The Assessment Cycle

This assessment cycle covers all UWE taught curriculum, including provision delivered by Collaborative Partners.

It is designed to ensure that we meet the requirements Part A6 of the QAA Quality Code: *"Higher education providers ensure the assessment of students is robust, valid and reliable and that the award of qualifications and credit are based on the achievement of the intended learning outcomes."*

For an introduction to the purposes of assessment see QAA Quality Code Chapter B6 which explains that assessment (and particularly feedback) forms part of the learning process dealt with in Chapter B3 of the Quality Code, as well as being the means by which academic staff form judgements about the extent to which students have met the intended learning outcomes. It also explains the concept of "assessment literacy" and how that should be developed in students.

Implementation

This policy will be phased in from 2014/15 with full adoption expected from 2015/16. As will be seen below, 2014/15 implementation relates to those aspects which should not represent any significant departure from current practice in terms of marking and moderation practice. Changes to curriculum design, assessment setting and annual monitoring will be implemented for new programmes which are approved in 2014/15 and more generally in 2015/16.

Stage of cycle	Details	Implementation date Items for **implementation in 2016/17 are in bold**	Progress as of 2015/2016
Stage 1	**Curriculum Design** 1. Module specification assessment strategy sets out clearly how the assessment will enable demonstration of the learning outcomes 2. An "**assessment *for* learning**" approach will use a strategy which links with the learning and teaching strategy to facilitate the process	1. Current position. 2. Current position to be more fully supported by Learning for All Hub.	

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	of reaching the outcomes rather than being merely after the event measurement 3. Assessment strategies should (a) take account of the diversity of the student body (b) "design out" plagiarism (c) take a programme level holistic view of the assessment experience of students (including a range of assessment types and opportunities for formative feedback) 4. Timings of assessment, type and feedback to be considered at curriculum approval stage at a programme level (including any consequent resourcing issues). To be supported by a programme level assessment calendar within the design and consultation document.	3. Current position. **4. For new programme approvals in 2016/17.**	**4.LTSEC have agreed that the calendar would be located within the design and consultation document for new programme approvals from September 2016. It has also been agreed by ASQCs and LTSEC that Programme Leaders would have oversight of the calendar, which would roll over annually unless a change was proposed. Each Faculty ASQC would continue to develop a Faculty process for oversight and approval of changes, and an additional question would be added to the annual programme report to facilitate consideration of the assessment timings calendar from September 2016.**
Stage 2	**Assessment setting**	2015/16	

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	1. **Internal peer scrutiny** process within field, in accordance with Faculty processes agreed by each Faculty's ASQC (which will also have oversight of this process to ensure it is meeting expectations) of draft assessments (coursework briefs, projectguidelines/draft assessment tools and examination) – evidence of scrutiny to be captured for audit trail. 2. **Assessment brief** minimum requirements i.e. **assessment criteria, marking criteria (an explanation of the criteria to which the work will be marked),** contribution to the module mark, submission details, expected feedback date (within 20 working days), link to word count policy and other relevant policies (e.g. Harvard referencing) 3. **External examiner scrutiny** of examination questions and, where possible, draft coursework briefs (see indicator 3, B7 QAA Code). Minimum requirement in relation to draft coursework is a conversation with the external examiner at field board time of any proposed differences in approach (i.e. assignment questions changing dramatically) for the following year. Involvement of external examiner in assessment setting to be captured in annual module report for audit trail. 4. Beginning of academic year the Student Administration Team provide the external examiner with information about timings and board dates 5. For Collaborative Provision – the timings and requirements may differ depending on the agreed assessment calendar for that partnership, however the peer scrutiny process should still be evidenced consistently. The programme Link Tutor should have oversight of a staged process of delegation according to the development of the partnership.	1.ASQCs have confirmed that internal processes which consider stages 2.1 and 2.2 are now in place. Audit trail - SAT team have introduced a new SharePoint system to monitor the sending of draft examinations to External Examiners. This should also be captured on the standard moderation form. 5.This is now part of the Partner Operation Agreement	**3. An informal process for the sending out/scrutiny of draft coursework questions is to be considered.**
Stage 3	**Module "Handbooks" (Blackboard)** 1. Assessment information to include submission and feedback dates (20 working days from submission), contribution toward module mark, expected number of hours' worth of work, method of submission, assessment criteria (for all types of assessment) 2. Information on **type of feedback (formative/summative)** provided throughout the module	2015-16	

	3. *(see QAA Code B6, indicator 6 on promoting assessment literacy in students)* 4. Inclusion of reference to UWE policies with regard to Reasonable Adjustments		
Stage 4	**Submission** Student completes and submits assessment/takes exam/does presentation etc.		
Stage 5	**A. Element and Component Marking (internal) - Guiding principles** The purpose of these processes is to ensure that marks appropriately reflect the standard achieved (a particular issue around borderlines) and are consistent across the cohort of students. "*Processes for marking assessments and for moderating marks are clearly articulated and consistently operated by those involved in the assessment process.*" *(from QAA Code B6 indicator 13)* • In all instances, including collaborative provision, Internal marking should be recorded and evidenced consistently for audit trail purposes and for the benefit of successor module leaders and external examiners • New markers should be mentored by an experienced marker • A presentation which counts for more than one quarter of the total assessment weighting of a module shall be assessed by more than one member of staff. Presentations, where possible, should be recorded • **Samples - 10% of the cohort scripts for each module run at all levels (including non modular programmes) by each first marker with a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 12 ensuring a representative spread from the lower, mid and high range of marks, including a sample of borderline marks i.e. For Levels 0-3, the sample should include work at the 35, 40, 50, 60 and 70**	2014-15	The External Examiner report now asks for judgement ratings and commentary regarding whether marking criteria and moderation processes were transparent and sound, and met the requirements as set out in the Assessment Cycle Policy. In the 2014-15 annual thematic review, it was recommended that further communications from SAT and LTET be sent to highlight this policy more clearly to EE's.

