

Assessment feedback feedforward

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Introduction

This resource has been supported by the shared knowledge and experience of staff. It explores the reasons to reflect on practice; provides tools to support reflection and includes a range of support resources.

This is a living resource which will grow as new case studies and content are added. Currently it consists of the following topics:

- Why reflect on practice?
- Tools for reflection
- In practice
- Assessment design and feedback
- Brightspace tools for assessment and feedback

These topics have been structured to help you access resources easily and flexibly. You can dip into a topic directly or work through the content in the above sequence. They contain step by step guides, case studies and provide signposting to relevant resources.

Assessment, feedback and feedforward policy and guidance

The university's assessment, feedback and feed forward policy sets out your obligations in carrying out assessment and feedback with your students. This resource is designed to help you meet these responsibilities. You can access the policy document by clicking the I symbol which can be found at the top right hand corner of each page of the online version. You can also find the policy in the Bookshelf along with other relevant documents.

Getting started

These short videos by the Higher Education Academy explore the role of assessment in student learning and set the context of assessment and feedback.

- [Talking Heads: Bruce Wiggins - What is the role of assessment?](#) (Vimeo) 3 minutes 47 seconds
- [Talking Heads: Peter Lennox - What is the role of assessment?](#) (Vimeo) 8 minutes 42 seconds
- [Student views on assessment](#) (Vimeo) 7 minutes 06 seconds

An excellent introduction to the potential benefits of reviewing and enhancing assessment and feedback practice is highlighted in this JISC video.

- [Transforming the assessment and feedback landscape: students as partners](#)
(Youtube) 4 minutes 26 seconds

The university is not alone in aiming to improve practice in assessment, feedback and feed forward and there is a wealth of information and discussion from within the sector. You'll find a selection of papers and articles in the Bookshelf which provide the wider context and highlight the current debates on assessment and feedback.



Graduation students from the university's image library

Adding new resources

This resource will continue to be developed to incorporate the latest ideas and new university case studies. If you would like to contribute to this resource, or would like further information or advice on assessment and feedback please contact Andy Brown andy.brown@uhi.ac.uk or the Educational Development Unit edu@uhi.ac.uk.

Recording your professional development

Mahara

Please remember to include your learning, reflection and practice in assessment and feedback as part of your record of professional development activities. This can be done by [logging into Mahara](#) and clicking on the Content dropdown menu as shown below.



The screenshot shows the Mahara interface. At the top left is the University of the Highlands and Islands logo with the text 'University of the Highlands and Islands' and 'Oilthigh na Gàidhealtachd agus nan Eilean'. To its right is the 'mahara' logo. Below these are navigation tabs: 'Dashboard', 'Content', 'Portfolio', 'Groups', and 'Site information'. The 'Content' tab is selected. Below the navigation is a header for 'CPD Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities' with a 'New activity' button on the right. Below the header is a table with columns: 'Start Date', 'End Date', 'Title', 'Description', and 'Hours'.

Continuous Professional Development page in Mahara

Why reflect on practice?

Introduction

Assessment, feedback and feedforward is a fundamental part of the learning journey. Delivering high quality and effective assessment feedback and feedforward is challenging for many educational institutions. The strategic targets section shows how assessment and feedback fits into the university's strategic plan.



Psychology students outside the Moray Life Science Centre
by Tim Winterburn / HIE / UHI

Strategic targets

Strategic vision and plan

Enhancing assessment and feedback supports two critical performance indicators (CPIs) in the university's [strategic vision and plan](#).

Student satisfaction

Student satisfaction	Baseline (2013/14)	Target (2019/20)
CPI 3a National Student Survey (UK higher education)	3% below Scottish average overall satisfaction (84% / 87%)	2% above Scottish average overall satisfaction
CPI 3b National College Satisfaction and engagement student survey (Scotland)		2% above Scottish average overall satisfaction

Student attainment

The university's strategic plan also has two critical performance indicators in relation to student attainment:

Student attainment	Baseline (2013/14)	Target (2019/20)
CPI 5a Attainment of higher education students	2669 awards	10% increase in awards
CPI 5b Percentage of full-time further education students successfully completing their course	66.1% (compared to 66% nationally)	At least maintain at sector average

University quality monitoring processes

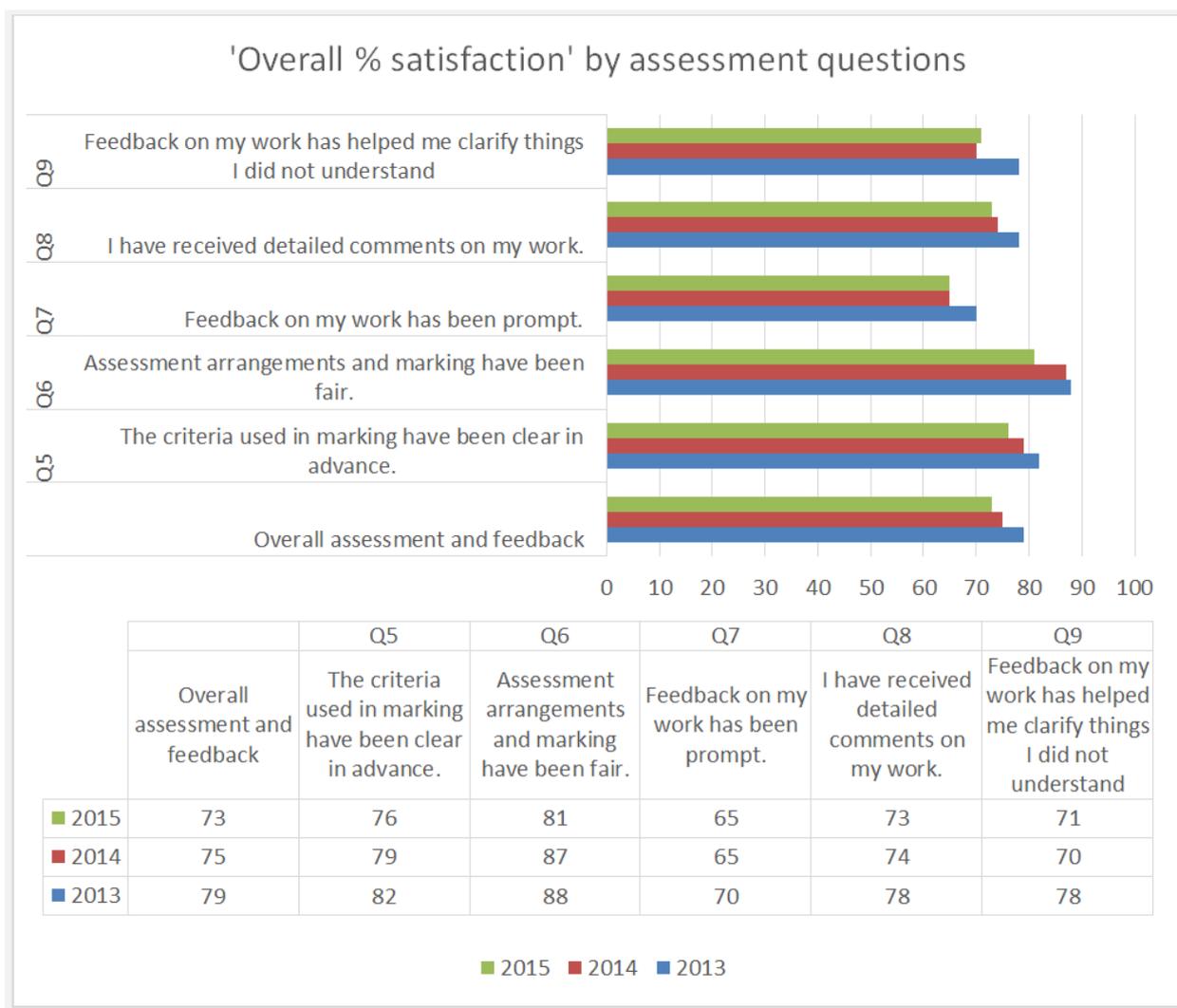
The following quality monitoring processes have highlighted the need for improvement for the University of the Highlands and Islands.

