Code of practice for assessment and feedback

Academic year 2021/22

Contents

Introduction and applicability

1. The *Code* covers all undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes that lead to an award of the University of Surrey, including University validated programmes at the Associated and Accredited Institutions. It also covers those credit-bearing taught elements of integrated PhD programmes as well as Foundation Year programmes facilitating entry onto undergraduate degree programmes.

2. Where the requirements of this *Code* differ from those of an external accrediting body the requirements of the external accrediting body may take precedence, but only with the formal written approval of the Chair of the University Education Committee (UEC). Such differences would normally be identified at validation and periodic review.

3. As part of the University Quality Framework, this *Code* should be read in conjunction with the *Regulations for taught programmes*, *Regulations for Foundation Year programmes,* as well as the *Code of practice for external examiners: taught programmes* and the *Code of practice for programme life cycle processes*.

The purposes of this *Code*

4. This *Code of practice for assessment and feedback* assists academic staff at the University of Surrey and its Accredited and Associated Institutions, its external examiners, and those of its administrators who are concerned with student assessment and its outcomes. Its role is to ensure that:

    *   There is demonstrable integrity, fairness and rigour in the application of academic judgement to the assessment of students' work

    *   The associated administrative processes are undertaken with demonstrable integrity, consistency and rigour

5. The *Code* should also assist students in understanding how they can best use the various forms of assessment to support their learning and to demonstrate the full extent of their achievements.

6. Academic judgement is exercised within the context of each discipline, but the University expects its academics to exercise their judgement rigorously and competently within the framework of this *Code*. Marks or grades resulting from that exercise of academic judgement must be dealt with consistently within the University's standardised procedures set out here.

The general principles for assessment

7. The following principles apply to the assessment of students' work in taught programmes:

    (i) all programmes include an assessment strategy that sets out the extent of and balance between the different methods of assessment used that are expected to contribute to and validate student learning, inclusive of formative and summative assessment;

    (ii) all summative assessment is subject to proportionate internal quality assurance and external examining;[1]

    (iii) each individual unit of assessment is dealt with independently in the first instance, whether or not the outcomes of units of assessment are subsequently aggregated;

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[1] See *Code of practice for external examining: taught programmes*.

(iv) all assessments are based on and aligned with the University grade descriptors (see Appendix 1) and related to the learning outcomes set out in the approved programme specifications and module descriptors;

(v) programmes that lead to University of Surrey awards and credit are taught and assessed in English, other than where tuition and assessment in other languages forms a required part of the learning outcomes for a specific programme or module that were considered and approved by the University at validation;

(vi) the form(s) and extent of each unit of assessment are expected to be relevant and proportionate to the learning outcomes being evaluated and the contribution the unit makes to the award;

(vii) the allocation of all marks is always supported by explanatory comments provided by the marker, whether for the benefit of students, where assessed work is returned to them as feedback for them to see how they have been assessed and how they can improve, and/or to provide evidence for any subsequent calibration, moderation or quality assurance by colleagues internally and external examiners and markers.

The quality control and quality assurance of assessment

8. The University defines quality control in the context of the assessment of students' work as:

'the processes followed by both the University's academic and administrative staff to ensure that assessments are appropriate to and valid for the learning outcomes of the relevant module/programme, that the assessments are conducted and marked fairly as the University requires by staff qualified to do so, and that results (including feedback, where relevant) are accurately recorded, processed, presented and returned to students in a timely manner.'

9. The University defines quality assurance in the context of the assessment of students' work as:

'the steps the University takes through its academic and professional services staff, and its external examiners, to enable it to be confident that quality control processes are taking place and that they are fit for purpose; that the outcomes of students' assessment provide a reliable guide to their achievements; that the University's assessment arrangements meet UK expectations and requirements; and that the University identifies and exploits opportunities for the enhancement of its assessment arrangements.'

10. The University is committed to meeting the Expectations and Core and Common practices set out in the QAA UK *Quality Code for higher education.*

11. As a principle, all work by students that is assessed and that makes a summative contribution to student progression and/or award will be subject to quality control and quality assurance. The University achieves this through:

- Its internal quality assurance procedures, which are applied to the academic and administrative aspects involved in assessment, and which are set out in this *Code.*

- Its external examining system, which provides independent external confirmation that the assessment procedures that have been applied are fair and that the outcomes are sound.

12. Strict procedural requirements apply to the:

(i)   marking of units of assessment and the recording of those primary assessment outcomes (see paragraphs 44-56 below);

(ii)   correction of marks, which is applied to any mark when there has been a demonstrable failure in the administration of marks, for example the incorrect addition of components leading to a total (see paragraph 64 below);

(iii)   agreement of assessment outcomes, which is applied where the primary and any other markers(s) initially disagree in the mark they allocate for an individual's unit of assessment that is not part of a cohort of assessed work (eg project or dissertation, individual performance) (see paragraphs 67-68 below);

(iv)   reconsideration of assessment outcomes, which is applied to the marks of a cohort of students for a unit of assessment (see paragraph 69-71 below);

(v)   adjustment of cohorts of marks (see paragraphs 72-75 below);

(vi)   compensation applied to the assessment outcomes of a module in accordance with the relevant *Regulations*.[2]

Disability and Neurodiversity and Academic Skills and Development

Disability and Neurodiversity

13.   Disability and Neurodiversity provides support and advice to disabled students, and guidance to staff on ways to support students with needs that arise from a wide range of disabilities including specific learning differences (such as dyslexia, dyspraxia and AD(H)D, autism, mental health conditions, sensory impairments, medical conditions and physical and mobility impairments). In addition to providing students with support and advice, the team can recommend adjustments to learning, teaching and assessment that have been judged as reasonable for a named student. These recommendations are based on the student's diagnosis, history, previous adjustments and the Disability Adviser's knowledge and experience. Where non-standard or complex adjustments are being considered, the Disability Adviser will consult the relevant Programme Leader before making any recommendations. These are referred to as Learning Support Recommendations (LSRs). The LSRs are uploaded onto SITS and can be accessed by relevant academic staff.

Academic Skills and Development

14.   Academic Skills and Development (AS&D) and Maths and Statistics Advice (MASA) are open to all students.

15.   AS&D provides guidance and advice on critical thinking and writing, researching information and referencing, planning and writing assignments, projects, or dissertations, using feedback effectively, developing sustainable and effective study habits, revision and preparation for examinations, and good academic practices and eliminating risks of plagiarism.

16.   MASA provides advice and guidance to develop confidence and proficiency with any maths or statistics topic, including maths and statistics software.

17.   The Surrey Institute of Education provides advice and guidance for staff in developing and innovating practice in teaching and assessment.

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[2] See *Regulations for taught programmes*.

The purposes of assessment

For students and academics

18. Assessments provide a way for the student to communicate their learning to their teacher and for the teacher to communicate with the student about their learning. Tracking student performance against learning outcomes is an effective method for the teacher and learner to monitor progress and to identify areas requiring further development.

19. For students, assessment provides motivation for study and promotes learning through feedback on performance, which helps students to identify their strengths and weaknesses and whether learning objectives have been attained. Feedback should assist them in improving the quality of their future work.

20. For academics, assessment provides an opportunity to evaluate student knowledge, understanding, application, ability and skills. The overall performance of the student cohort provides a measure of the effectiveness of course content and teaching methods, thereby enabling improvement.

For the University

21. Assessment provides information for progression decisions and the granting of awards. The assessment process enables the institution to ensure that appropriate standards are being met, in accordance with nationally agreed frameworks. Information generated by assessment is valuable for quality assurance and enhancement.

For external stakeholders

22. Professional, statutory, and regulatory bodies (PSRBs) may use assessment outcomes to award professional accreditation. Employers may use an individual's assessment record to assess their educational achievements and suitability for employment.

Forms and types of assessment

23. Each assessment is provided by the relevant member of academic staff in discussion with the Module Leader and in accordance with the programme assessment strategy (see section "Assessment strategy", pp. 31-35). Assessment is defined as either:

    • Formative – an integral and supportive part of the planned learning process, which contributes to the learning process by the return to students of their submitted work with a commentary on its strengths and areas for improvement; an indicative mark may be included but this does not contribute to any (aggregate) mark used for progression or award purposes. Students are expected to submit a reasonable attempt for all formative assessments identified in the module descriptor/student handbook. Additionally, students and their lecturers/tutors may agree on further formative assessments as part of their learning process over and above that included within the module descriptor/student handbook.

    • Summative– an integral and supportive part of the planned learning process which provides a mark that is recorded and subsequently contributes to the overall module mark, and in specified cases will contribute to the award.

24. Individual units of assessments can be categorised into seven main types. For the purposes of this *Code of practice* the University defines each as follows:

    • Coursework – work which is completed in the student's own time and which must be submitted by a specific time and date. Coursework normally takes place

during teaching weeks and not in the revision and examination periods, except for during the late summer (re)assessment period and in cases where a module is only assessed by coursework, not examinations. Examples of assessments which may be defined as coursework include essays, research reports, case studies, annotated bibliographies, reflective essays, research proposals, blog/webpages, position statements, concept maps, field reports, leaflets, policy briefs, learning journals, literature reviews, posters, numerical calculations, software applications, programming, abstracts, newspaper/magazine articles, essay plans, critical reviews, book reviews, business plans.

- <u>Test</u> - these are written assessments designed to provide an evaluation of the student's achievement at that point in the module. In-semester tests are held during the semester, normally within weeks 4 to 7, and wherever possible during the hours normally scheduled for that module. The in-semester tests take place under standard formal examination conditions and are organised by the Academic Registry, which is responsible for their quality control (See Appendix 4 for the Guidelines for in-semester tests). Examples of assessment which may be defined as in-semester tests include Multiple Choice Questionnaires, written tests, steeplechase, computer-based and calculation tests.

- <u>Examination</u> - an event (other than an in-semester test) that a student must attend at a particular time and place (noting this could be a virtual place) and which involves the completion of an examination paper under exam conditions. All examination assessments are summative. Examinations may take the form of essay-based exams, open or closed book exams, Multiple Choice Questionnaires (MCQs), short-answer question exams, calculation or clinical practice exams. Formal written examinations take place in the University appointed examination weeks and are typically organised by the Academic Registry.

- <u>Oral</u> - a unit of assessment where students' oral presentation or argumentation skills are the focus. Examples can include presentations, viva voce examinations, class contributions, contributions to meetings, Dragon's Den presentations, interpreting tests, discussion board contributions, music portfolios, pre-recorded presentations; in languages, listening and speaking, poster presentations, listening and speaking tasks.

- <u>Practical</u> – a unit of assessment where students' behaviour, skills or performance are the focus. The assessment could take the form of a practical exam scheduled to take place under test conditions on a specific date, or it could involve ongoing assessment of skills over a period of time. Examples of assessments that may be defined as practical include laboratory skills assessments, performances, recitals, simulations, Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs), Objective Structured Practical Examinations (OSPEs), assessed contribution to groupwork, graded assessment of clinical competencies, radio broadcasts, videos, webpages, rehearsals, or translation assignments for languages.

- <u>Project</u> – a unit of assessment involving a significant amount of ongoing work, culminating in the submission of a project report or dissertation. This type of assessment is often linked to modules with minimal or no taught element. The work typically involves content that cuts across modules in a programme or topics in a module. Examples include creative projects, software development, group project submission, design reports, research projects, portfolios, compositions, etc. Because of the high nominal credit value of the final year project report/portfolio or Master's dissertation and their significant contribution towards the final award mark/grade, the final year project report/portfolio or Master's dissertation units of assessments are double blind marked.

- <u>Attendance only</u> - a unit of assessment which receives a pass or fail based on fulfilling required hours of attendance, or where the assessment itself has a pass/fail criteria and does not receive a grade. Examples include practice hours, seminars, drug calculations or clinical competencies.

25. All modules should include at least one opportunity to provide students with evaluative feedback on their work from which they can judge how they have performed and how they can improve. Where a module is assessed exclusively by written examination(s), or extended coursework representing a single unit of assessment, there is a requirement for formative assessment prior to the examination(s)/coursework submission.

The validity of assessment methods

26. The University is committed to ensuring that the types of assessment methods that are used are appropriate and relevant to the learning outcomes for the student that the unit of assessment is intended to evaluate. It does this through:

- The continuing professional development of its staff

- The attention paid to assessment during programme and module design

- The internal quality assurance arrangements involved in:

  - its programme validation arrangements

  - its monitoring arrangements, including the evaluation and response to feedback from students, external examiners and other relevant stakeholders

27. Academic staff are required to identify both generic and specific learning outcomes as part of the process of designing their programmes and their modules. The analysis of how these learning outcomes can most effectively and efficiently be assessed results in the design of the assessment strategies for the programme and its modules, ensuring the relevance of the methods of assessment and their focus on the purpose(s) of each unit of assessment. See Appendix 2 for guidance on linking levels, learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

28. The programme learning outcomes outline what learning will be assessed during the programme, integrating the learning outcomes of its component modules, including the assessment of a balance between specific and generic learning outcomes. Units of assessment within modules normally focus on the demonstration of specific learning outcomes whilst contributing to the wider generic learning outcomes. The units of assessment within a module should ensure each of the intended learning outcomes of the module are evaluated, and that there is no unnecessary duplication within and between modules. Some overlap or even duplication in the assessment of particularly important learning outcome(s) may be advantageous in contributing to the learning process.

29. The design of assessment tasks should be clearly aligned with the University grade descriptors (see Appendix 1). Discipline-specific marking schemes should provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities to meet expectations at threshold level as well as progressively higher levels of ability that would achieve marks at the top of the mark range.

30. Appendix 3 provides guidance on designing assessment activities that can avoid plagiarism and Appendix 5 provides some suggestions for the assessment of group work.

Assessment strategy

31.   The design and preparation of all programmes and modules offered by the University requires that details of their units of assessment includes:

- A rationale for the aims, form(s) and relevance, and the extent of each unit of assessment

- The essential learning outcomes and any additional ones, including any weighting between elements where appropriate

- How the units of assessment, and elements within them, are integrated within modules and between modules within programmes

These details are required for module/programme validation.

