Quality System

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Policy Title

Higher Education Assessment and Feedback Policy for The Open University

Written by:	Equality Impact Assessment	Date of Policy	Date of next review
Author: Lee Phillips	Katy Dixon February 2024	June 2024	June 2026

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Higher Education Assessment and Feedback Policy for The Open University

1.0   Purpose

This policy provides a framework for effective, appropriate and fair assessment practice that promotes learning. The purposes of assessment and feedback are to:

- Promote deep learning and to engage students
- Assess the extent to which students have achieved learning outcomes
- Assure standards by demonstrating achievement consistent with recognised standards
- Help students to reflect upon feedback to evaluate and enhance personal performance and development
- Provide a basis for decisions regarding progress and award.

2.0   Scope

The Assessment and feedback Policy applies to all students undertaking taught components and programmes.

3.0   Key Definitions

Terminology	Definition
Assessment	The process of evidencing and evaluating the extent to which a learner has met the assessment learning outcomes.
Formative Assessment & Feedback	Formative assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. It does not contribute to the final mark given for the module. Instead, formative assessment contributes to learning through providing feedback. Formative feedback should indicate what is good about a piece of work and why this is good; it should also indicate what is not so good and how the work could be improved. Effective formative feedback will affect what the student and the teacher do next and improve the learner's future summative performance.
Summative Assessment	Summative assessment demonstrates the extent of a learner's success in meeting the assessment criteria used to gauge the intended learning outcomes of a module or programme, and which contributes to the final mark given for the module. Summative assessment is used to quantify achievement, to reward achievement, to provide data for selection (to the next stage in education or to employment). For all these reasons the validity and reliability of summative assessment are of the greatest importance.
Component of Assessment	A constituent part or aspect of a module's overall assessment strategy. Each component will be awarded an individual mark that will be recorded separately but aggregated to form an overall module mark. Components of assessment may be comprised of multiple elements [see below].
Element of Assessment	A constituent part of a component of assessment, for example individual aspects of a portfolio of work. Where a module employs the use of multiple elements within a component, each element will be awarded an individual mark, and these will be aggregated into a single mark for the component.
Feedback	Information given to students about the quality of their performance in an assessment.
MRAQCP	Module Results, Approvals and Qualifications Classification Panel
Unratified Feedback	Unratified feedback is feedback given to a student before the mark has been agreed through external moderation (where sampled), presented at the relevant examination board and formally ratified by MRACQP.

4.0   Core Concepts

This policy is founded on the philosophy that assessment is for learning and not just of learning. It also recognises that timely and effective feedback to students and constructive use of assessment are integral to the learning process and have a considerable influence upon what and how students

learn (see clause 7.3). In addition, this policy is underpinned by the following concepts

Validity – a valid assessment is one that assesses the stated learning outcomes of the relevant module, is set at the right academic level and is consistent with subject benchmarks, as appropriate. Validity of assessment is predominantly addressed in clause 7.1.

- **Reliability** – a reliable assessment is one in which the mark awarded would not vary significantly with different markers. The starting points for reliability is the development and communication of clear and understandable assessment criteria to students and markers (see clause 7.1), followed by the application of rigorous marking and moderation processes by appropriately qualified staff (see clause 7.2).

- **Efficiency** – this relates to ensuring that assessment workloads for students and staff are manageable and timed appropriately to support learning and minimise non-completion. This is addressed in clause 7.1.

- **Transparency** – this relates to ensuring that assessment processes and systems are clear and understandable for students, staff and external examiners. This is addressed in clause 7.2.

- **Diversity** – this relates to the use of an appropriate range of assessment strategies that meet the requirements of the discipline and the learning needs of students. This is addressed in clause 7.1.

5.0 Structure

This policy is structured into three sections.

- Assessment Design
- Assessment Standards
- Assessment Feedback

Each of the sections has principles, with supporting statements.

6.0 Policy and Development Process

6.1 This policy has been developed with due regard to the relevant sections of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. It has also drawn upon beast practice within the Higher Education sector.