Self-evaluation documents (SEDs)

Every module leader completes a self-evaluation document (SED) which informs the Programme SED as part of the annual quality monitoring process. Valuable information is drawn from these documents, including identifying areas for development and action in the forthcoming year.

National Student Survey

Responses to the multiple choice questions in the National Student Survey (NSS) show that UHI students are less satisfied with practice in assessment and feedback in 2015 than in previous years (see Figure below).



The key message of the graph is that in 2013 we had 79% overall % assessment and feedback satisfaction; this dropped to 75% in 2014 and dropped again to 73% in 2015.

Free text comments left by students indicate that:

- There are pockets of good practice around assessment and feedback with the number of positive comments increasing over the three years in which students have participated in the survey.
- The majority of the negative comments concerning assessment and feedback relate to the quality and timing of feedback. In terms of quality students feel that feedback was not helpful or detailed enough; in terms of timing some students reported not receiving feedback at all on some assessments, as well as not receiving feedback on time e.g. “feedback on first assessments not received in time to prepare for the second assessment”.

- A new theme amongst negative comments emerged in 2015 relating to the vagueness or inaccuracy of assessment requirements and marking criteria, and the inconsistent application of policies regarding mitigating circumstances/late submission.

Red button

The [Red button student feedback system](#) gives students a simple mechanism to tell us about their experience. Red Button Annual Reports have highlighted that students tell us they need feedback returned in good time (especially if it relates to the next assignment) and that accurate feedback and assessment information must be provided, particularly at induction.



Our service standards - The red button

Reflecting on professional practice

Reflecting on your teaching practice in assessment, feedback and feedforward is a fundamental part of enhancing your own professional practice. This resource aims to support you to reflect on your practice, identify and apply changes and review the impact of these changes.

Recording the way you enhance your professional practice is important; not just to keep a record of your continuous professional development but, by sharing your findings, you can also have a positive impact on your own students, your colleagues and their students.

Taking part in peer reviews and providing opportunities for your students to offer feedback throughout the teaching term are some of the ways you can reflect on your own and your colleagues' professional practice.



College tutor with student - [Shutterstock](#)

Sector-wide initiatives

Higher Education Academy

There are a number of education sector initiatives which inform activities undertaken in the university. The work of the [Higher Education Academy](#) and the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) are two examples of the way in which sector-wide initiatives inform activities within the university.

Curriculum for Excellence

The university also aims to connect effectively with national developments, particularly in areas that have a key impact on enhancing the quality of the learner experience. Those areas include transition from further education to higher education, HN and degree enhancement and [Curriculum for Excellence](#) (CfE) implementation.

This [animation](#), produced by Education Scotland, provides an overview of the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) and examines the ways in which assessment can result in positive outcomes for learners aged between 3 and 18. Much of the content is relevant to assessment and feedback practice in the university.



[The Global Learning and Observation to Benefit the Environment \(GLOBE\) program visits NASA Goddard](#) by [NASA Goddard Space Flight Center](#) from Flickr, [CC BY 2.0](#)

References

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) [online]. Available at < <https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/scottish-education-system/policy-for-scottish-education/policy-drivers/cfe-building-from-the-statement-appendix-incl-btc1-5/what-is-curriculum-for-excellence/> > [25 February 2016]

Education Scotland - '*overview of the Curriculum for Excellence animation*' [online]. Available at < <https://youtu.be/JVHyGPYiuos> > [25 February 2016]

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University of the Highlands & Islands '*Strategic Vision and Plan 2015-20*' [online]. Available at < <https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/about-uhi/strategy-and-planning> > [25 February 2016]

Tools for reflection

Introduction

Reflecting on your current assessment and feedback practice is an integral part of enhancing the quality of the student experience and is embedded in the university's policy.

“Staff should review subsequent student improvement in the light of feedback provided and reflect on additional actions which may be needed to better support students in the learning process. These actions should be recorded in their live action plans.” (2012: 2)

Two useful tools to support you to reflect on your current practice are explored here.



['The question What Have You Learned?....'](#) from [Shutterstock](#)

JISC viewpoint cards

The Viewpoints project (led by the University of Ulster and funded by JISC) created a suite of practical tools to support staff. There are nine cards, on a variety of assessment and feedback topics, and a worksheet. This can be used to undertake a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis of your current practice and to identify improvements to take forward.

Theme Card: Assessment & Feedback

Good assessment and feedback design should help empower and engage learners and provide opportunities for feedback dialogue (peer and/or teacher-learner).

These cards aim to help staff redesign their assessment and feedback practice in innovative ways that will allow learners to develop the ability to self-regulate their own learning and therefore improve the quality of their learning experience.

- Clarify good practice
- Encourage time and effort on task
- Deliver high quality feedback
- Provide opportunities to act on feedback
- Encourage interaction and dialogue
- Develop self-assessment and reflection
- Give assessment choice
- Encourage positive motivational beliefs
- Inform and shape your teaching
- _____

Theme Card: Clarify Good Performance

Help clarify what good performance is (goals, criteria, standards)

To what extent do learners in your course have opportunities to engage actively with goals, criteria and standards, before, during and after an assessment task?

- Provide clear definitions of academic requirements before each learning task.
- Provide explicit marking criteria and performance-level definitions.
- Provide opportunities for discussion and reflection about criteria and standards before learners engage in a learning task.
- Ask learners to reformulate in their own words the documented criteria before they begin the task. This could be submitted with the assessment.
- Model in class how you would think through and solve exemplar problems.

- Provide learners with model answers for assessment tasks and opportunities to make comparisons against their own work.
- Explain to learners the rationale of assessment and feedback techniques.
- Before an assessment, let learners examine selected examples of completed assessments to identify which are superior and why (individually or in groups)
- Organise a workshop where learners devise, in collaboration with you, some of their own assessment criteria for a piece of work.
- Ask learners to add their own specific criteria to the general criteria provided by you.
- Work with your learners to develop an agreement, contract or charter where roles and responsibilities in assessment and learning are defined.
- _____

Theme Card: Encourage Time and Effort on Task

Encourage time and effort on challenging learning tasks

To what extent do your assessment tasks encourage regular study in and out of class and deep rather than surface learning?

- Reduce the size (e.g. by limiting the word count) and increase the number of learning tasks (or assessments). Distribute these across the module.
- Make such tasks compulsory and/or carry minimal marks (5/10%) to ensure learners engage but staff workload does not become excessive.
- Break up a large assessment into smaller parts. Monitor performance and provide feedback in a staged way over the timeline of your module.
- Empower learners by asking them to draw up their own work plan for a complex learning task. Let them define their own milestones and deliverables before they begin. Assign some marks if they deliver as planned and on time.
- Provide homework activities that build on/link in-class activities to out-of-class activities.
- Ask learners to present and work through their solutions in class supported by peer comments.
- Align learning tasks so that students have opportunities to practice the skills required before the work is marked.
- Give learners online multiple-choice tests to do before a class and then focus the class teaching on areas of identified weakness based on the results of these tests.
- Use a 'patchwork text' – a series of small, distributed, written assignments of different types. Each of these are complete in themselves but can also be stitched together through a final integrative commentary.
- Award fewer marks for early assessments or allocate all marks for the final synthesis. This format gives learners some choice by allowing them to select which patches to include in the final reflective account.

