and School of Biological Sciences).

Whatever process is in place, the agreement of a mark where there is a difference of opinion between two markers must focus on a discussion around the assessment criteria and not a decision to go for a middle grade or the higher grade. This approach inevitably leads to grade inflation. If an agreement cannot be reached, a third marker should be involved in the process.

External moderation

External moderation requires the appointment of an External Examiner (who should hold the External Examiner qualification awarded by Advance HE where possible), independent of the University, to ensure that the level of achievements of students reflects the required academic standards and is comparable to similar programmes nationally. External Examiners should not be asked to undertake any marking.

You may ask your External Examiner(s) to comment on verification, in that they can advise on whether the assessments are appropriate, fair and valid, reflect the learning outcomes and present an appropriate level of challenge in terms of academic standards. However, External Examiners must not change marks on individual assignments or make pass / fail decisions.

Further guidance on marking and marking schemes is available on the Academic Affairs website. In addition, guidance is also provided on External Examiners.

Allow for marker's '*consultation hour'* if students would like to go over the feedback for clarification. Doing this means you can explain that the appeals process is open to

challenges on procedure but not the outcome.

Scaling

Scaling tends to be used at an Exam Board in order to standardise a set of marks for a cohort where the cohort's grade profile is significantly different to the work of that cohort on their programme or to the grade profile of previous cohorts. This is most commonly used where a problem is found with an assessment item after the assessment has taken place. Generally speaking, if careful assessment design, calibration and moderation are in place, then scaling is not required. The decision to apply scaling must be supported by suitable statistical analysis of the data by an expert in the field.

Mitigations and Adjustments for Assessment

The UK Quality Code, Advice and Guidance: Assessment (2018) issues the following guidance:

Principle 2: Assessment is reliable, consistent, fair and valid

Principle 4: Assessment is inclusive and equitable

The Study Regulations for Undergraduate Programmes, Regulation 4 and Study Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Programmes, Regulation 4 outlines the relevant processes to follow where mitigations and adjustments for assessments are required. They may be permitted under the following circumstances, where the appropriate procedure has been followed:

ASSESSMENT SUPPORT PROCESS	USE THIS IF	DURATION	WHAT THIS COVERS
EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES	You have a short-term illness, bereavement or other unexpected emergency	Up to one month	Exceptional Circumstances are events which are sudden, unexpected, significantly disruptive and beyond your control which affect your ability to complete a summative assessment, such as a serious illness or the death of a close relative. You can submit an Exceptional Circumstances application to request 'mitigation' such as an extension or deferring an assessment to a later date.
SHORT-TERM IMPAIRMENTS	You have a short term illness or impairment that is impacting your studies for over a month	One to 12 months	Short-term impairments are not chronic lasting less than 12 months with no outstanding or lasting effects. The short-term impairments process is in place to support students for conditions that may impact their studies beyond exceptional circumstances lasting more than one month e.g. broken limbs, short term impairments resulting from injuries, surgeries, medical procedures etc. Adjustments can include, but are not limited to 'in course' support such as flexibility with assignments or exam support such as rest breaks or extra time.
REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS FOR DISABILITIES AND LONG-TERM CONDITIONS	You have a disability or long-term condition	12 months or more (diagnosed condition)	A disability or long-term condition is one that has impacted or likely to impact for 12 months or more. Northern Ireland legislation defines 'Disability' as: "A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities". Disability Services work with students to put reasonable adjustments in place. Reasonable adjustments can include, but are not limited to, flexible with deadlines, exam support and access to lecture theatres.
ACADEMIC FLEXIBILITY FOR ELITE ATHLETES	You are struggling to balance your academic and athletic commitments when participating at an elite level	Needs analysis basis	Queen's University recognises that combining high level sport and higher education can be difficult. The University is fully supportive of elite athletes who manage themselves well and are proactive in organising their sport and their studies. Students eligible for academic flexibility for elite athletes can apply for this to be taken into consideration where their participation in their sport impacts on their ability to complete a summative assessment, for example being called to participate in a competition.

High Quality Feedback

The QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education (2024) states as one of its Key Practices (b) that:

> "Students are given clear information about the intended modular and/or programme learning outcomes and the purpose of assessment and are enabled to use feedback/ feedforward to support further learning"

The purpose of feedback

Feedback is central to the learner's ability to take the next steps in their programme of study. Feedback should provide students with an understanding of how their mark was arrived at and their relative success in achieving the learning outcomes.

Feedback should:

- Be clearly linked to learning outcomes and assessment criteria
- Identify good points in the work
- Identify areas for development
- Provide realistic next steps that are achievable along with advice on how these may be tackled in future work.

As such, it is important that feedback is timely and useful to the learners.

Timing of feedback

Feedback needs to be timely in order to be of any use to the learner. It is good practice to establish a clear timescale for providing feedback to students. Feedback should be received on any given assessment before a second assessment is due in. The University would normally expect that feedback be provided electronically **no later than 20 working days of submission of assessment by students.**

The nature of feedback

Feedback should be a dialogue and not a monologue. It can be provided by anyone involved in the learning process, including peers. It is good practice to annotate coursework and examination scripts, to assist in feedback and the moderation process. Feedback should be in balance with the criteria set out for the assessment. Over-annotation should not be used in order to avoid 'red- penning' work. For example,

excessive comments on writing style and grammar may not be relevant.

