

Chapter 7

Quality Assurance of Assessment

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INTRODUCTION

“Assessment is a fundamental aspect of the student experience. Students learn from assessment activities, interact with staff and peers, and gain feedback on their progress and performance. Assessment enables them to reflect and continually build on their learning.” (QAA,2018)

This chapter describes the University’s approach to the quality assurance of assessment. The practices described below are aligned with the Office for Students’ (OfS) Regulatory Framework¹, specifically the B Conditions of Registration for Quality and Standards. The following B Conditions have particular relevance to assessment practices, in that providers must:

- **B1** - Deliver well designed courses that provide a high-quality academic experience for all students and enable a student’s achievement to be reliably assessed.
- **B4** - Ensure that qualifications awarded to students hold their value at the point of qualification and over time, in line with sector recognised standards.
- **B5** - Deliver courses that meet the academic standards as they are described in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications at level 4 or higher.

It is also informed by the Quality Assurance Agency’s (QAA²) UK Quality Code’s supporting Advice and Guidance on Assessment³ (Nov, 2018) and is consistent with the University’s Assessment Policy⁴.

The QAA’s **Academic Integrity Charter**⁵, provides ‘a baseline position upon which to develop policies and practices to ensure that every student’s qualification is genuine, verifiable and respected’ (QAA, 2020). As a signatory, the University has committed to the implementation its seven principles for academic integrity (see Figure 1). These include working with staff, students, and the sector, to protect and promote academic integrity and act against academic misconduct.

¹ <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/securing-student-success-regulatory-framework-for-higher-education-in-england/>

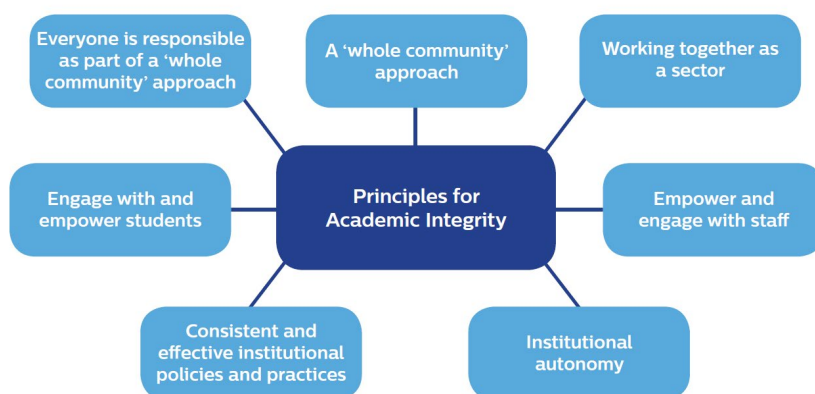
² www.qaa.ac.uk/.

³ www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/assessment.

⁴ www.edgehill.ac.uk/clt/files/2019/02/Assessment-Policy-Revisions-2019-Definitive-after-LTC.pdf.

⁵ <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/about-us/what-we-do/academic-integrity/charter>

Figure 1: Principles for Academic Integrity (QAA, 2020)



Assessment practices at Edge Hill are both *for* and *of* learning. Students' learning is demonstrated through:

- **Formative assessment** - as part of their learning development; and,
- **Summative assessment** - through assessment against Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) leading to the award of academic credit towards an intended qualification award.

Assessment is an integral part of learning and must be closely aligned to:

- The programme / module Aims and Rationale;
- The methods of teaching and learning to be used; and,
- The ILOs to be demonstrated by students at each level of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ).

In designing assessment activities, tutors must ensure they are aligned to the learning outcomes and will enable their achievement to be measured.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

The University works to develop students' understanding of the purpose and process of assessment – also known as **assessment literacy** - to help them better understand the relationship between intended learning outcomes, assessment (marking) criteria, grades and feedback as a means towards meeting the assessment requirements and improving their own performance.

Programme teams provide detailed information to students about the following:

- **The purpose of assessment:** staff make clear links between assessment and the module's aims, academic rationale and learning outcomes.
- **The form(s) of assessment:** staff ensure that students receive detailed information about the type(s) of assessment they will encounter and, where possible, have the opportunity to practise it before it is used summatively.

