



## Assessment and Feedback Principles 2016-2017 © Evans, 2016

Assessment practices support learning and provide a measure of the extent to which an individual has met the required learning outcomes. Understanding the assessment process is fundamental in enabling effective use of assessment feedback. Students need to co-own the assessment feedback process if they are to gain maximum benefit from it. Our assessment and feedback policy sees students as **partners in the process**.

These assessment and feedback principles are underpinned by the EAT framework; an inclusive participatory assessment feedback approach that is designed to support student self-regulation of learning, and informed by QAA; HEA and UKPPSF frameworks.

The importance of **engaging** students in meaningful assessment practices throughout their higher education experience is highlighted along with the importance of acknowledging and supporting student **transitions**. The assessment feedback process is seen **holistically** in terms of how all assessment components fit together and are **aligned** to support the student journey. A critical pedagogic stance is integral in ensuring ongoing **evaluation** of assessment feedback processes and the provision of appropriate **training** to support staff and students in assessment feedback practices.

Effective assessment feedback practices should support students to:

- Participate fully in assessment feedback processes;
- Understand the assessment feedback requirements of the discipline/profession they are working in;
- Embrace the aims and expectations of their chosen programme of study;
- Demonstrate understanding of, and an ability to reflect on their development of knowledge and skills as part of self-evaluation;
- Recognise and value existing knowledge and skills and build upon them in order to apply learning to new contexts;
- Make effective and responsible use of feedback that is provided;
- Offer feedback and support to others as part of collaborative learning opportunities;
- Understand sound academic practice and behave with integrity;
- Use resources, including own time effectively;
- Contribute effectively to teaching sessions including peer support;
- Contribute to the development of the design and delivery of assessment feedback practices.

Dimension	Keywords	Description	QAA	UKPSF	HEA
AL 1: Clarify what constitutes good			Assessment Literacy		
AL1.1	Transitions	<p><b>Students should receive explicit guidance on the requirements of assessment tasks from the outset.</b></p> <p>(a) Students should be made aware of the rationale informing the nature of assessment.</p> <p>(b) Students should be provided with the programme assessment regulations and the general regulations, including those governing academic integrity, special considerations (including deadline extension requests) and appeals <u>at the beginning</u> of their programme of study.</p> <p>(c) Key tasks and timelines should be clearly signposted. At the beginning of each semester or year students should be given the details of the assessment method for each module, including coursework and/or examination requirements, deadlines for submission and the criteria by which work will be assessed.</p> <p>(e) Students should be given explicit guidance on assessment requirements (e.g. demystifying critical reflection; writing styles; referencing etc.).</p> <p>(f) Students should be prepared for the assessment tasks they face (e.g. Rubrics should be published in advance of assessment taking place, and sample questions and materials made available so that students know what is expected of them).</p>	B3.7 B6.6	A 1,2,4 K2 V1,2,3	T5
AL1.2	Transitions Engagement	<p><b>Criteria for assessment should be as clear as possible to students, tutors, and examiners to ensure equity, validity, and reliability.</b></p> <p>a) Assessment criteria (grade descriptors) should be published and available to all students, markers and examiners.</p> <p>b) Students should have opportunities to work with the assessment criteria to ensure they fully understand what they mean and how to achieve them?</p> <p>c) Exemplars of good practice should be available so that student can see what 'good' looks like and the different ways in which 'good' can be manifested.</p> <p>Good practice would involve students in the design of criteria.</p>	B4.8	A1,2,3, A4 K2,3 V2	T5,6
AL1.3	Transitions	<p><b>What constitutes good academic practice should be made clear to all students.</b></p> <p>a) Students and staff should be enabled to become confident in recognising and applying good academic practice and be clear about activities which constitute unacceptable practice.</p> <p>b) Issues relating to academic writing skills, including how to avoid breaches of academic integrity, and how to use references appropriately to the discipline to avoid plagiarizing others' work should be explained clearly.</p>	B6.7	A2,4 K2	
AL1.4	Training Engagement	<p><b>All those involved in the teaching, learning and assessment on a programme (staff and students) should be trained in assessment feedback practices including the requirements of good academic practice.</b></p> <p>a) There should be regular training in marking and moderation for all those involved in the marking and moderation of work.</p>	B3.4 B4.7 B5.4 B6.4 B8.7 B8.8	A5 K1,2,3, 5,6 V3	T5