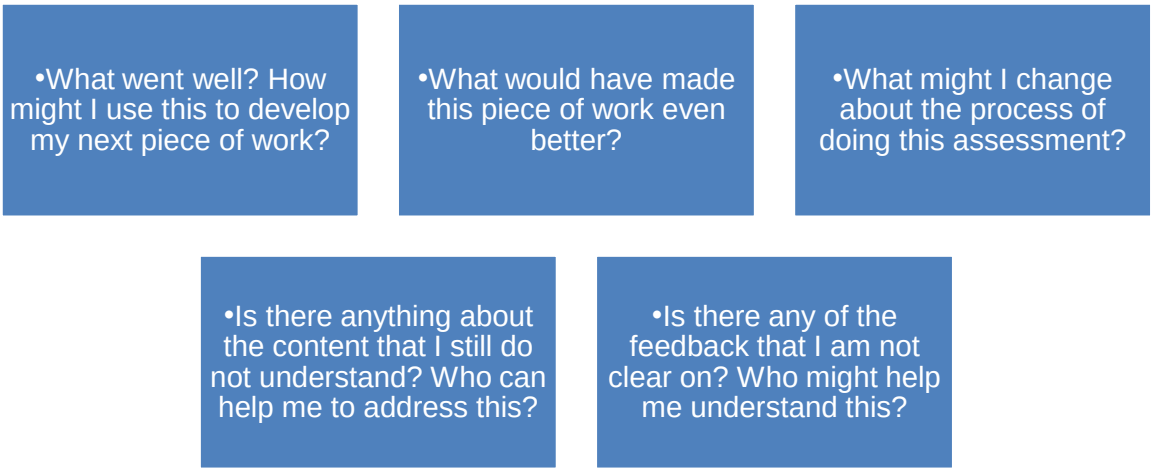
Feedback on performance in exams should be provided for all students. This can be in the format of generic question-by-question commentary for all students to access. Students should be able to discuss their exam scripts with relevant staff. Students are entitled to see their marked exam scripts. The arrangements for providing exam feedback should be specified in module materials.

The feedback cycle

Students require opportunities to discuss their assessments and feedback with the module teaching team. It is important, therefore, that markers 'own' their feedback and are willing to discuss it.

If students are to acquire the skills of regulating their own learning and development, they need to be able to self-assess their work. Students also need help in developing their own self-reflection on their learning.

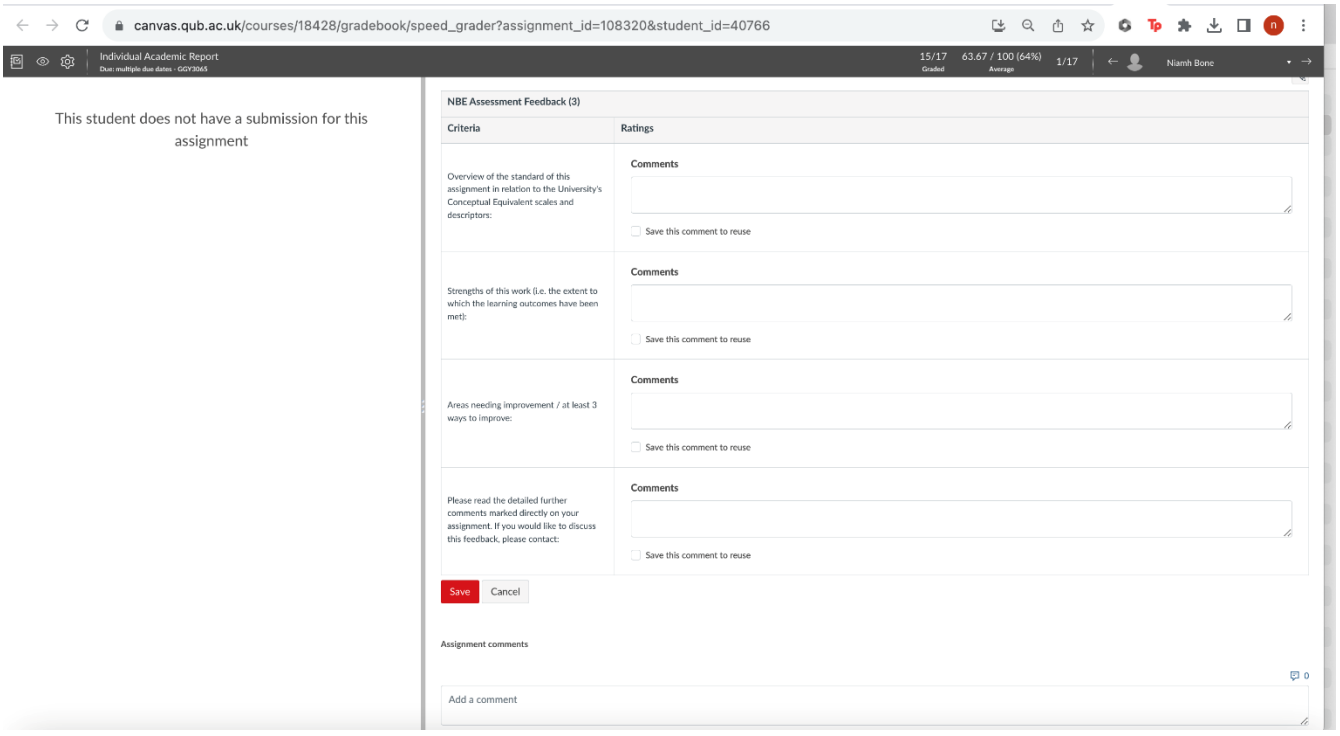
Providing students with opportunities to engage with self-assessment in a formal manner is likely to develop more autonomous learners and lead to greater engagement with criteria and standards. Questions that support learners with this include:



Some ways to do this include:

- ask students to complete a self-assessment proforma (using the assessment criteria) – this may include an estimate of the mark (your feedback would identify why there are gaps between the student's view and yours);
- ask students to indicate the parts of their work which they feel are strengths and weaknesses;
- a combination of the two above;
- confidence-based marking for MCQs – students have to rate how confident they are that their chosen answer is correct on a scale of 1-3. The mark is weighted according to their confidence level.
- peer assessment provides an opportunity for students to engage with the criteria and standards on someone else's work and then apply that to their own.
- students keep a reflective journal or portfolio through the course.
- students include how they have responded to earlier feedback.
- online objective tests and quizzes for self-testing.

Asking students to reflect upon their feedback when undertaking their next assignment can be useful. Proformas can be used as a compulsory part of submission that reflects what learning they have taken from their previous assignment into the next one. Examples from Biological Sciences are included in **Appendix 5.** Another example is provided below from the School of Natural and Built Environment:



What are the characteristics of good feedback?

Good feedback focuses on the assignment criteria and therefore the learning outcomes of any given module. It should encourage the learner to continue their development by providing a focus on the assessment task and drawing upon what the learner has done well. The feedback will clarify the expected standard for the piece of work and will, most importantly, identify the next steps for the learner.

