LTC17D149

Title:	**Individual Exam Feedback Pilots Final Report**
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Issue

A paper outlining the result of a small pilot of individual exam feedback was reported to the May LTC. The recommendations are to be reconsidered at this meeting, with the addition of a clarification regarding exam scripts.

Recommendations

- That generic exam feedback continue as per University policy.
- That individual exam feedback, by any mode, is not progressed further at this stage.
- To clarify that students can have access to their exam scripts on request to their Hub.

Resource Implications

There may be resources required to manage the access to exam scripts, depending on uptake.

Risk Implications

Low.

Equality and Diversity

Students will continue to receive generic exam feedback and they are encouraged to contact their Adviser and/or Module organiser if they require extra help, for example for reassessment.

Timing of decisions

With immediate effect.

Further Information

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Background

A proposal to pilot a few different methods of giving individual exam feedback was approved by LTC in May 2017. This followed the endorsement of a number of principles by LTC in May 2015 namely that individual examination feedback to be provided on request, that there should be no fee to students for providing copies of examination scripts and that feedback would not be provided in certain circumstances, for example for OSCEs.

Discussion

Three modules were identified for the pilot: PPLX5162B, ENV-5001A and ECO-5001Y. A summary of the comments received from the pilot are attached as Appendix A.

1. The PPL method, of giving individualised feedback from the marker to each student, was time-consuming, difficult to manage and prone to errors/data breaches. It is recommended that this manual process is not continued.
2. The ENV method involved posting generic feedback on Blackboard, with an invitation for all 60 students to ask for an appointment for individual feedback if they wanted. Of the 60 students, 9 looked at the generic feedback and no-one asked for individual feedback.
3. ECO's method of feedback was for students to request a scan of their script, to be read alongside the generic feedback comments. Of the 300 students on the module, 18 asked their paper, and of these, none followed up with a request to speak to the Module Organiser to discuss their feedback. Some that received a scanned copy of their script were disappointed with the lack of markers' comments on the scripts.

A review of practice in other institutions confirmed that UEA is not out of line with the sector; the majority of institutions do not offer individualised feedback nor do they return exam scripts. A summary of those considered are attached as Appendix B.

Conclusion
1. There was not a high engagement with any of the pilot modes, which suggests that there does not seem to be much call for individualised exam feedback more widely.
2. There is currently no efficient means of returning exam scripts or individual feedback to students, and the findings of the pilot suggest that there is not much call from the students for this information. It would seem that a resource-intensive process to return scripts, when there was little uptake in the pilot, is not the best use of limited administrative resource.
3. It is recommended that we do not pursue individualised exam feedback at this time. However, students may look at their script by making an appointment with their Hub.

Appendix A		
Module	**Proposed method of feedback**	**Comments on pilot**
PPLX5162B Comparative Politics Toby James No. of students: 45	1. Generic feedback is produced and published in the usual way. 2. Individual feedback is emailed to students, along with the link to the generic feedback. (LTS) 3. Students request a scan of their script on receipt of the individual feedback if they wish. (LTS)	**Academics' comments on how it worked** No comments received. **LTS' comments on how it worked** Feedback came to LTS from the Module Organiser via Caroline Sauverin and was received on 31st July. The feedback provided in a 'txt' document – notepad. The file contained the student number along with the number of the questions answered, feedback and some contained 'overall' feedback. However, this varied slightly depending on who the marker was and in some cases required editing as it wasn't clear which questions the feedback referred to. The process of returning the feedback to students was quite time-consuming as staff had to extract the student number from the document and then find the student on SITS. The data also had to be formatted into a word document/ transferred into a PDF so the data couldn't be edited. This took time as it had to be done for each individual student. All emails then had to be sent separately to attach the document. As this was a manual process with a number of different steps there is a real danger that data could be sent to the wrong student. One student was incorrectly sent feedback for this exam when they weren't enrolled on the module because the registration number provided to the HUB with had been copied incorrectly. This situation can be prevented moving forward by checking each student number against the mark sheet but this will add another step to what is already a time consuming process. If this pilot was rolled out for every examined module in the School the workload would not be manageable using the current process.