32.   The overall assessment strategy for a programme, and the details of the assessment requirements within each module, are made available to students before or at the start of the programme and each module, and also to the relevant external examiner(s)[3].

33.   The amount of assessment within a programme, module or unit of assessment should be proportionate to the contribution made to determining the award. All University taught programmes are based on a 15-credit tariff, with modules of 15 credits and multiples thereof. The extent of assessment and the type(s) of assessment must be determined primarily by academic judgements of the requirements to assess the learning outcomes. The following should be considered when designing assessment strategies and the extent of summative assessment:

(i)   the overall assessment strategy for all taught programmes at the University will include a balanced and blended combination of assessment types. The assessment strategy for each module is determined by its specific learning outcomes and the contribution it makes to the overall strategy for the programme;

(ii)   the overall assessment strategy should take account of the total assessment workload in the context of the anticipated total learning hours for the programme, ensuring that students are assessed sufficiently to justify the award of credit, while also preventing an excessive summative assessment workload;

(iii)   individual summative assessments must each be clearly recorded as part of the assessment strategy for each module and in SITS. Where there are multiple units of assessment within a module, the extent of each unit of assessment should reflect the proportion of module learning outcomes it is assessing;

(iv)   the number of assessments in each module should be selected on sound pedagogic principles and justified at validation and periodic enhancement review. Students should not be asked to complete a disproportionate number of summative assessments considering the module learning outcomes, the credit value of the module and the assessment load within the programme;

(v)   unless justified within the overall assessment strategy at programme level, modules should not rely on a single unit of summative assessment. Extended reports, essays or dissertations that integrate a student's work throughout a module or the whole programme would be possible exceptions. Where a

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[3] See Student Programme and/or Module Handbooks: https://catalogue.surrey.ac.uk/

module is assessed with a single unit of assessment, students should be provided with opportunities for formative assessment;

(vi)   summative assessment in the form of time-limited examinations (online and written) should be chosen only where there is no other appropriate means of assessing the relevant learning outcomes, or where external accreditation is a factor. Examinations are typically of up to two hours duration;

(vii)   where coursework is included within the assessment strategy for a module, the proportion of its contribution and its extent is determined by academic expectations. Attention is drawn to the requirements regarding return of assessed work to students (paragraphs 34 and 76-81 below) and the *Guiding principles for student feedback* (see Appendix 6);

(viii)   where in-semester tests form part of the assessment strategy for a module, they should not normally be the dominant form of assessment in a module nor account for a total weighting of less than 10% of a module. Each individual in-semester test should be separately designated on the module descriptor and in SITS regardless of its weighting. The maximum duration of an in-semester test should fit within the timetabled slot for the particular session and must allow time for set-up, paper collection and learning support adjustments.

34.   Where work is submitted for assessment at intervals throughout the semester, the timing of submission by and return to students should be sequenced to allow students to benefit from feedback on the earlier submission(s) prior to making the subsequent submission (see paragraphs 76-81 below).[4] This is sometimes referred to as 'feed-forward'.

35.   The use of formative assessment varies significantly between disciplines but in general it should not exceed the extent of summative assessment.

Penalties for late submission of work for assessment

36.   The University has clear requirements for the timely submission of work for assessment, including a tariff of penalties for late or incorrect submission. These are to be found in the *Regulations for taught programmes*. Wherever and however work is submitted for assessment, the rigorous application of penalties for late submission is included within the expectations of this *Code of practice*.

Illegible submissions

37.   It is the student's responsibility to present work for assessment that is legible. The *Regulations for taught programmes* have clear procedures with regard to how the submission of illegible work is dealt with.

Online submissions

38.   Assessed work should normally be submitted online via SurreyLearn. Students should familiarise themselves with any additional School/Department specific guidelines surrounding the online submission of their work, including requested file type and formatting including font size or spacing.

39.   It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the correct file is uploaded to the correct submission point, in a format that is in line with School/Departmental guidance and which is fully accessible to the marker. Following submission, students should review their submission confirmation and check that the submitted

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[4] This principle may not be applicable to students taking deferred assessment(s) due to agreed extenuating circumstances and/or temporary withdrawal.

file is correct, that the version is correct, that it has been fully uploaded, is not password protected or corrupted, and can be viewed. Failed or partial completion of the submission process will not be considered as successful submission.

40. Where a mistake has been identified by the student or a member of staff before the submission deadline, and the assessment has not yet been marked, students should resubmit the file. Students who experience difficulty should contact their Academic Hive immediately to arrange resubmission. If the correct file is resubmitted and is accessible prior to the deadline, no penalty will be incurred.

41. Where the student's final submission has been uploaded to the incorrect University assessment submission area, or drafts section before the deadline, but the error has been identified after the deadline, no penalty will be incurred. Students should contact their Academic Hive to request that the file is moved to the correct submission point.

42. Where an incorrect file, or the wrong version of the correct file has been submitted, and this is not identified until after the deadline, the submitted version would normally be marked as it stands. Students can resubmit the correct version of their work after the deadline but this would then be open to standard late submission penalties.

43. Where a submitted file contains a virus or proves to be inaccessible, but the student could not have reasonably known, no late penalty marks will be imposed, as long as the file was originally submitted prior to the deadline. This is the case even if the issue is identified after the deadline. If the file cannot be opened, the student will be asked to resubmit a safe, accessible file immediately. If there is evidence to suggest that the student deliberately submitted a corrupted file with a virus, or otherwise inaccessible file, they may be subject to disciplinary action.

Marking and its quality control and assurance

44. Faculties, Schools/Departments must be able to demonstrate consistency of marking within units of assessment and comparability between them.

45. The mechanisms used by Faculties, Schools/Departments and/or programmes for the agreement, moderation and adjustment of marks must conform with the University requirements as set out in this *Code of practice*.

46. The extent of quality control/assurance should be proportionate to the type of assessment and the contribution it makes to an award. This *Code of Practice* sets expectations for specific assessment types and minimum requirements for the moderation of marks.

47. The marking of written examination scripts, projects and coursework must not be left entirely to one person but must be subject to second marking (see paragraph 52). For examination answers in the form of calculations, multiple choice or short notes on a number of separate topics, it is sufficient for a second person to check that all parts have been marked and that the marks have been totalled correctly (see Audit marking, paragraph 54).

48. Where feasible, all pages of assessed work that contribute to a student's summative assessment in the penultimate year and final year of programmes should include an indication that the page has been scrutinised as part of the assessment process.

49. Normally, undergraduate final year project modules typically equate to 30 or 45 credits and Master's dissertation modules to 30, 45, 60 or 90 credits. MRes programmes may have a dissertation of between 90 and 150 credits. Where a unit of assessment on those modules is designated as a final year project report/portfolio or a Master's dissertation, all student work from that unit of assessment should be

double blind marked in accordance with paragraph 53, although only a sample of this work would normally be submitted for external examining. It is at the discretion of the School/Department whether the supervisor marks project reports and dissertations. Where a supervisor is not a marker, they may contribute an evaluation of the student's engagement, effort and level of independence in carrying out the project/dissertation. Such a report should be listed on the relevant module descriptor as a unit of assessment and allocated a weighting.

Pre-marking calibration

50.   In order to support programme teams to develop a shared understanding of marking criteria, assessment standards and quality feedback, pre-marking calibration events may be organised before or at the start of the marking period. These may include sharing marked student work from previous cohorts across a range of grade boundaries, arranging blind marking of a small number of assessments undertaken by previous cohorts or arranging blind marking of a small number of scripts submitted at the start of the current marking period. For further guidance please see Appendix 9.

Primary marking

51.   Primary marking is normally undertaken by the academic(s) involved in teaching the topic being assessed, either personally or via computer-based programmes.[5] Primary markers undertake primary marking. For each assessment, primary markers are required to provide a clear basis for the allocation of the mark(s) to be awarded against the learning outcomes that is aligned with the University grade descriptors. The primary marker(s) must include appropriate feedback where assessed work is returned to students, together with an explanation of the marking where assessed work is to form part of a sample submitted for scrutiny by the external examiner.

Second marking

52.   Second marking involves the work of a second academic (the second marker), typically but not exclusively within the University, who reviews the accuracy and consistency of marking carried out by the primary marker(s). The second markers have access to the marks and feedback of the primary marker(s). Second marking may involve all *or* a sample of students' work within a cohort depending on the size of the cohort. Where a sample of students' work is used for second marking this should be the same sample that is provided for scrutiny by the external examiner i.e. at least 10% of the total or 20 pieces of work, whichever is the lesser, across the range of marks provided that such a sample is of sufficient size to be proportionately representative of assessed work across the whole ability range demonstrated by the students. If the second marker identifies any concerns, they bring these to the attention of the primary marker(s).

Double marking

53.   Double marking also involves the work of a second academic, typically but not exclusively within the University, who marks work that has been submitted for assessment. The double marker makes their own independent judgement around the submitted work. They may have access to the mark and feedback provided by the first marker(s) before they begin their own marking process (double open marking) or they may not have access to this information (double blind marking). The latter is typically adopted where assessment has a significant nominal credit weighting, such as a dissertation. Double marking may involve all or a sample of students' work

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[5] See the *Code of practice for postgraduate researchers who support teaching* for guidance on when postgraduate research students can be involved in marking.

within a cohort depending on the size of the cohort. Where a sample of students' work is used for double marking, this should be the same sample that is provided for scrutiny by the external examiner i.e. at least 10% of the total or 20 pieces of work, whichever is the lesser, across the range of marks provided that such a sample is of sufficient size to be proportionately representative of assessed work across the whole ability range demonstrated by the students.

Audit marking

54.   Where assessment is either based on a binary (right/wrong) evaluation and/or entirely based on objective answers (for example, in multiple choice assessments with or without computer-aided marking) an 'audit' of the marking is required, to ensure that the procedures have been completed satisfactorily. Audit marking may involve all or, more typically, a sample of students' work within a cohort. Where a sample of students' work is used for audit marking this should be the same sample that is provided for scrutiny by the external examiner.

Internal moderation report

55.   An internal moderation process would normally occur for most assessed student work at each level of study to ensure the proper application of assessment criteria, marking fairness and consistency of marking of student work both within a module and between different modules.

56.   The selection of the appropriate moderation method is determined by the assessment type and the contribution of the assessment to the final degree classification/grading and can involve either second marking, double marking or audit marking. As an example:

- For a standard 15-credit FHEQ Level 5, 6 or 7 module: where a unit of assessment is worth 25% or more of the overall assessment strategy, a sample of assessed work should be second marked, double marked or 'audited', with the sample being that submitted for external examining.

- FHEQ Level 6 or 7 final year project/portfolio or a Master's dissertation units of assessment: all student work should be double blind marked, with a representative sample (10%, across the entire range of marks) submitted for external examining.

57.   An example of the internal moderation report can be found in Appendix 10. While various Schools/Departments may choose to use a different moderation report proforma, the University expects that all evidence of marking and internal moderation should be recorded clearly and consistently. The internal moderation report should also be shared with external examiners, where applicable.

Anonymous marking

58.   The University operates a policy of anonymous marking for all written examinations. Faculties are encouraged to consider anonymous marking of all written work where this is possible and practicable.

Awarding marks

59.   Marks are awarded following the generic framework provided by the University grade descriptors (see Appendix 1) and the extent to which a student has achieved the specified learning outcomes set out in the programme specification and module descriptors at validation and subsequent periodic review. Marks cannot be given for attendance alone nor deducted for non-attendance.

60.   Criteria for marking must be stated clearly in programme handbooks for the benefit of students, internal markers and external examiners. This is particularly important

where individual projects or dissertations are concerned since the topics may be diverse. If, for any given assignment or examination, marks are to be awarded specifically for spelling and grammar, or if marks are to be deducted should students fail to adhere to word count/video length or other content restrictions, this must be made known to all students in advance of the assessment within the marking criteria/assessment brief. Negative marking (i.e., deducting marks for wrong answers) should not be employed.

61. The University is committed to use of the full range of the marking scale and has advised its staff and external examiners accordingly. This is particularly important at the higher and lower ends of the range. Marks are awarded on a percentage scale (0-100%), except where other scales are required as a consequence of programme accreditation by external bodies. In such cases, a scheme to translate the alternative scale into the University's 0-100% scale is required which should be approved as part of the validation of the programme or through the programme and module modification process. For example, the "standard setting" scheme used for the OSCEs and the final year examination within the School of Veterinary Medicine is an evidence-based accepted set of academic methods which are used to define a pass mark. A mean value of the 'cut off' scores of the approved methods is used as the final 'cut off score'. The student marks are then scaled so that the cut-off point is 50% using the University mark adjustment procedure.

62. The principles embodied within the University grade descriptors should be used to create assignment-specific marking schemes. These include:

- Clarity as to what constitutes work that represents the whole range of available marks (0-100%)

- The objectivity of the marking schemes, their alignment with the University's grade descriptors, their correspondence to the learning outcomes that are being assessed, and their relevance to the form of assessment selected

63. Students should be made aware of University grade descriptors as provided in Appendix 1 and how these relate to marking schemes for their assignments. It is essential that the University grade descriptors are developed into marking schemes and that staff are able to explain these marking schemes to students, in discussions early in the students' academic careers.

Principles for correction and alteration of marks

64. Correction of marks applies when there has been a demonstrable failure in the administration of marking, for example the incorrect addition of components leading to a total. Correction may be applied to an individual mark within a cohort so long as the sample used for quality control purposes includes no further errors. Where additional errors are found within the sample then all the units within that cohort must be checked for administrative accuracy. The correction of marks is reported to the Board of Examiners.

65. The alteration of the initial mark(s) assigned to work submitted for assessment can only be undertaken through procedures that are applied consistently across the University.

66. Marks awarded cannot be changed by anyone acting alone, including Module Leaders, Programme Leaders, Directors of Learning and Teaching or others, except for corrections.

Agreement of marks

67. Agreement of marks applies in cases where double marking is used/required. When the two or more markers responsible for marking the assessment, or a component

within it, initially disagree, they may seek agreement on the mark they jointly award. Modification of a mark by agreement can only be applied before marks are formally returned and entered into SITS.