- **The part played by a single piece of assessment in a student's overall award:** staff ensure that students are aware of the credit and classification system which operates in the award for which they are studying.
- **How to prepare for assessment:** staff ensure that all students receive advice and guidance on how to prepare for assessment and that no student is disadvantaged by unavoidable absence from any taught session in which such guidance and support is offered.
- **The assessment criteria to be used in judging students' work:** students are made aware of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria that will be used to indicate the standard they have achieved; this includes assessment of proficiency in the use of the English Language. They are also advised of any penalties for incorrect spelling, grammar or academic referencing⁶. The reasons for awarding a particular grade are made explicit on the assessment feedback sheet.
- **The penalties that will be incurred for any form of academic malpractice:** students are advised of current University policy as set out in the Academic Regulations⁷.
- **The effects that non-attendance will have on assessment:** students are advised of the general attendance requirement at the commencement of their studies. No grade penalty may be incurred for poor or non-attendance unless participation is assessed through specific activities, e.g., assessed seminars, or is referenced explicitly within the intended learning outcomes⁸.
- **The procedures for submitting work for assessment:** a clear deadline for submission is set. Staff ensure that all submitted work is collected securely and its receipt acknowledged. Work submitted late receives a zero mark.
- **Extensions:** students are advised of the procedures for extensions which must be agreed in advance of the submission date. Extensions are approved only where unforeseen circumstances have arisen and the reasons for them are clearly documented. Departments ensure that students are treated equitably when granting extensions.
- **Personal circumstances⁹:** students are advised of current University policy¹⁰ as set out in the Academic Regulations. Personal Circumstances procedures allow students to notify assessment boards of factors that may have affected their performance in assessment.
- **Students with disabilities and/or specific learning difficulties:** students are advised of current University policy as set out in the Academic Regulations. Referral may also be made to the Disability Adviser and the Academic Registry.
- **Arrangements and procedures for conventional examinations:** students are advised of current University policy as set out in the Academic Regulations. A clear date,

⁶ See 'Assessment of Academic Referencing Policy' at www.edgehill.ac.uk/clt/files/2012/02/Assessment-of-referencing-policy-FINAL-17Oct12.pdf.

⁷ Available via www.edgehill.ac.uk/documents/collection/academic-regulations/.

⁸ For example, where minimum attendance is necessary to meet professional standards and/ or Fitness to Practise requirements.

⁹ Formally Exceptional Mitigating Circumstances (EMC).

¹⁰ <https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/document/appendix-7-procedures-for-the-submission-of-personal-circumstances-2022-23/>

duration and location for examinations is set. Conventional exams are subject to invigilation controls. Non-attendance at an examination is awarded a zero mark.

- **Arrangements and procedures for computer-based examinations, Time Limited Assessments online (TLAs):** where applicable, students (and staff) are made cognizant of current University policy on computer-based exams as set out in the Academic Regulations¹¹. Computer-based exams may be subject to proctoring controls.
- **Feedback on coursework:** staff agree the date by which assessed work will be returned to students with relevant grades and detailed written feedback. University policy dictates a **maximum turn-round time of 4 weeks** although the precise time may vary depending on the nature of the assessment (e.g., a short essay compared with a lengthy dissertation) and the number of students registered on the module. Where in exceptional circumstances the turn-round time will exceed 4 weeks, staff ensure that students receive advance notification.
- **Feedback on examinations:** all examinations are followed by feedback which as a minimum takes the form of a group presentation to students indicating common strengths and weaknesses exhibited in scripts and advising how general performance could be improved.
- **Students' rights to appeal against assessment decisions:** students (and staff) are made aware of the guidance prepared by the Academic Registrar on the grounds for appeal¹² and the way in which appeals will be handled.
- **Explanation of the processes in place to ensure assessment is fair:** For example, how assessment strategies are validated, the internal moderation process, external examination, monitoring and evaluation).