- Have learners undertake regular small tasks that carry minimal marks, with regular feedback.
- Provide learners with mock exams so that they have opportunities to experience what is required for summative assessment in a safe environment.
- _____

Theme Card: Deliver High Quality Feedback

Deliver high quality feedback information that helps learners self-correct

What kind of teacher feedback do you provide – in what ways does it help learners self-assess and self-correct?

- Provide opportunities for your learners to work through problem sets in tutorials, where feedback from you is available. This ensures that the feedback is timely and is received when learners get 'stuck'.
- Ensure feedback turnaround time is prompt, ideally within two weeks.
- Give plenty of documented feedback in advance of learners attempting an assessment, e.g. a 'frequently occurring problems' list.
- Give plenty of feedback to learners at the point at which they submit their work for assessment. This feedback might include a handout outlining suggestions in relation to known difficulties shown by previous learner cohorts supplemented by in-class explanations. Learners are most receptive to feedback when they have just worked through their assessment.
- Ensure that feedback is provided in relation to previously stated criteria, as this helps to link the feedback to the expected learning outcomes.
- Limit the number of criteria for complex tasks; especially extended writing tasks, where good performance is not just ticking off each criterion but is more about producing a holistic response.
- Instead of providing the correct answer, point learners to where they can find the correct answer.
- Ask learners to attach three questions that they would like to know about an assessment or what aspects they would like to improve.
- Ask learners to self-assess their own work before submission and provide feedback on this self-assessment as well as on the assessment itself.

Theme Card: Provide Opportunities to Act on Feedback

Provide opportunities to act on feedback (to close any gap between current and desired performance)

To what extent is feedback attended to and acted upon by learners, and if so, in what ways?

- Increase the number of opportunities for resubmission of assessments.

- Model the strategies that might be used to deal with difficulties with learners work in class
- Avoid releasing the grade for an assessment or tasks until the learner has responded to the feedback by commenting on it.
- Write down some action points alongside the normal feedback you provide This would identify for learners what they should do next time to improve their performance.
- Ask learners to find one or two examples of feedback comments that they found useful and explain how these might help them with future assessments.
- Use teaching time to involve learners in identifying action points for future assessments. Learners could formulate these action points after having read the feedback comments they have received.
- Provide online tasks where feedback is integrated into the task.
- Provide learners with model answers for assessment tasks and opportunities for them to make comparisons against their own work.

Theme Card: Encourage Interaction and Dialogue

Encourage interaction and dialogue around learning (peer and teacher-learner)

What opportunities are there for feedback dialogue (peer and/or teacher-learner) around assessment tasks in your course?

- Review feedback in tutorials. Ask learners to read the written feedback comments on an assessment and discuss this with peers.
- Encourage learners to give each other feedback on an assessment in relation to published criteria before submission.
- Create natural peer dialogue by group projects. Structure tasks so that learners are encouraged to discuss the criteria and standards expected beforehand, and return to discuss progress in relation to the criteria during the project.
- Use learner response systems to make lectures more interactive.
- Facilitate teacher-learner feedback in class through the use of in-class feedback techniques.
- Ask learners to answer short questions on paper at the end of class. Use the results to provide feedback and stimulate discussion at the next class.
- Support the development of learning groups and learning communities.
- Construct group work to help learners to make connections.
- Ask learners to set tasks for each other.
- Encourage the formation of peer study groups or create opportunities for learners from later years to support or mentor learners in earlier years.
- Link modules together as a pathway so that the same learners work in the same groups across a number of modules.

- Require learners in groups to generate the criteria used to assess their projects.
- Ask learners, in pairs, to produce multiple-choice tests, with feedback for the correct and incorrect answers.

Theme Card: Develop Self-Assessment and Reflection

Facilitate the development of self-assessment and reflection in learning

To what extent are there formal opportunities for reflection, self-assessment or peer assessment in your course?

- Create a series of online objective tests and quizzes that learners can use to assess their own understanding of a topic or area of study.
- Ask learners to request the kind of feedback that they would like when they hand in their work.
- Structure opportunities for peers to assess and provide feedback on each other's work using set criteria.
- Use confidence-based marking (CBM). Learners must rate their confidence that their answer is correct. The higher the confidence the higher the penalty if the answer is wrong.
- Use an assessment cover sheet with questions to encourage reflection and self-assessment. Ask learners to make a judgment about whether they have met the stated criteria and estimate the mark they expect.
- Directly involve learners in monitoring and reflecting on their own learning, through portfolios.
- Ask learners to write a reflective essay or keep a reflective journal in relation to their learning.
- Help learners to understand and record their own learning achievements through portfolios. Encourage learners to link these achievements to the knowledge, skills and attitudes required in future employment.
- Ask learners in pairs, to produce multiple choice tests over the duration of the module, with feedback for the correct and incorrect answers.

Theme Card: Give Assessment Choice

Give choice in the topic, method, criteria, weighting or timing of assessments

To what extent do learners have choice in the topics, methods, criteria, weighting and/or timing of assessment tasks in your course?

- Give learners opportunities to select the topics for extended essays or project work, encouraging ownership and increasing motivation.

- Give learners choice in timing with regard to when they hand in assessments – managing learner and teacher workloads. Particularly appropriate where students have many assignments and the timings for submissions can be negotiated.
- Require learners groups to generate the criteria that could be used to assess their projects.
- Ask learners to add their own specific criteria to the general criteria provided by the teachers. Take these into account in the final assessment.
- Ask learners, in pairs, to produce multiple-choice tests with feedback for correct and incorrect answers, which reference the learning objectives. Let the rest of the class take these tests and evaluate them. These could be used in the final assessment.

Theme Card: Encourage Positive Motivational Beliefs

Encourage positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem

To what extent do your assessment and feedback processes activate your learners' motivation to learn and be successful?

- Structure learning tasks that they have a progressive level of difficulty.
- Align learning tasks so that learners have opportunities to practice skills before work is marked (summative assessed)
- Encourage a climate of mutual respect and accountability.
- Provide objective tests where learners individually assess their understanding and make comparisons against their own learning goals, rather than against the performance of other learners.
- Use real-life scenarios and dynamic feedback
- Avoid releasing marks on written work until after learners have responded to feedback comments.
- Redesign and align formative and summative assessments to enhance learner skills and independence.
- Adjust assessment to develop learners responsibility for their learning.
- Give learners opportunities to select the topics for extended essays or project work.
- Provide learners with some choice in timing with regard to when they hand in assessments.
- Involve learners in decision-making about assessment policy and practice.
- Provide lots of opportunities for self-assessment.
- Encourage the formation of supportive learning environments.
- Have learner representation on committees that discuss assessment policies and practices.

Theme Card: Inform and Shape your Teaching

Provide information to teachers that can be used to help shape the teaching

To what extent do your assessment and feedback processes inform and shape your teaching?

- Request feedback from one-minute papers where learners carry out a small assessment tasks and hand it in anonymously at the end of a class. Use the information from these to inform teaching in the next class.
- Have students request the feedback they would like when they make an assignment submission.
- Provide opportunities for frequent low-stakes assessment tasks with regular outputs to help you gauge process.
- Deliver online multiple-choice tests before a class. Analyse and use the information gathered from these to determine what is taught in class.
- Use online tools with built-in functionality for individual recording and reporting – providing information about levels of learner engagement with resources, online tests and discussions.
- Use learner response systems to provide dynamic feedback in class. The stored data provides information about responses, which could be analysed.
- Provide opportunities for learners to self-assess and reflect on their learning. A record of these reflections provides information about the learners ability to evaluate their own learning.
- Request feedback from learners on their assessment experiences in order to make improvements.
- Carry out a brief survey mid-term or mid-semester while there is time to address major concerns.