68.   Agreement of marks should be on the basis of shared and agreed academic judgement, and an explanation must be available to a Board of Examiners should it be required. Where agreement cannot be reached between the markers the Module Leader (or Programme Leader if the Module Leader is involved in the lack of agreement) will discuss and seek to reconcile the assessment differences. On the rare occasions where differences are irreconcilable the matter may be referred to the relevant external examiner to consider how to reconcile the differences. In such a case the external examiner does not mark but is the final arbiter in deciding how to reach an agreed mark.[6]

Procedure for the reconsideration of marks

69.   The procedure of mark reconsideration is triggered where the quality assurance procedures within a cohort indicate variations or differences in the marking process in either a consistent or inconsistent pattern. Where the markers reach agreement on how marks should be changed, the alteration is applied to the complete cohort of marks for that unit of assessment, and before the marks are returned to students and entered into SITS. Modification of an individual student's mark is not allowed.

70.   Where there is a consistent pattern in the differences between the marks of the assessors, there are two procedural options:

- On the basis of shared academic judgement, the assessors can agree to alter all of the marks with the cohort to an agreed and common extent

- If they continue to disagree, then the Module Leader or Programme Leader intervenes and, if necessary, determines the extent of any alteration that will be applied to the whole cohort. Such alteration will be brought to the attention of the external examiner(s)

71.   Where there is an inconsistent pattern in the differences between the marks of the assessors, there are two procedural options, both of which require that the entire cohort of work submitted within that unit of assessment is (re)considered:

- On the basis of shared academic judgement, they can agree all of the individual marks within the cohort of work submitted for the unit of assessment

- If they continue to disagree then the Module Leader or Programme Leader intervenes and, if necessary, the latter determines the extent of any further (re)assessment. As a last resort, the opinion of the relevant external examiner(s) is sought, although they are not to be used as additional markers

Procedure for the adjustment of marks

72.   It is possible that, despite the thorough safeguards put in place by the University, the teaching and assessment processes may not always function as perfectly as intended. To mitigate potential risks to the maintenance of academic standards, Boards of Examiners can consider the adjustment of cohorts of marks.

73.   Adjustment can be used to either raise/lower a cohort of marks, or to alter some marks within a cohort. In both cases the intention being to alter an atypical profile of marks to a typical one, based on such factors as previous performance and disciplinary norms. There are choices of several methodologies to be used to adjust

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[6] See *Code of practice for external examining: taught programmes*

marks, which are given in Appendix 7. These procedures are likely to be applied rarely and only under precisely controlled circumstances.

74. The case for adjustment must be discussed by the Board of Examiners, including its external examiners, and the conclusions reported to the Senate Progression and Conferment Executive (SPACE), along with an action plan designed to avoid repetition of the cause(s) of the problem(s). Students will not normally be informed directly where mark adjustment has occurred except where provisional marks were provided to students subject to ratification/confirmation and were changed following adjustment.

75. In exceptional circumstances, SPACE may also decide to adjust a cohort of marks if it considers that appropriate corrective action has not been taken by a Board of Examiners.

Feedback and feed-forward to students on assessed work

76. Assessed work that is returned to students will be accompanied by feedback and/or commentary. It will be provided[7]:

    - On or before a specified date that is within a period of three semester weeks[8] following the submission deadline, and

    - Not less than three days before the submission deadline for assessed work where the student's response to feedback on the first piece of work might reasonably be expected to enable them to improve their performance in the second piece (or pieces) of assessed work.

    Final year project reports/portfolios and Master's dissertations are not required to be returned within the three semester week period following the submission deadline.

77. The assessment of all work requires a commentary explaining the basis of any mark or grade. The nature and extent of feedback will be determined by the needs of the assessment type and student performance(s) but should be sufficient to explain strengths and weaknesses in the performance(s) and explain and justify the mark(s) awarded. Appendix 6 provides some guiding principles for student feedback.

78. Feedback on student work submitted for formative assessment should be directed to supporting the learning process. It should additionally provide an explanation of why any indicative mark was applied and, where appropriate, how the student's performance could be improved.

79. Feedback on work returned to students that had been submitted for summative assessment must explain the grounds for the mark or grade awarded. It should additionally, and where appropriate, indicate how the student's performance could be improved. Feedback should be provided on the University's standard feedback template (see Appendix 6).

80. Feedback should aim to focus the student's attention in ways that are intended to support the learning process and provide a basis for future improved performance. It is in this sense that some have adopted the term 'feed-forward'. Feedback/feed-

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[7] This paragraph may not be applicable to students taking deferred assessment(s) due to agreed extenuating circumstances and/or temporary withdrawal.

[8] Where there are exceptional circumstances, for example related to staff illness, or there is a very large cohort of students and/or the volume of work to be assessed is such that the three-week deadline is impractical, the Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean may authorise an extension to a total maximum of four semester weeks so long as this is reported to the Faculty Education Committee.

forward should include comments on what a student has done well and what is incorrect and/or inadequately presented. It should be regarded as essential to provide advice on how the work could have been improved.

81. Students may, if they wish, be shown their marked examination scripts. Scripts may not be returned to candidates on a permanent basis.

The recording and return to students of provisional marks

82. The University is committed to the timely conduct of assessments and the timely return of assessed work to students with marks and feedback on their performance. Marks are, however, only provisional until they have been agreed by the Board of Examiners and students must be made aware of this to avoid any potential confusion.

83. Summative assessments that contribute to awards can be returned to students with the indicative mark once that mark has been subject to appropriate quality checks (excluding by external examiners) that could have resulted in its modification or moderation.

84. Marks are entered into SITS by the appropriate SITS experts in the Faculties and Academic Registry and are available to students wishing to monitor their academic progress through On-line Mark Viewing (OLMV) at prescribed times of the year.

85. Once entered into SITS, marks cannot be amended unless there has been an administrative error or following a process of correction, alteration, adjustment, or as a result of an extenuating circumstances application or academic appeal.

86. As part of the reports they provide to Boards of Examiners, the University expects Programme Leaders to identify individual students and/or cohorts where there are patterns in not making reasonable attempts to submit formative assessments.

The release of confirmed marks

87. Marks that have been agreed by the appropriate Board of Examiners are returned to the Academic Registry which releases/publishes agreed mark lists via On-line Mark Viewing or the Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR). The Academic Registry publishes degree lists that have been confirmed by SPACE. Boards of Examiners, Academic Hives Schools/Departments, Programme Leaders and/or individual members of staff are not authorised to release provisional pass lists or degree classifications or award grades prior to their publication by the Academic Registry.

88. The University is committed to work closely with Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs). Where a PSRB requires as part of its arrangements to accredit a University programme that there should be special arrangements for the agreement of marks and the conferment of awards for programmes, the details of any such special arrangements are formally recorded by the relevant Board of Examiners, set out in the programme handbook, and notified to the Academic Registry.

Classification of University of Surrey taught degrees

89. The procedure for classification of awards is set out in the *Regulations for taught programmes*.

Appendix 1 - University grade descriptors

University grade descriptors are generic statements that describe student achievement at undergraduate and taught postgraduate level. They are expressed in generic terms so that they are applicable to a broad range of disciplines. The design of a programme is informed by a range of sources, such as the *QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)* and subject benchmark statements and, where relevant, Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements. The grade descriptors are intended to complement these. In particular, they will help to confirm at the assessment stage that the breadth and depth of the learning experience has been undertaken and the standard achieved.

It is not expected that students should be able to demonstrate the entire knowledge and skills sets included within the descriptors at each stage of the learning experience (i.e. within every module or level). However, it is anticipated that, over the course of studying a programme, students will have had an opportunity to demonstrate that they have gained the knowledge and skills outlined in their programme specifications. By reference to the grade descriptors, students can understand why they have achieved the marks that they have for their assessments in each module or overall in their programme.

The purpose of grade descriptors

- Preparing level and module intended learning outcomes
- Designing assessment beyond 'content' to include skills (discipline-related and professional/scholarly ones)
- Ensuring that marks are awarded for the full range/ breadth, i.e. 0-100%, so that students can reach top marks, if deserved
- Shaping marking schemes and criteria appropriate beyond 'content' to include subject specific skills and professional/scholarly ones
- Managing expectations of feedback and guidance to students about their academic work

The importance of grade descriptors

Grade descriptors are important because they inform both the students and external stakeholders about the range and breadth of knowledge and abilities a student is required to achieve at the University of Surrey. Grade descriptors are statements about what it means to be a graduate of the University of Surrey and act as guidance for both staff and students.

Determining what grade descriptors apply at each level of undergraduate study

Grade descriptors can be used to generate assignment–specific marking schemes and marking criteria that specify the breadth and depth of students' capabilities at each level of their undergraduate studies. It is up to the professional judgment of academic staff to decide what is achievable at each level within the framework set by the grade descriptors.

Appling the generic language of the grade descriptors at a discipline level

The generic grade descriptors are there to ensure that assessments are marked across the whole range of available marks (0–100%) and that a range of subject specific, scholarly and professional skills are being assessed as well as content. Because of the level of generality within the grade descriptors, they allow for interpretation at School/Departmental and disciplinary level.

Academic staff can apply specific disciplinary meanings to the generic terms used in the grade descriptors, for example, in Mathematics, the term 'originality' could be interpreted as 'elegance' as it is a more appropriate term for that specific disciplinary community. It is important that these discipline specific terms are communicated to students, so that there is

alignment in understanding between staff and students. In this sense, the grade descriptors act as guidance for students and can also be referred to when providing feedback.

Deriving intended learning outcomes from the grade descriptors

Grade descriptors can be used as a guide in writing intended learning outcomes. They can assist in ensuring that intended learning outcomes should be based not only on content knowledge but also around skills and capabilities, both generic and professional.

Notes on using grade descriptors

1. Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements will be included within marking schemes appropriate to assignments set. In some discipline areas it will be appropriate to exemplify work of a particular standard by model answers. All marking schemes and model answers will align with the University grade descriptors.

2. The principles embodied within the University grade descriptors should be a feature of assignment-specific marking schemes. These include:

    *   Clarity as to what constitutes work that represents the whole range of available marks (0-100%)
    *   The objectivity of the marking schemes, their alignment with the University grade descriptors, their match to the learning outcomes that are being assessed, and their relevance to the form of assessment selected

3. Students should be made aware of the University grade descriptors and how these relate to marking schemes for their assignments. The former will be communicated via the University website and should be included in programme handbooks. The latter should also be communicated via handbooks and in discussions with students and made clear in assignment briefs.

4. Linked to point 2 above, it will be essential that, however the University grade descriptors are developed into marking schemes, staff are able to explain these marking schemes to students in discussions early in the students' academic careers.

5. The design of challenging assignments (beyond essays and exams that test knowledge recall) must happen alongside the use of the University grade descriptors and clearly aligned discipline-specific marking schemes since, if there is no opportunity within the assignment for a student to demonstrate their higher level ability then this too will limit their ability to access marks at the higher end of the range.

FHEQ Level 3 grade descriptors

Grade	Criteria/ HE level	Level
		HE3
90-100 EXCEPTIONAL	Knowledge	Demonstrates a very impressive breadth of knowledge and understanding of the subject
	Independent study	An exceptional range of literature has been used which is especially pertinent to the work in question.
	Development of argument	Exceptional level of argument and appreciation of the breadth of the field of study. Judiciously selected evidence is used that provides clear analysis. The use of evaluation and critique are superb.
	Application	Evidence of exceptional ability to contextualise and apply knowledge, to generate excellent, creative responses to given problems
	Transferable skills	Exhibits exceptional technical and professional skills, including communication, presentation and referencing
80-89 OUTSTANDING	Knowledge	Demonstrates an impressive breadth of knowledge and understanding of the subject
	Independent study	An outstanding range of suitable sources have been used. Evidence of reading outside the immediate area.
	Development of argument	Sophisticated level of argument and appreciation of the breadth of study. Successful critique or synthesis is evident.
	Application	Evidence of outstanding ability to contextualise and apply knowledge, to generate creative and sound responses to given problems
	Transferable skills	Exhibits outstanding technical and professional skills, including communication, presentation and referencing
70-79 EXCELLENT	Knowledge	Demonstrates very good breadth of knowledge and understanding of the subject
	Independent study	An excellent range of good quality and suitable sources have been used. There may be evidence of reading outside the immediate area.
	Development of argument	Arguments demonstrate an appreciation of the breadth of study and links to conclusions drawn. Successful analyse or evaluate sources. Critique of sources may be attempted.
	Application	Evidence of excellent ability to contextualise and apply knowledge, to generate a range of creative and reasonable responses to given problems
	Transferable skills	Exhibits excellent technical and professional skills, including communication, presentation and referencing
60-69 GOOD	Knowledge	Demonstrates a sound breadth of knowledge and understanding of the subject
	Independent study	A good range of suitable sources have been used.
	Development of argument	Arguments are presented clearly. Simple conclusions drawn. Synthesis of ideas may be attempted.
	Application	Evidence of good ability to contextualise and apply knowledge, to generate a range of reasonable responses to given problems
	Transferable skills	Exhibits good technical and professional skills, including communication, presentation and referencing
50-59 ADEQUATE (Pass)	Knowledge	Demonstrates an adequate breadth of knowledge and understanding of the subject
	Independent study	The suitability and breadth of sources used is adequate.
	Development of argument	Valid arguments are emerging. An attempt to analyse and evaluate sources has been made.
	Application	Adequate evidence of ability to contextualise and apply knowledge, to generate reasonable responses to given problems
	Transferable skills	Exhibits adequate technical and professional skills, including communication, presentation and referencing