Summative assessment

Programme teams are responsible for deciding the form, volume and timing of assessment in modules and programmes which are considered and approved at validation. Summative assessment strategies typically comprise:

- Coursework - *Written assignment, including essay; report; project; dissertation; portfolio.*
- Written examination
- Practical skills assessment - *Oral assessment and presentation; viva voce examination; clinical skills assessment (OSCE).*

Information on assessment collected at validation also supports the production of programme publicity, e.g., print and online prospectus, and compilation of external data returns including the University's submission for Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) assessment.

¹¹ See *Academic Regulations*, Appendix 5, available via www.edgehill.ac.uk/documents/collection/academic-regulations/.

¹² See *Academic Regulations*, Appendix 22, available via www.edgehill.ac.uk/documents/collection/academic-regulations/.

activities. Terms of reference for assessment boards include the specific evaluation of assessment in modules exhibiting low first-time pass rates.

ASSESSMENT PROCESSES

Marking and Moderation

Assessment criteria are used to classify student achievement of ILOs above (and below) threshold (pass) standard, i.e., 40%. Programme teams use **Sector Recognised Standards**, specifically the **Outcome Classification Descriptions for FHEQ Level 6 (Annex D)**¹⁶ to develop level 5 and 6 marking criteria that measure the demonstration of knowledge, understanding and skills within each classification band – Third, Lower Second, Upper Second and First Class (although further differentiation within the 70-100% First Class band is considered best practice). Separate criteria are developed for each FHEQ level (4 to 7). Use of assessment criteria should be transparent within the assessment process enabling students, internal moderators and external examiners to see clearly how marking decisions have been arrived at and to this end will align closely with the written feedback provided to students.

- **First marking** provides sufficient feedback to enable students to understand how their grades have been determined and how they might raise the standard of their work in future. All examination scripts are 'blind marked' with the candidate's name concealed on the cover sheet. While there is no Institutional requirement, departments determine whether to adopt blind marking for other forms of assessment, although it is recognised that some forms of practical assessment, such as performance and presentations, will often exclude this possibility. Where new staff (including associate lecturers) join a programme team and are inexperienced in assessment, Module/ Programme Leaders are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of, understand and utilise the assessment criteria effectively. Such programme teams are advised to moderate all, or a high proportion of, less experienced staff's assessments (see below). Support for staff inexperienced in assessment is available from the Centre for Learning and Teaching (CLT).
- **Second marking** is a process for reviewing and confirming marks as a prelude to internal moderation (below). **Unlike moderation, second-marking is not compulsory across all assessed pieces of work** but may be used where departments feel it is particularly appropriate, e.g., for the assessment of final year dissertations and extended projects. Second markers may attend assessed live performances or presentations which should be video-recorded where practicable for the purpose of internal and external moderation.
- **Internal moderation** is a process used within departments to test for consistent application of the assessment criteria across the range of marks displayed by a cohort. Moderation uses sampling¹⁷ to confirm that the profile of marks is appropriate. The

¹⁶ www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/annex-d-outcome-classification-descriptions-for-fheq-level-6-and-fqheis-level-10-degrees.pdf?sfvrsn=824c981_10.

¹⁷ For Institutional guidance on the range and size of moderation samples, see 'Marking and Moderating Assessed Work' at www.edgehill.ac.uk/clt/files/2013/01/MarkingModeratingAssessedWork.pdf.

moderator(s) review the work with sight of the marking tutor's grades and feedback and focuses on establishing the appropriate grade/class of the work, rather than being excessively concerned with precise numerical scores. Markers and moderators agree final marks for the work and where the variance is greater than ten marks (that is, the difference of a whole classification) it may be appropriate to engage a second moderator. Where the moderator identifies a consistent variance (over or under) across the majority of the sample, an additional sample is requested and in exceptional cases may prompt the scaling of marks or a requirement to re-mark the whole cohort's work. **Moderators are mindful of the impact of changing individual marks during the process on the rest of the cohort and this should not occur.** Evidence of a record of moderation must be present and made available to external examiners. The record must document the moderation process and lessons learned in relation to teaching, learning and assessment that may enhance the next cycle of learning. Discussions between marking tutors and moderators also consider the appropriateness of assessment, and assessment criteria.