Dimension	Keywords	Description	QAA	UKPSF	HEA
<b>AL 2: Clarify how assessment elements fit together</b>			<b>Assessment Literacy</b>		
AL2.1	Holistic/ Programme Level	<p><b>How all the different elements of assessment fit together across a programme should be made clear to students from the outset.</b></p> <p>a) Module and programme handbooks should be clear and consistent throughout about how the different elements of assessment fit together.</p>		A1,3,4 K2	
	Transitions				
AL2.2	Holistic/ Programme Level	<p><b>The pattern of assessment should be considered at the programme level to ensure coherence and progression in the development of knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to learning outcomes.</b></p> <p>Assessment deadlines should be managed across the whole programme so as to not have negative knock on effects.</p>		A1 K2	
	Transitions				
AL2.3	Programme Level	<p><b>How formative and summative assessment operates across a whole programme should be made clear to students and staff from the outset.</b></p> <p>a) Students should be made aware of any formative assessment on the module and the differences between formative and summative assessment explained.</p> <p>a) b) Whether formative assessment tasks are optional or compulsory should be made clear from the outset.</p>		A2,3,4 K3	
	Transitions				
<b>AL 3: Clarify student entitlement</b>			<b>Assessment Literacy</b>		
AL3. 1	Engagement	<p><b>Every student should be provided with clear and current information that specifies the learning opportunities and support available to them.</b></p> <p>a) A baseline of expectations regarding assessment and feedback practice should be agreed with programme teams.</p> <p>b) Opportunities for feedback should be made explicit to students. What constitutes formative feedback should be made clear (when, what, how, and involving whom).</p>	B3.7 B4.4	A1,2,3, A4 K3 V1,2	
	Transitions				
AL3. 2	Engagement	<p><b>The role and expectations of students in assessment and feedback practices should be clarified with all students from the outset.</b></p> <p>a) Students should receive clear statements of entitlement at the start of the programme and within each module. This will cover items such as lecturer/student roles, contact times, assessment feedback response times, marking expectations and levels of feedback; clarification regarding the amount of time and commitment required in the preparation of materials; peer mentoring and support; contribution to sessions; preparation prior to taught sessions and follow up work post-sessions etc.).</p>	B3.7 B3.8	A1,2,3, A4 V2	
	Transitions				
AL3.3	Transitions	<p><b>Information regarding student entitlement should be clear and consistent in module and programme handbooks and online provision from the outset.</b></p> <p>a) Students should be introduced to how the virtual learning environment is organised and how they can access resources, and networks of support.</p>		A1,4 V2	
AL3.4	Transitions	<p><b>Principles underpinning the assessment and feedback design should be made clear to students to enable them to engage fully in assessment and feedback practices.</b></p>	B4.8	A1,2,4 V3	
	Engagement				