40-49 BELOW EXPECTATIONS	Knowledge	Demonstrates superficial knowledge and understanding of the subject.
	Independent study	Unsuitable sources predominate or there is little evidence of broader reading beyond set texts.
	Development of argument	Fragmented analysis or evaluation. Arguments are not coherently presented.
	Application	Little evidence of ability to contextualise and apply knowledge, to generate reasonable responses to given problems
	Transferable skills	Exhibits limited technical and professional skills, including communication, presentation and referencing
30 - 39 WELL BELOW EXPECTATIONS (Fail)	Knowledge	Demonstrates very limited knowledge and understanding of the subject
	Independent study	Unsuitable sources predominate and there is little evidence of broad reading
	Development of argument	Justification of points made are somewhat lacking. Limited sense of a argument.
	Application	Very limited evidence of ability to contextualise and apply knowledge, with little evidence of ability to generate reasonable responses to given problems
	Transferable skills	Exhibits very limited technical and professional skills, including communication, presentation and referencing
20 - 29 FAR BELOW EXPECTATIONS (Fail)	Knowledge	Demonstrates extremely limited knowledge and understanding of the subject
	Independent study	Very limited reading is evident and reading does not suit the work in question.
	Development of argument	Justification of points made are mostly absent. Arguments are not coherently presented and are based upon personal opinion.
	Application	Ability to contextualise and apply knowledge is not evident, with no evidence of capacity to respond to given problems
	Transferable skills	Exhibits extremely limited technical and professional skills, including communication, presentation and referencing
10 - 19 FAR BELOW EXPECTATIONS (Fail)	Knowledge	Demonstrates almost no knowledge and understanding of the subject
	Independent study	No evidence of reading.
	Development of argument	No justification of points made. Arguments at times are false and lack evidence.
	Application	Adequate evidence of ability to contextualise and apply knowledge, to generate reasonable responses to given problems
	Transferable skills	Exhibits extremely poor technical and professional skills, including communication, presentation and referencing
0 - 9 VERY FAR BELOW EXPECTATIONS (Fail)	Knowledge	Demonstrates no knowledge and understanding of the subject
	Independent study	No evidence of use of appropriate, independently selected sources
	Development of argument	No analysis and evaluation of sources is present, resulting in incoherent work based entirely on unsubstantiated opinion
	Application	No evidence of ability to contextualise and apply knowledge, to generate responses to given problems
	Transferable skills	Exhibits no technical and professional skills, including communication, presentation and referencing

FHEQ Level 4, 5 and 6 grade descriptors

Grade	Criteria/ HE level	Level		
		HE4 (Year 1)	HE5 (Year 2)	HE6 (Year 3)
90-100 EXCEPTIONAL (First)	Knowledge	Very impressive knowledge and understanding, evidenced through integration and application of a full range of appropriate principles, theories, evidence and techniques and an awareness of the limitations of knowledge.	Extensive and relevant knowledge and understanding, evidenced through integration and application of full range appropriate principles, theories, evidence and techniques, with awareness of the limitations of knowledge and impact of this on possible interpretations.	Comprehensive, deep, advanced knowledge and understanding evidenced through integration and application of full range appropriate principles, theories, evidence and techniques. Awareness of the limitations of evidence, and able to challenge convention and investigate contradictions.
	Independent study	Evidence of reading beyond provided texts, using an exceptionally wide range of carefully selected literature that is integrated into work and used to critically inform arguments or problem solve.	Evidence of extensive, carefully selected independent reading of an exceptionally wide range of literature that is integrated into work and used to critically inform arguments or problem solve.	Evidence of careful independent selection and rigorous evaluation of an exceptionally wide range of high quality evidence, used to create the highest level of compelling and coherent arguments, develop new insights and highly persuasive conclusions, and to solve complex problems.
	Development of argument	Clear, relevant and convincing explanation, evidencing high level ability to analyse, showing critical insight and creativity.	Clear relevant explanations and persuasive arguments showing exceptional and thorough critical analysis, synthesis and reflection and a willingness to suggest alternatives.	Exceptional scholarship, including very high quality independent critical evaluation, analysis, synthesis and reflection that is innovative and challenges existing approaches, with persuasive arguments.
	Application	Relates theory to practice with a range of relevant examples.	Integrates theory and practice with original insight and a range relevant examples.	Original and insightful integration of theory and practice, demonstrating excellent initiative and using a very wide range of relevant examples.
	Transferable skills	Competent in subject-specific practical and transferable skills appropriate to level.	Competent in subject-specific practical and transferable skills appropriate to level.	Exhibits advanced subject-specific practical and transferable skills.
80-89 OUTSTANDING (First)	Knowledge	Impressive knowledge and understanding, evidenced through integration and application of a full range of appropriate principles, theories, evidence and techniques and an awareness of the limitations of knowledge.	Impressive, extensive knowledge and understanding, evidenced through integration and application of a full range of appropriate principles, theories, evidence and techniques, and an awareness of the limitations of knowledge and impact of this on possible interpretations.	Comprehensive, detailed and advanced knowledge and understanding evidenced through integration and application of a full range of appropriate principles, theories, evidence and techniques. Awareness of the limitations evidence, and ability to investigate contradictions and identify reasons for these.
	Independent study	Evidence of reading beyond set texts using an impressively wide range of carefully selected literature that is integrated into work and is used to critically inform arguments or problem solve.	Evidence of extensive, carefully selected independent reading of an impressively wide range of literature that is used to critically inform arguments or problem solve.	Evidence of careful, independent selection and very high quality evaluation of a full range of high quality sources that is used to create a high level of compelling and coherent argument, developing innovative insights and highly persuasive conclusions and solving complex problems.
	Development of argument	Provides clear, relevant and convincing explanation, evidencing a sophisticated ability to analyse, and insight and creativity.	Clear relevant explanations and persuasive arguments based on thorough critical analysis, synthesis and reflection, and a willingness to critique and suggest alternatives.	Exceptional scholarship, including critical evaluation, synthesis and reflection that is innovative and challenges existing approaches.
	Application	Relates theory to practice with a range of relevant examples.	Integrates theory and practice with insight and a range relevant examples.	Insightful integration of theory and practice, using a wide range of examples.
	Transferable skills	Competent in subject-specific practical and transferable skills appropriate to level.	Competent in subject-specific practical and transferable skills appropriate to level.	Exhibits advanced subject specific practical and transferable skills.

Band	Criteria			
70-79 EXCELLENT (First)	Knowledge	Thorough and substantial knowledge and understanding of main concepts, evidenced through integration and application of a wide range of appropriate principles, theories, evidence and techniques, and beginning to show an awareness of the limitations of knowledge.	Detailed/extensive knowledge and understanding of key concepts, evidenced through integration and application of a very wide range of appropriate principles, theories, evidence and techniques, and an awareness of the limitations of knowledge	Comprehensive, advanced and up-to-date knowledge and understanding of main concepts and inter-relationships, evidenced through integration and application of a full range of appropriate principles, theories, evidence and techniques. Detailed appreciation of uncertainties, limitations or contradictions of information.
	Independent study	Some evidence of independent study beyond set texts, using a range of carefully selected literature.	Evidence of significant independent reading, using a very wide range of carefully selected literature that is used to draw sound conclusions or problem solve.	Evidence of extensive independent reading using a very wide range of carefully selected sources, used to critically inform arguments and problem solve
	Development of argument	Literature is critically analysed to create perceptive and persuasive arguments, and strong conclusions.	Literature is critically analysed and reflected on to develop very good, relevant, explanations and arguments, some original ideas, to solve problems and to draw strong conclusions.	Literature is critically evaluated to create a high level of compelling, coherent argument that is often innovative or insightful and includes robust conclusions. Evidence of an excellent, mature and independent approach to problem solving.
	Application	Able to relate theory and practice with relevant examples.	Able to relate theory and practice with relevant examples.	Integration of theory and practice that is insightful, using a range of relevant examples.
	Transferable skills	Competent in subject-specific practical and transferable skills appropriate to level.	Competent in subject-specific practical and transferable skills appropriate to level.	Exhibits advanced subject-specific practical and transferable skills.
60-69 VERY GOOD (2:i)	Knowledge	Detailed knowledge and understanding, with only some minor misunderstandings, evidenced through integration and application of a range of appropriate principles, theories, evidence and techniques and some awareness of limitations of knowledge.	Detailed, thorough knowledge and understanding of key concepts, evidenced through integration and application of a wide range of appropriate principles, theories, evidence and techniques and awareness of other stances, but with some minor misconceptions.	Comprehensive, thorough, coherent and up-to-date knowledge and understanding of concepts and their inter-relationships, evidenced through integration and application of a very wide range of appropriate principles, theories, evidence and techniques, and an awareness of the uncertainties and limitations of the subject.
	Independent study	Evidence of reading set texts and use of some independently sourced literature .	Evidence of reading independently sourced, relevant literature.	Evidence of considerable independent reading of a wide range of independently sourced and relevant literature, used to inform arguments and problem solve.
	Development of argument	Literature is analysed well to create basic, but relevant, explanations and arguments that are generally well-supported, but some conclusions may be based on insufficient evidence.	Critical analysis and synthesis of literature to support relevant explanations and arguments and derive valid conclusions and reflections	Critical evaluation of, reflection on and synthesis of literature to create arguments that are coherent, show good insights and have convincing conclusions and reflections, and to resolve complex problems.
	Application	Able to relate theory to practice with only some relevant examples.	Able to link theory and practice with only some relevant examples .	Clear, critical integration of theory and practice that offers some insights and uses some relevant examples.
	Transferable skills	Competent in subject-specific practical and transferable skills appropriate to level.	Competent in subject-specific practical and transferable skills appropriate to level.	Exhibits advanced subject-specific practical and transferable skills.
50-59 GOOD (2:ii)	Knowledge	Evidence of sound knowledge and understanding of core areas, evidenced through integration and application of some appropriate principles, theories, evidence and techniques with emerging awareness different stances, but there may be major misconceptions and limited recognition of inherent complexities.	Generally sound knowledge and understanding of key concepts, evidenced through integration and application of a range of appropriate principles, theories, evidence and techniques and awareness of different stances, but there may be some misconceptions.	Strong, detailed, systematic knowledge and understanding of key concepts, evidenced through integration and application of a wide range of appropriate principles, theories, evidence and techniques, and recognition of the provisional nature of knowledge and an emerging awareness of different stances.
	Independent study	Limited evidence of reading beyond lecture materials and set texts.	Some evidence of reading beyond lecture materials and set texts	Evidence of reading relevant, independently sourced literature.
	Development of argument	Work is largely descriptive, with limited evidence of reasoning, limited relevant explanations and broadly valid conclusions.	Accurate, analytical and generally critical use of literature to support arguments and generate generally sound conclusions and reflections, but there may be a lack of focus	Some logical analytical thinking and synthesis of a range of literature to create and support arguments that exhibit some coherence and criticality, and lead to valid conclusions and reflections.
	Application	Application of theory to practice may be confused.	Evidence of application of theory to practice, with some examples, but may be confused.	Evidence of integration of theory and practice, with relevant examples, but with some limitations.
	Transferable skills	Competent in subject-specific practical and transferable skills appropriate to level.	Competent in subject-specific practical and transferable skills appropriate to level.	Exhibits advanced subject-specific practical and transferable skills.

Grade band	Criteria			
40-49 ADEQUATE (Third)	Knowledge	Basic, but broadly accurate, knowledge, based only on lecture material, but little understanding and some flaws evident.	Some evidence of basic knowledge and understanding of key concepts.	Coherent knowledge and understanding of key concepts, with only basic recognition of the complexity of the subject, and some omissions or errors.
	Independent study	No evidence of reading beyond lecture material.	Little evidence of reading beyond supplied texts.	Some evidence of reading from a limited range of independently sourced literature
	Development of argument	Work is descriptive, with some unsubstantiated assertion or logic, and only some valid conclusions. Arguments are weak, albeit that a sense of argument is emerging with some evidence used to support views.	Work is limited to description and only basic analysis, with weak explanations and only some effective arguments and conclusions.	Work is mainly descriptive, with some relevant conclusions and reflections. There is some logical, analytical thinking and attempt to synthesise, and use literature to support arguments, which are limited by underdeveloped critical engagement.
	Application	Superficial links between theory and practice, and little application.	Ability to integrate theory and practice, but with limited application and poor examples.	Some evidence of integration of theory and practice, with some examples, but may be confused.
	Transferable skills	Demonstrates adequate subject-specific practical and transferable skills for the level.	Demonstrates adequate subject-specific practical and transferable skills for the level.	Demonstrates advanced subject-specific practical and transferable skills
30 - 39 BELOW EXPECTATIONS (Fail)	Knowledge	Emerging, but patchy knowledge of the subject, with superficial understanding and some errors and misunderstanding.	Basic, patchy knowledge of some relevant topics and partial or superficial understanding, but with some inaccuracies.	Basic and patchy knowledge and superficial understanding (inadequate), with little to no recognition of the complexity of the subject and some significant inaccuracies.
	Independent study	Little evidence of reading and indiscriminate use of sources.	Evidence of little appropriate reading and indiscriminate use of sources	Evidence of little independent reading and reliance on inappropriate or indiscriminate sources.
	Development of argument	Work is descriptive and uncritical, with generalisations and scant evidence, and conclusions that lack validity.	Work is largely descriptive with some unsubstantiated assertion and generalisations with scant evidence, and conclusions that lack validity.	Work is largely descriptive, includes unsubstantiated assertion or scant evidence and fails to show critical engagement or coherence, therefore producing conclusions that lack relevance.
	Application	Links between theory and practice are confused.	Little integration of theory and practice, or application of knowledge, and poor examples.	Some evidence of integration of theory and practice, but is inconsistent, and with poor examples.
	Transferable skills	Fails to demonstrate adequate subject-specific practical and transferable skills for the level.	Fails to demonstrate adequate subject-specific practical and transferable skills for the level.	Fails to demonstrate adequate subject-specific practical and transferable skills for the level.
20 - 29 WELL BELOW EXPECTATIONS (Fail)	Knowledge	Little or confused knowledge and understanding, with major gaps.	Little knowledge and understanding and significant inaccuracies.	Major gaps in knowledge and understanding, and significant inaccuracies.
	Independent study	No evidence of reading.	No evidence of reading.	Little evidence of reading.
	Development of argument	Work is descriptive, containing only personal views and unsubstantiated generalisations, and with little to no attempt to draw conclusions.	Work contains unsubstantiated generalisations without credible evidence, and unsupportable conclusions.	No attempt to analyse, synthesise or evaluate information, leading to work with unsubstantiated generalisations with no credible evidence, no real underlying arguments, and a lack of critical engagement, and unsupportable conclusions.
	Application	Unable to relate theory and practice.	Unable to relate theory and practice.	Mainly unable to relate theory to practice.
	Transferable skills	Fails to demonstrate adequate subject-specific practical and transferable skills for the level.	Fails to demonstrate adequate subject-specific practical and transferable skills for the level.	Fails to demonstrate adequate subject-specific practical and transferable skills for the level.
10 - 19 FAR BELOW EXPECTATIONS (Fail)	Knowledge	Very weak understanding of key concepts, with major inaccuracies and much confusion.		
	Independent study	No evidence of reference to relevant literature.		
	Development of argument	Work is wholly descriptive, opinion-led, and largely irrelevant and has fundamental flaws in arguments.		
	Application	Unable to demonstrate application of theory to practice.		
	Transferable skills	Fails to adequately demonstrate subject-specific practical and transferable skills for the level.		
0 - 9 VERY FAR BELOW EXPECTATIONS (Fail)	Knowledge	No understanding and no evidence of relevant learning, with many inaccuracies.		
	Independent study	No use of appropriate sources.		
	Development of argument	Work is wholly descriptive and opinion led, and is incomprehensible and irrelevant, with an absence of any argument or focus.		
	Application	Unable to demonstrate application of theory to practice.		
	Transferable skills	Fails to demonstrate any subject-specific practical and transferable skills for the level.		