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Module	**Proposed method of feedback**	**Comments on pilot**
ENV-5001A Aquatic Ecology Ros Boar No. of students: 60	1. Generic feedback would be on Bb. 2. Also on Bb would be an invitation from Ros for anyone who wanted individual feedback to make an appointment to see her. 3. Ros would get the script from LTS and go through the script with the student.	**Academics' comments on how it worked** In July 2017, an announcement was made *via* the module Blackboard called "*Comments on exam answers'*" with the text: "*I have added to the Aquatic Blackboard (the 'past exam papers' content area), some general comments about answers given in the June exam*". A file called *"Comments on your answers to the 2016/17 exam questions*" had been uploaded with the covering text: "*If anyone would like individual feedback, please email me in the new academic year (Sept/Oct 2017) to make an appointment*". Nine of the sixty-one students viewed the content area after the announcement was made, but none made any further contact i.e. none asked for individual feedback. This pilot follows two earlier and much more elaborate (and time-consuming for LTS and ENV) pilots run in ENV across second-year modules; take-up was negligible in both of these. **LTS' comments on how it worked** We did not receive any requests from Ros for exam scripts. Therefore, there was no LTS involvement for us to comment on.

ECO5001Y (Intermediate Economics) James Watson 300	1. Students request a scan of their script and the model answers (as an email attachment, which will overcome any issues with accessing Bb remotely). (LTS) 2. On their return in September, students can speak to the Module Organiser to discuss their feedback further, should they wish to. This meeting would be arranged directly with the MO.	**Academics' comments on how it worked** Students were informed (using email and Blackboard) about this opportunity, with the information being provided by both the ECO UG HUB Team and the Module convenor. 288 students sat the May examination, with 18 choosing to request a scanned copy of their exam paper. (Note that generic feedback and answer guidance was available to all students on the module, as per current UEA policy.) None of the students who requested a scan of their paper was put forward for reassessment. No students took up the opportunity to meet the MO. As noted by our then HUB Team Leader (Kerry McConnell), some students expressed dissatisfaction with what they received – although it was explained explicitly that it would be just a scan of their exam script, accompanied by generic feedback and answer guidance, and the opportunity to meet the MO to discuss further. Based on this trial my concerns are twofold: 1. It has the potential to be work intensive (for LTS in the first instance), should many students choose to really embrace the opportunity afforded them; But, as seems a possibility based on this trial, if uptake is poor, and even some students are dissatisfied with what they receive, it is hard to see how much benefit this approach would be in satisfying students' apparent desire for exam feedback. 2. On the one hand, if this trial is in anyway representative, such an approach could well offer a 'tick box' to '*exam feedback being offered*', and in quite a time-efficient way. However, I do have reservations that the approach I trialled may not be enough to satisfy some students, who it would appear simply want a marked script back. Dare I summarise, a middle ground that has the risk of only either being ignored or generating dissatisfaction. **LTS' comments on how it worked** The former LTS ECO UG Team Leader said, "Only 18 students made a request and quite a few didn't think the feedback was that personalised once received." Concerns about workload were somewhat unfounded – although this was due to students choosing not to make use of this opportunity. If something like this was rolled out more broadly, and students engaged with it, then the workload implications are somewhat.

Appendix A		
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UG Pre-reg Module 4 Amanda Bowman and Rebekah Hill 280	1. Generic feedback, plus emailing a scanned copy of the student's script on request, for students who have passed the module. (LTS to scan and send). 2. Timetabled session to receive further feedback, as long as the student has asked for their script in advance. (the School to organise).	**This didn't take place, due to the timing of the delivery.**

