

LTC14D194

Title: *Principles for Assessment and Feedback*
Author: Professor Neil Ward
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Issue

A number of proposals have been developed through a dialogue between the University and the Union of UEA Students to help direct improvements in assessment and feedback in Schools of Study.

Recommendation

LTC is invited to endorse the proposals in the paper.

Resource Implications

There are no immediate outstanding resource implications. As the principles are applied, there may be implications for the planning of academic staff time and the prioritisation of return of feedback within Schools. However, the Executive Team have approved the document and so there is a University commitment to use the principles to help guide improvement in assessment and feedback.

Risk Implications

The principle risk is in failing to improve levels of student satisfaction around assessment and feedback. This restricts the opportunities for students to benefit from feedback in deepening their learning and improving their academic performance. Questions on assessment and feedback also form an important part of the National Student Survey and so relatively poor performance on these questions inhibits the University's overall performance on the NSS.

Equality and Diversity

The proposals will benefit all UEA students.

Timing of decisions

LTC's endorsement of the proposals in the paper will enable the document to inform practice in Schools and faculties for the 2015/16 academic year.

Further Information

Professor Neil Ward, Vice Chancellors Office (neil.ward@uea.ac.uk)

Background

The Students' Union submitted a document prepared by the National Union of Students which contained a benchmarking tool to assist in the development of policy and practice in assessment and feedback. The University's Executive Team have twice considered the document, which has been developed to fit the particular circumstances and systems at UEA. The two-page document – 'Outstanding Practice in Assessment and Feedback' is appended.

Discussion

Members are asked to consider and approve the principles outlined in the attached paper.

Attachments

Paper: Outstanding Practice in Assessment and Feedback.

Outstanding Practice in Assessment & Feedback
University of East Anglia and the Union of UEA Students

Assessment and feedback is an integral part of the learning and development process and a key concern for students during their studies. It is a crucially important means of supporting student learning. It is the responsibility of the University to always provide the best it can for its students, including in this core area. Students' personal development should take account of all the feedback they have received throughout their course.

The table below has been developed as a tool to help direct improvements in assessment and feedback in Schools of Study at UEA. It is based on a national benchmarking tool developed by the National Union of Students, but modified to fit the particular circumstances and systems in operation at UEA. The tool has been developed through a dialogue between the University and the Union of UEA Students. The principles set out below provide a means of guiding the University's improvements in assessment and feedback. Principles and processes should be reviewed regularly in partnership with students, through student engagement and representation structures.

Issue	Principle
Diverse forms of assessment designed to assess a range of skills and knowledge	<p>Courses are planned holistically to assess a broad range of skills and knowledge through a variety of forms of assessment including written coursework, examinations and oral presentations</p> <p>It is made clear to students how the skills they gain and develop can be applied in the wider world.</p> <p>Students are able to articulate the skills they have developed and demonstrated through their course and through individual forms of assessment.</p> <p>Students are able to enter into dialogue with academic staff on their assessment methods, including the balance between taught, peer and self-learning.</p> <p>Students have some choice in the assessment methods they are offered through their choices of modules.</p>
Assessment criteria	Assessment criteria are clear, easily accessible and linked to learning outcomes. Students fully understand them and are supported in using them.
Submission processes	<p>Submission is simple and flexible, through an online system that confirms receipt and delivers online grades and feedback.</p> <p>Submission is electronic where possible and appropriate, and feedback is provided on-line where appropriate.</p> <p>Accessibility for students is the paramount concern.</p>
Workload distribution	<p>Assessments are planned across courses to avoid clustering where possible (including for joint honours students). Assessment dates are co-ordinated by the Course Director.</p> <p>An indication of the structure of assessment, including where practicable the pattern of deadlines, is available before module selection and students are made fully aware of the assessments they will be expected to submit in a module from the outset.</p> <p>During the academic year students are able to raise issues regarding deadlines.</p>
Anonymity and externality	All summative work is anonymous as far as is possible.

	The University makes appropriate use of external markers to review the approach to assessment.
Marking consistency and distribution	<p>Marking is consistent across every student's course.</p> <p>There is an expectation that all markers will use the full range of marks.</p> <p>Students are made aware of the Senate scale grade/classification descriptors, where appropriate, and these are clearly linked to the marks students are awarded.</p>
Feedback timeliness	All work (formative and summative) should be returned as soon as possible in order that students can reflect and act on it in time for the next piece of relevant assessment. UEA's institutional minimum standard has been 20 working days for summative work, and should move to 15 working days and beyond where practicable.
Feedback quality	<p>Detailed, constructive, individual feedback is provided on all forms of assessment, including examinations.</p> <p>Students receive on-going verbal, written or email feedback throughout their course and understand that feedback encompasses more than just written comments on assignments.</p> <p>The opportunities to receive feedback are clearly explained to students at the start of the course.</p> <p>Feedback is detailed enough to clearly identify areas for improvement and examples of good practice.</p> <p>There are opportunities for dialogue about feedback, individually with staff or advisors as well as peer-to-peer dialogue.</p>
Formative assessment and feedback	<p>Formative assessment is a key aspect of learning and encourages students to reflect on their performance and develop their skills.</p> <p>Formative feedback is considered holistically as part of a student's personal development.</p> <p>The design of formative coursework should be part of a dialogue between students and staff.</p>
Self-reflection and peer learning	<p>Formative feedback regularly includes self-reflection and peer input which will be embedded in the curriculum.</p> <p>Students are encouraged to reflect on the feedback they have been given by peers and tutors and to develop their skills holistically and sustainably.</p>