Dimension	Keywords	Description	QAA	UKPSF	HEA
		a) Students should be introduced to the purposes and methods of assessment; the range and types of feedback available, and clear links to sources of support and guidance from the outset.			
AL3.5		<b>Students undertaking the same module should receive the feedback at the same time.</b>		A1, V1,2	
<b>AL 4: Clarify the requirements of the discipline</b>			<b>Assessment Literacy</b>		
AL4.1	Transitions	<b>All students should be inducted into the requirements of the discipline and what is to be a member of such a community from the outset.</b> a) The most effective ways of learning within a specific discipline should be explored with students from the outset. b) Students should be inducted into current research within the discipline and their role within it.	B4.8	A2 K2,3 V1, 2,3	
	Alignment				
	Engagement				
AL4.2	Transitions	<b>Core* concepts and threshold** concepts should be identified at module and programme levels in order to support student progression throughout a programme of study.</b> * Core concepts – fundamental knowledge, skills and understanding a module/ programme is focusing on. **Threshold concepts – those concepts that are most likely to present students with difficulties – e.g. troublesome concepts).		K2,3	
AL4.3	Alignment	<b>Assessments should be relevant to the requirements of the discipline and related professional, statutory and regulatory bodies.</b>	B4.6	A1,2,3 V3	
AL4.4	Engagement	<b>Assessments should be designed to encourage a deep approach* to learning within the discipline.</b> *Deep approach – requires the student to engage with the material and own it (i.e. requires more than a superficial knowledge and understanding; a student should be able to apply and develop the ideas beyond the immediate context.		A1,2,3 V3	
<b>AF1: Provide accessible feedback</b>			<b>Assessment Feedback</b>		
AF1.1	Engagement	<b>Feedback should be focused on supporting students' learning in 'how to improve.'</b>	B6.9	A3 V3	
AF1.2	Alignment	<b>Feedback should directly relate to the assessment criteria and the learning outcomes being assessed and all students should receive parity of treatment.</b>	B6.9	A3 V3	
AF1.3	Alignment	<b>The feedback method used should be appropriate for the assessment task.</b>	B6.9	A3 V3	
AF1.4	Alignment	<b>The rationale for the awarded mark should be clear.</b>	B6.9	A3	
AF1.5	Evaluation	<b>The effectiveness and efficiency of feedback mechanisms should be evaluated on an ongoing and iterative basis with students and staff.</b> a) The process for reviewing the effectiveness and efficiency of feedback should be transparent.	B8.2 B8.7 B8.8	A5 K5,6 V3	
<b>AF2: Provide early opportunities for students to act on feedback</b>			<b>Assessment Feedback</b>		
AF2.1	Transitions	<b>There should be early opportunities to assess students' competence in key areas of knowledge, skills, and understanding to enable students' to bench mark where they are at, and where they need to get to.</b>		A1,3 K3	

Dimension	Keywords	Description	QAA	UKPSF	HEA
AF2.2	Transitions	<p><b>Feedback should be given in sufficient time* to enable a student to use the feedback prior to summative assessment.</b></p> <p>a) *Feedback on assessments should be received <u>within 4 working weeks after the submission date</u>. Students must be informed of the reasons if feedback will not be provided within this timeframe and when, in such circumstances, feedback will be made available.</p> <p>b) <u>Feedback on examinations should be received within 6 weeks.</u></p> <p>c) Substantial pieces of work such as research projects or dissertations should receive feedback, but the provision of such feedback is not required to adhere to the above time limits. This reflects the importance of such work within degree programmes and the need to devote appropriate time and attention to the assessment process.</p> <p>d) <u>Clear timelines for such feedback should be provided to students at the start of the programme.</u></p>	B6.9	A1-4 K1,3,4 V1,2	
	Engagement				
	Alignment				
AF2.3	Alignment	<p><b>Formative feedback tasks should directly relate to summative tasks and the links between them should be made clear.</b></p> <p>a) There should be a balance between formative and summative assessment tasks in each module and across the programme.</p>		A1 V1,2	
	Holistic/ Programme Level				
<b>AF3 Prepare students for meaningful dialogue / peer engagement</b>			<b>Assessment Feedback</b>		
AF3.1	Engagement	<p><b>There should be regular opportunities for students and staff to engage in dialogue to enhance understandings of assessment and feedback and relevant standards in order to understand what is required from, and entailed in, the assessment process.</b></p>	B5.2 B6.6 B8.7 B8.8	A1,3 V2	T4
AF3.2	Engagement	<p><b>Peer engagement activities should be authentic and relevant.</b></p>		A1	
AF3.3	Engagement	<p><b>Where students are involved in peer teaching and feedback activities expectations regarding student participation should be made clear from the outset</b></p> <p>a) The purpose of peer engagement activities should be made explicit from the outset (e.g. contribution to teaching; mentoring; assessment; whether optional or compulsory etc.)</p> <p>b) Expectations regarding student participation should be made clear from the outset (e.g. preparation of materials pre and post sessions; number of peer sessions required; hours of preparation).</p> <p>c) Students should be provided with clear criteria regarding the nature of feedback they are being asked to provide.</p> <p>d) Students should be given training to support them in giving, using and acting on feedback.</p>	B3.9	A1,3, 4 K3 V2	
	Training				
	Transitions				
AF3.4		<p><b>Peer engagement opportunities should provide students with a degree of choice.</b></p> <p>a) Students should have the opportunity to work individually and collaboratively in a variety of groups subject to the requirements of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies.</p>		V1, 2	
<b>AF4: Promote development of students' self-evaluation skills</b>			<b>Assessment Feedback</b>		
AF4.1	Engagement	<p><b>Assessment and feedback practices should support students to successfully manage their own learning.</b></p> <p>a) Students should have full access to resources and course/programme information from the outset so that they can self-regulate their learning.</p>	B3.9 B4.8	A1,3,4 V1	✓
	Transitions				

