



University
of Glasgow

Learning through Assessment

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Glossary

Advance HE	Advance HE is a member-led charity of and for the sector that works with partners across the globe to improve higher education for staff, students, and society.
CPD	Continuous professional development
eAssessment	E-assessment is when an assessment is created, written, delivered, and marked with technology, usually a specialist assessment platform. In other words, any form of assessment that uses technology for any part of the process.
EIA	Equality Impact Assessment is an evidence-based approach designed to help organisations ensure that their policies, practices, events, and decision-making processes are fair and do not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any protected groups from participation.
ePortfolio	is a collection of work (evidence) in an electronic format that showcases learning over time.
GTA	Graduate Teaching Assistant
HE	Higher Education
ILOs	Intended Learning Outcomes
JISC	The Joint Information Systems Committee, Jisc is the UK digital, data and technology agency focused on tertiary education, research, and innovation.
LTA	Learning through Assessment
L&T	Learning and Teaching
Moodle	Moodle is an open-source learning management system.
MPA	Management, Professional and Administrative staff
Open-book exam	An open-book exam allows you to refer to your notes and other course materials while you are taking the exam. Open-book exams are designed to test your ability to analyse, evaluate or synthesise knowledge, rather than your ability to recall facts or information.
ODL	Online distance learning
P&DR	Performance and Development Review

NSS	National Student Survey
QAA	The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
WCAB	The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines that must be adhered to meet requirements and guidelines for digital assessment publication.
Teacher	Reference in the document to “teacher” includes lecturers, Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA), tutors, demonstrators, technicians, and any other member of staff who instructs, teaches, or assesses students.
UofG	The University of Glasgow
UCL	University College London

Learning through Assessment: An Assessment and Feedback Strategy for the University of Glasgow

Introduction and context

Learning through Assessment sets out our approach to assessment and feedback at the University of Glasgow. The approach is based around the principle that assessment can and should support students' learning, from the beginning of their university career until graduation and beyond. We know that our students want detailed and focused feedback, demonstrating their enthusiasm for learning from their assessments and applying this learning in future.¹ Assessment, and its associated feedback, has a major impact on the quality of students' learning, and their experiences in Higher Education.

Learning through Assessment promotes assessment as learning:

Assessment as learning is a learning experience where the formative and summative elements work well together. Tasks appear relevant, students can see what they have gained by undertaking the activity, they feel involved in a dialogue about standards and evidence and the continuous development approach helps with issues of stress and workload for staff and students (Ferrell & Knight, 2022)

Our approach to assessment and feedback is informed by consultations with staff and students at the University, research on good and best practice in A&F in other institutions, and workshops with members of the Assessment and Feedback Project Board. Further, we refreshed this approach in mid-2022, to take account of our experience of the Covid-19 pandemic. The answers and comments we obtained through this research and these conversations have allowed us to write principles for designing A&F based on evidence from across the sector, the local expertise and experiences of our staff and students, and insight into the needs of members of the University of Glasgow community.

We also recognise that as more learning and teaching takes advantage of blended and remote contexts, especially but not only since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, the ways in which we will need to assess this learning must adapt. This is discussed below, in Technology. We also recognise that the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted that the ways in which we assess students' learning must reflect the increased variety of teaching delivery

¹ <https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/leads/aftoolkit/feedback/glance%60/students/> (Last accessed April 22nd, 2020)

methods and must make better use of the available tools to maximise the opportunities for all students to demonstrate their achievements.

Benefits of Learning through Assessment

The benefits of successfully implementing this approach include the following:

- More meaningful assessment and feedback that enhances our students' learning
- A better experience of assessment and feedback for students and staff, reflected in improved NSS scores and other indicators of student satisfaction
- Life-long and self-regulated learners who are able to apply their learning beyond university
- A better user experience through user-friendly systems and fully integrated processes, which are standardised where appropriate and helpful
- Reduced risk around assessment and feedback processes.