FHEQ Level 7 grade descriptors

Grade	Criteria/ HE level	Level
		HE7
90-100 EXCEPTIONAL	Knowledge	Demonstrates an exceptional breadth and depth of knowledge, at the forefront of the discipline, and an excellent understanding of the limitations of knowledge
	Independent study	Makes good use of an extensive range of appropriate, independently selected sources to inform arguments
	Development of argument	Critical use, integration and synthesis of an extensive range of sources and/or own research data to develop new insights and authorative conclusions. Conclusions are based on rigorous independent thought, are of a publishable quality, and may have the potential to challenge the forefront of the academic discipline or area of professional practice, and make an authorative contribution to knowledge
	Application	Is able to apply theory to practice in a way that is creative and original, and consistently offers perceptive interpretations and striking insights, and demonstrates excellent judgement on the basis of evidence when tackling complex problems.
	Research skills (where relevant)	Demonstrates exceptional skill in the selection of research methodologies and their use, and in the analysis and reporting of results. Generates new knowledge, and has an excellent awareness of the limitations of results and the conclusions that can be drawn. Work is of a publishable standard.
	Transferable skills	Exhibits exceptional technical and professional skills, including research skills where relevant
80-89 OUTSTANDING	Knowledge	Demonstrates an outstanding breadth and depth of knowledge, at the forefront of the discipline, and a very good understanding of the limitations of knowledge
	Independent study	Frequently uses a very wide range of appropriate, independently selected sources to inform arguments
	Development of argument	Critical use, integration and synthesis of a wide range of sources and/or own research data to develop insights and authorative conclusions. Conclusions are based on rigorous independent thought, may be of a publishable quality, and may have the potential to make some contribution to knowledge
	Application	Is able to apply theory to practice in a way that is creative and original, and offers perceptive interpretations and insights, and demonstrates very good judgement on the basis of evidence when tackling complex problems.
	Research skills (where relevant)	Demonstrates outstanding skill in the selection of research methodologies and their use, and in the analysis and reporting of results. Generates new knowledge, and has a very good awareness of the limitations of results and the conclusions that can be drawn. Work may be of a publishable standard.
	Transferable skills	Exhibits outstanding technical and professional skills, including research skills where relevant
70-79 EXCELLENT (Distinction)	Knowledge	Demonstrates an excellent breadth and depth of knowledge, frequently at the forefront of the discipline, and a good understanding of the limitations of knowledge
	Independent study	Consistently uses an extensive range of appropriate, independently selected sources and/or own research data to inform arguments
	Development of argument	Critical use and synthesis of a wide range of sources and/or own research data to develop some insights and valid conclusions. Conclusions are based on sound independent thought and judgement.
	Application	Is able to apply theory to practice in a way that is creative and original, and offers some perceptive interpretations and insights, and demonstrates sound judgement on the basis of evidence when tackling complex problems.
	Research skills (where relevant)	Demonstrates excellent skill in the selection of research methodologies and their use, and in the analysis and reporting of results. Generates new insights, and has a very good awareness of the limitations of results and the conclusions that can be drawn.
	Transferable skills	Exhibits excellent technical and professional skills, including research skills where relevant

60-69 GOOD (Merit)	Knowledge	Demonstrates a systematic and broad understanding of the subject, often at the forefront of the discipline, and an understanding of the limitations of knowledge
	Independent study	Often uses appropriate, independently selected sources and/or own research data to inform arguments
	Development of argument	Critical use and application of a range of sources and/or own research data to develop coherent arguments and new insights, and to identify problems.
	Application	Is able to apply theory to practice in a creative way that offers robust interpretations and insights, and demonstrates good judgement on the basis of evidence when tackling complex problems.
	Research skills (where relevant)	Demonstrates good skill in the selection of research methodologies and their use, and in the analysis and reporting of results. Generates new insights, and has a good awareness of the limitations of results and the conclusions that can be drawn.
	Transferable skills	Exhibits very good technical and professional skills, including research skills where relevant
50-59 ADEQUATE (Pass)	Knowledge	Demonstrates a systematic and broad understanding of the subject, and an awareness of the limitations of knowledge
	Independent study	Evidence of some use of a range of appropriate, independently selected sources and/or own research data to inform arguments
	Development of argument	Critical use of a range of appropriate sources to develop adequate arguments and some insights.
	Application	Is able to apply theory to practice in a way that offers adequate conclusions, but may not always reflect the complexity of the subject.
	Research skills (where relevant)	Demonstrates skill in the selection of research methodologies and their use, and in the analysis and reporting of results. Generates some new insights, and has an awareness of the limitations of results and the conclusions that can be drawn.
	Transferable skills	Exhibits adequate technical and professional skills, including research skills where relevant
40-49 BELOW EXPECTATIONS	Knowledge	Demonstrates an incomplete understanding of the subject and little awareness of the limitations of knowledge
	Independent study	Limited use of independently selected sources and/or own research data, which may not be carefully selected for appropriateness or accuracy
	Development of argument	Underdeveloped ability to critically engage with sources, leading to overly simple conclusions and arguments that lack coherence .
	Application	Limited and inconsistent ability to relate theory to practice, and does not reflect the complexity of the subject matter
	Research skills (where relevant)	Demonstrates some skill in the selection of research methodologies and their use, and in the analysis and reporting of results. Does not generate new insights, and has an incomplete awareness of the limitations of results and the conclusions that can be drawn.
	Transferable skills	Does not exhibit adequate technical and professional skills, including research skills where relevant

30 - 40 WELL BELOW EXPECTATIONS (Fail)	Knowledge	Weak depth and breadth of knowledge of the discipline, with little evidence of understanding and sparse awareness of the limitations of knowledge
	Independent study	Very limited use of the literature, with little evidence of an ability to differentiate sources and/or own research data in terms of quality or appropriateness
	Development of argument	Descriptive work that lacks any real critical engagement or analysis, has poorly constructed arguments and limited conclusions.
	Application	Consistently poor application of knowledge
	Research skills (where relevant)	Demonstrates little skill in the selection of research methodologies and their use, and in the analysis and reporting of results. Does not generate new insights, and has an little awareness of the limitations of results and the conclusions that can be drawn.
	Transferable skills	Does not exhibit adequate technical and professional skills, including research skills where relevant
20 - 30 FAR BELOW EXPECTATIONS (Fail)	Knowledge	Serious limitations in the breadth and depth of knowledge, and no real understanding or awareness of the limitations of knowledge
	Independent study	Where literature and/or own research data are used, there is no differentiation in the quality or appropriateness of sources or data
	Development of argument	No critical engagement with the material, resulting in work that is descriptive and demonstrates no analysis, and with poorly constructed arguments and no conclusions
	Application	Extremely limited application of knowledge
	Research skills (where relevant)	Demonstrates very little skill in the selection of research methodologies and their use, and in the analysis and reporting of results. Does not generate new insights, and has an very little awareness of the limitations of results and the conclusions that can be drawn.
	Transferable skills	Does not exhibit adequate technical and professional skills, including research skills where relevant
10 - 20 FAR BELOW EXPECTATIONS (Fail)	Knowledge	Largely ignorant of the subject, and no understanding exhibited
	Independent study	Frequent absence of sources and/or own research data to support arguments, and sources largely irrelevant or inappropriate
	Development of argument	No attempt to critically engage with the material, leading to arguments that lack coherence or credibility
	Application	Virtually no ability to apply knowledge is evident
	Research skills (where relevant)	Demonstrates poor skills in the selection of research methodologies and their use, and in the analysis and reporting of results. Does not generate new insights, and has an no awareness of the limitations of results and the conclusions that can be drawn.
	Transferable skills	Does not exhibit adequate technical and professional skills, including research skills where relevant
0 - 10 VERY FAR BELOW EXPECTATIONS (Fail)	Knowledge	Ignorant of the subject, and work completely misrepresents thinking in the discipline
	Independent study	Absence or misuse of any relevant sources and/or own research data
	Development of argument	Fails to present any relevant material, with incoherent and confused arguments
	Application	Unable to apply knowledge
	Research skills (where relevant)	Demonstrates no skill in the selection of research methodologies and their use, and in the analysis and reporting of results. Does not generate new insights, and has an no awareness of the limitations of results and the conclusions that can be drawn.
	Transferable skills	Does not exhibit adequate technical and professional skills, including research skills where relevant

Appendix 2 - Linking levels, learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Definitions

Aims

The aims of a module should summarise broad purposes and goals. They may be aspirational and not necessarily easily measurable.

Objectives

Objectives are specific intentions that indicate the steps to be taken to achieve our aims or goals; they should be measurable and indicate the *teaching* intentions.

Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes describe what the learners will be able to do after a particular teaching intervention and are expressed from the students' perspective. They must be measurable and assessable.

It is important to note that objectives indicate the intentions of the **teacher**, while outcomes are the specific measurable achievements of the successful **student**.

Level descriptors

Level descriptors are generic outcome statements of what a learner is expected to have achieved at the end of a level (eg a year) of learning.

See the SEEC Credit Level Descriptors for Higher Education

Assessment criteria

An assessment criterion is a statement that prescribes (with greater precision than a learning outcome) the quality of performance that will show that the student has reached a particular standard.

Moon (2002) has developed a model that provides a rationale for ensuring the existence of a relationship between levels, learning outcomes, assessment criteria, assessment and teaching methods during module development (Figure 1).
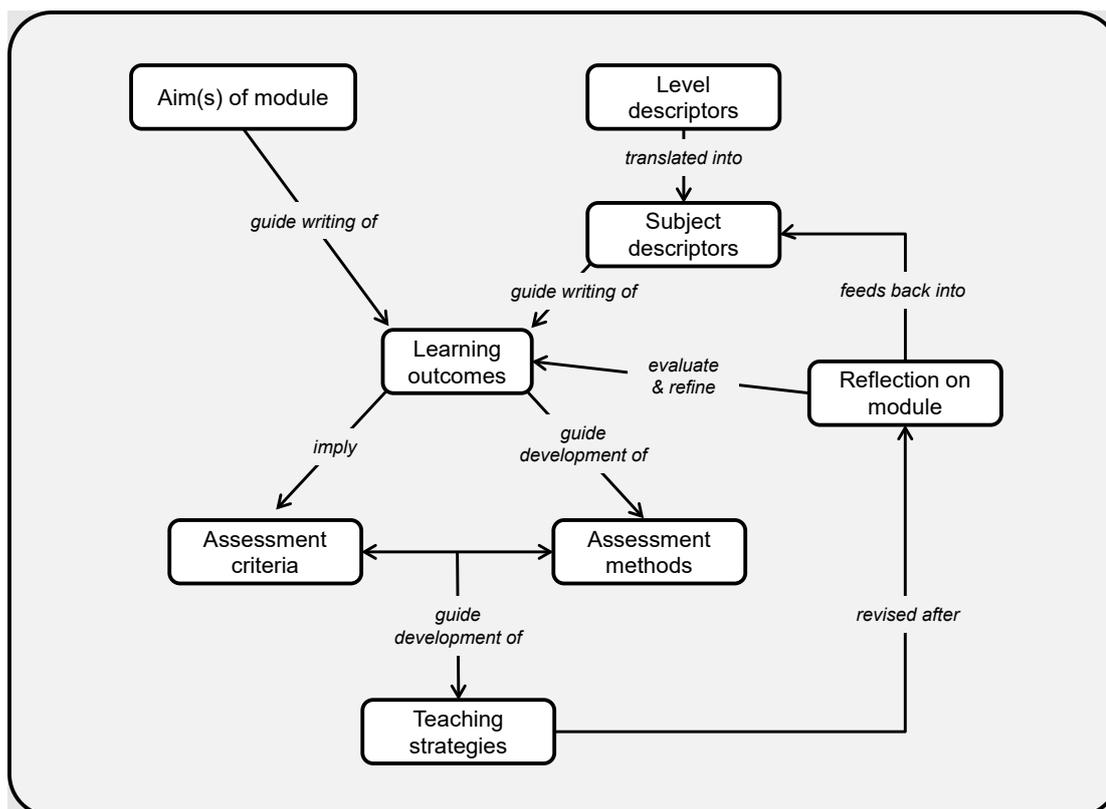
Figure 1: Model of module development (redrawn from Moon, 2002)

The model (Fig 1) depicts the following sequence:

Level descriptors and module aims guide the writing of learning outcomes. A set of level descriptors may act directly as a guide for the writing of learning outcomes or the level descriptors may be translated into descriptors for the discipline or programme. In either case, the level descriptors ensure that the outcome statement is clearly related to a particular level and they provide an indication of agreed achievements. Learning outcomes are derived from consideration of level descriptors and aims. Learners must achieve the learning outcomes to gain credit for the module. Aims provide a rationale or a direction.

Learning outcomes imply the assessment criteria. Assessment criteria may be developed from the learning outcome or from the assessment task – but in either case they should relate to the learning outcome. There are many reasons for developing assessment tasks, such as to provide feedback, and these will affect the manner in which an assessment task is designed. However, the purpose of the task with which we are concerned here is to test that the learning outcomes have been achieved. A teaching strategy, on this model, is seen as being designed in relation to assessment processes, providing the support necessary to enable the students to be successful in attaining the threshold indicated in assessment criteria.