7.0 Principles

7.1 Section A: Assessment Design

7.1.1 Assessments are clearly matched to learning outcomes and set an appropriate academic level:

a) Each module learning outcome will be subject to summative assessment. They will be mapped against the Programme Learning Outcomes, which have been designed in order to meet the overall Programme Aims.

b) Assessment tasks will be appropriate to the academic level of the module. During the programme development cycle, assessments within all modules are designed in accordance with The UK Quality Code. Assessment task workloads in relation to areas such as the level of study and assessment word counts (and equivalences), are subject to scrutiny and are finalised during programme validations/re-validations in accordance with The UK Quality Code. For further information, please refer to Appendix H (Assessment Load Guidance)

7.1.2 Programme assessment strategies include a range of summative methods that encourage learning and counter possible bias associated with individual assessment methods.

    a) Each module/programme assessment strategy is developed taking account of the way in which assessment/tasks integrate with each other, both within and across modules, pathways and programmes.
    b) Assessment task are designed on the basis that they are appropriate to assess the type of learning outcomes.
    c) Where appropriate, assessment tasks are work-related to ensure that graduates exit with appropriate employability skills.
    d) Where group working forms part of an assessment strategy, consideration should be given to whether marks should be awarded to individuals or to the group. The decision and way in which this is managed, should be clearly explained in the assessment strategy and communicated in all assessment briefs.

7.1.3 Assessment practices are inclusive, ensuring all students have equal opportunity to demonstrate achievement.

    a) Students will be given equal opportunity to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes and competence standards as appropriate.
    b) Where students have a confirmed disability, reasonable adjustments to assessments will be made where possible. Please see the HE Reasonable Adjustments Application Form which contains associated guidance for more information. (This document is a post enrolment document and is available within the Student Portal, from Student Services or from your programme tutor).

7.1.4 Programme assessment strategies include a range of methods/processes that encourage learning.

    a) Each programme incorporates a range of processes including oral, written and, where feasible, peer assessment and feedback.
    b) Due regard is given to the inclusion of an early formative piece of work to promote skills development in Level 4 or the transition phase between levels i.e. early in Level 5 and 6.
    c) Where appropriate, some assessment tasks are designed to encourage students to apply formative feedback (from staff or peers) to improve their performance in the next assessment.
    d) Where less familiar types of assessment are used, timely opportunities will be made available for a student to practice and to receive constructive feedback.

7.1.5 Assessment strategies and tasks promote good academic practice.

    a) Assessments will be designed with due regard to preventing academic misconduct.
    b) Students will be informed about academic misconduct and its consequences using standard information.
    c) Appropriate support for the development of good academic practice will be provided for students.
    d) Consideration will be given to how students may be more involved in the assessment process for each module/programme – e.g. self, peer, group activities, exercises to help students use assessment criteria, peer marking.

7.1.6 Assessment workloads are realistic and not over-burdensome for students and staff and are timed to support learning.

    a) Clear information regarding assessment regulations and processes will be provided to students and moderators, to promote assessment and regulatory literacy.
    b) External examiners will be provided with access to information about assessment processes.
    c) The use of elements within components of assessment (compound assessment) should not result in over-assessment within a module or programme.

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7.1.7 Assessment strategies are regularly reviewed and, where appropriate, revised.

   a) Module Tutors will reflect at the end of a module, on the appropriateness of the assessment strategy in light of student feedback, performance and external examiner comments and implement enhancements as appropriate.

Module statistics will be reviewed at the Assessment Board and where issues related to student performance are identified, an action plan will be implemented by the programme leader and Head of School.

   b) Detailed analysis of student performance data should be undertaken as part of annual programme monitoring and programme (re)validation processes, and assessment strategies adjusted, where necessary.

7.2 Section B: Assessment Standards

7.2.1 Assessment processes are transparent and clearly communicated to relevant stakeholders.

   a) Clear information regarding assessment regulations and processes will be provided to students and moderators to promote assessment and regulatory literacy.
   b) External examiners will be provided with access to information about assessment processes.
   c) For each module, timely information will be given that clearly states the purposes and methods of module assessment, assessment criteria and how and when students will receive feedback.
   d) It is recognised that there may be times when a student's circumstances are such that they cannot complete assessments to the best of their ability, are unable to attend an examination, or are unable to meet an assessment deadline due to adverse circumstances beyond their control. In such circumstances, students should refer to the Higher Education Extenuating Circumstances Policy (POL-HE-05) for more guidance and information. This can be found here: https://bacoll.ac.uk/HE

7.2.2 Clear and appropriate assessment criteria are provided for all assessment tasks.

   a) Each module assessment task has specific assessment criteria based on the module learning outcomes.
   b) Assessment criteria are developed with regard to the generic marking criteria in addition to the relevant learning outcome.
   c) Directly quoted text will **NOT** be included in the word limit.
   d) Supplementary evidence provided as Appendices will **NOT** be included in overall word count.

7.2.3 Marking and moderation practices promote consistency, reliability and objectivity.

   a) Marking and internal and external moderation processes will be carried out in accordance with the processes identified in Appendix C.

   b) External examiners will report any concerns regarding standards of assessment and also areas of good practice, to the (S)PQM and the programme team for development purposes.

   c) The College will ensure that all concerns reported by external examiners are responded to appropriately and will take any necessary actions and disseminate

   d) All assessed work will normally be retained by the College for the current Academic Year, plus three further Academic Years. The original work must be retained by the college, with photocopies given to students, on request.

