

## Assessment, Marking & Feedback Policy

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**Organisation:** Falmouth University

**Applies to:** Staff & Students

**Policy Owned by:** Deputy Vice-Chancellor

**Required Consultees:** Heads of Subject, Faculty Deans, Student Records & Achievement, Quality Assurance & Enhancement

**Approved by:** Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee

**Date Approved:** 20 May 2026

**Review Date:** 19 May 2027

## Assessment, Marking & Feedback Policy

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### 1 Key Facts

| No. | Clause(s) | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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| 1   | 3.1       | Summative assessment requirements (including assessment briefs, learning outcomes, assessment criteria and deadlines) shall be defined, approved and communicated to all students prior to the start of a module.                                                                 |
| 2   | 4.3       | Students should have the opportunity to undertake formative assessment at a suitably early point in their studies.                                                                                                                                                                |
| 3   | 5.1       | In designing assessment, the University promotes an inclusive approach with the aim of reducing the need for subsequent individual reasonable adjustments.                                                                                                                        |
| 4   | 6.5       | It is the responsibility of students to ensure that assessments submitted meet the published format, are submitted to the correct location and are accessible to staff responsible for marking.                                                                                   |
| 5   | 7.1       | All module assessments and learning outcomes shall be presented in an accessible and clear fashion to students and supported, where necessary, with additional contextual information to ensure that assessment practices are transparent.                                        |
| 6   | 8.1       | Students should receive feedback on summative assessments at the earliest opportunity; this should normally be within 3 calendar weeks of the student's assessment deadline (excluding University breaks), and where possible, prior to the commencement of the next study block. |

### 2 Purpose

- 2.1 This policy sets out the principles and requirements governing assessment, marking, moderation and feedback to ensure consistency, fairness, inclusivity and academic standards across the University.
- 2.2 Course and module assessment strategies support students' understanding of their learning processes and are designed to foster a deep, reflective approach to learning. The University promotes autonomous learning and self-evaluation as vital elements within the overall learning process.
- 2.3 Assessment enables students to evidence achievement of a module's learning outcomes through a range of assessment modes. These may include, but are not limited to, portfolios, essays, journals, course work, business plans, artefacts, exhibitions and events. These assessments are the vehicles for demonstrating attainment of the learning outcomes.

### 3 Summative Assessment

- 3.1 Summative assessment evaluates student learning by comparing it against learning outcomes and assessment criteria. It provides the basis of module results, and progression and award decisions.
- 3.2 Each module shall have its own discrete summative assessment which allows students to demonstrate attainment of the module learning outcomes.

- 3.3 Summative assessment requirements (including assessment briefs, learning outcomes, assessment criteria and deadlines) shall be defined, approved and communicated to all students prior to the start of a module.
- 3.4 Summative assessment briefs shall be made available to External Examiners sufficient to ensure quality and standards are maintained.
- 3.5 Across each stage of study, a course should offer a range of different assessment modes and methods to better ensure that students are given a diverse range of opportunities to demonstrate learning, offer appropriate academic challenge and demonstrate that learning outcomes have been reproducibly and properly tested.
- 3.6 Students should have a clear understanding of the equity of effort/equivalency of different modes of assessment, so it is clear where an assessment is not written (with a word limit), what the equivalent parameters of another assessment mode are for equity and clarity. This includes alternative assessment modes.
- 3.7 Assessment in a module shall not make assumptions about concurrent learning on other modules, and an assessment shall not normally be shared across different modules.
- 3.8 All students studying a module should share a common (equivalent) assessment experience. Students on a module will normally undertake the same set of assessments regardless of whether they are enrolled on the same course or drawn from two or more courses.
- 3.9 Multiple elements of assessment in a module should be used sparingly. Where these are unavoidable, they should ideally be equally weighted and ideally, avoid assessing the same learning outcome.
- 3.10 After summative assessment requirements have been published to students, they may not be modified in-year without the approval of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee (LTQC). In-year changes to assessment will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. Once agreed by LTQC, changes must be communicated in writing to all students, clearly stating the rationale for any change.

## **4 Formative Assessment**

- 4.1 Formative assessment assists students by providing early feedback to help them to improve their learning, building on their strengths and targeting weaknesses that require closer attention. It does not contribute directly to the module result, or to progression and award decisions.
- 4.2 Engagement with formative feedback enables students to fully participate in learning dialogue with their tutors and reflect on their needs as a learner.
- 4.3 Students should have the opportunity to undertake formative assessment at a suitably early point in their studies.
- 4.4 Students should have the opportunity to experience peer assessment and self-reflective learning during their studies.

- 4.5 Formative assessment is not required to be recorded centrally. However, best practice would suggest that some form of record is kept by and for the students to ensure consistency of feedback and that it is impactful and timely.

## **5 Alternative Assessment**

- 5.1 In designing assessment, the University promotes an inclusive approach with the aim of reducing the need for subsequent individual reasonable adjustments.
- 5.2 Alternative assessments are key to providing an appropriate and equivalent means for students who are unable to undertake the standard assessment due to long-term illness, disability or personal circumstance.
- 5.3 Each summative assessment should have a credible and external examiner supported alternative assessment.
- 5.4 Alternative assessments are intended as modified evaluation methods, such as written work instead of oral presentations, designed to allow students to demonstrate required knowledge without lowering academic standards and therefore, must be equivalent to the primary assessment in terms of difficulty, level and learning outcome coverage.
- 5.5 Alternative assessments are legally distinct from competence standards, which are essential, non-negotiable skills for course completion.
- 5.6 Communication with students around alternative assessment uses and arrangements should be included from the start of the module/course to aid clarity for the students around expectations.