Theme Card: Good assessment and feedback practice should....

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Adapted from the REAP principles of good formative assessment and feedback; the QAA Enhancement Theme: The First Year Experience – Transforming assessment and feedback: enhancing integration and empowerment in the first year.

JISC Viewpoint cards used by HN events teaching team

As part of a workshop session the HNC events team used the JISC Viewpoint cards as prompts to explore how they could maintain consistency and standardisation in marking and feedback across the team. Their discussions highlighted the need to focus on a number of critical points during the semester. They used the reflective worksheet to record this and to identify a number of actions to take forward.

Cross academic partner collaboration to evaluate departmental standards and to share good practice; look at paperwork tracking; develop digital feedback standards; create declaration sheets for FE and HE Submissions to assist with progression / transition; learn to use GradeMark and discuss marking criteria at IV1 stage; monitor and evaluate new procedures, ensure this includes feed forward.

There are many ways to review your current assessment, feedback and feedforward practice and these are just two approaches to support that reflection as a team or as an individual practitioner.

References

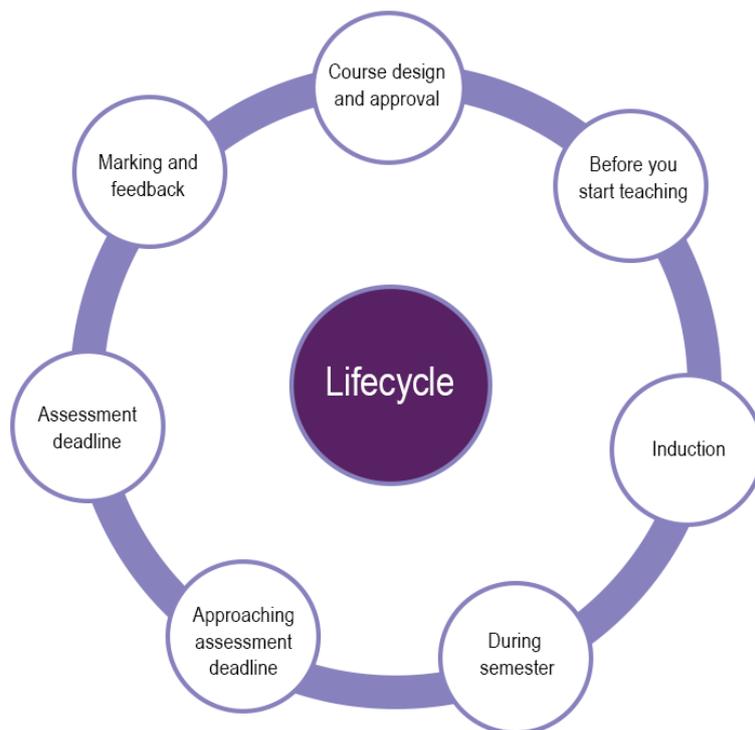
University of the Highlands and Islands (2012) *Assessment feedback feedforward policy* [online]. Available from <<http://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/about-uhi/governance/policies-and-regulations/policies/assessment-feedback-feedforward-policy-and-guidance/assessment-feedback-feedforward-policy/view> > [30 September 2015]

In practice

Introduction

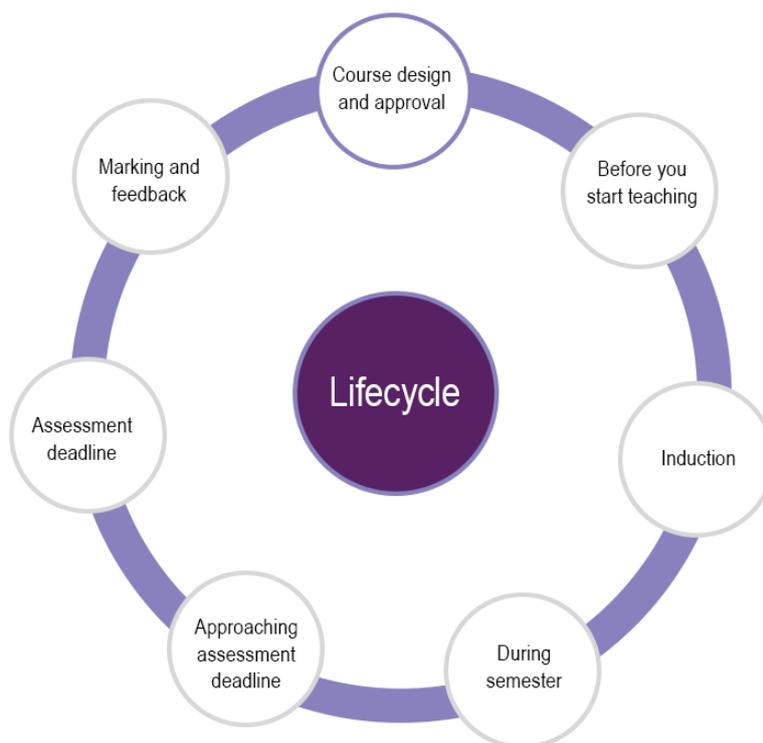
It may be helpful to review your assessment and feedback practice at key stages in a course lifecycle, for example:

- course design and approval;
- before you start teaching;
- induction;
- during the semester;
- approaching assessment deadline;
- assessment deadline;
- marking and feedback.



Lifecycle diagram showing the seven key stages.

Course design and approval



As part of the new course / programme design or as part of the revalidation process you can:

- review the timing of assessments so as not to overload students and staff. For example, you could consider spreading the marking load. With large cohorts this may require reconsideration of assessment timing;
- consider using multiple choice questions (MCQs) in Brightspace for formative assessment;
- discuss and agree the types of assessments to be used, for example formative peer review or group work;
- define coursework assessments and submission dates;
- identify and agree method of digital submission and receipt of coursework;
- design your assignment cover and return sheets.

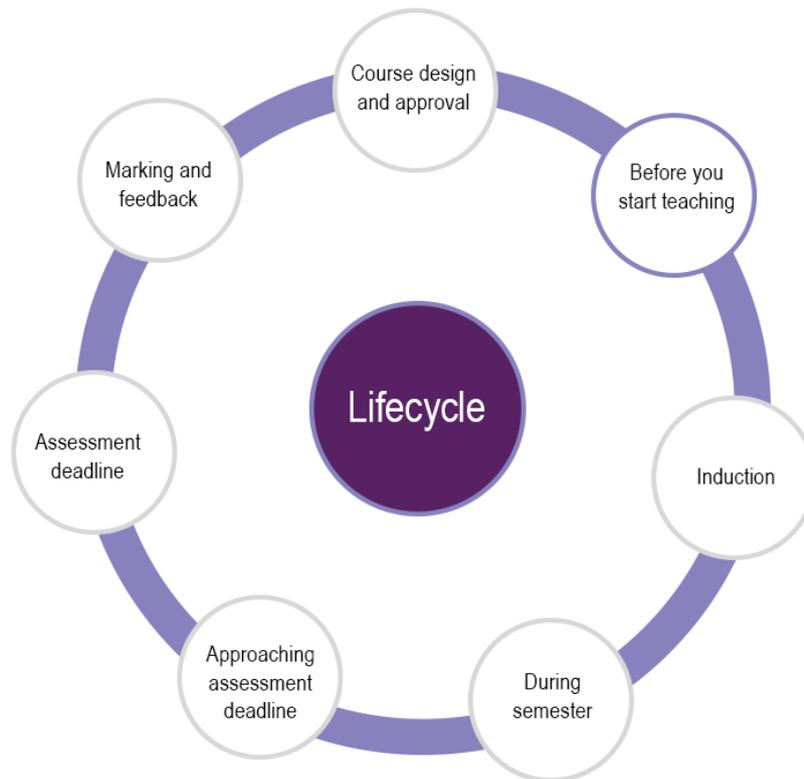
Further reading

The [ASKe Pedagogy Research Centre](#) at Oxford Brookes University provides resources on assessment and feedback.