7.3 Section C: Assessment Feedback

   a) All programmes will have a feedback strategy including both formative and summative feedback.
   b) Individual formal feedback is provided in written format, either via Moodle or physically, to

students on all summative assessed work.

c) Opportunities will be made available for students to discuss their feedback with a module tutor as appropriate.

d) Unratified feedback will be provided for **all first sit** summative assessments normally by 20 working days of the hand-in date.

e) Students who consider that the College has failed to carry out its duty to act fairly in the application of this HE Assessment & Feedback Policy and would like to appeal any decision made, should consult the Academic Appeals Procedure for further guidance outside of this policy. This document is available on our website here: https://bacoll.ac.uk/HE

8.0   Associated Documents

- POL-HE-05: Higher Education Extenuating Circumstances Policy
- BAC-HE-01: Academic Appeals Procedure
- HE-RA-01: HE Reasonable Adjustments Application Form

Appendix A – Assessment Approval Events

The key steps involved in assessment approval are as follows.

1. Summative assessment design and type, including the allocation of marks is the collective responsibility of the team and must be led by a subject expert. Drawing on additional expertise as required, assessments should be subject to a process of peer review to include:

   a) An appropriate scenario
   b) The clarity of the task(s)
   c) The level, difficulty and topicality of the task(s)
   d) Suitably of the time scale of assessment
   e) Relevance to and coverage of the learning outcomes being assessed
   f) Overlap with the other assessments

2. All summative assessment proposals should be subject to approval. The should normally apply to both first sit and reassessment proposals, which should both be presented at the same time.

3. Once the final format is agreed, all summative assessments should be shared with external examiners to comment on the appropriateness and standard of the summative assessment.

4. All assessment information must go to students at the beginning of the module.

5. All communications with External Examiners, including confirmation of all assessment materials, should include the HE Development Coordinator, to ensure assessment planning is monitored and regulated. Training needs may also be identified from this process.

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Appendix B1 – Generic College Undergraduate Grade Boundaries for Assessed Work

Grade Band	Level 4 (Certificate)	Level 5 (Diploma)	Level 6 (Degree)
A 85% - 100%	Exceptional work with presentation of a very high standard. There is coherence of ideas and demonstration of a thorough knowledge and understanding. Arguments are supported by wide reading with very effective use of source material and accurate referencing.	Exceptional work with presentation of the highest standard. The work contains coherent arguments and ideas. There is a detailed understanding of subject matter and critical analysis of issues/problems. Points are made clearly and concisely, always substantiated by appropriate use of source material. There is evidence of a sound ability to critically interrelate theories with examples from practice where appropriate.	Exceptional work. Presentation is logical, error free and, where appropriate, creative. There is an in-depth understanding of issues/problems and excellent critical/deep engagement with the material and concepts involved. Very skilled interpretation of data. Arguments, ideas and, where appropriate, solutions are presented coherently and fully underpinned by thorough research and reading.
B 70%-84%	Extremely good work with presentation of a high standard. There is coherence of ideas and demonstration of thorough knowledge and understanding. Arguments are supported by wide reading with appropriate use of source material and accurate referencing.	Extremely good work with presentation of a high standard. Evidence of strong knowledge and understanding together with some critical analysis and insight. Source material is used effectively to support arguments, ideas and solutions.	Extremely good work with presentation of a high standard. Demonstrates an excellent knowledge base with a clear understanding of the issues and application to practice where appropriate. There is some effective critical and analytical application of relevant research and reading.
C 55%-69%	The work is well presented and coherently structured. There is evidence of a sound knowledge and understanding of the issues with theory linked to practice, where appropriate. Most material used has been referenced/acknowledged.	Very good presentation. Sound knowledge and understanding with an emerging ability to critically engage with and apply the concepts involved linking them to practice, where appropriate. Good use of source material which supports most points clearly. Content is wholly relevant and is coherently structured.	The work is very good, logically structured and presented to a high standard. Demonstrates a strong knowledge base with a clear understanding of the issues and application to practice, where appropriate. There is some critical and analytical application of relevant research.
D 40%-54%	Presentation is acceptable but attention to structure and style is required. The content is relevant but largely descriptive. There is evidence of a reasonable level of knowledge and understanding but there is limited use of source material to support the arguments, proposals or solutions. Some links are made to practice, where appropriate.	Adequate presentation. The work is descriptive and/or lacks critical analysis, where required, but is relevant with limited through sufficient evidence of knowledge and understanding. There is some evidence of reading although arguments/proposals/solutions often lack coherence and may be unsubstantiated by relevant source material or partially flawed. Links to practice are made where appropriate.	Adequate presentation. The work displays basic knowledge and understanding of the topic but is largely descriptive. There is an attempt to bring together different ideas and concepts although this would have been strengthened by the inclusion of further key issues. The structure of the work requires attention to its coherence and logical development of content. The link between theory and practice, where appropriate, is somewhat tenuous and its development would enhance the work considerably.
E 30%-39%	The work is poorly structured and presented. Some material may be irrelevant. Content is based largely on taught elements with very litter evidence of reading around the topic and little or no reference to practice, where appropriate.	Poorly structured, incoherent and wholly descriptive work. Evidence of a very weak knowledge base with some key aspects not addressed and use of irrelevant material. Flawed use of techniques. Limited evidence of appropriate reading and no evidence of critical thought. Little reference to practice, where appropriate.	The work is poorly presented and contains numerous errors, inconsistencies and omissions with limited use of source material. The work displays a weak knowledge base and a lack of sufficient understanding of the topic. There is limited evidence of the application of theory to practice, where appropriate. It contains many unsupported statements with limited attempts to bring issues together and lacks critical analysis and reflection.