Following internal moderation, all internally-moderated work is sent to **the external examiner** for further sampling sufficient to confirm that, in their expert opinion, academic standards are being set appropriately and that students are achieving them¹⁸. Module Assessment Boards are convened to consider students' marks and make recommendations to Progression and Award Boards¹⁹ according to specifications set out in the University's Academic Regulations (sections H & I)²⁰.

Moderation of 'closed' programmes

The process for programme closure as detailed in Chapter 4 of this Handbook involves a Faculty proposal to the Academic Quality Enhancement Committee (AQEC)²¹ confirming termination of recruitment, the date by which the final full- and/or part-time cohorts complete and the arrangements in place to maintain the quality of the student experience. **During the closure period, programmes remain subject to the full range of quality assurance processes** including annual monitoring, external examining, periodic review and any minor / major modifications deemed necessary to maintain academic standards and the quality of student learning opportunities. Following completion of the final cohort, any individual students trailing referred assessment are covered by existing procedures which require their work to be internally moderated only. There is no requirement for external moderation on the basis that constructing a meaningful sample in such circumstances is likely to be impractical²².

In some cases, **repeating students or students who have had an interruption to their studies return to study** after their programme has ceased delivery. In such circumstances the

¹⁸ See Chapter 2.

¹⁹ See Chapter 8.

²⁰ Available via www.edgehill.ac.uk/documents/collection/academic-regulations/.

²¹ See Chapter 8.

²² See Chapter 2, 'Roles and Responsibilities'.

University supports them to complete the awards on which they were initially registered, through either:

1. Continuing on their original modules where these remain in delivery for other programmes; and/or
2. Undertaking alternative subject modules that demonstrably meet the Programme Learning Outcomes of their intended award; and/or
3. Negotiating Student-Initiated Credit²³ that demonstrably meets the Programme Learning Outcomes of their intended award.

In each of the above three scenarios, normal external examiner arrangements apply.

In a very small number of cases where students are required to **repeat without attendance** after module delivery has ceased, they remain registered on their original modules for assessment only and there is generally no requirement for external moderation (although internal moderation is still undertaken). Nevertheless, Faculties may seek the involvement of an external examiner where this felt to be both *proportionate and productive*, most notably where there are enough students to generate a meaningful 'cohort' for moderation purposes and/or where the assessment makes a significant contribution to the student's intended award, e.g., final year Dissertation or Extended Project. In such cases, the Faculty has the option of:

- Retaining the outgoing external examiner (with an Extension of Office where required and available); or
- Extending the duties of an examiner of a similar or cognate programme of the same department; or
- Appointing a separate examiner (time-limited appointment).

Inclusive Assessment Design and Reasonable Adjustments

Teaching and learning activities are influenced by University policies and UK legislation²⁴ related to Equality and Disability. Faculties seek to make their programmes accessible and inclusive at the point of design, devising learning and assessment activities that do not knowingly disadvantage or exclude any student group. Course designers take steps to identify and resolve any barriers and biases in respect of a proposed programme's content, learning activities, learning outcomes and assessment strategy. For example, consideration may be given to how students with a sensory impairment will access learning materials resulting in adaptations to the materials or how and when they are made available. Similar consideration must be given to assessment so that it is accessible to all students. A range of teaching and assessment methods also helps accommodate students' varying learning styles and preferences. The provision of academic and personal support also considers the diverse needs of students.

The University subscribes to inclusive assessment practices, ensuring that assessment is designed in a way that meets the needs of all students, including those studying at different

²³ See Academic Regulations s. C3.9.

²⁴ Equality Act (EQA) 2010 www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents.

locations, via different modes of study (blended or online) and those possessing one or more protected characteristics. Inclusion features prominently among the fourteen principles of the University's Assessment Policy which states that 'assessment will be informed by Edge Hill's Equal Opportunities policy and will seek to be inclusive and not to disadvantage specific individuals or groups of students'²⁵.