In other words, the feedback should indicate:

- what was done well (or not so well) and why;
- where is room for improvement and why;
- what the learner's next steps are.

Disclosure of marks

Students should receive provisional marks for assessment components of a module following internal moderation. Students should be made aware that their marks are provisional until after Exam Boards, and may go either up or down.

Reassessment

The relevant information about reassessment can be found in the University's regulations as follows:

Study Regulations for Undergraduate Students, 5.4 Awarding Credit and Resit Requirements

Study Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Programmes, 5.4 Awarding Credit and Resit Requirements

The role of the External Examiner

The University appoints external examiners for all award-bearing courses. The QAA's UK Quality Code Advice and Guidance: Assessment (2018) makes the following observations about the External Examiners' process:

The provider uses external expertise, assessment and classification processes that are reliable, fair and transparent. In practice, this means that providers operate processes for assessment and classification that ensure student achievement is measured reliably, fairly and transparently. They use external examiners for independent confirmation that their processes have been applied appropriately, and ensure qualifications have been awarded equitably and in accordance with national standards. Providers also make sure assessment policies and procedures are published and readily accessible to all stakeholders

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The engagement of an external examiner with the relevant professional expertise and experience in higher education provides assurance to the provider and other stakeholders that the academic standards and quality achieved are in accordance with national qualification frameworks and other requirements such as Characteristic Statements and Subject Benchmark Statements. An external examiner can also provide impartial and independent confirmation that the provider's processes have been followed and that the assessment and classification processes are fair, reliable, and transparent.

External Examiners are an important element in the ongoing monitoring of programmes. A key aspect of their role is the assurance of standards and processes. The role also includes the analysis of data and reporting. Degree-awarding bodies consider the feedback provided by External Examiners and report on it. Providers and degree-awarding bodies respond to this peer feedback, as well as identify and action any areas of enhancement.

The External Examiner should *submit an annual report that:*

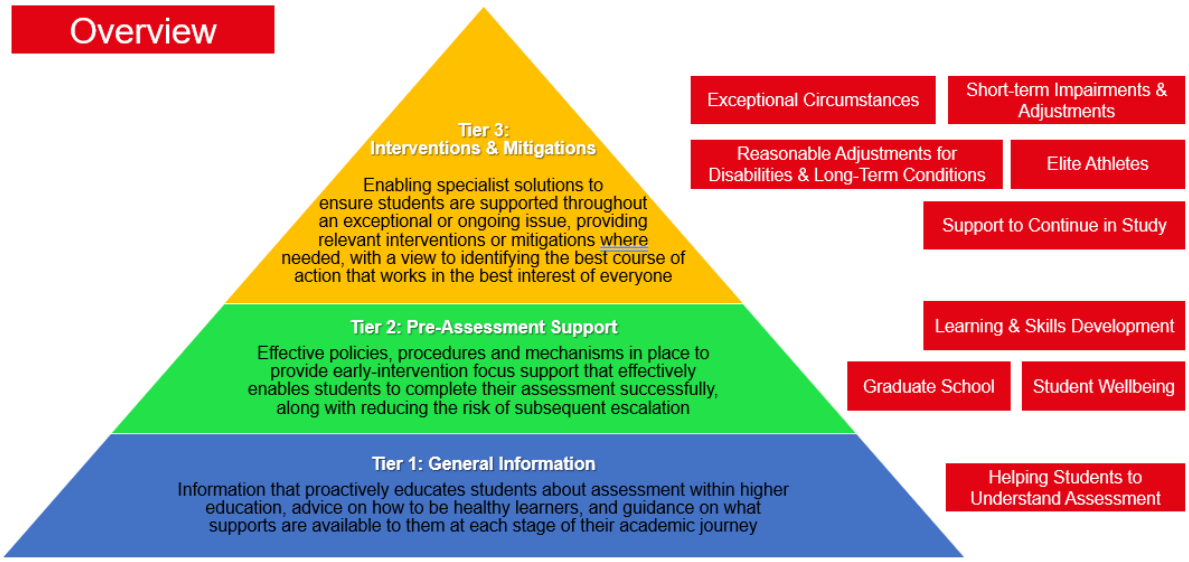
- provides confirmation that sufficient evidence was received to enable the role to be fulfilled;

- states whether issues raised in previous reports have been, or are being, addressed to their satisfaction;
- addresses any issues as specifically required by any relevant professional body;
- gives an overview of their term of office (on completion).

External Examiners should be provided with all documentation pertinent to the modules and programmes they are examining. It is preferable that those being considered for appointment have undertaken the Advance HE course on External Examining. Advance HE holds a database of all those who have successfully completed the course. In addition, External Examiners should attend the University for an induction. Further details on the Examinations Process are available on the Academic Affairs website.

Assessment Support Hub

The University's Assessment Support Hub launched in September 2023 and is a one-stop shop for students to access a range of information and resources to support them with their assessment at Queen's. It has been aligned to three key pillars, so that information can be tailored to students depending on individual needs and circumstances. These are: Helping Students to Understand Assessment; Pre-Assessment Support Resource; and Assessment Adjustments and Mitigations.



This site can be used as a toolkit for you to engage with students who are struggling with a particular aspect of their assessment, and help guide your conversations with them. It covers topics such as why do we assess, managing deadlines, fit to sit, marking and moderation and Boards of Examiners to get students up to speed with our assessment processes. It also signposts to key University resources such as Transition Skills and the Student Wellbeing Service, and explains how students can access adjustments and mitigations for their assessments, if needed, clarifying what process applies depending on their circumstances. So help your students to gain knowledge, grow in confidence and get support by encouraging them to explore the Assessment Support Hub.

Further Support and Guidance

The Centre for Educational Development	Dr Claire Dewhirst Head of Centre for Educational Development c.dewhirst@qub.ac.uk Alternatively, you can contact the Centre directly: ced@qub.ac.uk 028 9097 2420
Academic Affairs	Dr Michelle Spence Head of Academic Affairs m.spence@qub.ac.uk Alternatively, you can contact Academic Affairs directly: qar@qub.ac.uk 028 9097 3006
Exams Office	General exam enquiries can be made by contacting the Exams Office at: exams@qub.ac.uk Enquiries regarding students who require additional support when undertaking formal examinations should be sent to: greenroom@qub.ac.uk.