Read the Oxford Brookes' guide: [Adopting a social constructivist approach to assessment in three easy steps!](#)

Consider peer review – read the Oxford Brookes’ guide: [Making peer feedback work in three easy steps!](#)

Before you start teaching



Prior to the start of the semester you need to consider the following:

- assessment information and publication;
- marking criteria;
- submission;
- second marking.

The following pages look more closely at these considerations.

Assessment information and publication

- Write or update your coursework assessment guidelines for completion, submission deadlines and feedback/feedforward return date; these must be made available to students at the outset of the unit/module.
- Publish in the programme handbook, unit/module materials, the VLE and/or workbook (as appropriate):
 - marking criteria
 - assessment format
 - submission requirements
 - submission date and
 - feedback / feedforward return date.

If you use Turnitin, include the following information:

- [UHI's Turnitin FAQs](#)
- [Turnitin training for students](#).
- For all digital assessments identify the most effective UHI core technology for submission and receipt of coursework. Students may only submit digital assessments using their UHI id and password. Technologies that may be used for submission are [Brightspace](#) (a Turnitin assignment may be created in Brightspace), [Mahara](#), [Medial](#), [UHI dropbox](#) and [UHI email](#). Digital assessments may not be submitted via any other technology, this includes cloud apps such as Google, UHI OneDrive, MS OneDrive and Dropbox.com.
- For non-digital assessments identify the means of submission and receipt of coursework.
- Check that students have been given instructions on how to submit an assessment and how they will receive their receipt.
- Include information on what students should do if they have submission problems.
- Check assessment cover and return sheets are up-to-date. The Assessment feedback and feedforward policy was approved by the Academic Council on 27th March 2014. All cover/feedback sheets should comply with the policy. Here's the required full field list (to which you may add additional fields to meet your needs):
 - Module title

- Student number
- Question in full
- Date submitted
- A checklist to ensure the student has done all that is required
- Lecturer contact number
- Lecturer email
- Feedback/feedforward return date
- Feedback
- Feedforward
- Marks allocated by first marker
- Marks allocated by second marker
- Agreed mark – to be confirmed by the Exam Board following marker discussion.

Download return sheets

- Blank front cover return sheet - [Download](#)
- Example of a completed return sheet - [Download](#)

Marking criteria

- Clarify your understanding and application of the marking criteria – you'll find this in the programme student handbook.
- Clarify and agree the method of marking to ensure consistency of marking and feedback.
- Reflect on previous student feedback and make appropriate changes.
- Select the most effective method to minimise the time you and the teaching team spend on marking, while providing effective feedback to your students.

Submission

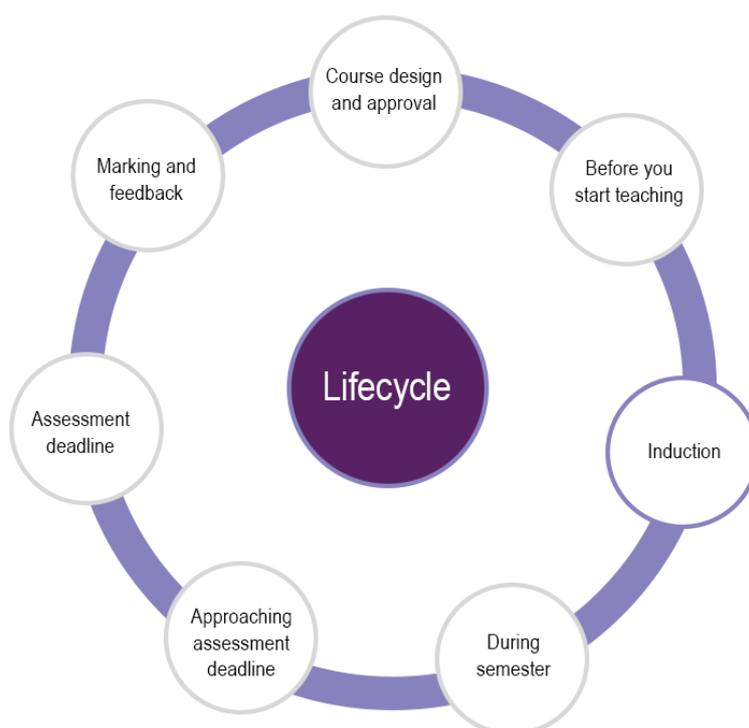
Digital assignments may only be submitted and returned via UHI core technologies such as the VLE (Brightspace). Technologies that may be used for submission are [Brightspace](#) (a Turnitin assignment may be created in Brightspace), [Mahara](#), [Medial](#), [UHI dropbox](#) and [UHI email](#). Digital assessments may not be submitted via any other technology, this includes cloud apps such as Google, UHI OneDrive, MS OneDrive and Dropbox.com.

If you want to use externally hosted technologies for learning and teaching please contact Learning and Teaching (LT@uhi.ac.uk) before doing so to ensure compliance with UHI policy, the DPA and other legal requirements.

Second marking

- Confirm the marking period and arrangements with the second marker.
- Ensure the second marker will be available at the required time:
 - marked assessments should normally be returned within 15 working days - please note this refers to the university working days;
 - wherever possible students should receive feedback/feedforward in good time to inform their subsequent work.
- Confirm the process to ensure consistency will be achieved across markers. For example, some teaching teams double mark a sample of marked assessments for each grade to allow other markers to gain a sense of the levels.
- Agree the process of feedback to markers to support development and consistency, especially when inexperienced staff are marking for the first time.
- All of the above are informed by the Assessment and Feedback policy and guidance.

Induction



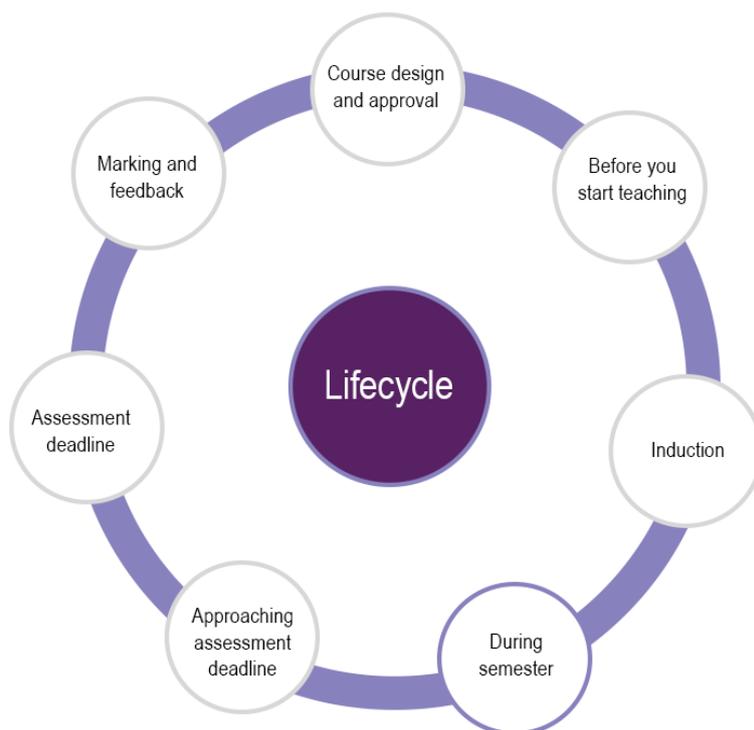
At induction include student awareness-raising on feedback and feedforward. This needs to include (at a minimum):

- a definition of feedback and feedforward;
- how students should use feedback and feedforward to inform and enhance work for subsequent assignments;
- guidelines for good assessment and feedback;
- the formal processes for taking appropriate action regarding queries, complaints or appeals about assessment, such as contacting their tutor or PAT and how to initiate a complaint or appeal;
- the purpose and function of the 'Red Button'.