Programme approval (validation) panels judge the extent to which inclusion has been considered within the curriculum design process in relation to student characteristics that may include:

- Age, e.g. school-leaver or mature returner to study
- Gender, including sexual orientation and gender-identification
- Ethnicity, including faith or belief systems and cultural values
- Socio-economic background, including first-time HE participation
- Entry qualifications, e.g. A-level, BTEC, T-Levels, Access/ Fastrack; no formal qualifications/ RPEL
- Disability and/ or specific learning difficulties.

Once a programme or module is validated, **reasonable adjustments** (such as additional time for an examination) or **alternative assessments** (substituting one form of assessment for another) may be accessed by students with specific learning difficulties or disabilities. Students are requested to consult their tutors or the University's Inclusive Services²⁶ team before making an application for Faculty approval. In the case of alternative assessments, the choice of substitute is determined by the module leader on condition that it (i) meets the validated module learning outcomes for that particular element of assessment (and any professional body requirements); (ii) is confirmed with the external examiner²⁷; and (iii) is verified by the responsible Programme Leader or Head of Department.

'Must Pass' and 'Pass/Fail'

The University's Academic Regulations permit the award of credit where the aggregation of marks obtained within a module is 40% or higher²⁸. Designating an individual assessment element as **Must Pass**²⁹ means that the student will not progress in the module unless the mark achieved in that element is at least 40 irrespective of the final module mark, e.g. a student with an aggregated module score of 50 would fail the module if they scored below 40 in the Must Pass element. Must Pass is normally reserved for the assessment of core (professional) competencies that are integral to a qualification award and can either be *weighted*, i.e. make a x% contribution to the overall module score, or *unweighted* (0% contribution) as justified at validation. Where used, Must Pass elements should be clearly

²⁵ www.edgehill.ac.uk/clt/files/2019/02/Assessment-Policy-Revisions-2019-Definitive-after-LTC.pdf.

²⁶ www.edgehill.ac.uk/inclusiveservices/.

²⁷ For modules that would normally require external examination, typically at FHEQ level 5 and above but with some additional exceptions – see Quality Management Handbook Chapter 2

www.edgehill.ac.uk/documents/files/02-external-examiners.pdf.

²⁸ See *Academic Regulations* H3.6. However, a separate process of *condonement* may be used to compensate students for marginal failure of a module – see section H11 of the Regulations.

²⁹ Requires justification at programme validation.

identified as such under Additional Assessment Information in the module specification template (E-VAL).

Designating an assessment element **Pass/Fail** means that the student is awarded a mark of *either* 100 or 0. Because this is a binary judgement and there is no grading involved, Pass/Fail should be used where task completion against the intended learning outcomes, rather than degree of performance is being measured. Examples may include the submission of an essay plan or small research proposal. Assessment is weighted in the normal manner and because of the potential to 'skew' the aggregated module mark Pass/Fail elements will normally carry a low weighting, e.g. 10% contributing only 10 or 0 marks to the overall module grade. Pass/Fail elements should be clearly identified as such under Summative Assessment in the module specification template (E-VAL).

Whilst they are different and treated separately, it is possible for an assessment element to be specified *both* 'Must Pass' and 'Pass/Fail' – for example, a clinical skills test could be designated Must Pass with a Pass/Fail mark of either 100 or 0 (either weighted or unweighted).

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR [EXPERIENTIAL] LEARNING

The University's Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy³⁰ acknowledges that learning may occur in a wide variety of settings and facilitates the formal recognition of such learning, whether based on previous academic qualifications or on learning derived from personal or professional experience gained outside any formal educational setting. Learning recognised in this way can be used towards meeting the entry requirements for an Edge Hill programme, or for 'entry with advanced standing' where one or more modules is exempted up to a permitted credit threshold³¹. Individuals seeking to have their prior learning recognised, access processes for the consideration of RPL claims which are described in Faculty Quality Statements³², and where credit is being assigned for experiential learning, this is normally through the assessment of a portfolio demonstrating alignment with learning outcomes (see Table 1).