Our Vision and Design Principles

Learning through Assessment is structured around six design principles, which are in turn built upon four key concepts: **meaningful**, **iterative**, **programmatic**, and **inclusive** assessment and feedback. Surrounding each of these elements of *Learning through Assessment* are **assessment and feedback literacy**, and **academic integrity**. These are both crucial to successfully carrying out meaningful, programmatic, iterative, and inclusive assessment and feedback.

Vision

We will develop a sector-leading, evidence-based inclusive approach to assessment and feedback that enables our students to be life-long, self-regulated learners and to actively contribute to assessment and feedback processes. At the heart of our approach will be meaningful and diverse assessment that is responsive to changes in higher education and the workplace.

Design Principles

1. We will aim to provide the best possible experience of assessment and feedback that produces significant benefits for students' learning and enables staff to concentrate on the elements of teaching, assessment and support for learning that have the greatest impact.
2. We will facilitate this through feedback that relates to iterative, meaningful assessment designed to support and develop students' engagement with learning.

3. We will support staff in the design of programmatic assessment and feedback, where appropriate, to provide our students with connected learning over the course of their degrees.
4. We will implement sustainable and manageable approaches to assessment and feedback that are inclusive, responsive, continually evaluated and supported by clear academic policies and processes.
5. We will enable this approach through an optimal number of user-friendly systems that efficiently integrate all aspects of assessment and feedback.
6. Our approach will be complemented by the use of analytics to support student learning and inform, evaluate, and enable innovation in our assessment practices.

How do we want assessment and feedback to be at UofG?

If assessment and feedback at the University of Glasgow is to be meaningful, iterative, programmatic, and inclusive, each of these key concepts should inform assessment and feedback design. We can embed these values by helping students and staff to develop their assessment and feedback literacy, and by emphasising and supporting academic integrity in assessment and feedback. These values are interlinked and share characteristics. For example, diversity in assessment type is a characteristic of programmatic (p.13) and inclusive (p.15) assessment; dialogue between teachers and students is a characteristic of meaningful (p.9), iterative (p.11), and inclusive (p.15) feedback. We want students to see the inherent value in carrying out assessments and receiving and acting on feedback, irrespective of the grades or credits they might receive. We want assessment and feedback to be more straightforward for staff, and we want our staff to be able to clearly see how it is impacting students' learning and to be able to develop their curricula and assessment based on this understanding.

In the following sections, we outline what we mean when we discuss the values, [meaningful](#), [iterative](#), [programmatic](#), and [inclusive](#), and suggest ways these can be implemented at UofG. We then elaborate on our approaches to assessment which underpin each of these concepts. We go on to describe how UofG will support staff and students in implementing the framework. Our suggestions are based on work done by the Project Board, our engagement with the University community, and research on best practice in assessment and feedback as well as our experience during the Covid-19 pandemic. which underpin each of these concepts. We go on to describe how UofG will support staff and students in implementing the framework. Our suggestions are based on work done by the Project Board, our engagement with the

University community, and research on best practice in assessment and feedback as well as our experience during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Please note: where we refer to “teacher” below, this includes lecturers, GTAs, tutors, demonstrators, technicians, and any other member of staff who instructs, teaches, or assesses students.

Meaningful assessment and feedback

Meaningful assessment (also known as *authentic* assessment) helps students develop subject-area knowledge, as well as knowledge and skills that may be useful for them in other contexts. While this does not mean eliminating exams completely, it does mean shifting away from being reliant on them when other methods of assessment can be more beneficial for the students. By making assessments more meaningful, we can improve the quality and depth of students' learning, increase their autonomy, and improve their commitment to and motivation for learning (Villarroel, Bloxham, Bruna, Bruna & Herrera-Seda 2018).