Grade Band	Level 4 (Certificate)	Level 5 (Diploma)	Level 6 (Degree)
F 15%-29%	The work is very poorly structured and presented. Much material is irrelevant. Content is based almost entirely on taught elements with very little evidence of any purposeful reading around the topic. No effective reference to practice, where appropriate. To obtain a mark of 20% the work must show evidence of a genuine attempt to engage with the assessment requirements and with the subject matter.	Very poorly structured, incoherent and wholly descriptive work. Evidence of a very weak knowledge base with many key omissions and much material irrelevant. Use of inappropriate or incorrect techniques. Very little evidence of appropriate reading and no evidence of critical thought. No links to practice, where appropriate. To obtain a mark of 20% the work must show evidence of a genuine attempt to engage with the assessment requirements and with the subject matter.	The work is very poorly presented and contains numerous serious errors, inconsistencies and omissions with little use of source material. The work displays a very weak knowledge base and a lack of sufficient understanding of the topic. There is very little evidence of the application o theory to practice, where appropriate. It contains many unsupported statements with very little attempt to bring issues together and there is a complete lack of critical analysis and reflection. To obtain a mark of 20% the work must show evidence of a genuine attempt to engage with the assessment requirements and with the subject matter.
G 0%-14%	The work is extremely poorly structured and presented. It demonstrates no real knowledge or understanding of key concepts and principles. Much material is irrelevant. No real use of supporting material. Not genuine attempt to engage with the assessment requirements and/or subject matter.	The work is extremely poorly structured and presented. It demonstrates no real knowledge or understanding of key concepts and principles. Much material is irrelevant, incorrect or omitted. No evidence of critical thought. No effective use of supporting material. No links to practice, where appropriate. Not a genuine attempt to engage with the assessment requirements and/or subject matter.	The work is extremely poorly structured and presented. It demonstrates no real knowledge or understanding of key concepts and principles. Much material is irrelevant, incorrect, inconsistent or omitted. No evidence of critical analysis and reflection. No effective use of supporting material. No application of theory to practice, where appropriate. Not a genuine attempt to engage with the assessment requirements and/or subject matter.

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Appendix B2 – Generic College Postgraduate Grade Boundaries for Assessed Work