Appendix B: Exam feedback information from other members of the Academic Registrars' Council Assessment Group – April 2015		
Institution	Do you give exam feedback, and if so , what form does this take?	Do you give students access to their exam scripts and markers' comments? If so how is this managed, practically? e.g a. Do you give them a copy of the script (Scanned and emailed/available for collection)? b. Do you give them access to the original script but they are not allowed a copy? c. Do students have to ask for access, and if so, what is the take-up, or is it routinely made available to them. d. Are there only certain groups of students who are given access routinely/at all e.g. only those that have failed the exam/non-finalists? e. Is there a time limit on students being able to request access?
Senior Registrar BUCKINGHAM NEW UNIVERSITY	Mixture depending on the area of study – feedback in some form is required and is moving more and more to specific individual feedback. Find that there is a split on this along old faculty divides, e.g. any "health" course does individual feedback, business tends towards generic.	Students can request to view their paper. It is organised by the faculty, they can look at it but not copy or remove from the room. Usually accompanied at the time. Technically they are also supposed to pay £10 for the privilege, as happens rarely, it is thought this is not enforced.
Head of Examinations and Awards, KING'S COLLEGE LONDON	Provide generic feedback but intending to allow access to scripts. Currently considering how best to manage exam feedback. As yet not decided how to manage this.	
Head of Examinations & Assessments, OXFORD	Most courses give written feedback through the course.	In addition, students can make a data subject access request to see any marks sheets, comments sheets etc., but cannot see their scripts. If markers have annotated the scripts then the student receives a transcribed copy of the annotation.
Business and Student Services UNIVERSITY OF DERBY	Do not give access or return exam scripts. They get feedback if they request it but that is direct with the academics.	

Policy Officer, Examinations & Undergraduate Programmes, Education Policy Support, OXFORD	Currently reviewing policy on feedback for summative assessment for undergraduate programmes. Paper marks considered to be feedback. Beyond this for students who fail one or more of their first year exams, they are given as detailed a breakdown of marks as is available for the failed papers. Students also have access to examiner reports which provide general information on how well individual questions were answered, typical errors etc., Students may also discuss paper (but not scripts) with tutors. Students also take mock exams and they get individualised feedback on these. Not sure if they get to see their mock exam scripts. Policy on feedback for graduate taught courses is slightly different. Details can be read at http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/pgexaminers/14feedbackandresits/. Briefly, examiners are permitted to provide written feedback on PGT exams, but it is for each subject to decide whether or not to provide this and what the format is and written feedback is expected on PGT thesis/dissertations over 5000 words.	Students are not permitted to see exam scripts. Not routinely permitted for them to see markers' comments, but some students access these by making subject access requests.
Assistant Registrar (Assessments and Student Regulations) UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH	Yes, normally the same expectation that is given on coursework for exams as well.	The script is returned to them. It is up for individual departments to manage how this happens and keep them in a safe place. Those not collected after a certain time are destroyed. b. Original script is returned. c. All get them back. d. and e. n/a It is not thought that there is huge take up on collecting scripts except where they are borderline for marks and classifications. Have never had that many requests before coming up with this universal policy which was requested by the Students Union.

Deputy Director (Academic Administration) Academic Services Division, UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM	Information on Feedback to students is available at http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/academicservices/quality manual/assessmentandawards/feedback-to-students.aspx	Scripts are not currently returned and it is believed that the release of them (or not) is still covered by the Data Protection Act and the following advice is given: Examination scripts are exempt from the DPA data subject access rules (this exemption covers any written assessment, coursework or fieldwork). Schools are under no obligation to allow students to see original scripts or copies of them, although they may do so voluntarily. E.g. as part of the feedback process. Comments made by an internal or external examiner whether on an examination script or on a separate sheet, that can be held and applied to the original script, may be accessible by the student as personal data and, therefore, should be intelligible and appropriate. Where possible, comments should be made on attached sheets rather than on the scripts themselves to facilitate making comments available to the student on request.
University Examinations Officer Examinations Office UNIVERSITY OF READING	The policy on providing feedback to student on their performance states that schools must ensure feedback on performance in written exams is available to students, if sought. The school is responsible for determining the nature and extent of feedback that is appropriate, although students who are resitting an exam are entitled to guidance that identifies the strengths and weaknesses of their performance and indicates how they might improve their performance.	Students do not have an entitlement to have access to their exam scripts, although they may be allowed sight of them as part of a discussion on their exam performance, where this happens, students are not allowed to take away the script. The expectation is that it will be relatively unusual for a student to ask to see their script – and normally only where the student has failed the exam. The practicalities depend on how quickly a student asks to see their script. In the periods after the exam and the examiners meetings, the scripts will still be held in the department that owns the module. At that point, the student will ask the department to look at their script. A couple of months after the exam period, the scripts are taken to secure central storage on campus. After that, if a student wishes to see their script, the department has to request through the Exams Office for the script to be retrieved. As finding an individual script in the storage space is not straightforward, it is strongly suggested to departments that scripts should only then be retrieved if there is a complaint or appeal.
Senior Assistant Registrar, Assessment & Awards UNIVERSITY OF SURREY	Varies.	a. No b.Yes c.Students have to ask, not huge numbers. d. n/a e. Scripts only kept for twelve months.