Meaningful assessment has particular requirements for assessment design as cited in Ajjawi, Tai, Huu, Boud, Johnson & Patrick (2020, p.306-307). These include:

- requiring students to carry out activities that reflect actual practices of a profession within or in similar physical and social contexts of that profession (Gulikers et al., 2004; Swan & Hofer, 2013; Bosco & Ferns, 2014)
- being cognitively challenging (Ashford-Rowe et al., 2014). It should stimulate students to engage in solving actual problems, applying knowledge, and making decisions, which is conducive to the development of cognitive and metacognitive skills (Elliott & Higgins, 2005; Villarroel et al., 2018)
- encouraging student reflexivity. Reflexivity requires a student to position themselves in relation to their practices and develop a sense of self. During authentic assessment tasks, students oscillate between the role of student and future practitioner as they straddle both the academy and the world of work (Lingard, Schryer, Garwood & Spafford, 2003; Field, Duffy & Huggins, 2013).
- promoting students' capabilities to judge the quality of their work. Assessment activities should encourage students to engage with criteria and standards about what a good performance means, judge their own performance, and thereby regulate their learning (Tai, Ajjawi, Boud, Dawson & Panadero, 2018; Villarroel et al., 2018).

How do we do this?

- Staff receive training and advice on assessment and feedback literacy, with a special focus on designing meaningful assessment and providing feedback on students' performances.

- Collaboration and co-design with students (where appropriate) are important elements of meaningful assessment. Students are partners in assessment creation,
- Feedback is a dialogic activity between students and staff, and students and their peers.
- We engage students through varied approaches to giving feedback, including peer-review and self-assessment, as well as audio feedback.
- Peer- and self-review of assessment helps students develop their critical analysis skills, and reflects how students will engage with work and feedback after university.
- Additionally, there is some evidence that engagement in peer-review activities is more beneficial for students' learning than engagement with discussion forums (Hughes & Price, 2019)
- “the capacity to produce quality feedback is a fundamental graduate skill, and, as such, it should receive much greater attention in higher education curricula” (Nicol, Thomson & Breslin 2014)
- Dialogue among and between students and staff is encouraged. This develops engagement with assessment and feedback and reflects the ways in which feedback is received after university.
- UofG will support staff in developing and trialling innovative forms of assessment and ways of capturing graduate attribute development.
- UofG will also support staff in modifying existing practices, rather than completely changing them.
- Practical lab work might shift so students are analysing, as well as typically collecting, data.
- Videos of experiments (e.g. from the [Journal of Visualized Experiments](#)) could be shown to students who must then reflect, or answer questions on, what they see (Allen n.d.; Sankey 2020) and apply learning to a new context.
- We recognise that more traditional assessment formats, including exams, can also be meaningful by, e.g. “whitelisting” additional resources during an exam so that students, while in a lockdown browser, can access. These might include datasets, as in more traditional pen and paper exams.

Iterative assessment and feedback

Iterative assessment suggests that students are reviewing their performances and building incrementally on their assessment and feedback experiences across courses and years of study. It helps students to become independent and to self-regulate their learning; it develops their understanding of what they can and need to learn from assessment and feedback, and it gives them the opportunity to be participants in a dialogue with staff and peers, rather than being passive recipients of feedback. Iterative feedback can function as part of a feedback spiral, or a process of sustainable feedback (Carless, Salter, Yang & Lam 2010); “[s]piral forms of learning involve iterative cycles of tackling assignments, engaging with feedback, reflecting and making ongoing adjustments” over a long-term period (Carless 2018: 713). The range of sources could include formal and informal feedback from teachers and peers, self-reflection, and review of previous work.

How do we do this?

- Staff are supported in designing iterative assessment, both formative and summative, and providing feedback in time for the next assessment. This promotes reflexive learning.
- Students learn through being more engaged with the feedback they receive.
- ePortfolios: These allow students to see their grades, feedback, and course and programme ILOs in one place throughout their university career. As such, they can see how assessments and other elements of learning are connected throughout their degree and guides them in areas where they can improve and build upon the knowledge and skills they have acquired.
- With support from staff, students can develop personal learning goals relevant to their programme, based on their work and progress to date.
- Staff can clearly see students’ development, and where a student can improve further.
- Introduce two-stage assessments, to the extent that it is reasonable for staff to do so.
- These might take the form of students answering a question on their own, and subsequently in a group once they have received feedback
- Students might receive feedback on a draft piece of work, which they can then use to inform a revised version of that work for final submission

- We help students develop their assessment and feedback literacy so that they can interpret feedback and understand how to use this to plan learning in future and evaluate their own learning.
- Students have the opportunity to receive formative feedback on their work, whether from their teachers, or from technology and analytics.
- Embedding the opportunity to interact with peers and/or staff through engaging with feedback. This is an explicit part of the feedback process and can help reduce student isolation.