Grade %		Descriptive terms associated with students' performance across a level	Knowledge Knowledge Relevance Understanding	Analysis Research Evidence Interpretation	Application Application Argument Evaluation	Construction Presentation Structure Referencing
Band	**%**	*What are we looking for in each column?*	*What do you know and understand?*	*How do you evidence/support this*	*What do you do with this?*	*How do you communicate this?*
Exceptional Distinction	100	Exemplary, outstanding, creative, insightful, illuminating, inspiring, authoritative, professional, exceeding expectations.	Demonstrates an **outstanding** systematic understanding, knowledge and critical awareness of contemporary approaches in psychotherapy.	**Outstanding** analysis/ interpretation demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of subject area.	An **insightful and illuminating** critical evaluation of the application of knowledge.	Information **professionally** presented/ structured and conclusions clearly communicated (to specialist and non-specialist audiences); references accurate, reliable and precise.
Very High Distinction	94					
High Distinction	87					
Mid Distinction	80	Excellent, persuasive, sophisticated, original, ambitious, meticulous, critical, innovative.	Demonstrates an **excellent** systematic understanding, knowledge and critical awareness of contemporary approaches in psychotherapy.	**Excellent** analysis/ interpretation demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of subject area.	A **sophisticated** critical evaluation of the application of knowledge.	Information **excellently** presented/ structured and conclusions clearly communicated (to specialist and non-specialist audiences); references accurate, reliable and precise.
Low Distinction	74					
High Merit	68	Very good, fluent, thorough, analytical, precise, rigorous, sustained, convincing.	Demonstrates a **very good** systematic understanding, knowledge and critical awareness of contemporary approaches in psychotherapy.	**Very good** analysis/ interpretation demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of subject area.	A **convincing** critical evaluation of the application of knowledge.	Information **precisely** presented/ structured and conclusions clearly communicated (to specialist and non-specialist audiences); references accurate and reliable.
Mid Merit	65					
Low Merit	62					
High Pass	58	Good, reasonable, clear, confident, thoughtful, accurate, careful, congruent, coherent, solid, relevant, minor deficiencies.	Demonstrates a **clear** systematic understanding, knowledge and critical awareness of contemporary approaches in psychotherapy.	**Good** analysis/ interpretation demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of subject area.	A **confident** critical evaluation of the application of knowledge.	Information **confidently/ clearly** presented/ structured and conclusions communicated (to specialist and non-specialist audiences); references accurate with only minor deficiencies.
Mid Pass	55					
Low Pass	52					
Marginal Fail	45*	Descriptive, partial, elementary, basic, mostly relevant, with deficiencies.	Demonstrates a **basic** understanding, knowledge and critical awareness of contemporary approaches in psychotherapy.	**Basic** analysis/ interpretation of subject area.	A **basic** evaluation of the application of knowledge.	Information presented/ structured and communicated in a **basic manner**; references mostly accurate but with deficiencies.
Mid+ Fail	42					
Mid Fail	40					
Fail	35	Incomplete, inadequate, inaccurate, inconsistent, contradictory, superficial, partially relevant, limited, below level.	Demonstrates a **weak** understanding, knowledge and critical awareness of contemporary approaches in psychotherapy.	**Superficial** analysis/ interpretation of subject area.	**Limited** evaluation of the application of knowledge.	Information **inadequately** presented, structured and communicated; references inaccurate and inconsistent.
Fail	30					
Fail	25	Erroneous/wrong, missing, extremely limited, irrelevant, inappropriate, insufficient, unstructured, below expectations, not systematic, poor.	Demonstrates an **extremely limited** understanding of knowledge and critical awareness of contemporary approaches in psychotherapy.	**Poor** analysis/ interpretation of subject area.	A **poor** evaluation of the application of knowledge.	Work is **unstructured; poorly** presented and communicated; referencing erroneous/missing.
Fail	10	Absent/none, lacking, formless, detrimental, incoherent, non-existent, deficient	Demonstrates an **absence** of understanding and awareness of contemporary approaches in psychotherapy.	**Incoherent** analysis/ interpretation of subject area.	A **lack** of evaluation of the application of knowledge.	Presentation and communication are **careless and deficient**; an absence of referencing.

A zero mark is awarded for either non-submission, or unfair means penalty, or submission of no academic merit.
**A 50 mark is only awarded when the mark is capped following re submission / reassessment.*

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Appendix C – Marking and Moderation Processes

The following marking and moderation processes are identified to promote consistency, reliability and objectivity, and to ensure that summative assessments have been through a defined and evidenced set of processes that demonstrate consistency of judgement and of standards for all students in any given cohort, irrespective of the number of staff involved in delivery and marking, location of students method of delivery, etc.

1.0   Definitions

| 1.1 | **Moderation** | This is an overarching term to describe the processes that take place following first marking to verify the judgement of the first marker(s). This could include double marking, concealed double marking or internal sampling, depending upon the complexity of provision. |

| 1.2 | **First Marking** | A process whereby a member of staff awards marks and produces feedback for the work of students. |

| 1.3 | **Double Marking** | A process whereby, a nominated person reviews a sample of work, including the mark allocated and feedback, with the aim of confirming the judgement of the first marker(s). |

| 1.4 | **Internal Verification** | A process whereby, a nominated person reviews a sample of work, including the mark allocated and feedback, with the aim of confirming the judgement of the first marker(s). |

| 1.5 | **Checking** | A process following first marking of objective assessments (e.g. MCQs) whereby a second person checks to ensure that marks have been calculated and recorded accurately. |

2.0   Moderation

2.1   The minimum standard for all taught modules comprises internal sampling for each assessment component, apart from dissertations or equivalent project involving 30 credits or more. Under certain circumstances additional verification processes may be required and where double marking of a sample or full cohort of work is required, further internal sampling will not normally be necessary.

2.2   Where assessments comprise solely of objective tools (e.g. multiple choice questions, objective right and wrong answers) then internal sampling will be replaced by a process of **checking** by a second person to ensure that marks have been calculated and recorded accurately.