Essential student skills

A good source of support for your students is the [Essential student skills](#) resource which has a section on assessment and feedback.

During the semester



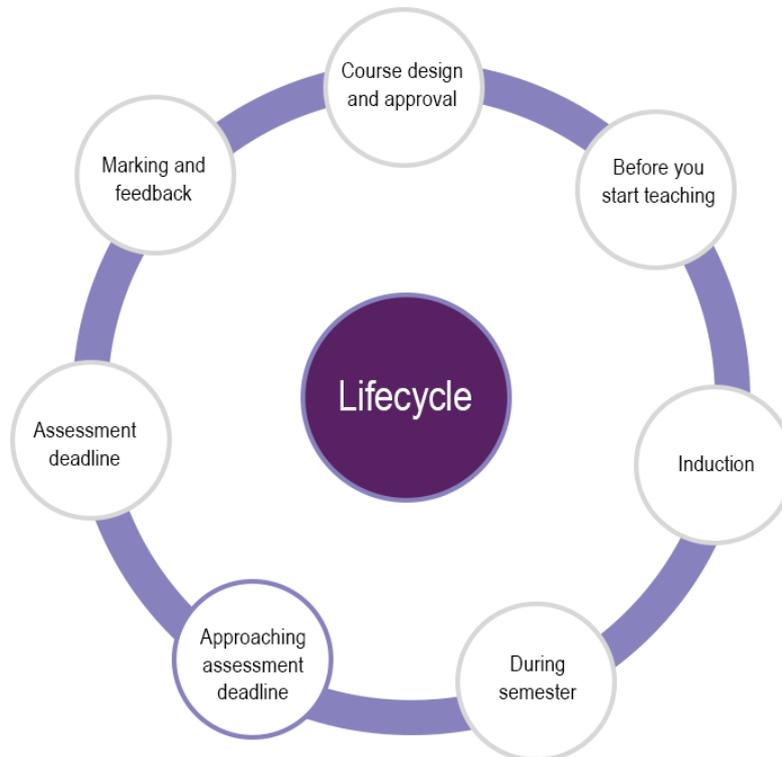
Include opportunities to talk to students about assessment and feedback at induction sessions. You can:

- set time during lectures to give general advice on making the most of feedback;
- remind students of the marking rubric in their Student Handbook;
- provide samples of marked assessments and feedback;
- remind students of the link to the [Essential student skills](#) resource;
- provide opportunities for students to submit assignment plans or outlines well ahead of the assessment deadline.

Oxford Brookes' guides

[Reduce the risk of Plagiarism in just 30 mins!](#)

Approaching assessment deadline



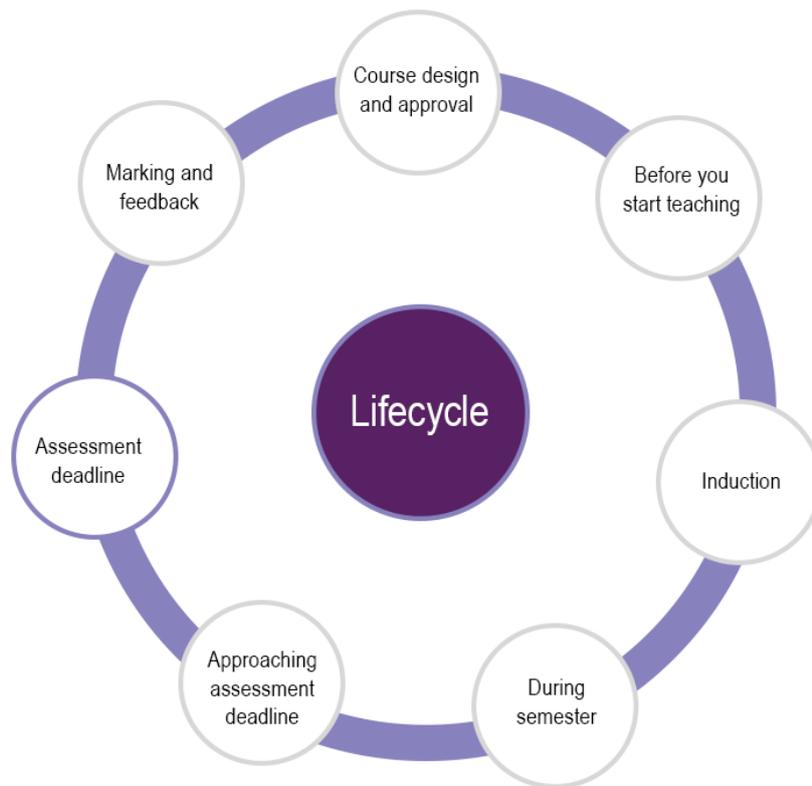
It is a good idea to remind your students about what was covered at induction on assessment, feedback and feedforward as this may not have been uppermost in their minds at the start of their course. A few weeks before the assessment deadline:

- remind students of the link to [Essential student skills](#), particularly the sections on Assessment and Core skills;
- if not already covered, ensure that you set time during lectures to give general advice on making the most of feedback and feed forward;
- provide an opportunity for students to submit assignment plans or outlines well ahead of assessment deadline;
- allow students to submit multiple drafts to Turnitin.

The benefits of using Turnitin

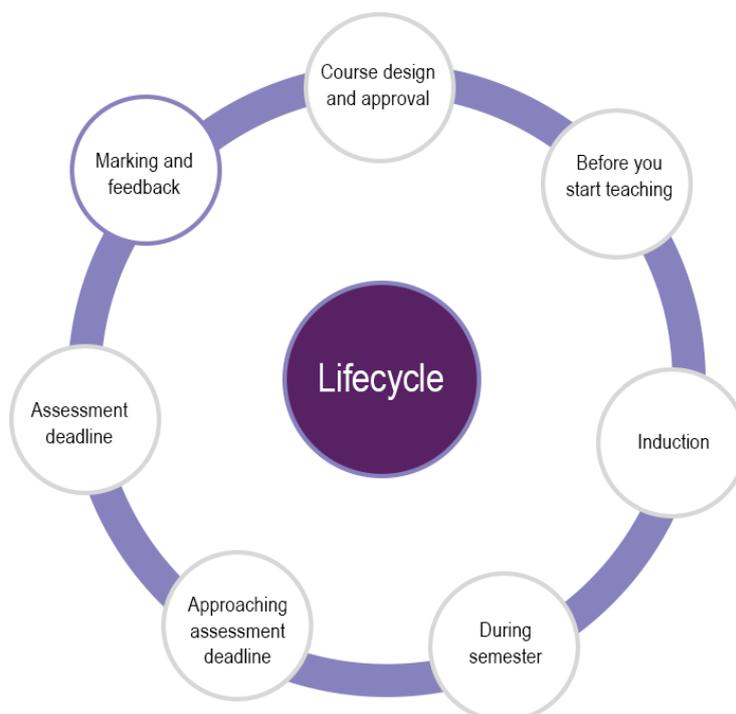
Matt Sillers, Social Science Lecturer at Inverness College, describes the [benefits of using Turnitin](#).

Assessment deadline



As soon as the deadline has passed and if you have the time, you could consider emailing (copied to their PAT) any students who have missed the assessment deadline.