Programmatic assessment and feedback

Programmatic assessment implies that assessment is organised across a programme, rather than for individual courses. This programme structure allows for iterative assessment practices to flourish, and for students to more meaningfully engage with the assessment process. Assessments are linked across courses and programmes, giving students a connected learning experience, and helping staff reflect on what they assess, and why and how they do this. Assessment on one course may prepare a student for the content covered in the next course or can tie into assessment of a student's performance across their whole programme. Knowledge and skills are assessed in a variety of ways; assessments complement one another, and it is possible to obtain a picture of students' broader skillsets. Designing assessment programmatically can also help reduce over-assessment, as academic staff have greater visibility of the amount and type of assessment their students are required to complete.

How do we do this?²

- Constructive alignment can be used to support the implementation of programmatic assessment.
- Teachers designing assessments can clearly see the links between ILOs, the skills and knowledge that are being assessed, the methods of assessment, and assessment criteria.
- Assessment blueprinting helps teachers see how assessment looks across the programme, including variety of assessment types, and how it is built upon over courses and years.
- There is no unnecessary duplication of assessments happening at other points in the programme.
- Programme teams collaborate on how to create and build assessment across the programme.
- While not every course learning outcome will fulfil a programme learning outcome, collaboration could help ensure that a combination of course outcomes can do so.
- Students engage with feedback on all formative and summative assessments, so this can be applied in future.

² Curriculum management software will be crucial to facilitating constructive alignment, assessment blueprinting, and programmatic assessment design. Such software affords an overview of the curriculum as a whole, and makes it easier to ensure that all course and programme ILOs are being assessed, and makes the links between assessments on different courses more visible. Some curriculum management solutions allow programme outcomes to be matched to QAA Benchmark Statements, which may be useful for constructive alignment.

- ePortfolios help students to see how their assessments are linked, and how they are developing different skills and knowledge. This will also help students identify those areas where they would like to improve, or to recognise their strengths.
- Marks are based on cumulative performances, across a course or programme, rather than only on individual pieces of assessment.
- We encourage students to engage with and learn from their feedback and marks across a programme, rather than to focus on a mark for an individual assignment.

Inclusive assessment and feedback

Inclusive assessment and feedback mean that *all* students have equitable opportunities to learn through assessment, and are treated equitably throughout the assessment and feedback process. Inclusive assessment and feedback practices would help to reduce the attainment gap between different groups of students, such as those based on ethnicity, disability, and/or gender, or their social and cultural capital.³ Changes to assessment and feedback practices alone will not solve this problem, but can form an important part of making sure that all students have the same opportunities to perform well.

Inclusive assessment and feedback means that these opportunities must be accessible to students for example, who:

- are from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background;
- live in priority postcode areas, or who are financially disadvantaged;
- are care-experienced or are carers themselves; have any form of physical or mental disability or long-term illness;
- are neurodivergent;
- live overseas, or whose schooling or first degrees were in a language other than English;
- are the first in their family to attend HE (<https://www.jisc.ac.uk/guides/widening-participation>);
- are seeking asylum or are refugees;
- are returning to formal education after a break.

Inclusive assessment and feedback can also support students' wellbeing by reducing unnecessary anxiety and stress (while recognising that some amount of stress is normal).

Making assessment and feedback inclusive requires making them accessible. UofG's current policies around reasonable adjustments are an important part of making assessment and feedback accessible. Digital assessment must also adhere to requirements and guidelines such as the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1), or the UK Government's accessibility regulations⁴. For assessment and feedback at UofG to be truly accessible and inclusive, however, we must go beyond basic requirements, and we must ensure that accessibility is part of the design process from the outset. Accessibility does not

³ "The degree attainment gap refers to the difference in the proportion of one group receiving a first/2:1 compared with another group." (Advance HE 2018: 17).