It is important to check the coherence of the cycle. This means going through it several times, ensuring that each part that is linked to another part by lines on the diagram, clearly links in terms of the structure of the programme. Any element in the cycle of development can be changed except the agreed level descriptors that are fixed (after Moon, 2002).

Communicating criteria to students

Recent research shows that many students find written descriptions of marking criteria difficult to understand unless they are helped to engage with assignment exemplars. A spectrum of processes have been employed, to help students engage with assessment requirements from the explicit publication of written learning outcomes to the more implicit use of dialogue and discussion about written examples of submitted work (figure 2). O'Donovan *et al*. (2004), suggest that processes at the right-hand side of the spectrum represent more efficient ways of helping students to understand assessments, with teacher-led marking activities and discussion of exemplars resulting in increased understanding of standards and higher achievement (Hendry *et al*. 2012). However, it is also clear that steps must be taken to avoid plagiarism by students of exemplars (Handley and Williams, (2011), as students become more assessment literate and develop the ability to self-assess and to understand what is being required of them.
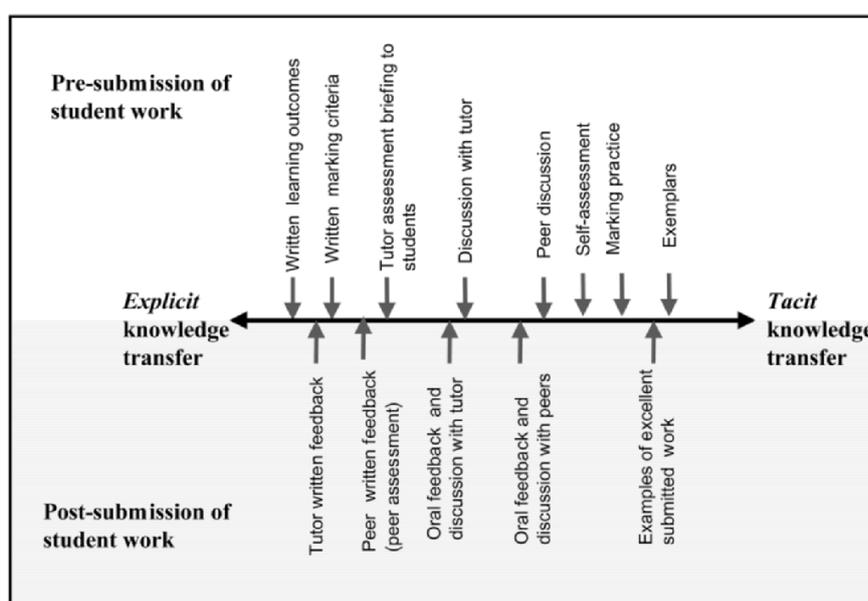
Figure 2: An illustration of a spectrum of processes supporting the transfer or construction of knowledge of assessment requirements standards and criteria (from O'Donovan *et al*., 2004)

References

Handley, K and Williams, L. (2011) From copying to learning: using exemplars to engage students with assessment criteria and feedback. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 36(1): 95 - 108.

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Moon, J. (2002) *The module & programme development handbook: A practical guide to linking levels, learning outcomes and assessment*. London, Routledge.

O'Donovan, B., Price, M. and Rust, C (2004) Know what I mean? Enhancing student understanding of assessment standards and criteria. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 9 (3): 325 - 335.

Appendix 3 - Guidance on designing out plagiarism

Designing out opportunities for plagiarism

Changing assessments

- Rewrite/modify the assessment task each time the course is taught
- Reconsider the learning outcomes for the course and decrease those that ask for knowledge and understanding, substituting instead those that require analysis, evaluation and synthesis; consider adding information gathering to learning outcomes.

Create individual tasks

- Design in assessment tasks with multiple solutions or set one that creates artefacts to capture individual effort.

Integrate assessment tasks

- Integrate tasks so each builds on the other; design in checks that do not require teacher time but do require student effort. Be careful to only check, not assess, the intermediate tasks. Set a variety of assessment tasks, choosing those less likely to already exist.

Inform students about institutional policies and programme expectations

Define collusion and inform students

Clearly signpost students to Regulations for academic integrity, as well as additional guidance on MySurrey (https://exams.surrey.ac.uk/academic-integrity-and-misconduct/plagiarism)Induction or apprenticeship?

- Treat all instances of plagiarism formally with penalties and tariffs adjusted to fit student circumstances; inform students clearly of the policy, how they must comply and how they will be helped to do so.

Teaching academic conventions

- Design in compulsory teaching sessions on academic writing and citation skills where students can apply the skills to discipline-specific content as part of their core assessment tasks.

Active learning methods to teach students

- Ensure that students are taught how to avoid plagiarism with active learning techniques, providing opportunities for discussion, practice and feedback; this instruction works best integrated into discipline-specific contexts.

Remind Students before assessment

- Include reference to academic misconduct within assessments to bring to front of mind and remind students. This could be done through the use of checklists, for example in SurreyLearn.

Create a climate of student involvement and interest

Academic conduct as a model of good practice

- Academic staff need to be seen to be adhering to the behaviours they ask of their students and taking steps to defend them from abuse.

Secure systems for recording and returning coursework

- Create administrative and institutional systems to collect, record and return coursework securely.

Appendix 4 - Guidelines for in-semester tests

1.   **Formative** in-semester tests can take place either during scheduled class times or through the VLE and do not require central supervision. Where these assessments follow a time constrained format appropriate Disability and Neurodiversity requirements must be accommodated.

2.   **Summative** in-semester tests will normally take place under the following conditions:

   a. The schedule for the holding of in-semester tests will be published at the start of the module and tests should normally be held within weeks 4-7 of the semester. Once the date has been published it can only be changed in exceptional circumstances.
   b. In-semester tests will take place wherever possible due to rooming constraints during scheduled class times so as not to disrupt normal teaching.
   c. The maximum duration of the test should fit within the timetabled slot and must allow time for set up, paper collection and Disability and Neurodiversity adjustments within that normal scheduled period.
   d. Tests will always take place under standard formal examination conditions and will be organised and supervised through the central examinations team.
   e. Each in-semester summative test should be separately designated on the module descriptor and in SITS. In-semester tests should not normally be the dominant form of assessment in a module but a weighting of less than 10% is also unlikely to be suitable.
   f. External examiners will only need to approve papers for in-semester tests and see samples of work if the test meets or exceeds the 25% weighting rule (see the *Code of practice for external examining: taught programmes*).
   g. In-semester tests must always comply with all Disability and Neurodiversity requirements.
   h. The timing of feedback must be provided within the guidance of the *Code of practice on assessment and feedback* in order to provide useful feed forward guidance.
   i. In-semester test answer papers must be returned to students with their feedback.
   j. Resits for in-semester tests will be held in the next available assessment period.

3.   In-semester tests should be designated for KIS and CMA purposes as examinations but designated for internal regulatory purposes as 'in-semester tests'.

4.   PSRB requirements may need to be accommodated in the weighting, timing and scheduling of in-semester tests.

The University should investigate technological solutions to the organisation of in-semester tests and consider the regulatory and Disability and Neurodiversity requirements that would then need to be addressed.

Appendix 5 - Guidelines for group assessment

These guidelines have been developed by the Surrey Business School to establish some principles of good practice to govern how group assessment is designed and used. They are provided here as an example which can be utilised by other areas.

Group assessment can have significant benefits for student learning. For example, students can learn from the opinions and experiences of others, undertake more comprehensive assessments, become active learners and develop interpersonal and team-working skills (Johnston and Miles, 2004). Furthermore, group assessments can also help develop skills of critical analysis and creativity (Barfield, 2003). These benefits, however, are only likely to arise if two conditions are met. First, that group assessment is part of a wide and varied diet of assessment forms. Second, that group assessment is done well.

- In any semester, no more than 50% of modules in a programme will have group assessment as part of the modules' assessment regime.

- All group assessments must have a clear pedagogical rationale which is communicated to students. In particular the rationale will explain how the group assessment contributes to the meeting of the module's learning outcomes and why group assessment is the best way of doing this.

- In modules where there is an element of group assessment, group work must be embedded in the module and, therefore, have a significant role in the teaching and learning strategy of the module. In such modules, it is not acceptable that the only element of group work that students undertake is the group assessment.

- Modules with group assessments will have a clearly articulated policy for students who do not fully contribute to the group assessment which will be communicated to all students. The policy will explain how such *free loading* is to be identified (by both academics and students), reported and dealt with. Free loading should be addressed during the process of group assessment and not just at the end of a group assessment exercise.

- Unless there is a compelling pedagogical rationale, all group assessment will assess both the outcome of the group work and process of the group work. Where there is a compelling rationale for not assessing the process of group work, this should be provided by the Module Leader.

- The level of complexity of the group assessments should be designed so that members of the group must collaborate throughout the whole group assessment process and should minimise the opportunities for groups to separate the assessment into tasks which can be done on an individual basis.

- The marking criteria for group assessments should be designed so that individual contributions to the assessment are fully recognised (e.g. by using a contribution sheet).

- There must be a clear rationale of how students are allocated into groups for the purpose of group assessment. Putting students into groups at random may be more appropriate during the early stages of a programme whereas self-selecting groups may be more appropriate during the later stages of a programme.

Appendix 6 - Guiding principles for student feedback and feedback template

Feedback plays a crucial role in maintaining excellence in student learning at undergraduate and postgraduate level, and is important for the development of the organisation as a whole:

> *"Feedback is the key element in all healthy systems. The absence of feedback results in a lack of potential to adjust, acclimate and adapt."*
>
> (Siemens, 2006: 126)

This document provides a framework of guiding principles to underpin the effective provision and use of feedback by teachers and students at the University of Surrey.

Feedback is defined by Boud and Molloy (2013) as a "*process whereby learners obtain information about their work in order to appreciate the similarities and differences between appropriate standards for any given work, and the qualities of the work itself, in order to generate improved work*". The authors describe the value of this definition as it:

1. Centres on learners and what they do, rather than on what teachers do for them

2. Recognises the importance of external standards and the need for learners to understand what these are

3. Is a process extended over time and not a single act of reception of information

4. Positions feedback as leading to action.

Opportunities for feedback arise within timetabled teaching sessions (tutorials, practicals, lectures) as well as more informally within the dialogue of the classroom. Feedback can be provided not only on coursework assignments, tests and exam answers, but also on activities that are not necessarily formally assessed such as class discussions, group exercises, problem-solving, fieldwork and field trips, placements and developing project plans and proposals. This informal feedback is important so that students receive regular feedback within modules as well as terminal feedback after summative examinations.

Feedback is of most value when it focuses on work that is on-going, and where students can readily make use of the feedback to enhance the quality of their learning. Where feedback is provided at the end of a module, it should focus not only on that assessment but also aim to look beyond it, towards students' future academic and professional work – often described as 'feed-forward'.

Guiding principles

Feedback is a two-way process. It thrives on interaction and dialogue between students and their teachers, and where there is a sense of belonging to a vibrant community of learners.

Therefore, feedback can only work well when it is a joint and shared responsibility.

It is the *responsibility of students* to:

1. Familiarise themselves with where and when feedback is provided.

2. Develop their understanding of assessment expectations, criteria and standards within their programme of study.

3. Collect and reflect on the feedback provided and grasp opportunities to put it to good use.

4. Seek guidance where feedback is not clearly understood.

It is the *responsibility of teachers* to:

1. Ensure feedback is an integral component of module design; enabling students to receive and act on feedback.

2. Inform students when, where and how feedback will be provided.

3. Provide feedback appropriately (as described in this document).

4. Offer guidance where feedback has not been understood.

Feedback varies in a number of ways:

Feedback can achieve a range of purposes, including to correct; to justify a mark or grade; to encourage and commend; to diagnose; to explain why or how; to troubleshoot; to debate; to suggest alternatives; to edit; to clarify; to advise on where and how to improve. It also provides data to teachers to inform the development of practice.

It can come from many sources: from lecturers, supervisors, tutors and demonstrators; from fellow-students; from professional practitioners; from students' own personal reflections; from the audience for a seminar or poster presentation.

It can take many different forms, including pre-assignment guidance; notes in the margins of an essay or report; ratings on a pro forma; verbal comments in a laboratory or clinical environment; emailed comments; "EVS" responses in a lecture; peer review; a practice session in marking and commenting on a sample assignment; 'drop-in' advice; a supervision meeting; a debriefing by a professional practitioner; whole-class or 'generic' feedback on how an exam question had been approached.

Standardisation

Whilst recognising the variety of teaching that is undertaken across the campus, there should be parity of practice across all programmes. Towards this aim, the written feedback form used to give feedback to students on their coursework and on examinations for a module should be "*standardised*" such that:

1. Written feedback to students should be based on the relevant assessment criteria as stated in the definitive validation document. The weighting of each should be noted.

2. Comments should highlight students' strengths and provide advice on ways in which aspects of their future or re-submitted work may be improved in relation to each of the assessment criteria.

3. On the feedback form the grade for each of the assessment criteria should be recorded beside the relevant written comments or on the specific section of an assessment criteria grid – as appropriate to disciplinary practice.

4. It should be obvious to students and external examiners from the comments and the grades for individual assessment criteria exactly how the overall grade for any assignment was reached, including evidence or examples to support judgements where appropriate.

5. If oral feedback is given to a group of students, a brief record should be kept and retained in the relevant course file.

6. The 'principles' also refer to comments made directly on assignments/exam papers and should be referred to on feedback sheets as appropriate.

In practical terms, and from the student perspective, feedback should be:

1. **Understandable**: expressed in a language that students will understand.

2. **Selective:** commenting in reasonable detail on two or three things that the student can do something about.

3. **Specific**: pointing to instances in the student's submission where the feedback applies.

4. **Timely:** provided in time to improve the next assignment.

5. **Contextualised**: framed with reference to the learning outcomes and/or assessment criteria.

6. **Non-judgemental**: descriptive rather than evaluative, focused on learning goals not just performance goals.