Marking and feedback



You are expected to provide feedback and a provisionally agreed mark (from both first and second marker) within 15 working days following the submission deadline. Here are some suggestions to help you achieve this:

- Follow the agreed marking process to minimise the time you and the team spend on marking and providing feedback.
- To save time, use Turnitin's GradeMark for marking.
 - Liaise with second markers to:
 - remind markers of the marking deadlines;
- check for consistency in marking and any queries.
- Encourage students to review their feedback and feedforward, then consider future improvement.
- Remember, when marking exams, that students may request examination feedback.

Oxford Brookes guide

[How to make your feedback work in three easy steps!](#)

References

Oxford Brookes University (2014) *Adopting a social constructivist approach to assessment in three easy steps!* [online] <<https://www.brookes.ac.uk/aske/documents/SocialConst.pdf> >
[26 February 2016]

Oxford Brookes University (2014) *Making peer feedback work in three easy steps!* [online] <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/aske/documents/2788_123-PeerFback.pdf>

Assessment design

Introduction

Evaluating understanding and progress, and providing constructive feedback are essential components of any course. Students need to know that they are 'getting it' and teachers need to know that their materials and practices are working.

Matching assessment design to the learning outcomes is a key step to ensure there is alignment between:

- your intended learning outcomes;
- student learning activities and
- the formative and summative assessment you require them to undertake.

Assessments should provide evidence that students have achieved the learning outcomes.

The method of assessment you choose should reflect the type of knowledge or behaviours described in the learning outcomes. So for example, if a learning outcome related to using a piece of technology, the learning activities and the assessment should involve “using” – so observation or peer review assessment could be an option. It would not be appropriate to ask the students to write about using the piece of technology. You would not be able to assess your students’ use of the technology.

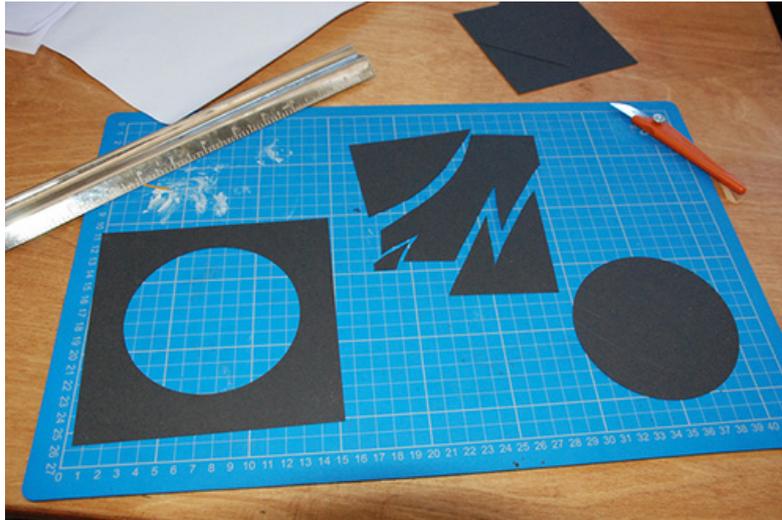
In the following pages you’ll find more information on writing assessment criteria and questions, group work and reflective practice.

The REAP principles

REAP

The [REAP](#) (Re-Engineering Assessment Practices in Scottish Higher Education) project provides an excellent guide for the design of assessment in higher or further education. Within the resources tab on their website there are two sections which you may find particularly helpful:

- Assessment principles: some possible candidates
- Questions to ask yourself about your assessment



'[S2 Clock Project](#)' by [Jordanhill School D&T Dept](#)
from Flickr, [CC BY 2.0](#)'

Assessment criteria

An assessment should be:

Valid



image by '[Hywards](#)' from '[FreeDigitalPhotos](#)'

It measures what it is supposed to measure - does the content address learning outcomes?

Reliable



Image by '[Stuart Miles](#)' from [FreeDigitalPhotos](#)

It achieves similar results in scoring and grading across students with similar abilities.

Equitable and fair



Image by '[Salvatore Vuono](#)' from [FreeDigitalPhotos](#)

It is accessible to all learners who have the potential to succeed in it.

Practicable



Image by '[posterize](#)' from [FreeDigitalPhotos](#)

Assessors and students need to have adequate resources to carry out assessments effectively and efficiently.

Benefits of clear criteria in assessment

This video by the Higher Education Academy explores the benefits of providing clear criteria in assessment.

- [Dr Jon Callow on student perceptions of assessment](#) (Vimeo)

Assessment questions

Writing Good Exam Questions

There is certainly a difference between good and bad questions, or rather, easy questions that only test recall, and well-designed questions that engage students and draw on higher levels of thinking skills. [Dr Kate Exley's \(2012\) Writing Good Exam Questions - A Self-study Workbook](#) gives advice on writing masters-level examination questions. She provides user-friendly advice on writing questions and gives many examples and tips.

“The goal – Test items should be really difficult for people who don't understand the subject material, but they should be straightforward for those who do. If an item is difficult because of complicated wording (e.g., double negatives) or vocabulary, you will end up testing language skills rather than ability in the discipline”

Exley (2012: 6)

Guidance on writing essay test items

You may wish to review the guidance on writing essay test items by the [University of Illinois](#).

Bloom's revised taxonomy

Bloom's revised taxonomy provides an excellent framework for designing learning outcomes and associated learning activities, and can also be highly effective in supporting the design of formative assessment.

In reviewing assessment design consider:

- testing your questions by answering them yourself and checking whether you got what you expected;
- ensuring that your assessments address your learning outcomes;
- checking what knowledge, skills and cognitive processes students will use to answer the assessments to ensure they are working at the appropriate level – see Blooms Revised Taxonomy and the SQA Level descriptors.

Guidance on writing learning outcomes

Guidance on writing learning outcomes using [Bloom's revised taxonomy](#).

Guidance on writing learning outcomes particularly relating to [new modules and revalidation](#) of programmes.

Multiple choice questions (MCQs)

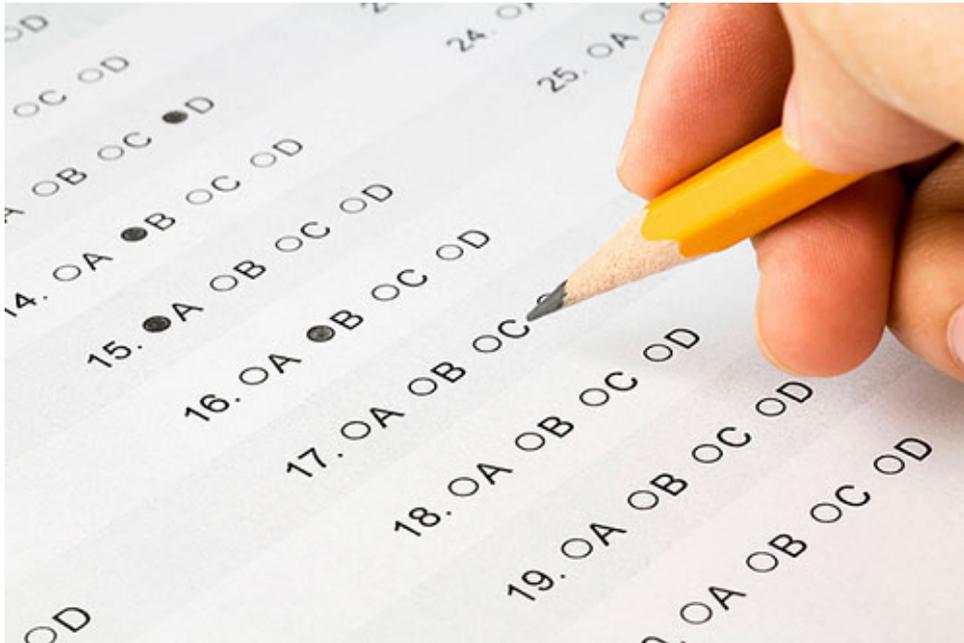
Using multiple choice questions can provide valuable formative feedback for students and can also be used effectively for summative assessment.