	boundaries, and for Level M it should include work at the 40, 50, 60 and 70 boundaries. *Module run – where the same assessment questions and same markers are being used for different module runs then appropriate marking can be assured through the initial run.* • An exception for practical reasons to internal marking processes includes the practice component of professional practice modules.		
	B. Which internal marking process is appropriate? 1. **Students are all doing a different assessment -** Where each member of a module cohort is doing a different piece of work (e.g. dissertation): **Process A (double blind marking)** 2. **Students are all doing the same assessment (individual first marker) –** The same assessment being completed by each member of cohort, all first marked by same marker: **Process B (Second Sample Marking)** 3. **Students are all doing the same assessment (team of first markers) –** The same assessment being completed by each member of cohort, first marking by team of markers: either **Process C (pre-standardisation)** or **Process D (Team Second Sample Marking)** 4. **Collaborative Provision** - as agreed in the operating agreement for the provision which in the case of a franchise would follow the same UWE procedures. 5. **Marked by computer –** computer based assessment.	2014-15 for processes A&B **2016/17 for processes C&D** The language used may be different and online multi-media (i.e. "talking heads") will be made available to assist with translating current practice into this language.	As above, the question within the External Examiners report has been re-worded. **To note that there are still differences in supporting this within the online marking environment. ITS confirmed that the business case and technical impact assessment which were completed within 2015/16 are currently with the Enterprise Architects to take this forward.** An online video is available on the policy website to help translate the policy.

	C. Internal Marking Processes **A - Double blind marking:** first marking by two individual people of each piece of work (can happen at same time where submission is electronic) followed by Marks reconciliation/ standardisation to agree marks – might include a third marker in case of dispute **B - Second Sample Marking:** Work from across the grade range to be sampled for each module. If sample adjusted, adjust the whole cohort appropriately (sampling might identify a problem across the whole range of marks or just in particular areas of range). If sampling identifies inconsistency in marking, whole cohort needs to be reconsidered. **C – Team pre-standardisation:** team pre-marking exercise using sample of assessments to set standards. Module leader to check that profiles of marks from team members appear to be consistent (*or that discrepancies can be explained and rationalised and this is evidenced*). **D - Team Second Sample Marking –** first marking followed by sampling across the range for each marker by one sample marker (probably the module leader). If sample adjusted for any marker, adjust for all work marked by that marker appropriately (sampling might identify a problem across the whole range of marks or just in particular areas of range). If sampling identifies inconsistency in marking, all work marked by that marker to be reconsidered by the module leader.	2014-15 for processes A&B **2016/17 for processes C&D - tools will be developed. Modules currently using process C & D should continue to do so – in most cases this should, according to information from the consultation stage, reflect current practice.** The language used may be different and online multi-media (i.e. "talking heads") will be made available to assist with translating current practice into this language.	As above, the question within the External Examiners report has been re-worded. **To note the above regarding the changes required to the online marking environment.** An online video is available on the policy website to help translate the policy.

Stage 6	**Element and Component Moderation (***see paragraph on sampling work within indicator 13, B7 QAA code)*
	    1. Sample moderation to be completed by an external examiner. Sample to be sent to examiner should be taken from the assessments that have been 2nd marked and consist of **10% of the cohort scripts for each module run at all levels (including non modular programmes) with a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 12 ensuring a representative spread from the lower, mid and high range of marks, including a sample of borderline marks i.e. For Levels 0-3, the sample should include work at the 35, 40, 50, 60 and 70 boundaries, and for Level M it should include work at the 40, 50, 60 and 70 boundaries.**
	    2. Where the external examiner also has oversight of collaborative provision they should also receive a sample as determined
		2014-15
		
		The language used may be different and online multi-media (i.e. "talking heads") will be made available to assist with translating current practice into this language.
			As above, the question within the External Examiners report has been re-worded**.**
			
			An online video is available on the policy website to help translate the policy.

	above. The collaborative provision sample should be clearly identified to the External Examiners. 3. The following also to be made available to external examiners: module handbook, appropriate evidence of moderation, assessment/exam, marking criteria, draft module report		**There is a project currently in place to consider how and when module reports will be sent to External Examiners.**
Stage 7	**Agreeing the module aggregate** (for modules with more than more component of assessment) *QAA Code B6 Indicator 13 …"the need is addressed for clear guidance about how borderline marks or grades are defined and treated, both in individual assessments and in overall results for a module.."* 1. The aggregate of the different assessment components for the module needs to be agreed prior to the Field Board 2. Where the aggregate mark ends up as a borderline (see definition section), module leader may need to consider whether this mark is the correct reflection of overall demonstration of how learning outcomes have been met (this is more likely to be an issue where the nature of the assessment makes accuracy to within 1% difficult) 3. Should be an audit trail via Field Board SharePoint checker confirming that borderline marks have been considered (or that not appropriate to do so) and, where changed, rationale noted (there is no requirement that "9s" will be changed. 4. External examiners should be provided with final set of marks as signed off in SharePoint (including comments about changes)	2014-15	This is managed on the SharePoint tracker.
Stage 8	**Annual Monitoring and Curriculum Design** Assessment outcomes and external examiner reports will feed into **annual monitoring** and review and inform curriculum design and assessment setting for the future. Module and Programme annual reporting to ensure consideration of appropriate assessment strategy and to encourage this to be the first place to initiate a change. This will include capturing discussions with the external examiner.	2014/15	Introduced within the annual monitoring report pro-formas.

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