RPEL claimants receive support and guidance in producing their portfolios, and initial assessment is by a member of Faculty staff other than the designated support tutor. External examiners³³ review a sample of portfolios, negotiated with the department/ Faculty, which is typically larger than for modules that are conventionally delivered and assessed. Ultimate responsibility for the assessment of RPEL claims resides with the appropriate Faculty assessment board.

³⁰ Academic Regulations Appendix 4, available via www.edgehill.ac.uk/documents/collection/academic-regulations/.

³¹ See Academic Regulations s. C7.10.

³² See Chapter 1.

³³ See Chapter 2.

Table 1: Portfolio assessment process in support of RPL claims

Claimant's details:	Description
Curriculum Vitae:	
Current job description:	This should be included only if the claim is for learning from work that includes, or is relevant to, the claimant's current post. Where no formal job description exists the claimant should develop his or her own job description.
The Claim:	This should state the learning outcomes achieved, the level and volume of credit being claimed and (for advanced entry) any modules from which exemption is being sought.
Evidence of Learning Achievement:	This should comprise the primary documentary evidence adduced by the claimant in their Reflective Account (below).
Reflective Account:	This should be explicitly cross-referenced to (and evaluate) the learning outcomes and the evidence of learning achievement. Length, content and style should be appropriate to the volume and level of credit being claimed. The account should demonstrate that the student has engaged with the relevant academic literature and be properly referenced. It should be produced in anticipation of the criteria against which the claim for credit will be assessed which will include its: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Validity</i>: the match between the evidence presented and the learning achieved; • <i>Sufficiency</i>: sufficient volume and breadth of evidence, including reflection, to demonstrate the achievement of all the outcomes claimed; • <i>Authenticity</i>: the evidence must be clearly related to the applicant's own efforts and achievements (independent verification may be specified); • <i>Currency</i>: demonstrating that what is being assessed is current learning.

STUDENT-INITIATED CREDIT

Students who fail a module after initial re-assessment³⁴ can substitute another module³⁵ or undertake a negotiated learning module for the award of Student-Initiated Credit. Student-Initiated Credit is also available for students whom an assessment board has permitted to transfer from an Ordinary degree to an Honours degree³⁶. Proposals for Student-Initiated

³⁴ Note: module substitution is not permitted following a second failed re-assessment.

³⁵ Up to 40 credits may be substituted subject to ensuring consistency with the validated programme learning outcomes and that any modules designated 'core' to the programme/award are not substituted. See Academic Regulations section H12.8.

³⁶ Academic Regulations section I4.6.

Credit are considered and approved by Faculties using the process described in their Faculty Quality Statements³⁷ and are supported by learning agreements which typically include:

1. The student's name, department and the programme/year on which they are enrolled.
2. The rationale for Student-Initiated Credit.
3. The code, title and credit value of the module to be replaced and the code, title and credit value of the replacement module³⁸.
4. The proposed module content, intended learning outcomes and assessment that have been negotiated between the student and tutor, and how the module learning outcomes align with the programme learning outcomes for the justification of a student's award.
5. Submission date for assessment.
6. Signatures of the tutor and student indicating their agreement of the negotiated learning.
7. External examiner's approval³⁹.
8. Signature of the approving authority, e.g., PVC Dean or Associate Dean of Faculty or chair of the relevant Faculty committee.

RETENTION AND DISPOSAL OF ASSESSED WORK

The University's Retention Records Schedule⁴⁰ contains the following guidance on the procedure and timelines for the retention and disposal of assessed student work:

Record Category	Retention Period	Rationale	Notes
Examination scripts (i.e., completed answers)	Level 4: Confirmation of Level 4 Results + 5 years All other levels: Termination of relationship with student + 5 years.	To allow for disputes to be resolved	
Assessed work (other than examination scripts). Including dissertations, that counts towards the final award	Termination of relationship with student + 5 years.	Best practice	Retention period applies only when the assessment is retained by the University. Assessed work may be returned to students at any stage providing marking/moderation/ sampling processes are complete. Departments are required to retain samples for audit purposes ⁴¹ .

³⁷ See Chapter 1.

³⁸ Which may be a validated 'shell module' of the appropriate level and credit value containing generic learning outcomes to which the negotiated content and assessment are applied.