⁴ Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. See also the University of Glasgow Digital Accessibility pages: <https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/digitalaccessibility/>.

just refer to disabilities or illnesses, it also considers staff and student access to the necessary hardware, network infrastructure, internet services, digital literacy, and quiet space to work. If students are carrying out an assessment remotely, these technical considerations might also be considered in light of being sure that students who use assistive technologies have access to these off-campus. Furthermore, students have the opportunity to familiarise themselves with assessment methods, particularly when these are novel or involve technology that they have not used in such a way before. This can be achieved through formative assessment or through developing feedback literacy. This ensures fairness, which is a part of inclusivity.

Inclusive assessment and feedback can help students develop a sense of community and belonging, which may be particularly beneficial for those students who feel isolated or disconnected from their peers and staff. We know that students who feel like they are part of a community achieve better degree outcomes (McDougall 2020) and ensuring that assessment and feedback are inclusive towards students who are isolated for any reason will also have positive longer-term effects.

How do we do this?

- Students contribute to assessment and feedback processes, including design, where appropriate.
- Students might be offered the opportunity to indicate the type of feedback they want, or the areas in which feedback would most benefit them (within the existing framework of marking criteria).
- Marking criteria, or some part of these, could be co-created between staff and students.
- Assessment and feedback methods incorporate some flexibility so that adjustments can be made for students with additional access or learning requirements. However, we generally design accessibility in, reducing the need for such adjustments to begin with, particularly where these are “one-off, reactive modifications” (Quality Assurance Agency 2018).
- Assessment policies, processes, and practice are clear to students.
- We incorporate a variety of assessment types and feedback delivery across the programme, so that students can play to different strengths and receive feedback in ways suitable for them.
 - For example, some students might prefer written feedback and exchanges with staff, or even automated, non-personalised feedback, to personalised feedback and face-to-face interaction.

- We work to reduce anxiety around assessments through, e.g., making assessment scheduling more visible early on, removing single high-stakes exams as a means of course assessment (unless these are required by external accrediting bodies). High-stakes exams, or other types of high-stakes assessments are those “in which a student can fail a course based on their performance in that one piece of assessment, often at the end of a course, and often in an unseen examination scenario, with the potential for this to adversely affect their degree classification.” (Sykes 2020: 1).
- E-assessment can typically be inclusive as it can provide opportunities to support alternative assessment types, where needed.
- We can better align the experiences of on-campus and Online Distance Learning (ODL) and blended learning students.
- Assessment should be formatted so that students who, for example, use screen readers or have dyslexia can modify the appearance and layout of the assessment to suit their needs.
- Open-book exams which can be completed over a period of e.g. 24 hours may be particularly beneficial for students who may have issues with connectivity, hardware, or social environment.
- Most students have access to a smartphone, if not a laptop or PC. These can be used for audio submissions, or video demonstrations.
- Ensure that our policy on resits is fair, and does not disadvantage overseas students.
- Building staff-student relationships and increasing opportunities for dialogic feedback can help staff understand the support needs of their students, from a psycho-social as well as academic perspective.
- Meaningful, supportive staff-student relationships can help students’ sense of belonging, which in turn can improve their overall wellbeing and degree outcomes. We will design assessment and feedback so that interaction, dialogue, and positive staff-student relationships can be fostered, e.g. through personalised feedback, goal planning, co-creation of assessments.
- An increase in electronic submission of assessments could mean a reduction in students’ face-to-face time with teaching support staff and administrators. In freeing up time spent on non-value-adding tasks we can create opportunities for teaching support staff to get to know students and offer help and guidance in other ways.