Dimension	Keyword	Description	QAA	UKPSF	HEA
AF4.2	Engagement	<p><b>Learning opportunities should be made available to students to support them in reflecting on their own learning and enable them to develop the skills to self-monitor and self-evaluate their performance.</b></p> <p>a) To support students' self-evaluation skills, students should be exposed to tools and strategies to support their development (e.g. rubrics; exemplars; models to show alternative ways of approaching task; peer and self-feedback opportunities etc.).</p> <p>b) b) Students should be supported in learning what to do when they do not know; how to diagnose an issue, how to support their own development through an understanding of how they learn.</p>	B3.9 B4.8	A3 V1	✓
	Transitions				
AF4.3	Transitions	<p><b>Students should be made aware of existing networks of support that are available to them (discipline and University) and supported in developing their own networks of support.</b></p>		K3 V1,2	
	Engagement				
<b>AD1: Ensure robust and transparent processes and procedures</b>			<b>Assessment Design</b>		
AD1.1	Engagement	<p><b>Assessment policies should be created in partnership with students.</b></p>			
AD1.2	Evaluation	<p><b>Assessment policies, regulations, and processes must ensure that the academic standard for each award of credit/qualification is rigorous and maintained at the appropriate standard.</b></p> <p>a) Assessment policies, regulations, and processes including marking and moderation should be consistent, transparent, replicable and accessible to all intended audiences.</p> <p>b) The way student achievement is reported at individual task level and how this is combined at module and programme level should be explicit and clear to all.</p> <p>c) The effectiveness off the marking and moderation process should be regularly evaluated.</p>	B6.1 B6.2 B6.13 B8.1	A1,3,4 K2,5,6 V1,2	T6
AD1.3		<p><b>Assessment should be fit for purpose. Assessment tasks should be designed to effectively measure the intended module / programme learning outcomes.</b></p> <p>a) The design of assessment (volume, timing and nature) should enable a student to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes.</p> <p>b) Learning extends beyond what is amenable to precise specification of standards or to objective assessment. Not all learning outcomes can be specified.</p> <p>c) In developing sustainable assessment practice it is important to support students in meeting the requirements of specific modules while at the same time developing their skills beyond the module.</p>	B6.8	A1,3,4, 5 K6 V1,2,3	T,2,3 6
AD1.4		<p><b>Student performance should be equitably judged against the standards set.</b></p>	B6.1	A3 K2,6	T6
AD1.5		<p><b>Assessment should be redeemable although the opportunities may be restricted by specific professional, regulatory, and statutory body (PRSB) requirements.*</b></p> <p>* Faculties must follow the regulations for the redeeming of failed assessments as outlined in the University Calendar</p> <p>a) Information on arrangements for re-assessment should be available to students at the beginning of each module.</p>		A3	
<b>AD2: Promote meaningful and focused assessment</b>			<b>Assessment Design</b>		
AD2.1	Engagement	<p><b>Assessment and feedback practices should be informed by best practice underpinned by research, discipline-specific and educational scholarship.</b></p>	B3.3 B6.5	A5 V3	