Appendix 1 Conceptual Equivalents Scale/Descriptors Guidance

Details of the University's Conceptual Equivalents scale are available on the Academic Affairs website.

Appendix 2 Instructions for Item Writing and Test Setup

Multiple Choice Exams in Canvas and QuestionMark (Sample Guidance from School of Nursing and Midwifery **(Paddy Haughian 2019)**)

Summative MCQ Examinations

In the creation of 'Multiple Choice Questions' (MCQ) and the setup of summative online examinations, the following procedures **MUST** be followed at all times:

Question Writing

All multiple-choice questions used in summative tests must comply with the 30 item writing guidelines developed by Haladyna & Downing (1989) overleaf.
Additional MCQ questions must be added to item banks each year.

New questions are reviewed by the Assessment Group and External Examiner before being used in a summative examination.

Item Banks

Questions are stored in sub-folders based on course learning outcomes and difficulty level. Summative exam questions stored separately from sample/formative exam questions to preserve the integrity of the item banks.

Item Review

All MCQ questions must be reviewed by the module team **prior** to use.

Examination Setup

Questions used in any exam are selected randomly.

The number of questions asked is in proportion to the learning outcomes. A one-hour MCQ test would contain between 60 and 90 questions.
A 90-minute test would contain between 90 and 120 questions.

A member of teaching staff and IT staff will be available at the start of each online MCQ.
For all summative exams, the QAA request a University invigilator to be present.

Item Analysis (to be completed after each MCQ examination)
That an item analysis would be carried out on **all** questions are use in an examination. That questions statistics be recorded for all questions; Item difficulty, Discrimination Index and Distractor efficiency), Paddy Haughian 2019.

Glossary of Multiple-Choice Examination Terms

Items
A multiple-choice item has a stem which asks a question, describes data or presents a situation. The responses include a keyed correct response and three or four distractors or foils. The way the item is framed, and the type of response required determines whether the item is ***'recall', 'interpretation'***, or ***'problem solving'.***

Item Banks
An item bank is a term for a repository of test items that belong to a testing programme, as well as all information pertaining to those items.

Item Review
Once items have been written, an iterative process of review and revision is implemented. Generally, there are three levels of internal item review. In the first level, item writers evaluate the items drafted by their colleagues. In the second level of review, the items are reviewed again, this time by a content expert. Finally, items are reviewed for typographical and formatting issues.

Item Analysis

Item analysis is a process which examines student responses to individual test items (questions) in order to assess the quality of those items and of the test as a whole. Usually, three statistics are recorded:

Item Difficulty

For items with one correct alternative worth a single point, the item difficulty is simply the percentage of students who answer an item correctly. The item difficulty index ranges from 0 to 100; the higher the value, the easier the question.

Item Discrimination

This refers to the ability of an item to differentiate among students on the basis of how well they know the material being tested. Various hand calculation procedures have traditionally been used to compare item responses to total test scores using high and low scoring groups of students. Computerised analyses provide more accurate assessment of the discrimination power of items because they take into account responses of all students rather than just high and low scoring groups.

Distractor Analysis

This provides a measure of how well each of the incorrect options contributes to the quality of a multiple-choice item.

A Taxonomy of Item-Writing Guidelines for MCQ Writing

Guideline	**Item Writing Guidelines**
1	Use correct grammar, syntax, spelling and punctuation.
2	Avoid extraneous material in the stem or options.
3	Do not use unnecessarily complex vocabulary or jargon.
4	Avoid humour or names of famous people.
5	Only cover important material, not trivia.
6	Avoid testing student opinion.
7	Do not quote directly from a text.
8	Number question and letter options.
9	Make each item independent of other items.
10	Use a clear legible format.
11	Use both generic and brand names for medications.
12	Do not use negatively phrased questions.
13	Provide clear instructions.
14	Avoid specific determiners (always, never, all, only).
15	Avoid ‘fill in the blank’ questions.
16	Put information in the stem; avoid repeating in the options.
17	Put the problem in the stem, not the options.
18	Avoid ‘all of the above’ or ‘none of the above’.
19	Do not use combined options.
20	Arrange options in logical order (alphabetical, chronological).
21	Avoid overlapping options.
22	Make all options approximately the same length.
23	Make sure there is only one correct option.
24	All options plausible. (3 good options better than 4 weak options)
25	Avoid options that echo the stem.
26	Make incorrect options as precise as correct option.
27	Make options similar in form.
28	Write questions at the higher cognitive levels.
29	Make all content current.
30	Do not omit important content.

Adapted from Haladyna & Downing, (1989)

Appendix 3 Sample Internal Moderation Guidelines (School of Nursing and Midwifery)

Introduction and background to document

This document provides some guidance to the SN&M processes in relation to internal marking and moderation of assessments. It is primarily intended to ensure that all academic members of staff have a clear understanding of what is expected of them in relation to the quality processes surrounding assessment and examination and that these conform to the University academic standards and assessment policies. The following sections give further details about specific activities in relation to assessment, assessment management and examination boards processes.

Marking and Moderation principles

The marking and **moderation** practices adopted within the School of Nursing and Midwifery are based on the following general principles.

- all assessed work which contributes to a final award should be subject to an element of independent internal scrutiny;
- scrutiny seeks to contribute to consistency in marking standards and practices across module and programme assessments;
- seeks to ensure accuracy and fairness;
- be appropriate and acceptable to the discipline being taught;
- be suitable to the material being assessed;
- be suitable to the means of assessment being used;
- be clearly evidenced in the feedback provided to students, which should normally take the form of electronically recorded comments from markers (exceptions may include desk top written examinations or where marking methods are automated such as online MCQs (i.e., the answers are optically read). Please note that there is a separate marking and moderation scheme for OSCEs; and,
- the moderation approach chosen should be formal, recorded, published and reaffirmed or changed as part of regular programme or module reviews.

The Role of the External Examiner in relation to internal moderation.