- UofG will help develop the knowledge and capabilities of MPA staff around new methods of assessment and feedback so they can offer help to students and staff in these areas.
- Dialogue allows staff to understand how students are interpreting and responding to their feedback, which allows them to improve their practice and better support students.
- Helping students build and embed themselves in a community of learners is an important part of their university experience (McDougall 2020). Group work and peer-review might help facilitate this.
- Peer-review and peer-assessment might also encourage relationship building and communication, as well as helping students to develop critical analysis skills and to better understand assessment criteria.
- We will help students to set up and participate in real-world and/or online spaces to discuss assessments and feedback in a supportive environment.
- We will develop staff knowledge and understanding of unconscious bias in assessment and feedback and take the necessary steps to minimise this.
- We will ensure that feedback is clear, avoiding jargon and other technical terms which may be unfamiliar.
- We will support staff in creating accessible assessment and feedback methods.
- External constraints on students' and staff time are considered when setting assessment deadlines, e.g. school holidays and childcare, professional commitments, religious observances.

Assessment and feedback literacy and academic integrity

Assessment and feedback literacy and academic integrity can stand as values or guiding principles in themselves. We also see them as being integral to each of the key concepts listed above, i.e. assessment and feedback that is meaningful (p.9), iterative (p.11), programmatic (p.13), and inclusive (p.15).

Assessment literacy is defined as “the suite of knowledge, skills and attributes that students require to understand both the purpose and systems of assessment within higher education” (Denton & McIlroy 2017, p.2).

Feedback literacy in this context is defined as:

“the understandings, capacities and dispositions needed to make sense of information and use it to enhance work or learning strategies. Students’ feedback literacy involves an understanding of what feedback is and how it can be managed effectively; capacities and dispositions to make productive use of feedback; and appreciation of the roles of teachers and themselves in these processes” (Carless and Boud, 2018, p.1316)

Through developing assessment and feedback literacy,

- students understand that assessment and feedback are essential parts of learning, and can see inherent rewards in these practices.
 - Students know how to use their work on assessments and the feedback they receive for learning.
 - Staff and students understand that feedback is a vital part of the learning process (Büchert Lindberg & Eggert Bjælde 2019)
- students understand that they are part of the academic community and are responsible for the academic integrity of their work.
- students are familiar with and practiced in different methods of assessment, and understand the validity of these, e.g. why closed-book exams are used, and how these support learning.
- staff are able to design out plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct.
- staff are supported in designing meaningful, varied assessments which are culturally inclusive.

- students can develop a deeper understanding of standards and expectations, and use these to monitor their own progress.

We will ensure that

- teaching staff receive feedback on their approaches to assessment and feedback.
- staff and students understand how to interpret and use learning analytics in a productive way to develop students' skills and knowledge.⁵
- students understand how their feedback links to particular assessments, and their progress overall.

The transition between secondary and tertiary education can be challenging to students for many reasons; one of these is the expected standard of work. UofG will help staff and students to develop their assessment and feedback literacy so that:

- students understand these expectations and how to meet them
- staff know how to best communicate these expectations and how to meet them

Doing so can help improve students' outcomes, and UofG's retention rates.

How do we do this?

- Help students to develop their understanding of assessment and marking criteria using, for example, peer-review and peer-assessment, and co-creation of marking criteria (where appropriate).
- In Equality, Agency, Transparency framework (Evans 2016), Evans emphasises the importance of communicating four dimensions of assessment literacy to students: what we mean by "good" and how this can be achieved; how the assessment is designed, and why this is the case; the type of support available to them, and where and how to access this; and the specific requirements of their discipline.
- Embed opportunities for interaction about feedback between teachers and students so that students can better understand their feedback and how they might act on it.
- Provide access to resources that help students interpret feedback and explain how it might be used.

⁵ NB: The use of learning analytics requires human judgement and any data must be used carefully to avoid unfairly targeting individuals or groups through bias. Implementing learning analytics will require strong, ongoing guidance and audit to make sure these are used fairly. UofG's approach will always be on human-centered learning analytics.