³⁹ For Student-Initiated Credit at level 5 and above.

⁴⁰ [Records Retention Schedule](#).

⁴¹ For example, by the Office for Students, Ofsted or as required by individual Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies.

Record Category	Retention Period	Rationale	Notes
			Retention in these cases will be dictated by the requirements of the audit. It is advised that externally examined samples and associated reports are stored for ease of retrieval. Samples may be retained indefinitely as 'exemplars' where the author gives consent.
PhD theses	May retain indefinitely	Best practice	Only where consent is given by the author.

APPENDIX: “Assessment and Feedback: Baseline Expectations to Ensure Good Practices”

The processes of Assessment Design – Quality Management and Enhancement

1. Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria and tasks will be designed to match the level of higher education study. These will be checked by internal and external experts from this and another university when a programme is validated, or when significant modifications are made.
2. Marks are based on how well students perform against the Learning Outcomes and against specific Criteria for an individual assessment, or against generic Criteria for specific assessment types at that level.
3. Assessment tasks (including coursework, examinations, presentations etc. for levels 5, 6 & 7 and 4, 5 for Foundation Degrees) will also be checked and approved by an External Examiner before they can be used.
4. Tutors’ marking will be checked by other tutors as part of Assessment Moderation sampling, to make sure it is fair and consistent. **A moderation record will be kept for each sampling**, indicating the nature of the sample, those involved, and any lessons learned which may enhance future learning, teaching and assessment.
5. This will be followed by further scrutiny by External Examiner/s who also check fairness, that standards are appropriate, and that feedback is of high quality.

Student Support and Development of Assessment Literacy

6. Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria will be explained in detail. These will be provided for students in a handbook.
7. The Programme Handbook will contain a schedule and instructions for submitting work and the date on which feedback will be received.
8. Teaching will include guidance and preparation for assessment (i.e. Formative Assessment). Tutors will explain how assessment works for each type of assessment that students will encounter. This will be in good time, before students experience that assessment type.
9. Students will be shown examples of assessment, feedback and grades awarded so that they get a sense of ‘what matters.’
10. Tutors will provide opportunities to discuss assessment during teaching. The Personal Tutor will also act as a source of guidance.

Feedback and Communications

11. Students will receive feedback specifically constructed to explain in detail how grades have been awarded and how well the Learning Outcomes have been met against the Assessment Criteria.
12. Feedback will be developmental, giving specific advice for the future. It will be provided in a timely way (within 4 working weeks) in accordance with the schedule set down in the Programme Handbook.

13. Where feasible, work will be submitted via the VLE and feedback returned via the VLE. Students should be asked to consider Learning Outcomes and Assessment criteria prior to submitting to maximise the quality of their work before submission.
14. Any unforeseen delays in feedback will be communicated immediately to students and a confirmed date set for receipt. If a delay is anticipated, contingency measures will be pursued to ensure the original deadline is met.
15. Students will be given an opportunity to discuss feedback with a tutor, individually or as a group. Feedback on examinations will be discussed with the whole group (similar to an examiner's report on strengths and areas for further development)

Fairness in Assessment

In conclusion, it is important that students understand that assessment is a fair process and should know how we underpin that with integrity and accountability. The following messages should be reinforced as part of student inductions each year:

- When we create a programme, learning outcomes and assessment criteria are carefully designed to match the level of your study. These are checked by external experts from another university.
- Assessment tasks (coursework, exams, presentations etc.) are also checked and approved by an external examiner from another university before they can be used.
- Marks are based on how well you perform against the learning outcomes and assessment criteria. They are focused solely on the quality of your work and are not a comparison or competition with other students' work.
- A process called assessment moderation makes sure marking/grading is fair and consistent. This involves tutors having their marking/grading checked for fairness and consistency by other tutors, followed by further scrutiny by external examiners.

This helps us ensure our standards are appropriate and our feedback is of high quality.

For further guidance on Assessment and Feedback see:

<https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/document/assessment-policy/>.

Professor Mark Schofield, October 2021.