1. Academic & Student Affairs provides specific guidance on the role of the External Examiner.
2. External Examiners, at both undergraduate and taught postgraduate level, should act as overseers of the moderation process only, and NOT as second markers themselves.
3. It is expected that External Examiners review not only draft examination papers and other types of assessments which they normally have responsibility for advising on, but also marking schemes for such assessments. Suitable marking guidance schemes must be provided for assessment on modules where moderation occurs. (Please see University guidelines from sample sizes to be sent to external examiner).

Internal Moderation

The following are criteria which should be taken into account in determining appropriate schemes of moderation:

- the nature of the material being assessed;
- whether material is qualitative or quantitative;
- whether marking requires the judgement of the examiner or merely the checking of objective fact;
- whether material is presented in essays or numerical answers;
- whether questions and answers are structured or unstructured;
- whether questions are multiple choice or open;
- whether assessment involves short, discrete questions or questions which have a wide coverage;
- the level of study of the module.

Explanation of Terms

A number of terms are often used inter-changeably which can give rise to confusion. For clarity the following definitions should be used;

- **second or double marking-** involves a first marker and a second marker marking all of student's work. There are two types **of second (double marking), blind and non- blind.** In the latter the second marker is aware of the marks/comments by the first marker;
- **cross-marking or sample second (double) marking-** involves first markers marking a number of allocated student assignments and then markers (including first markers and/or module leader) second marking across a range of samples of other first marked assignments. (See below for further detail on samples).

Internal Moderation process

Moderation takes place at the key stages of the assessment process, i.e. design of tasks and marking of assignments (including consideration of results).

Prior to commencement of the module, the module team confirms the method of assessment – to check that the method is appropriate to the learning outcomes and as agreed in the module pro-forma. Any changes to the nature of the assessment, i.e. exam to essay, must be agreed by the School Education Committee.

Considerations must be given to University and School deadlines for internal scrutiny and review by the assessment group and external examiners. Examination papers and assignment titles/guidelines must be submitted to the School assessment group for internal review.

Issues which might be considered at the early stage are:

- availability of appropriate staff to act as markers; student numbers; deadlines for submission;
- date for completion of first marking, cross marking and moderation (internal validation) prior to external validation by external examiners;

- assessment criteria;
- marking schemes model answers, use of rubrics and application of the appropriate level of QUB conceptual equivalents (Please note the University regulations stipulate that the latter should only be applied to essay type assignments/components of the module and the scale should be applied once, at the level of the assessed component of the module, and not at any subsequent stage).
- consistency across fields of assessment load and task;
- consistency with former assessments (in terms of standards).

Students should be advised that marks disclosed and feedback during the course of the year for prescribed assessments are subject to moderation by internal and where appropriate, external examiners, and as such are to be considered to be provisional until results are confirmed and ratified at the appropriate exam board.

Module leaders should agree with marking team a specified date and time for completion of first marking and internal moderation. Students should be informed as to when they will receive provisional feedback. This should normally be relayed to student at the outset of a module. (With the introduction of Grademark this system requires that a date is given for provisional feedback prior to the students' submission).

Aims of first marking process

- Learning outcomes – to check that the related learning outcomes in the assessment have been met.
- Assessment criteria – to check that all assessment criteria have been covered.
- Grades – to check that assessment grades accurately reflect the quality of student work.
- Feedback – that feedback provides a clear rationale for assessment decision and constructive advice to student on how to improve their work (feedforward).
- Cross marking and Moderation (The Queen's internal verifier reviews a sample of the assignments to confirm the marking criteria have been appropriately applied)

The key activities of cross marking & moderation process at the marking stage include:

- sampling of marked assessments (see below);
- additional marking of borderlines and fails;
- second(double) marking of dissertations, majorprojects/designs orpresentations or where there are specific professional requirements to do so;
- adjudication by another marker where there are significant differences between the marks given by two or more assessors;
- evaluation of consistency where multiple staff members have contributed to the marking;
- review of marks/academic standards across courses within a programme;
- overview of marking of assessments undertaken by particular staff groups: new staff members (both probationary and those new to the module or course);
- consideration of special circumstances which may have affected the performance of a group of students.

Sample

The Module Co-ordinator explores the range of marks, and each module leader can determine an appropriate sample of completed assessments to be cross-marked & moderated, including:

- where the marking has been conducted by a team of first markers, the sample should include assessment marked by each of the first markers;
- those that are drawn from and reflect, the whole range of marks, particularly borderlines, all firsts and fails. (A minimum 10 % of all assessments and minimum 10% from each banding). The table below gives a general guide as to the number of scripts that should be cross-marked according to the number of students;

Group Size for Cross Marking	**Sample of Scripts**
<50 students	25%
50-99 students	20%
100-200 students	15%
>200 students	10% +/=

- it is recommended that the sample of work for cross marking should be between 10% and 25 % of assessments marked as firsts, fails, each grade borderline, marks just below the lower boundary of a grade, classification. Where there is a high number within a grade banding, then consideration should be given to cross marking more than the minimum 10% within that banding;
- include a range of assessments marked by a new/inexperienced staff member;
- include at least some of the assessments which will be sent to External Examiner (Please see University guidelines for sample sizes to be sent to external examiner).

Adjusting Marks

When there is wide variation across markers it may be necessary to reconsider the whole range of marks and, as a consequence, change marks. Where there are such variations a sample of 3 assessments should be blind marked by all markers (with reasons for marks awarded). Where a marker grade varies significantly from others, then this will need to be discussed and reviewed. Various forms of adjustment may be used, provided that these are applied to the range of marks and to all relevant students, not just those in the moderation sample.

Examples of adjustment include adding/subtracting a fixed percentage to/from marks, scaling marks by a constant factor, widening or reducing the span of marks, or a combination of both.

Moderation by sampling of the cohort

This may be used where first markers are less experienced, where there are several first markers and consistency may be a problem or where unusual patterns of performance are expected or observed. It may lead to more extensive marking if problems are detected. The second marker may be the arbiter in such cases or may be responsible for alerting the module leader with overall responsibility for the module.