2.3   Internal Verification Process

2.3.1   At the commencement of the module, the Programme Leader or nominee will identify a person or persons who would be suitable to undertake internal verification (referred to hereafter as the internal sampler). This will normally be a colleague who also teaches on the module or a verifier of the Programme Team. For modules with large numbers of students, it may be appropriate to identify more than one person to undertake this activity.

2.3.2   The internal verifier must have access to the work of all markers for the cohort and will normally select a sample based on all of the following parameters:

- Work awarded a fail
- Work allocated a 70% mark or equivalent grade (or above)
- Borderline pass work (3% below to 3% above the pass mark)

- A sample of work across all other brands (normally comprising approximately 10% of the work in those bands) to include some work from each marker
- Any additional work where the first marker requests a second opinion

2.3.3   The internal verifier will review the work selected and consider whether the assessment criteria have been applied appropriately and consistently and whether the mark awarded and proposed feedback, is appropriate.

2.3.4   Where the internal verifier confirms the marks of the first markers, then the internal verifier will complete the Internal Verification of Assessment Decisions form (ref: HE-IV-01) in conjunction with the Module Tutor, using the standard proforma. This will then be made available to the external examiner, in addition to a full list of marks and the sample of work [see 3 below].

2.3.5   Where the internal verifier identifies issues relating to consistency in the application of the assessment criteria then this should be reviewed with the Module Tutor and relevant markers. Where concerns are raised and considered to warrant further discussion, then the relevant Programme Leader will be informed and a course of action identified to assure standards. This will normally entail initiating **concealed** double marking of either the work of all students or all the work of a particular marker. Following this, marks will be agreed as identified in clause 2.5 of Appendix C. The Internal Verification of Assessment Decisions form (ref: HE-IV-01) should provide the external examiner with an overview of the process.

2.4   Double Marking

2.4.1   All dissertations or equivalent projects involving 30 credits or more must routinely be double marked.
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2.4.2   For work submitted for reassessment, where the first marker awards a fail, double marking must be undertaken.

2.4.3   There are a variety of factors that can potentially reduce the reliability of marking and such factors need to be taken into consideration when deciding whether double marking is required. The guidance contained in this document should direct teams as to whether double marking is required. If in doubt, consult the HE Development Coordinator. Factors that increase the likelihood that double marking is required include:

- Whether or not is it a new module
- The experience of and number of markers
- Whether or not the assessment technique is new or familiar to the markers
- The credit size and level of the module
- Whether or not the work constitutes 100% of the module mark
- Whether there are specific professional, statutory and regulatory body requirements
- Concerns raised previously by external examiners

Example

The above list is not exhaustive, and it may be a combination of more than one factor that is used to determine the requirement for double marking. For example, a new module with a familiar assessment type and experienced marking team would not necessitate double marking but a new module with an innovative assessment type that constitutes 100% of the module mark would.

2.4.4   Double marking could include a sample or may be required for all work and where feasible and practicable it should be concealed. Where double marking a sample reveals any significant issues,

then the remaining work should be double marked. Double marking provides an opportunity to further embed academic consistency and standardisation.

2.5 Agreement of marks following double marking

2.5.1 Following double marking, the first and double markers meet and compare their judgements on the mark awarded and feedback. If there are no significant differences, then the markers will agree the mark and content of feedback to the student. The first marker will then make any necessary alterations to the feedback and the student will only receive one set of feedback which is signed by the first marker.

2.5.2 The name of both markers, their marks and the agreed mark are recorded for inclusion in the IV Report (HE-IV-01) and Assessment Feedback Form (HE-AF-01).

2.5.3 If there are significant differences in the marks then the reasons for allocating marks will be explored in an attempt to reach an agreement on the mark to be awarded. If the two markers are able to resolve their differences, then they will agree a set of marks for the work.

2.5.4 If the two markers are unable to resolve their differences, then the matter must be reported to the Programme Leader/Head of School. The Programme Leader/Head of School will review with the markers the marks allocated and attempt to reach a resolution. Where this cannot be easily achieved, an independent person will be asked to double mark the work (third marker) and following discussion, the Programme Leader/Head of School will determine a final mark for disputed work to be given to the student. Any third marked work will be sent to the External Examiner for sampling.

3.0 Sample of work to be made available to the external examiner

3.1 Please note that the sample to be made available to external examiners is negotiated with individual examiners and should include as a minimum for first sit assessments:

- A sample of at least 25% plus any additional work requested by the external examiner

- All failed work

- All first-class work

- A sample of all internally moderated work

- A sample of work which sits on grade boundaries

The sample can include work that has been single marked, double marked and internally sampled and not be restricted to the sample that was used for internal sampling.

