

College Policy on Feedback on Assessment

Introduction

1. The role of feedback in the learning process is to “inform the student of where and how their learning and performance can be improved. Feedback on learning can come from fellow students, lecturers, staff supporting the learning process such as demonstrators or the student themselves”.
2. The provision of feedback on assessment is clearly a matter of importance to students, and is consistently rated as one of the most important issues of concern in the National Student Survey.
3. In addition, the QAA Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education states, in its section on Assessment of Students:

In meeting the needs of students for feedback on their progression and attainment, it can be helpful to consider:

- the desirability of providing feedback at an appropriate time in the learning process, and as soon as possible after the student has completed the assessment task
 - specifying the nature and extent of feedback that students can expect and whether this is to be accompanied by the return of assessed work. It is important to consider the particular needs of students studying part-time and/or remotely
 - the effective use of comments on returned work, including relating feedback to intended learning outcomes and assessment criteria, in order to help students identify areas for improvement as well as commending them for achievement
 - the role of oral feedback, either on a group or individual basis, as a means of supplementing or replacing written feedback
 - providing guidance about the point in the module or programme where it is no longer appropriate for a member of staff to continue providing feedback to a student on his/her work. This is normally when a student is approaching a summative assessment, such as submission of a dissertation, or handing in a coursework assignment.
4. It is recognised however that feedback comes in a variety of forms dependent on discipline, and applying a strict College policy may actually inhibit the process of informing the student of where and how their learning and performance can be improved, where this process is better undertaken by other means. Feedback may encompass: formal feedback; informal feedback; written; oral; individual; group; lecturer-student; student-student.

5. This policy therefore seeks to specify how feedback on assessment should be provided at module, programme, department and school level.

Feedback Statements

6. There are many innovative ways of incorporating feedback into the teaching process. This policy attempts to provide a framework within which such innovative methods can be operated.
7. For feedback on coursework a statement on practice within the programme, including timescales where appropriate, should be published in the programme handbook or other appropriate forum. This may, where appropriate, refer to module specifications for full details.
8. A statement on the form that feedback will take within each module should also be published. This could include, for example, whether feedback will be oral or written, whether template reports will be used, and whether feedback will be provided on an individual basis or in the form of a report to all students giving a general report on an individual assessment exercise. This may be published in module specifications or in programme handbooks.
9. Feedback on coursework may include a provisional mark for the piece of work in question. It should however be noted that all marks are subject to ratification by the relevant Sub-Board and Board of Examiners, normally at their meetings in July of each year; Sub-Boards and Boards reserve the right to assign a mark other than the provisional mark where, in the academic judgement of the Sub-Board / Board, it is appropriate to do so, or where mark is amended as a result of College regulation or policy (for instance in the event of a subsequent finding that an assessment offence has been committed).
10. Feedback on coursework should normally be provided, in the format specified in the appropriate feedback statement, within four weeks of the deadline for submission of the piece of work in question. It should be noted that, where a piece of work is submitted after the normal deadline then it may not be possible to provide feedback within four weeks.
11. Feedback on end of year examinations, beyond the confirmed mark, is not normally provided.

Academic Board
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