Resolving differences between Markers (Third Marking)

There must be a method of resolving differences between markers. These are as follows:

- iscussion and negotiation between the two markers on all differences.
- Discussion and negotiation between the markers on specified differences e.g.,for relatively large differences, fails, firsts, borderlines or differences across degree classes.
- Taking the mean of different marks: this may be done for all differences, for

relatively small differences or differences within a degree class, or where both marks are clearly above or below the pass-fail line or above or below limits for compensation. It is recommended that where differences straddle critical boundaries the differences should be settled by discussion and negotiation;

- Resort to a third marker. This should be an additional internal examiner.
- Differences between markers cannot be left unresolved.

Moderation reports

On completion of the internal moderation the module leader should complete a report to the pre- examination board. This ideally should include any concerns regarding high numbers of fails or first. Spreadsheets giving the range of marks for the module may including a bar graph or histogram allowing for visual inspection of the spread of marks. The Examination Board has ultimate responsibility for evaluating the effectiveness of the School's moderation processes as implemented at the module/programme level by considering the moderation reports and record, in the minutes that the moderation process has been properly carried out.

Appendix 4 Sample Moderation Report: School of Biological Sciences

Assessment Moderation

This document should be completed for all summative assessments prior to the feedback being issued to the students.

Module Code	**BIO1303**	**Module Title**	**Chemistry & Composition of Foods**
Module Coordinator	Dr Susan Doherty	Programme(s)	BSc/MSci FQSN and FSFS
Assessment ID (e.g. 1CWK40)		Assessment Title	Fruit Ripening Report
Primary Marker	Dr Susan Doherty	Secondary Marker / Moderator	Dr Alison Calvert
Assessment date	Submission 17/03/2020	Feedback date	23/03/2020

To be completed by the moderator(s). In the case of a criterion not being met, the moderator(s) should state what amendments/actions are required.

Total no. submissions	20	No. moderated submissions	20	All markers sampled	N/A	All failed work checked	N/A

Criterion	Y/N	Actions if required
Were the marking schemes/criteria consistently applied?		
Were the marking schemes/criteria accurately applied?		
If multiple markers were used, are marks and feedback consistent across marking team?		

Was the quality and detail of feedback appropriate?		
Did the feedback align with the mark awarded?		
Are the marks ready for release?		

I confirm that I have reviewed the marks awarded for all ~~scripts/~~CA and that

√ I agree with the marks awarded no action required

☐ Action required - see comments above

Actions & Amendments:

The module team and moderator(s) should comment on the assessment feedback and marks detailing any amendments that have been made and highlight examples of good practice.

Module team:	
Moderator:	
Module Coordinator signature	Date
Module Moderator signature	Date
Marks ready for publication?	

Appendix 5 Sample Process from School of Nursing and Midwifery of Internal Moderation of Examinations and Assessments

1. Prior to commencement of the module, the module team

- Confirm the method of assessment
- Check that the method is appropriate to the learning outcomes and as agreed in the module pro-forma
- Agree dates for completion of first marking, cross marking and completion internal validation prior to external validation by external examiner and ratification at exam board.
- Agree dates for provisional release via Grademark of feedback and non-ratified marks on assignments. Students should normally be informed at the outset of a module as to when they will receive provisional unratified feedback.
- Agree marking criteria- Marking schemes model answers, use of rubrics and application of the appropriate level of QUB conceptual equivalents (Please note University regulations stipulate that latter should only be applied to essay type assignments/components of the module and the scale should be applied once, at the level of the assessed component of the module, and not at any subsequent stage).

2. Request for exam paper, +supplementary papers+ reserve and assignments sent to module co-ordinators by Admin on behalf of the Assessment Group.

3. Draft examination papers + supplementary papers + reserve and assignment titles/guidelines (with learning outcomes) to be forwarded by module co-ordinators to Admin for collation on behalf of the Assessment Group as per date requested.

4. Feedback from Assessment Group to module co-ordinators. Module co-ordinators to amend papers etc, if necessary, following Assessment Group feedback, and forward to relevant Admin person (undergraduate or post-graduate). Admin staff forward exam papers to external examiner.

5. External Examiners to return comments to School with any recommended changes/ comments to relevant Admin staff. Admin staff to forward to module co-ordinators.

6. Module Co-ordinators/team amend papers, if required following External

Examiner comments and forward final examination papers to Admin. Admin to upload to QuietMan (university electronic system) as per **University deadline for uploading papers.**

7. First marking process Module co-coordinator allocates sample of students' submitted work to team members for first marking. First marker to check that assessment grades accurately reflect the quality of student work. Feedback provides a clear rationale for assessment decisions and constructive advice to student on how to improve their work (Feedforward). Exceptions may include desk top written examinations or where marking methods are automated such as online MCQ's (i.e., the answers are optically read).

8. Second (Double) Marking (Postgraduate or professional requirements) Second (double) marking should be undertaken of dissertations, major projects/designs or presentations or where there are specific professional requirements to do so.

9. Cross marking (Second sample marking) Cross marking (Undergraduate) Module leader determines an appropriate sample of assessments/ examination papers to be **sample cross marked** including:

- Where the first marking has been conducted by a team of first markers, the sample should include assessment/examination marked by each of the first markers.
- Those that are drawn from and reflect, the whole range of marks, particularly borderlines, all firsts and fails. (A minimum 10 % of all assessments and minimum 10% from each banding). Please see the SNAM moderation guideline document which gives a general guide as to the number of scripts that should be cross marked according to the number of students.
- It is recommended that the sample of work for cross marking should be between 10% and 25 % of assessments/examinations marked as firsts, fails, each grade borderline, marks just below the lower boundary of a grade, classification. Where there is a high number within a grade banding then consideration should be given to cross marking more than the minimum 10% within that banding
- Include a range of assessments/examination marked by a new/inexperienced staff member.
- Include at least some of the assessments which will be sent to External

Examiner (Please see university guidelines for sample sizes to be sent to external examiner).