7. **Balanced**: pointing out the positive as well as areas in need of improvement.

8. **Forward looking**: suggesting how students might improve subsequent assignments.

9. **Transferable**: focused on processes, skills and self-regulatory processes not just on knowledge content.

10. **Persona**l: referring to what is already known about the student and her/his previous work (where feasible).

(modified from Nicol, 2010)

Ultimately, feedback needs to be fit for purpose. The particular kinds of feedback that are offered within any given module or programme unit will, vary depending on what and how students are expected to learn and the resources available.

Effectiveness

In order to be effective, feedback needs to be prompt, informative, helpful, engaging, motivational and linked to learning beyond the immediate context of the assignment:

1. *prompt* feedback is returned to students within the agreed timescale for the work submitted so that students may act upon advice given.

2. *informative* feedback highlights strengths and weaknesses, giving specific examples or explanations in an understandable format using appropriate language.

3. *helpful* feedback offers suggestions about how to improve.

4. feedback only has an effect when it is *engaged with* and *acted upon* by students to improve their learning. Therefore, thought should be given on how students can engage with feedback (eg Donovan *et al.,* 2004), and provide opportunities for students to demonstrate this engagement.

5. *motivate* students to reflect upon their work and seek to improve performance, in dialogue with their teachers.

6. highlight *links* between the assignment at hand, and development of a wider appreciation of the general concepts being assessed to facilitate transfer of learning to new contexts (eg Nicol, 2013).

Students' engagement with feedback thrives when they experience it in a wide range of forms and settings, while gaining practice in acting upon and giving feedback (eg in peer assessments) as well as receiving it. Active engagement can be encouraged by, for example separating feedback from results/grades (see Buswell and Matthews, 2004)

Feedback is likely to be most effective when staff and students share common expectations, and this may require some 'education' of students in appreciating the value of feedback as a

learning tool (Adcroft, 2011). Students will not learn from feedback if they do not recognise they are receiving it or if they are only interested in the marks received on assessed work.

Challenges: why students and staff find feedback problematic:

Students often find assessment feedback unsatisfactory, for a wide range of reasons, including the following:

1.   When feedback is illegible or cryptic (for example, "More", "What's this?", "Link?", or simply ticks and crosses), students can sometimes be unable to gauge whether a response is positive or negative, whether and how the feedback is related to their mark, and what they might do to improve.

2.   When feedback consists mainly of grammar and spelling corrections and provides little or no advice for them to act on, students cannot tell what they have done well, what they need to change and why they have achieved the grade they have.

3.   Many assessment tasks are one-offs, intended for students to demonstrate their achievement for a summative grade; students cannot respond to the feedback with a further submission. Such tasks do not encourage risk-taking, experimentation, creativity or practice.

4.   Feedback that does not acknowledge the way students' learning has progressed over time does not help them get a sense of how far they have come and what they have yet to achieve.

5.   Students can encounter different (and inconsistent) comments from different lecturers on similar pieces of writing.

6.   When feedback focuses on justifying the grade given and is aimed at informing external examiners rather than supporting the development of the learner.

Academic staff report a range of concerns about assessment feedback, including the following:

1.   Preparing good-quality assessment feedback for students is very time-consuming, in spite of its potential value for improving learning.

2.   When evidence suggests that students have not read the feedback or acted on it, teachers see time and effort put into providing feedback as wasted.

3.   Giving feedback can be repetitive and unproductive. Academics often find themselves giving the same or very similar feedback to many students, or giving the same feedback to repeated efforts by one student, with no change occurring in that student's performance.

4.   Students can focus on negative comments and fail to register positive comments.

Preparing students for feedback

Ensure that students and teachers have a shared understanding of what feedback is, and what it is for.

Students may struggle to understand assessment criteria and the academic language used in feedback, so make sure you communicate clearly. It is important that a team of markers is supported to develop a shared understanding of criteria and standards.

Be explicit about the details of feedback processes and expectations.

Ensure that students understand why they are getting feedback and, how their learning can benefit from their reflecting and acting on feedback.

If students and teachers discuss, and jointly construct, the feedback procedures, a shared understanding will develop. A student guide such as that produced by *Hepplestone *et al.* (2010) is one way of making this understanding explicit.

To develop a shared language about assessment and feedback, you can, for example: annotate and distribute a range of sample student responses on the same task to illustrate different levels of performance, use annotated examples as a basis for class discussion.

Let students undertake their own assessments of un-annotated examples, justifying the kind of feedback and/or grades they would give, and perhaps annotating the examples for use in a future class. Exercises like this can be undertaken in class before, during and after students complete an assessment task.

Staff expertise in feedback grows when new tutors, demonstrators, supervisors and lecturers are well-supported in learning how to give feedback effectively in their subject area, and when good practice and innovation in feedback are shared amongst staff at all levels of experience.

*See: Hepplestone, A., Parkin, H., Irwin, B., Holden, G., Thorpe, L. and Burn, C. (2010). *A student guide to using feedback*. Learning and Teaching Institute, Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield, UK. Available online at:
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Nicol, D. (2010). From monologue to dialogue: improving written feedback processes in mass higher education. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education,* 35 (5), 501 – 517.

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Siemens, G. (2006) *Knowing Knowledge*. Publisher: Lulu.com

See also:

Nicol, D.J. and Macfarlane-Dick, D. (2006) Formative assessment and self-regulated learning: a model and seven principles of good practice. *Studies in Higher Education*, 31(2): 199 – 218.

Feedback template

Student URN

Student's University Registration Number, usually 7

Grade

Module

If possible, please include the module code.

UoA

Section 1

What has been done well (in relation to the assessment criteria)

This would be the section where Departments could insert their own specific rubrics in a format that best suits the discipline: a blank space for text or a table to insert a more itemised perspective.

Section 2

How you may strengthen future work

How students might change their approach; strengthen their understanding by further reading; develop a skill by further practice; employ additional procedures or techniques; engage with other students/academics/professionals.

Section 3

General comments

This would include wider comments about presentation; the wider application of the work covered and how it might be developed in later modules or in professional practice.

Students should be referred to FEATS and how it can help them use feedback

Marker's name:

Second marker's comment (only available if work has been double marked):

Any additional perspective that might be of help.

Appendix 7 - Methodologies for mark adjustment

The premise of the University's mark adjustment methods is summarised in the slide set "Methods of Mark Adjustment" available on the Quality Framework webpage for Codes of Practice.

Implementation of mark adjustment can be carried out by simply entering raw marks and relevant *adjustment parameters* (see below) to the Excel workbook of the chosen method (also available on the Quality Framework webpage). The workbook will automatically calculate the mean and standard deviation of the entered (raw) data. Likewise, graphical representations of the raw and adjusted mark distributions (including a scatter plot of adjusted vs. raw mark) are also automatically generated and provide a useful visual check on the adjustment.

The following notes are intended to guide Module Leaders, Programme Leaders and Directors of Learning and Teaching in the selection of a suitable mark adjustment method.

1. Method 1: Z-Score Normalisation

1.1 This is the most convenient method to use if you just want to adjust the mean and move the mark distribution uniformly up or down. The method is best suited for marks that have (approximately) normal distribution, i.e. the bell-curve distribution.

1.2 There are 2 adjustment parameters: the required values of the mean and standard deviation. Some further considerations in the use of this method are summarised below:
- If you leave the standard deviation unchanged (i.e. required = raw), it is simply adding to or subtracting from the mark of every student in the cohort. For example, if the raw data mean is 70% and a required mean of 65% is entered, then 5 percentage points will be subtracted from the mark of each student.
- If the mean looks reasonable but, for example, the standard deviation is rather small (suggesting very little differentiation in the marking, e.g. poor use of marking range) then the standard deviation can be increased whilst keeping the mean constant.
- For both mean and/or standard deviation adjustments, care is needed not to unintentionally push students into failure, or conversely, into a first-class grade. It is also possible to generate adjusted marks that exceed 100% or indeed fall below 0%.
- If you want to reduce the failure rate without changing the proportion of firsts (or distinctions), one way would be to increase the mean and reduce the standard deviation.

2. Method 2: Quadratic Scaling

2.1 This is a method of mark adjustment that allows you to scale marks without inadvertently generating marks that fall outside the 0-100% range. The method results in the maximum adjustment to marks in the 50% region, and diminishingly less adjustment as the 0% or 100% mark regions are approached. A specified mark (e.g. 70%) can be directly adjusted to a desired value (e.g. 65%), but there is little control in adjusting the distribution of the marks, i.e. the standard deviation cannot be directly controlled. Nevertheless, it provides a very quick method of adjusting the mean mark when there is a very wide mark distribution and so a danger of generating nonsensical values.

2.2 With reference to the slide set "Methods of Mark Adjustment", scaling is as though the plot of adjusted vs. raw marks (initially a straight line for unadjusted marks) is replaced by a curve that is displaced upward or downward by a specified amount at a particular point, whilst keeping each end (at 0% and 100%) pinned in place. There are no rules governing where this key point (mark) for the displacement is, although the logic might be to locate it at a degree-class boundary.

2.3 The 2 adjustment parameters for this method define the key point mentioned above and its level of adjustment, i.e. the *actual* and *desired* marks. Some further considerations in the use of this method are summarised below:

- The method works well for a distribution that has the bulk of students achieving middle marks (e.g. 45-55%), but where you do not necessarily want to scale the marks at the extremes of performance (exceptionally poor or good).
- Some trial and error is needed (point selection and degree of adjustment at that point) to achieve an overall desired mean mark.
- Depending on the raw mark distribution, and the degree and direction of scaling, the standard deviation may either increase or decrease, but does not usually change significantly.

3. Method 3: 3- and 4-Point Piecewise Linear Scaling

3.1 These are best suited to distributions where there are localised problems. For example, where the marks look fine at the higher end but there is a bigger than expected failure rate. Piecewise scaling gives you some ability to address this. It does not make the assumption that you are dealing with a normal distribution of marks, which is a shortcoming of the Z-score method.

3.2 Workbooks have been created to support mark adjustments for either Level 4-6 programmes (4-point piecewise linear scaling) or Level 7 modules (3-point piecewise linear scaling). The former allows independent adjustment of the 4 classification boundaries associated with UG modules, i.e. pass (40%), lower-second (50%), upper-second (60%) and first-class (70%). For example, an increase of the first-class boundary to 75%, will reduce the overall number of first-class achievements by scaling marks down accordingly in that region. The 3-point piecewise linear scaling method works in a similar way, but with initial boundaries set as pass (50%), merit (60%) and distinction (70%) and this suitable for PGT and Integrated Masters programmes. Some further considerations in the use of this method are summarised below:

- Where Bachelors and Integrated Masters students (or Integrated Masters and PGT students) might be enrolled on the same module, a bimodal distribution of marks (with two distinct humps rather than one) is often observed, and piecewise methods can accommodate this.
- The method might be useful when it is felt the standard for pass was too high, and local adjustment in that area only is desired.

3.3 Comparison to student performances in previous years may also help define class boundaries to achieve similar achievement profiles, especially if an anomaly is deemed to exist in the current assessment

4. Procedure

4.1   The adjustment can be carried out on the aggregated module marks or, where it is apparent that a particular unit of assessment is causing an unacceptable distribution of marks, the adjustment can be carried out on that single unit of assessment.

5.   Board of Examiners

5.1   When the marks adjustment has been applied, the Module Leader presents the completed spreadsheet to the Board of Examiners Chair, who will review the proposed marks adjustment. If the Board of Examiners Chair is satisfied with the distribution, the adjusted marks will be entered into SITS.

5.2   The Board of Examiners is presented with the raw and adjusted marks and advised of the adjustment procedure that has been applied and the justification for it. In exceptional circumstances the Board may request that the marks adjustment is modified or that the raw marks are reinstated – in which case the marks be entered in SITS will be replaced by the new agreed distribution.

5.3   If marks adjustment has been carried out and agreed by the Board of Examiners, the External Examiner is presented with the raw and adjusted marks and advised of the

adjustment procedure that has been applied and the justification for it. If the External Examiner is satisfied with the adjustment, no further action is required. Otherwise, the Board of Examiners Chair will discuss the matter with the External Examiner in order to reach consensus on the way forward.

5.4   If marks adjustment has been carried out and agreed by the Board of Examiners and the External Examiner, a report is made to Senate Progression and Conferment Executive (SPACE), in line with the *Code of practice for assessment and feedback* using the template below.

Case for adjustment of marks

(please delete the prompts after completing the case)

Module code: …………… **Module title:** …………………………………………………..

Academic year: 20… /… **Semester:** …

Cohort size: ……..

Background and justification

Consider the following when making your decision to adjust marks:

Why is mark adjustment considered necessary: is the module mean, failure rate, or proportion of first class marks unusually high or low? Is this in comparison to performance in other modules in the same level and semester, or the historical performance of this module (3-5 year trend)?   Is a particular unit of assessment responsible? (e.g. how do exam and coursework performance correlate?)   If a scatterplot or cumulative distribution has been used to identify the anomaly, please include that here.

What is thought to have caused the anomalous mark distribution: is the module new? Has it been taught by different staff for the first time? Have the teaching and/or assessment methods been changed? Did student feedback or evaluations highlight any problems?

…………………………..

Details of proposed adjustment

Which method of mark adjustment has been used (z-score, quadratic, piecewise linear) and what scaling parameters were used?   What was the reason for choosing these values?

Histograms of raw and adjusted should be imported from the appropriate Excel workbook; right-click the chart, Copy, and then Paste Special | Picture (Enhanced Metafile) into this document.

Provide a summary of the key statistics to show the effect of the mark adjustment:

UoA	Type *(exam, coursework, etc)*	Weighting	Raw Mean	Raw Std Dev	Adjusted Mean	Adjusted Std Dev
001						
002						
etc						

Has the mark adjustment had the desired impact – for example on failure rate or proportion of first class marks?

Check, that there has not been any undesirable consequences to the cohort following this process

……………………

Comments from External Examiner

Has the External Examiner been consulted? Were they in agreement with the proposed mark adjustment?