## **6 Submission of Work**

- 6.1 The deadline and method of submission shall be defined and published prior to the commencement of a module.
- 6.2 For all assessments, students shall be required to submit via the same method, and against the same deadlines, unless an adjustment has been agreed on grounds of disability or other extenuating circumstances through a formal process.
- 6.3 All assessment submissions should be logged electronically where possible.
- 6.4 Performances and work assessed through observation should be recorded to facilitate assessment.
- 6.5 It is the responsibility of students to ensure that assessments submitted meet the published format, are submitted to the correct location and are accessible to staff responsible for marking.

## **7 Marking and Moderation**

- 7.1 All module assessments and learning outcomes shall be presented in an accessible and clear fashion to students and supported, where necessary, with additional contextual information to ensure that assessment practices are transparent.

- 7.2 Marking criteria and expectations shall be defined and made available to all students prior to the start of a module where possible.
- 7.3 It is important there is a clear and transparent link between learning outcomes, assessment criteria and attributed student marks.
- 7.4 Assessment criteria must be used when determining the summative grades for students.
- 7.5 It is an expectation that a representative sample of summative marking will have been subject to a marker moderation activity to ensure parity. This activity supports a shared understanding and consistent application of the assessment criteria.
- 7.6 A representative sample of work (normally a minimum of 10%) shall be second marked. Ideally, that sample should include any assessments near or between grade boundaries as best practice. Where two markers diverge significantly (for example, marks straddle a grade boundary), a third marker should be used to ensure reliability.
- 7.7 There are two approaches to portfolio marking that are distinct and it is important that, from the outset, students and markers are clear which is being applied. Either a portfolio is being marked holistically (typically, one moderated mark for the entire portfolio, clearly marked against the assessment criteria) or a portfolio is marked in individual parts, with each part being marked against the relevant part of the assessment criteria, the parts summed, and the final total aggregated mark reached. Either approach is pedagogically valid but once the approach is decided, consistency and records must be maintained for reasons of clarity for the students and rigour of marking practice.
- 7.8 External Examiners shall satisfy themselves that marking standards are appropriate and aligned with HE sector expectations, and that moderation is properly conducted.

## **8 Feedback**

- 8.1 Students should receive feedback on summative assessments at the earliest opportunity; this should normally be within 3 calendar weeks of the student's assessment deadline (excluding University breaks), and where possible, prior to the commencement of the next study block.
- 8.2 Due to its character and purpose, feedback on formative assessment should be provided at the earliest opportunity.
- 8.3 Feedback should be appropriate and constructive.
- 8.4 The format of summative feedback shall be appropriate to the assessment. Feedback must not be restricted to certain types of assessment. The feedback must clearly explain how the mark/grade was arrived at, linked to the assessment criteria, and provide counselling advice on how to help students improve.
- 8.5 The University recognises the value of a range of evaluative activities to support learning and that feedback can take many forms, such as verbal, audio and/or studio-based feedback. Course teams should select the most positively impactful mode of feedback with sufficient detail to support improving student academic performance. A student should expect to

receive a variety of forms of feedback relating to their course. This must include 1:1 feedback, particularly in the earlier stages of the course.

## **9 Re-assessment**

- 9.1 Reassessed work, and work deferred due to extenuating circumstances, shall be assessed to the same standards as 'on-time' work.
- 9.2 Students shall be given clear written instructions about the requirements and deadlines for referred work.
- 9.3 All assessment elements must have an appropriate reassessment strategy that should be in place at the start of each module.
- 9.4 Where a student is required to re-submit the same piece of summative assessment for reassessment, careful consideration must be given to ensure that the reassessment remains pedagogically sound and that marking is sufficiently rigorous. Reuse of the same assessment should only occur where it can be clearly justified; where there is doubt, an alternative reassessment approach should be used.
- 9.5 Where a student is required to submit a new piece of work, or to resubmit part of an existing assessment, the following principles should be considered:
  - 9.5.1 For portfolio-based assessments (including artefacts, installations, exhibitions, and performances), it would not normally be practical or appropriate to require students to repeat the entire assessment, unless there are significant shortcomings or concerns relating to academic integrity or misconduct.
  - 9.5.2 For written assessments, such as essays, it may be appropriate to set a new (equivalent) assessment brief, particularly where there have been previous academic integrity concerns.
  - 9.5.3 For oral presentations, live recordings, or group work, reassessment should use the alternative assessment format.

## **10 Publication of Results**

- 10.1 The University shall inform students of results publication dates during the relevant study block.
- 10.2 Until formal publication, all assessment marks supplied as part of student feedback remain provisional. The University reserves the right to review and amend marks in case of material error, or when evidence of unfair practice becomes available.

## **11 Related Policies and Guidance**

11.1 [Academic Integrity Policy](#)

11.2 [Academic Regulations](#)

11.3 [Retention of Student Work Policy](#)

11.4 Staff should refer to the [Learning & Teaching intranet pages](#), specifically, Assessment, Course Design Principles and Hitchhiker's Guide to Curriculum Design, for guidance and tools to aid assessment design and implementation.