Senior Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance & Enhancement) IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON	Yes, this varies between departments/programmes – these include the provision of general information to the class as a whole and more individual feedback given to students through their personal tutor/programme tutors.	Yes, - in some departments this happens routinely but all scripts are always the property of the university. (All students can apply to see their exam scripts and marks/comments under the data legislation route). a. No, can only view, not take away, all scripts are the property of the university. b. Yes. c. Under data legislation students can ask for access, rarely happens. d. Depends on department/programme. e. If requesting under data protection this is either 5 months from the day on which the Data Protection Officer received the request or 40 days from the announcement of the examination results.
Quality Enhancement Officer, BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY	Feedback to students should be constructive and include the percentage mark. Feedback should be appropriately critical, highlighting areas of strength and areas for development; focus on how an improved mark could have been achieved and should help students to improve on their performance in subsequent assessments; explain why the students gained the mark awarded; Be directly related to the intended learning outcomes and relevant generic assessment criteria as well as more specifically to the marking criteria as set for the assignment and detailed within the assignment brief; refer students to additional/further support when and where appropriate. Students should always be offered the opportunity to discuss their assessed work with their markers to seek further clarification and advice. Staff should be able to provide all the examinations. Although it is acknowledged that written feedback on examination papers tends to be fairly limited, more detailed feedback should be provided verbally, particularly for students who have failed.	Marked examination scripts are not routinely returned to students but may be viewed by students by arrangement. There is no administration fee charged for this. Schools/Faculties should forward examination papers to Student Administration after the Boards have met. All papers will be destroyed by Student Administration one year after the meeting at which the results for the year are finalised. Students may request access to their papers under the Data Protection Act (See Section 7).

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Deputy Head of Registry Operations NEWMAN UNIVERSITY, Birmingham	Is going to the Academic Standards Committee as found that different departments are following their own rules and would like an institutional approach . No. Students can request to see their tutor about their mark and their tutor may choose to give them further information.	a.No b.No Some subject areas will keep their scripts in case students wish to discuss issues with them and will do so, usually in a one-to-one. Students are not able to take away the original or a copy of their script. Currently, exam results are only put on the element-listing on the Students interim transcript (on their individual Portal). Again there are some subject areas that will put up a list of marks, or create a Moodle page.
Faculty Registrar Faculty of Engineering and Computing, COVENTRY UNIVERSITY	Students get their marks and can ask for a copy of their script (payment required) to see the actual comments made.	a. and b. Historically students were made to complete a paper request form, take to finance counter to pay up to £1.50 per script requested. Once receipted as paid, they had to bring that slip of paper back to the relevant faculty desk and wait up to 28 days. (It never took that long) to copy and pull out the script and for them to come back and collect. Now there is a shop they access via the website http://www.coventry.ac.uk/life-on-campus/the-university/key-information/registry/qualifications-certificates-and-transcripts/exam-script-requests/ec-exam-script-request-form/?theme=main They complete an online request for each script they want stating which module and then pay online. When order is complete the request is sent to a central inbox to the relevant faculty. They pull out the relevant script(s) scan them and email them to the student immediately. c. It has been advertised but not in a wide way, mainly resit students come and ask and they are given priority. Have never been overrun with requests under the manual process but will see what the online shop does after the next couple of weeks of exam period. d. Available to all just prioritised when busy. e. No specifically, but possibly should – such as within 8 weeks of exam board.
NORTHUMBRIA	(From document retention policy on the web)	Students collect their exam scripts. Any uncollected scripts are kept for the current year plus 4 months.