Was this undertaken at Pre-Board following advice from the External Examiner and then reported to the Board of Examiners? What was the date of the BoE where this was either reported or further discussed and agreed? Include any relevant extracts from the BoE Examiners' minutes etc.

………………..

Future mitigation

What will be done to avoid a reoccurrence of the need for mark adjustment in the future?

 ………………..

Chair of Board of Examiners:	…………………

Date:	…………………

Associate Dean (Education): …………………

Faculty:

Annexe 1

Mark adjustment
Z-score normalization
Suitable for Levels FHEQ 4-7   NB: Column A contains illustrative values ONLY and should be replaced with actual marks.   Similarly for cells B11 and B12.

STEPS
1. Enter the original ('Raw') data values in column A, either manually or by copying from another spreadsheet (using Paste Special | Values)
2. Set the Required Mean and Standard Deviation in B11 and B12 respectively
3. If there are **more than 50** raw data values, extend the ranges in cells B7 and B8, copy B65 : AF65 to all the additonal rows below (to preserve the histograms), and increase the range of the scatter plot by right clicking the graph and then Select Data.
4. If there are **fewer than 50** raw data values, shorten the ranges in cells B7 and B8, delete the superfluous rows from column A to AF (to preserve the histograms), and reduce the range of the scatter plot by right clicking the graph and then Select Data.
NB: If an adjusted mark falls below 0% or above 100%, the cell will be highlighted in orange (conditional formatting)

Raw	
Mean	65.3
Std.Dev.	16.79
Required	
Mean	57.0
Std.Dev.	10.00

Raw marks histogram — Total number of students **50**

0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	>90
0	0	1	4	6	9	7	12	8	3

Adjusted marks histogram — Total number of students **50**

0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	>90
0	0	0	1	10	16	18	5	0	0

Raw	Standard	Adjusted
79	0.815	65
69	0.219	59
43	-1.330	44
74	0.517	62
68	0.160	59
44	-1.270	44
70	0.279	60
85	1.172	69
63	-0.138	56
89	1.411	71
36	-1.747	40
89	1.411	71
69	0.219	59
84	1.113	68
79	0.815	65
79	0.815	65
53	-0.734	50
71	0.338	60
81	0.934	66
48	-1.032	47
59	-0.376	53
57	-0.496	52
73	0.457	62
55	-0.615	51
80	0.874	66
26	-2.342	34
83	1.053	68
59	-0.376	53
74	0.517	62
59	-0.376	53
49	-0.972	47
63	-0.138	56
37	-1.687	40
76	0.636	63
38	-1.627	41
78	0.755	65
55	-0.615	51
91	1.530	72
48	-1.032	47
37	-1.687	40
47	-1.091	46
92	1.589	73
84	1.113	68
53	-0.734	50
92	1.589	73
62	-0.198	55
76	0.636	63
55	-0.615	51
64	-0.079	56
71	0.338	60

A maximum cohort size is anticipated for the columns used to produce the histograms
(see formulae in L14 : AF14)

Annexe 2

Mark adjustment
Quadratic Scaling
Suitable for Levels FHEQ 4-7   **NB: Column A contains illustrative values ONLY and should be replaced with actual marks.   Similarly for cells B6 and B7.**

STEPS

Actual	70
Desired	60
Maximum	100
Factor K	-0.004762

1. Enter the original ('Raw') data values in column A, either manually or by copying from another spreadsheet (using Paste Special | Values)
2. Set the pair (Actual, Desired) in cells B6 and B7, where Actual is a specified mark which is to be adjusted to a Desired mark. Keep Maximum at 100 (as units of assessment are normally marked out of 100)
3. If there are **more than 50** raw data values, extend the ranges in cells B12 and B13, copy B65 : AF65 to all the additonal rows below (to preserve the histograms), and increase the range of the scatter plot by right clicking the graph and then Select Data.
4. If there are **fewer than 50** raw data values, shorten the ranges in cells B12 and B13, delete the superfluous rows from column A to AF (to preserve the histograms), and reduce the range of the scatter plot by right clicking the graph and then Select Data.

Means
Raw 65.3
Adjusted 55.8

Raw	Adjusted
79	71
69	59
43	31
74	65
68	58
44	32
70	60
85	79
63	52
89	84
36	25
89	84
69	59
84	78
79	71
79	71
53	41
71	61
81	74
48	36
59	47
57	45
73	64
55	43
80	72
26	17
83	76
59	47
74	65
59	47
49	37
63	52
37	26
76	67
38	27
78	70
55	43
91	87
48	36
37	26
47	35
92	88
84	78
53	41
92	88
62	51
76	67
55	43
64	53
71	61

A maximum cohort size is anticipated for the columns used to produce the histograms
(see formulae in L14 : AF14)

Total number of students **50**

	0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	>90
	0	0	1	4	6	9	7	12	8	3

Total number of students **50**

	0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	>90
	0	1	4	6	9	7	8	10	5	0

Annexe 3

Mark adjustment
4-Point Piecewise Linear Scaling
Suitable for Levels FHEQ 4-6   NB: Column A contains illustrative values ONLY and should be replaced with actual marks.   Similarly for cells B6 : B9.

STEPS

Pass	40	1. Enter the original ('Raw') data values in column A, either manually or by copying from another spreadsheet (using Paste Special | Values)
Lower 2nd	50	2. Decreasing the value of any scaling point will move the profile to the left and adjust marks *upwards,* either side of that point.
Upper 2nd	70	3. Increasing the value of any scaling point will move the profile to the right and adjust marks *downwards* , either side of that point.
First	80	4. If there are **more than 50** raw data values, extend the ranges in cells B12 and B13, copy B65:AF65 to all the additonal rows below (to preserve the histograms), and increase the range of the scatter plot by right clicking the graph and then Select Data.
		5. If there are **fewer than 50** raw data values, shorten the ranges in cells B12 and B13, delete the superfluous rows from column A to AF (to preserve the histograms), and reduce the range of the scatter plot by right clicking the graph and then Select Data.

Means
Raw   65.3
Adjusted 60.0

Total number of students **50**

	0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	>90
	0	0	1	4	6	9	7	12	8	3

Total number of students **50**

	0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	>90
	0	0	1	4	6	14	14	6	5	0

Raw	Adjusted
79	69
69	60
43	43
74	64
68	59
44	44
70	60
85	78
63	57
89	84
36	36
89	84
69	60
84	76
79	69
79	69
53	52
71	61
81	72
48	48
59	55
57	54
73	63
55	53
80	70
26	26
83	75
59	55
74	64
59	55
49	49
63	57
37	37
76	66
38	38
78	68
55	53
91	87
48	48
37	37
47	47
92	88
84	76
53	52
92	88
62	56
76	66
55	53
64	57
71	61

A maximum cohort size is anticipated for the columns used to produce the histograms
(see formulae in L14 : AF14)

Raw marks

Adjusted marks

Annexe 4

Mark adjustment
3-Point Piecewise Linear Scaling
Suitable for Level FHEQ 7   NB: Column A contains illustrative values ONLY and should be replaced with actual marks.   Similarly for cells B6 : B8.

STEPS

Pass	50	1. Enter the original ('Raw') data values in column A, either manually or by copying from another spreadsheet (using Paste Special | Values)
Upper 2nd	70 (Merit)	2. Decreasing the value of any scaling point will move the profile to the left and adjust marks *upwards,* either side of that point.
First	80 (Distn)	3. Increasing the value of any scaling point will move the profile to the right and adjust marks *downwards* , either side of that point.

4. If there are **more than 50** raw data values, extend the ranges in cells B12 and B13, copy B65 : AF65 to all the additonal rows below (to preserve the histograms), and increase the range of the scatter plot by right clicking the graph and then Select Data.

5. If there are **fewer than 50** raw data values, shorten the ranges in cells B12 and B13, delete the superfluous rows from column A to AF (to preserve the histograms), and reduce the range of the scatter plot by right clicking the graph and then Select Data.

Means
Raw   65.3
Adjusted 60.0

	Total number of students	**50**										Total number of students	**50**								
	0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	>90		0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	>90
	0	0	1	4	6	9	7	12	8	3		0	0	1	4	6	14	14	6	5	0

Raw	Adjusted
79	69
69	60
43	43
74	64
68	59
44	44
70	60
85	78
63	57
89	84
36	36
89	84
69	60
84	76
79	69
79	69
53	52
71	61
81	72
48	48
59	55
57	54
73	63
55	53
80	70
26	26
83	75
59	55
74	64
59	55
49	49
63	57
37	37
76	66
38	38
78	68
55	53
91	87
48	48
37	37
47	47
92	88
84	76
53	52
92	88
62	56
76	66
55	53
64	57
71	61

A maximum cohort size is anticipated for the columns used to produce the histograms
(see formulae in L14 : AF14)

Scatter plot: Adjusted mark (%) vs Raw mark (%)

Histogram: Raw marks — Frequency vs Marks

Histogram: Adjusted marks — Frequency vs Marks

Appendix 8 – Guidance for timed online assessments within SurreyLearn

There are two forms of timed online assessments within SurreyLearn;
- Submission of a file to a folder in SurreyLearn within a given time frame after the students have gained access to the paper;
- Completion of online examination using the Test tool in SurreyLearn within a given time frame.

The time limit for students to work on the assessment is determined during the programme/ module validation process. Generally, across majority of Surrey programmes, the time "window" varies between 4 - 48 hours, which gives students a certain degree of flexibility as to when they work on the assessment. Some assessments may also feature a specified time limit for completion, e.g. 2 hours within a 24 hour window.

Guidelines for submission of files:

Online guidance exists for creating file submission folders at
https://surreylearn.surrey.ac.uk/d2l/le/lessons/14020/topics/1395203

Guidelines for timed examinations in SurreyLearn:

Online guidance exists for creating online tests at
https://surreylearn.surrey.ac.uk/d2l/le/lessons/14020/topics/1774469.

This online guidance covers five steps:
1. Creating a test.
2. Configuring the test, setting up time restrictions etc.
3. Building questions in test.
4. Deterring collusion and misconduct.
5. Enabling personalised time allowances.

Appendix 9 - Assessment calibration workshops with programme teams

Dr Naomi Winstone & Dr Emma Medland, Surrey Institute of Education

PURPOSE

No matter how clear a set of grade descriptors (i.e. institution-level grade descriptors for levels 3-7), individual markers bring their own approaches to interpretation of the criteria, and markers often apply tacit judgements when marking work. This can result in discrepant approaches to marking, which can require lengthy moderation procedures in order to ensure consistency and parity of judgement.

This model for a calibration workshop is based on the principles of pre-marking calibration, not post-marking moderation. This approach is best represented as an 'academic conversation' between members of a programme team, to discuss the approaches they take to marking work, and to surface the perhaps contradictory tacit criteria used by different members of a marking team.

PROCEDURE

Calibration workshops typically last for 75-90 minutes. These workshops can be run at the start of the academic year for all programme staff, or can be run with smaller marking teams prior to the submission of student work.

The main activity in the workshop is the discussion of marks awarded to three separate pieces of work (see 'marking activity' below). There are also a series of potential discussion questions that can be used to surface tacit criteria and to agree common principles for marking.

General discussion questions

- What is the difference between level descriptors, grade descriptors, learning outcomes, and marking schemes?
- How would you articulate the difference between the evaluative terms 'sound', 'good', 'excellent', 'outstanding' and 'adequate'?

Marking activity

1. The workshop facilitator (e.g. DLT, Programme Leader, or Module Leader) selects three pieces of work for discussion amongst the team. These should be anonymised prior to circulation. The three pieces of work could be chosen to represent a spread of marks, or could include those that may be harder to mark (e.g. borderline submissions). It is recommended that at least one piece of work is a borderline submission or one that is expected to elicit divided opinion, as these cases are often the most useful in forcing the articulation of personal marking models.

2. Members of the marking team individually assign a mark to each piece of work. This can be carried out prior to the workshop itself.

3. In the workshop, each individual writes the grade they have assigned to each piece of work on a single post-it note, sticking it on the wall in a place designated for each individual piece of work. Individuals should be prepared to discuss the reasoning behind their chosen mark.

4. The facilitator opens up a discussion about the spread of marks awarded.

5. Taking each of the individual pieces of work in turn, the facilitator leads a discussion of the features of the work that influenced marking decisions, and why individuals assigned particular grades to the work. Emerging themes and areas of misalignment between markers can be written on a board or flip chart during the discussion.

6. The group should be tasked to identify assumptions that have been made about the work and/or the criteria, differences in beliefs held about the different levels in criteria, ways in which the criteria have been interpreted in different ways by different markers.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Should there be sufficient time within the workshop, it is also suggested that any supplementary documents designed to support the marking process be considered alongside the following activities:

Purpose: To explore how features of the grade descriptors are prioritised in different ways by different markers.

Procedure: On individual pieces of paper or post-it notes, list each main area of the grade descriptors (e.g. knowledge, application, independent study, etc.). Individually, rank them according to how much weight they are perceived to hold in grading decisions (using tied ranks where necessary). Share and discuss to surface different interpretations of the criteria.

Purpose: To agree the 'distinguishing' features of different mark bands.

Procedure: Discuss what different markers see as the 'distinguishing' features of different mark bands, e.g. what distinguishes a First from an Upper Second, an Upper Second from a Lower Second, and so on. The same process can be repeated within a mark band, e.g. what distinguishes a high First (85+) from a lower First?

Purpose: To surface 'implicit' criteria that are used in the marking process.

Procedures: With reference to the grade descriptors, markers to discuss what other factors influence their grading decisions that are not mentioned in the grade descriptors. It is also useful to discuss the extent to which thoughts about what students 'could have done' influence grading decisions.

Appendix 10 – Internal moderation/audit report (example)

Faculty of Engineering & Physical Sciences

RECORD OF AUDIT MARKING

UNIVERSITY OF SURREY

Module Name ....

Module Level ....

Assessment ....

Semester ....

 # Students Enrolled on Module ....

 # Assessments Moderated ....

First Marker ....

Audit Marker ....

External Examiner ....

URN or Student Name	Mark	Approved	Comment (if appropriate)

OVERALL COMMENTS:

First Marker (Signature) .... **Date** ....

Audit Marker (Signature) .... **Date** ....

External Examiner (Signature) .... **Date** ....