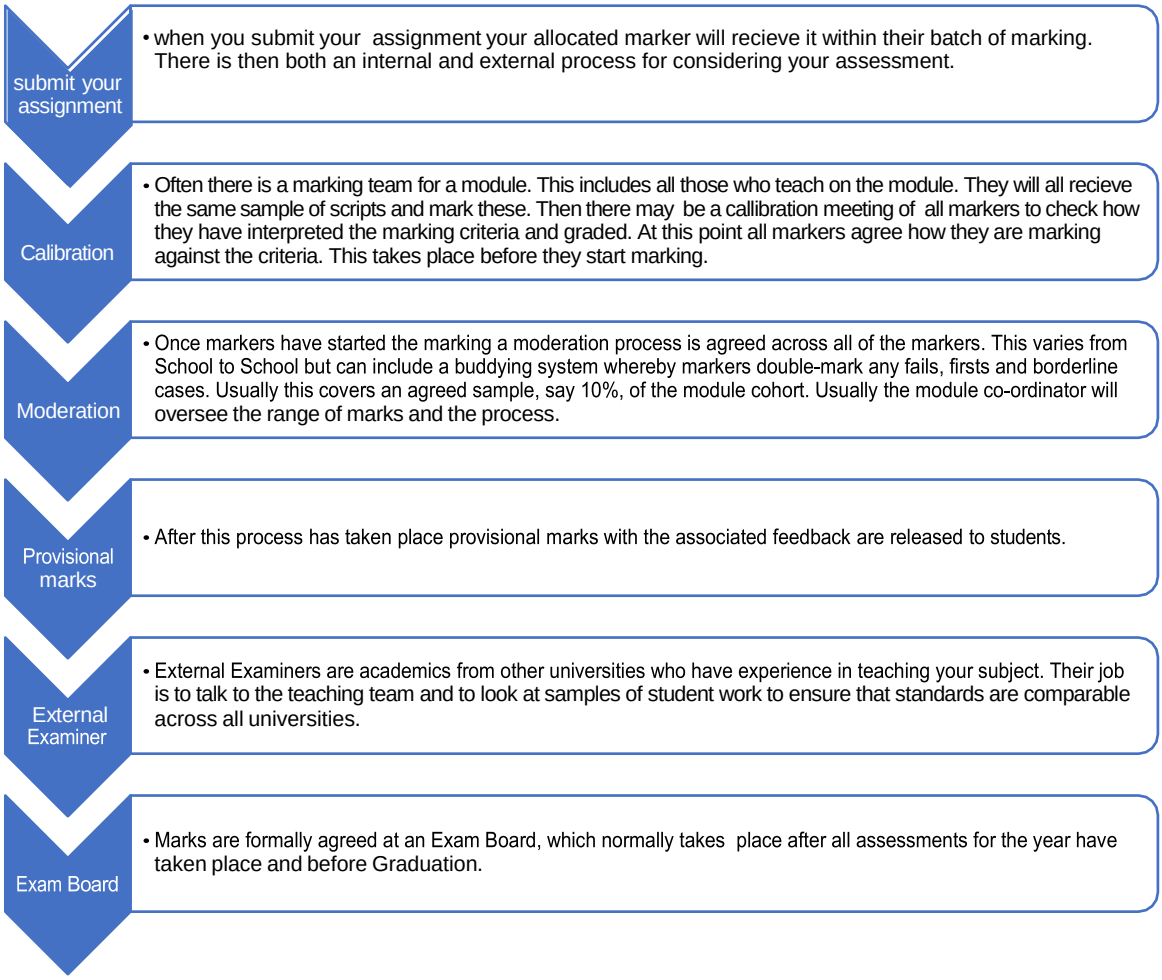
- Adjudication should be undertaken by another marker/or module leader where there are significant differences between the marks given by two or more markers.
- Please refer to the SNAM Moderation Guidelines process document regarding Adjusting Marks, Resolving differences between Markers (Third Marking) and Moderation by sampling of the cohort.

10. On completion of the internal moderation (within the agreed timeframe) the module leader should inform the relevant administration person that the internal marking process has been completed. The administration staff will inform therelevant external examiner and send sample examination papers or guide them on how to access marked assessments such as via Grademark.

11. **Moderation reports.** On completion of the internal moderation the module leader should report to the pre-examination board. This ideally should include any concerns regarding high numbers of fails or first. Spreadsheets giving the range of marks for the module may include a bar graph or histogram allowing for visual inspection of the spread of marks. The Examination Board has ultimate responsibility for evaluating the effectiveness of the School's moderation processes as implemented at the module/programme level by considering the moderation reports and record in the minutes that the moderation process has been properly carried out.

Appendix 6 Information for students about assessment processes

When you submit your assessments a number of processes take place before you receive your marks and feedback. This is to ensure that your mark is fair. Your module handbook will outline the relevant processes that are followed for your assessments.



Appendix 7 Submission Sheet including Reflection on Previous Feedback

BIO 1303 Chemistry & Composition of Foods

Reflection on your formative feedback from the Meat WHC report & its impact on your Fruit ripening report submission

Q 1. In her feedback, what did Dr Calvert identify you did well in the Meat report?

The introduction and aims of the report were good and Dr Calvert like the use of images used in the report to back up the findings online. There was a good attempt to discussing the results and applying relevant theory to back up these discussion points. The comments made about the method and ways to improve it were good.

Q2. Reading through both the feedback comment box plus any comments Dr Calvert made in the body of your report, what did she advise you needed to improve on in order to secure a higher mark next time? (Please write this is your own words).

The aims of the experiment were to be placed into my own words and needed to make sure that when referencing the documents available in canvas to make sure that they are done correctly. I had to make sure that in future reports all of the tables have the proper headings and table numbers. I was to make comments on other potential methods for meat quality and preservations. The use of more external sources were to be used and this would help back up my discussion.

Q3. Taking all of this feedback on board, please explain how you have addressed these suggested improvements in the fruit ripening report?

The first step I took was to elaborate on the aims and put them into paragraph form so that they flow better. The use of images was also placed in this experiment as Dr Calvert saw this as useful to the report. More external sources have been used in this report and the referencing for the document used from canvas has been altered and hopefully is right this time. I have also included some information about why prolonging fruit shelf life with the use of low temperatures is good for supermarkets and trading which was a point Dr Calvert pointed out would be helpful in providing information around the experiment carried out.