3.2 Module Tutors will agree with external examiners how and when they wish to see this material and they can, via attendance at the College, access the work of all students if they so wish.

3.3 External Examiners should sample all reassessed work.

3.4 External examiners should also be provided with relevant module information, assessment information including assessment criteria, results for the full cohort and the IV Report (HE-IV-01) / Assessment Feedback Form (HE-AF-01).

4.0 Assessment less suitable for internal and external moderation

4.1 The use of certain types of assessment, e.g. practical examinations or oral presentations present challenges in terms of the internal and external moderation processes. The key questions for the Programme Team to answer are:

4.1.1 How will external examiners be provided with evidence on which to base their judgement regarding the maintenance of academic standards?

4.1.2 How robustly they can defend challenges to the objectivity of the assessment process should this be required?

4.2 For programmes involving assessment of practical artefacts, the process for external moderation will be discussed and agreed with the HE Office to ensure appropriate quality assurance, at the commencement of the programme.

4.3 Where such assessments are weighted at greater than 30% of the module mark, the Module Tutor should propose to the appropriate Programme Team Leader / Head of School, the approach to be taken for moderation. This will normally involve:

4.3.1 Where possible, recordings can be made of the assessment activity and these can be used as part of the internal sampling and external examining process. Students should be informed of the requirement to make a recording and the rationale for it and their permission sought.

4.3.2 If recordings cannot be made, double marking for all students should be undertaken

4.3.3 Ensuring that relevant, artefacts produced by the student are made available to the external examiner for the usual sample of work (see clause 3 of Appendix C), in additional to the feedback given to the student.

4.3.4 Providing the external examiner with an opportunity to attend to observe some of the assessment activities.

4.3.5 If none of the above strategies are appropriate, the external examiner should be invited to attend the assessment activity.

4.4 Moderation of Practice Placement Assessments

All assessments of professional competence of students in the workplace is undertaken by the programme team. For degree apprenticeships different rules may apply. The form of moderation should be in line with section 3.1 above.

Appendix D – Retention of Assessed Work

All assessed work, including that submitted electronically should normally be retained for the current Academic Year, plus three following Academic Years, subject to any Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Body [PSRB] requirements, delays due to ongoing issues (e.g. Complaint/Assessment Review, and any specific quality sampling purposes).

In the event that a student seeks an Academic Appeal or is otherwise in pursuit of redress through litigation or complaint, then the work of such a student should be retained.

In all other cases (except as below), student work may be destroyed at the close of this period. All work should be destroyed as confidential waste.

It is not the policy of the College to normally return work to students, although Programme Teams may do so at their discretion. Students should be advised to keep a copy of conventional assignments if they so wish.

Certain types of work (e.g. original artwork or artefacts) may not be easily copied and students may have a legitimate need to use such work to demonstrate their abilities to potential employers and others.

- *Students may request the return of such work and Programme Teams will make appropriate arrangements. Students should be required to complete a proforma, which should contain the following:*

"If you are considering applying for assessment review you should, if possible, apply before requesting the return of any assessed work which may be subject to such review, and which then will not be returned to you until completion of the review process.

Note that if an application for assessment review is accepted, the College will not be able to reconsider work which has already been returned".

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Appendix E – Assessment Report (HE-AF-01)

Course Title:	
Student Name	
Student Number	
Module Title	
Module Code	
Module Tutor	
Assessment Type	
Submission Deadline	
Late/Second Submission	
Assignment Title	
Assignment Brief	

Learning Outcomes	How effectively did you meet this learning outcome?

Further Comments

To improve your mark in the next assignment you need to address

Mark	

Date feedback given		
1st Marker Signature	**2nd Marker Signature**	**External Examiner Initials**

*Please note that all grades are provisional subject to confirmation by the Module Assessment Board.

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Appendix F – Internal Verification Report (HE-IV-01)

This record is to be completed by the nominated Internal Sampler and returned to the Module Leader for inclusion in the Internal Moderation Pack.

Module Title:	
Module Code:	
Module Level/Credit:	
Module Assessment:	
Name(s) of Designated Internal Sampler(s):	

Please confirm that:	Yes	No
You have had access to the work of all students who submitted for assessment for sampling purposes and a completed marks sheet	☐	☐
You have sampled work in accordance with paragraph *2.3.2 of Appendix C Higher Education Assessment and Feedback for the Open University Policy*	☐	☐
You have indicated on the marks sheet, using the abbreviation IS, which students work you have sampled.	☐	☐
The assessment criteria have been applied fairly and consistently	☐	☐
Feedback to students is appropriate and consistent with the mark awarded	☐	☐

If you have answered NO to any of the above questions please give an overview of action taken in the box below, which can also be used for any additional comments you would like to make.