- Use rubrics on some courses to help students understand teachers' expectations. These can also support students in self- and peer-assessment, which in turn can facilitate self-regulated learning (Jönsson & Panadero 2017).
- Increase formative assessment to help students understand the types of assessment they will be doing and the expectations involved. Formative assessment can also help teachers identify particular areas with which their students might need support, e.g. course content, what constitutes "good" in the assessment.
- Setting assessment questions that require students to reference course materials, rather than textbooks, can minimise opportunities for contract cheating. (Uys 2020)
- Support academic staff with communities of practice for digital assessment and a digital assessment toolkit.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity means that staff and students uphold the values and principles of honesty, rigour, transparency and open communication, care and respect, and accountability (Universities UK 2019). Academic integrity can be "designed in" to assessments, by, for example, making plagiarism more difficult through the use of personalised tasks.

How do we do this?

- Create links between tasks (one builds on another)
- Utilize methods to track/record student effort.
- Discussion around online sources and use of them
- Methods for the student to show individual effort and create individual artefacts
- Opportunities for practice – grows confidence
- If necessary, authentication exercises

And by avoiding:

- Opportunities to pass by submitting something that already exists
- Opportunities to use other's work as evidence for assessment
- Processes for choosing and agreeing on assessment tasks that make fraud easy

However, we want our students to understand the principles of academic integrity and be able to apply these themselves to their own work. We want our students to connect to an

“emphasis on ethics” [that] may assist institutions in helping to understand the importance of academic integrity to enable them to deal with inevitable dilemmas they will face as professionals (Manly, Leonard & Riemenscheider 2015, p. 580). This may come from “online instruction, combined with collaborative instruction elements where content is embedded into the discipline with an opportunity for feedback” (Davila, Griffiths, and Leigh 2016 as cited in (Sefcik, Striepe & Yorke 2020, p. 41).

How UofG will support *Learning through Assessment*

Policy

We suggest creating a new policy suite for assessment and feedback, which must be designed and written in close collaboration with the Academic Policy and Governance. There is much in our existing policies that can be used as part of the new policy suite. Going through this process, however, will build clarity and coherence.

In Principle 4, we note that our approaches to assessment and feedback “will be supported by clear academic policies and processes”. Policies should be accessible to staff and students; they should be easy to find on University webpages and written in plain language. Guidance for their implementation will be made available where this might be helpful. Each new policy will undergo an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA).

Transforming assessment and feedback will require a review of those policies underpinning and supporting our current practices. Most of these policies are appropriate for what we require, but extending the use of programmatic assessment, removing single high-stakes exams, and increasing the use of e-assessment, and other large-scale changes, will entail certain modifications. We will furthermore likely need to introduce new policies to support *Learning through Assessment*.

Technology

At UofG, we want to make the best use of available technology to support assessment and feedback. However, we are committed to ensuring that any technological change is driven and supported by pedagogy (Fawn, 2022); that is, we will not invest in new technologies unless they can support existing good practice at UofG, or support practice that has been demonstrated to be effective elsewhere.⁶

The 2020 spring exam diet, and subsequent diets, have shown that UofG has the technological capability to support online exams. Most subject areas have used other forms of electronic assessment, such as electronic submission of essays, and Moodle quizzes. However, to best implement our vision and principles, we will need to extend and modify our current capabilities.

One advantage of increasingly using technology for assessment and feedback is that it allows us to think more widely about the types of assessment we do (Kolhatkar 2020). Although technology must not force us to assess our students in any particular way, it does provide opportunities for those seeking to introduce new or alternative modes of

⁶ See UofG’s webpages on [Using technology in assessment](#), part of the [Assessment and Feedback Toolkit](#). These are subject to review.

assessment. While the use of technology is not in and of itself transformational, technology can allow us to transform our assessment practices, where doing so can be beneficial to students' learning. Our use of technology should always be guided by its value in learning for assessment and helping our students meet ILOs. While we do not wish to stop teachers setting "traditional" assignments such as essays or exams, we also encourage staff to be more creative, and not simply migrate current analogue practice to digital practice (Allan 2020).