Appendix 8 MSc Psychological Science (Conversion)
Queen's University Belfast Thesis Rubric

In each section (Introduction etc) please highlight the elements that best describe the thesis in bold font (I selected a few as an example in the introduction). These could be from different mark bands. The box to the far right of each description allows for a section mark, comments and feedback. The five sections are equally weighted.

Student name: Marker Name:

Supervisor? ☐

	Fail (0-49)	Pass (50-69)	Distinction (70+)	Section mark, comments and feedback
Introduction	**Little or no engagement with the literature or critique of previous research.** Provides vague descriptions of context of problem and does not situate it in larger context. No evidence for originality and critical judgement **Statement of the aim of the study, research question(s) or hypothesis(es) not given or given very ineffectively.**	Literature review demonstrates a good understanding of the literature. **Context of the problem is defined.** **Some evidence for originality and critical judgement** Statement of the aim of the study, research question(s) or hypothesis(es) are provided.	Literature review covers the relevant literature in depth and beyond what is expected from an average thesis. Context of the problem is defined exceptionally well. Clear evidence of independence of thought and originality Statement of the aim of the study, research question(s) or hypothesis(es) exceptionally well-explained and emerges from the reviewed literature.	e.g. 54, Add notes here

Methods	No reference to type of method used, or explanation unclear or misleading Unable to identify exact participants nor give adequate reason for their selection to participate in the study. Describes no procedures used to conduct the study for sample recruitment, informed consent, maintaining data. Describes no details of the protocols and steps taken during data collection, or clear misdescription. Many questions remain about the procedures and protocols and the rationales for any actions. Vague or no reference to the data collection instruments.	Describes whether research is qualitative or quantitative or mixed methods and provides adequate justification for selection of type in relation to research problem and research questions. Identifies participants in the study and provides rationale for their selection; describes sampling methods. Describes most of the procedures used to conduct the study for sample recruitment, informed consent, maintaining data. Describes most of the details of the protocols and steps taken during data collection. Describes the data collection instruments.	Describes whether research is qualitative or quantitative or mixed methods and defines type. Provides exceptionally clear justification for selection of type in relation to research problem and research questions. Clearly identifies participants in the study and provides compelling rationale for their selection; describes sampling methods concisely and clearly. Clearly describes the procedures used to conduct the study for sample recruitment, informed consent, maintaining data. Describes the step-by-step details of the protocols and steps taken during data collection. Fully describes the data collection instruments. Includes persuasive rationale for the selection and format of	

	Vague or no description of data analysis procedures. Qual: Does not include a reflexivity statement and discuss on the influence of researcher in the research process.	Describes data analysis procedures, including detailed coding methods and statistical analysis, if appropriate. Qual: Includes a researcher positionality/ reflexivity statement recognising previous assumptions and its influence in the qualitative process	these instruments in reference to other choices, and includes citations for all instruments. Clearly describes steps of data analysis procedures, including details of coding methods and statistical analysis, if appropriate. Qual: Includes a clear Researcher positionality/reflexivity statement drawing on previous knowledge or experience on the topic, how that might have impacted data collection and analysis, and how the researcher reduced impartiality in data analysis.	
Results	Inappropriate analysis of data, not connected to research question and purpose Inaccessible and confusing presentation of results; very limited variety of charts, table or data displays included. Analyses are not appropriate to assess	Appropriate analysis of data, connected to research question and purpose. Accessible and understandable presentation of results; variety of charts, table or data displays included where appropriate.	Appropriate analysis of data, clearly connected to research question and purpose. Easily accessible and clearly understandable presentation of results; variety of charts, table or data displays included where appropriate. Findings interpreted correctly and directly	

	research questions/hypotheses Qual: Themes are not developed and simply summarise what participants say in relation to each question.	Findings reported correctly, supported by evidence and address research questions. Qual: Themes are well-developed and analytical claims are evidenced by relevant quotations. Themes are analytical and move beyond description. There is coherence within themes and evidence of how themes are developed.	supported by evidence and clearly address research questions. Qual: Themes are not limited to data collection questions and evidence thoughtful, reflective analytic work that develops and interprets patterns. Themes cohere and analytic claims are well-illustrated with relevant data extracts.	
Discussion	No re-introduction to purpose of the study including research question and/or hypothesis. Limited or no discussion of major findings/outcomes and lack of engagement with the relevant literature. Presentation is not accurate or engaging	Re-introduces purpose of the study including research problem and question; transition to conclusion included. Discussion of major findings/outcomes. Conclusions/summaries are mostly appropriate and linked to findings/outcomes. Presentation is accurate, engaging and situated in larger context. Findings related to research literature or theory where appropriate.	Clearly and succinctly re-introduces purpose of the study including research problem and question; smooth transition to reporting the main finding(s) included. Clear and in-depth discussion of major findings/outcomes using the relevant literature. Presentation is accurate, exceptionally engaging and/orthought provoking and situated in larger context. Findings skilfully related	

	Limitations and recommendations for future research are not included.	Limitations and Recommendations for future research are appropriate and linked to findings/outcomes. Implications for policy/practice included.	to research literature and theory where appropriate. Limitations and suggestions for future research are particularly insightful, appropriate and linked to findings/outcomes. Implications linked with policy/practice included.	
Presentation	May attempt to use organisational structures but inconsistent use of headings, transitions between chapters leads to disorganized paper. Difficult for reader to follow. Makes frequent errors in sentence and paragraph structure, grammar, punctuation and/or spelling that interferes with comprehension. Does not use APA style and lack of citations interferes with comprehension. Reference list is inaccurate in terms of format, references are missing.	Consistently uses organizational structures (introduction, headings for each core area with clear transitions, sequenced material within the body, and conclusion) within the paper Makes minor errors in sentence and paragraph structure, grammar, punctuation, and/or spelling that do not impede understanding. Writes in the past tense. Generally uses correct APA style in text citations and references	Skilfully uses organizational structures (introduction, headings for each core area with clear transitions, sequenced material within the body, and conclusion) within the paper Demonstrates detailed attention to language including sentence and paragraph structure, grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Writes in the past tense. Consistently uses correct APA style in text citations and references	

		Reference list appears to largely accurately reflect in-text citations	Reference list appears to accurately reflect in-text citations	
Overall award:				
Overall feedback:				

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