Additional Comments/Actions

Signature:		**Date:**	
Designation:			

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Record of Double Marking

Name of Student	1st Marker's Name	1st Mark	2nd Marker's Name	2nd mark	Agreed Mark	Brief Comments on how agreed mark reached

Please indicate on the attached marks list those that have been double marked by using the abbreviation DM and those that have been included in the sample assessed/sent to the External Examiner by adding EE.

Here, we set out a table of benchmarks for assessment loads for use by programme teams designing or reviewing their assessment strategy. While there is an intention to ensure a parity of approach across all Bishop Auckland College Higher Education validated programmes, we do not expect 100% conformity across all programmes as each will be informed and constrained by their own subject characteristics, any PSRB requirements, and their programmes learning and formative assessment strategies. However, below we present guidance on how we expect the tool to be used.

Consistency:

The benchmarking tool sets out typical student workloads associated with summative assessment at each level of study. All programmes should ensure that there is a relatively even distribution of student workload across each level's modules, with no modules having significantly more or less assessment workload than another. The programmes team's approach to ensuring a consistent, balanced workload across modules and levels should be articulated in the validation document or, for reapprovals, in the developmental commentary.

Assessment preparation time:

This tool recognises that there will be greater expectations of students' independent and background research, and the use of critical and creative thinking to produce work at higher levels. This is generally reflected in the time that students are expected to spend in assessment preparation. However, this will not always be the case, depending on the nature of the tasks set for students. Thus, for some level four work the amount of assessment preparation time may be significantly higher, whilst for the odd level six component the opposite may be the case. However, there is an expectation that assessment preparation will tend to take a significantly greater proportion of students' time in later parts of the programme preparation.

Other types of assessment:

While the benchmarking tool explores workloads associated with academic writing, exams and presentations, it is recognised that many other forms of assessment components are employed in programmes. For example, where students are required to produce non-academic forms of writing such as reflective pieces, prose, or public facing documentation, set word lengths are often adjusted to reflect the form of writing and are likely to be significantly less that that required for an academic piece. For programmes within creative or technical subject areas, it is often difficult to quantify the workload associated with particular types of assessment component. In such cases, it will often be the hours of assessment preparation time that students are expected to require that is the better measure of workload.

Taking formative assessment loading into consideration

For many modules, particularly focussed on the development of practical skills or competencies, work on the summative assessment components forms an integral part of the planned learning experience. It is recognised that in such situations it is can be hard to differentiate between workload allocated for learning and that allocated for assessment preparation.

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				Typical assessment load total Where more than one assessment component is set, word counts and time durations should be proportionally divided between the components according to relative weightings.		
Level	Module type	Typical assessment preparation time	Typical number of components	Recommended word count (academic writing) if all assessment is written submissions	Exam load if exams are the only means of assessment[1]	Presentation total duration if presentation is only means of assessment[2]
4	20 credit module	30-35 hours	1-2	Normally 1,500 words, with a maximum of 3,000 for one or two modules	No more than two hours	20 minutes
	40 credit module	60-70 hours		Normally 3,000 words, with a maximum of 4,500	No more than three hours	30-45 minutes
5	20 credit module	50 hours	2-3	3,000 words	Three hours	30 minutes
	40 credit module	100 hours		6,000 words	Five hours	60 Minutes
6	20 credit module	60-70 hours	1-2	3,000 words	Three hours	30 minutes
	40 credit module	120-140 hours	2-3	6,000 words	Five hours	60 Minutes
	40 credit project or dissertation			10,000 to 12,000 words		
7	20 credit taught module	60-70 hours	1	5,000 words	Three hours	30 minutes
	40 credit module	120-140 hours	1-2	10,000 words	Five hours	60 Minutes
	60 credit taught postgraduate dissertation			10,000 to 15,000 words		

Table title: Assessment Loading Benchmarking Tool

[1] Individual exams would not normally exceed three hours in duration.

[2] Individual presentation components would not normally exceed thirty minutes, and would typically be much shorter at Levels 3, 4 and 5.

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Record of Checking Process

This form is to be completed where assessment comprise solely of objective tools and a process of checking replaces internal sampling.

Module Code:	
Module Assessment:	
Name and Designation of Person Checking:	

Please confirm that:

	Yes	No
You have checked that all marks have been calculated and recorded accurately.		

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Appendix K – Programme Assessment Design Guidance

Version	Date	Detail
Issue 1 Rev 0	September 2019	First Version
Issue 1 Rev 1	February 2024	Updated
Issue 1 Rev 2	June 2024	Updated

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