AD2.2		<b>Assessment design should be underpinned by effective assessment and feedback principles (see page 15 EAT Framework)</b>		A1,4,5 V1,2,3	T1
AD2.3	Holistic	<b>Assessment practices should be holistic in taking into account assessment literacy, assessment feedback, and assessment design. Learning and assessment should be integrated and fully aligned</b> (see EAT framework@Soton). a) Assessment should be considered holistically across modules to ensure progression, efficiency, and fit within the overall programme structure. b) Assessment design should be considered at the programme level to ensure streamlining of learning outcomes; appropriate variety in assessment tasks; and timing of assessment to prevent overload.	B6.8	A1,4	T1
AD2.4	Engagement	<b>Assessment should be relevant and enable students to be engaged in the production of meaningful products</b> (e.g. engaging in research; developing resources for the community; addressing key concerns within the wider world; have direct applications to professional practice; community input involved in assessment of products).		K2	✓
AD2.5		<b>Assessment tasks should be sufficiently challenging to enable all students to demonstrate the best level of attainment of which they are capable.</b>	B6.8	A1 V1,2	
AD2.6		<b>Technology should be used appropriately to support the sustainability and enhancement of assessment practices.</b>		A1,3,4 K4	
AD2.7	Holistic/Programme Level	<b>Assessment practices should be sustainable and manageable for students and staff.</b> a) The pattern of assessment should be manageable to avoid overload for students and staff (e.g. spread of assessment over the academic year; the appropriateness of assessment set at different times; number of learning outcomes).	B6.8	A4	
<b>AD3: Ensure access and equal opportunities</b>			<b>Assessment Design</b>		
AD3.1	Engagement	<b>Assessment and feedback practices should be inclusive. They should provide every student with an equal and effective opportunity to access learning and teaching opportunities and to achieve the intended learning outcomes.</b> a) Assessment opportunities to enable appropriate support should be considered during the development of a programme assessment strategy; b) The baseline of assessment and feedback provision needs to be clear to all students and staff from the outset; c) Assessment should be appropriate and manageable in relation to student level; d) All students should receive induction into module and programme assessment and feedback requirements; e) The balance of different assessment activities should be considered to ensure reasonable choice in relation to meeting intended learning outcomes; f) Where choice in assessment is available, negotiated choice is advocated so that students are guided in selecting appropriate choices from the outset; g) Any additional support services should be clearly outlined to all students from the outset.	B3.2 B4.3 B6.10	A1 V1,2	

Dimension	Keyword	Description	QAA	UKPSF	HEA
AD.3.2	Evaluation	<p><b>Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of inclusive assessment practice should be in place to ensure that no students are inadvertently disadvantaged by assessment practices.</b></p> <p>a) Staff should have access to sources of advice about inclusive assessment strategies and practices, as well as about the assessment implications for individual students, especially disabled students.</p>	B6.10 B6.18 B8.1 B8.2	K5	
	Training				
<b>AD4: Ensure ongoing evaluation to support development of sustainable assessment and feedback practice</b>			<b>Assessment Design</b>		
AD4.1	Engagement	<p><b>Students should be given a range of opportunities to effectively contribute to the design, delivery, and evaluation of assessment and feedback.</b></p> <p>a) Programme teams should create and maintain an environment which encourages student and staff to engage in discussions to bring about enhancements in assessment and feedback.</p> <p>b) Students should be centrally involved in the development of assessment and feedback policy.</p> <p>c) The efforts of staff and students in developing assessment feedback practices should be recognized and celebrated (e.g. Associate Deans with RAP staff and student discipline representatives).</p>	B1.6 B5.1 B5.2 B5.3 B8.7  B5.6	V2	
AD4.2	Evaluation	<p><b>Feedback from a range of sources (staff and student feedback; external examiner reports; learning gain measures/ analytics) should be analysed appropriately to ensure the continued effectiveness of assessment practices.</b></p>	B3.5 B5.5 B8.2	K5	
AD4.3	Engagement	<p><b>How student feedback has been used to inform programme/ module development should be clearly communicated to students.</b></p>	B3.5		
AD4.4	Evaluation	<p><b>Assessment practices should be regularly evaluated and developed.</b></p>		K5,6	
AD4.5	Alignment	<p><b>Assessment practice should be aligned to University Plans and Strategies underpinned by effective assessment feedback principles. It should be cognisant of the wider HE context.</b></p>		K6 V4	