A guide to methods of meaningful assessment is available on the University's [How to Moodle](#) pages. Many of the assessment types therein can be submitted online, particularly those requiring text submissions. Those which would traditionally be carried out face-to-face, such as debates, group discussions, and assessments relying on observation can also be successfully carried out online, and indeed, can provide novel challenges to students (although they should be used formatively in the first instance, to allow students to become used to new formats).

Peer- and self-assessment are also particularly useful for online courses; by building self-assessment opportunities or requirements into asynchronous courses, for example, students can get regular feedback (Alhaj Ali 2020).

Allowing students to demonstrate their skills in a performance can be a useful way for students and teachers to view the students' development (Alhaj Ali 2020).

Voice feedback can be employed more often in online feedback, saving time for markers, and with the following benefits for students:

- Improve ability to understand nuance
- Increase involvement: Students feel less isolated in the online environment and are more motivated to participate when they heard their instructor's voice
- Increase content retention: Interestingly, [students] report that they retained the course content to which the feedback referred better [with audio feedback] than with text feedback.
- Increase instructor caring: Students interpreted the instructor as caring about them and their work more when they received audio feedback.... (Orlando 2011: 30, citing Ice & Richardson 2009)

Students may already be familiar with social media platforms such as Instagram and Twitter, or blogs; using tools such as these, with which students are already familiar, may give them an opportunity to develop something they know, while other students can like, comment, and

follow along using hashtags. This also allows for collaboration with other institutions. Apps like Periscope can be used to broadcast live video or debates. Social media arguments can be useful to encourage students to think critically about others' points, e.g., noting where an argument, even if it is one the student disagrees with, is backed up with strong examples, or when an argument is worded well but is ultimately flimsy.

Given that students are likely accustomed not only to using text-boxes on websites, but also to word processing, blog writing, and code writing, for example, it is useful to set assessments which rely on these "tools of the trade" so that authenticity is designed in (Hillier 2020).

Implementing the Strategy

Learning through Assessment presents the principles supporting assessment and feedback and sets out what these mean in practice. Strategy implementation will require substantial change in our behaviours, practices, and processes. While we are eager to make an impact, we also want to make changes manageable, so we will stagger the introduction of different elements of the strategy. For example, between 2023 and 2025, we could ensure that at least one assessment on each course is meaningful; between 2025 and 2027, we could develop this further so that all assessments on each course are meaningful. The University of Derby's [Assessment and Feedback Strategy](#) provides an example of the staged implementation (see page 13).

Enablers

- Training and ongoing support for all staff and students in new approaches to assessment and feedback and in new technology.
 - UofG will invest in the reorganisation of teaching support where this is needed.
- Investment in existing and new technologies.
- A percentage of assessment and feedback could be audited annually to gauge the extent to which the strategy is being implemented. This will allow UofG to consider where further support might be needed.
 - This could be across the institution as a whole, and/or at a College/School level. In the latter scenario, the Deans of Learning and Teaching, along with Heads of School, and College Learning and Teaching Committee members would be supported by UofG Learning and Teaching Committee, but it will ultimately be the local team's responsibility to conduct the audit and address any issues it raises.

- College and School/Programme L&T committees will be encouraged to have strategy implementation as a standing point on their agendas.
 - The committee members should be responsible for implementation in their area, and for addressing gaps in implementation identified in the audits above.
- The benefits of implementing the strategy and adopting new technologies will be made clear to staff
 - Staff are rewarded for engaging with and implementing the framework through P&DR and opportunities and support for CPD at any career stage
 - An ongoing communications, engagement, and support programme could maintain awareness of and interest in the strategy's rollout, and help staff feel more included in the process of introducing this new approach
 - This could include feedback from staff who have themselves observed the benefits and advantages of the new approach, for themselves, their colleagues, and/or their students

How will we measure success?

The potential Benefits of Learning through Assessment of the new strategy for assessment and feedback are presented in the section above. We will establish measures to assess the extent to which *Learning through Assessment* framework realises our Vision, and to ensure we are delivering the Benefits of Learning through Assessment we have identified. This might take the format used by UCL in their Education Strategy (UCL 2016: 25-26). 2016: 25-26).

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