Multiple choice test questions

You may also wish to look at writing good multiple choice test questions from the [Centre of Teaching Vanderbilt University](#).

Introducing students to the use of multiple choice questions: case study

It is important to familiarise students with the multiple choice process and technology you are going to use. The case study (See online version) by Dr Gareth Davies, Programme Leader MEd, Lews Castle College illustrates how students on the Introduction to Psychology module were given practice multiple choice questions as a piece of formative assessment to allow them to familiarise themselves with the process and the technology.



'Exam' by [Alberto G.](#) from Flickr, [CC BY 2.0](#)'

Technology in assessment

A variety of technologies are available to support you in assessment such as [Mahara](#) (ePortfolio), [Medial streaming service](#), (where students can upload video demonstrations); and [Turnitin](#) (used to improve academic writing; peer review option).

Working with students

Encouraging students to discuss their feedback from assessments and how they will act on it is an important part of their learning process. It can provide motivation, focus and support their assessment activity. So it is worthwhile thinking about what opportunities you provide to support such conversations. The University of Strathclyde's [Principle 6: Encourage interaction and dialogue around learning \(peer and teacher-student\)](#) - Encourage interaction and dialogue around learning (peer and teacher-student) explores this area in more detail.

“Research is increasingly demonstrating the importance of tutor-student dialogue in both understanding assessment expectations and being able to make use of feedback.”

**A marked improvement: Transforming assessment in Higher Education.
Higher Education Academy (2012: 10)**



'Writing Center IMG 7886' by Eastern Arizona College
from Flickr, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0'

This video produced by JISC promotes the benefits of working with students as key stakeholders in the design and implementation of assessment and feedback.

- [Transforming the assessment and feedback landscape: reconceptualising feedback](#) (Youtube)

This short case study by Wendy Maltinsky, Programme Director - Psychology, Health – Inverness College, illustrates how one programme team sought to increase student engagement and discussion with their feedback.

Case Study: Maximising student input on feedback

Wendy Maltinsky, Programme Director, Psychology and Health, Inverness College UHI

Introduction

This case study provides an illustration of how the Psychology teaching team in the University enhanced their practice in assessment feedback and feedforward and reviews and demonstrates the potential benefits of ensuring that the student is included in the process to encourage them to consider the actions they must take.

Background

A workshop session was held in 2014 with externals using the HEA (Higher Education Academy) Self Evaluation templates. The aim of the workshop was to define what the team were striving for in assessment and how they would plan to achieve this. It was recognised that often students appeared to not read, acknowledge or act on the wealth of feedback and feedforward received.

We examined some common experiences and established key philosophies:

It was agreed that:

- assessment at earlier levels would focus on learning how to learn which would progress to learning what to learn increasingly
- student engagement in the feedback/marking process would help to place the responsibility for learning with the student

Description of key issues

A key driver was to look at maximising student input and reducing the overwhelming demand on staff time at marking points.

Present the story / facts

The current system involved staff identifying one or two items that the student should seek to address to improve their grades. The team had piloted a check system by which students were asked to tick to indicate that they had read the feedback; that they had collated it to take to their next PAT (Personal Academic Tutor) session and most importantly that they had identified what they would do in order to address the feedback suggestions.

To support this process the team have also introduced an assessment review as the first meeting with the PAT at the start of the academic year (for levels 8, 9, and 10) to which students are asked to bring these assessments.

Outcome, next steps

Currently the process still relies on the student to take the initiative. To properly close the loop it would be good if there was a way of ensuring that PAT's get a copy simultaneously as students. A facility by which it would be possible to easily include the PAT in the feedback to the student (perhaps allowing Pat's access to the relevant grade centres? Or having a system which automatically downloads all of the student's feedback to the relevant PAT) would render this more possible.

Further information:

Wendy Maltinsky, Programme Director - Psychology, Health – Inverness College:
Wendy.Maltinsky.ic@uhi.ac.uk

Link to HEA Self Evaluation Document; Link to PAT resources.

Oxford Brookes' guides

You may find the following Oxford Brookes' guides helpful:

- How to [improve your students' performance in 90 minutes!](#)
- When and how to use [Face-to-Face Feedback](#)

Group work as assessment

Group work is becoming increasingly popular as a method of assessment as it reflects the demands of the workplace. Here are five useful resources to support you in using group work with your students:

1. [Getting the most from groupwork assessment](#) (Oxford Brookes University)
2. [Teaching toolkit: large and small group teaching](#) (University College Dublin)
3. [Small group teaching](#) (Oxford Brookes University)
4. Bobby Elliott (SQA, 2008) provides a useful short report on '[Online collaborative assessment](#)'. In the report Elliott presents a set of 6 useful criteria for assessing online group work. He also provides additional criteria gained from his review of exemplar marking schemes.



Students in group work activities
West Highland College Prospectus photography,
Ewen Weatherspoon Photographer, UHI Image Library

Reflective practice as assessment

The use of reflective journals or portfolios to record learning over a period of time is also increasingly used as an assessment method. The University of Hong Kong provide a wide range of very useful [assessment resources](#) (to line up with name of linked page) including a guide to using reflective journals in teaching which can be accessed via the 'assessment methods' tab.

“We do not learn from experience We learn from reflecting on our experience”.

John Dewey

Using Mahara to support reflective practice and assessment: case study

This short [case study](#) illustrates how Mahara has been used by students on the BA Applied Music as a tool for reflective practice and assessment.

Mahara training materials

- [Tutor training in Mahara](#)
- [Examples of sample portfolios in Mahara](#)
- [Sample Templates](#)

Turnitin

Turnitin links

Staff are increasingly turning to Turnitin as an effective assessment and feedback tool. If you are considering using Turnitin you must first ensure that you have an official Turnitin account. If you don't have one you need to log a call with the [Help Desk](#).

The EDU has produced an illustrated [staff guide to Turnitin](#), which includes step by step instructions on how to link an assignment in Brightspace to Turnitin, optional settings and how to use the tool for grading.

Additionally, there are links to official [Turnitin guidance in Mahara](#) (including links to webcasts and a blog).

Turnitin case studies

Unitec (the largest Institute of Technology in New Zealand) has been using Feedback Studio for more than a decade to [reduce academic misconduct and lighten the burden of grading for teachers](#).

Dr Cath Ellis from Huddersfield describes how the School of Humanities has adopted a [paperless assessment and feedback policy](#) and the way in which GradeMark was pivotal in the process.

Generic feedback

Generic feedback to all students following an assessment can be an effective and timely method of providing good quality feedback. This can include common feedback appropriate to all of the students and could be on referencing and the tutor's broad expectations of how the assessment should have been approached. Providing generic feedback can help students understand that their challenges are shared by their peers and can also provide an opportunity for feedforward – perhaps a discussion on how to approach the next assessment.

For the tutor it can save time by eliminating the need to repeat the same feedback to every student; and allows them to focus specific feedback for individual students.

Consider creating:

- FAQs for your students highlighting common problems which students experience e.g. referencing correctly;
- model answers;
- lists of common issues faced by previous students.

This generic feedback could be discussed by your students and then used as a basis for individual feedback to students.

Oxford Brookes' guide

Oxford Brookes 3 step guide to [using generic feedback effectively](#).

Using audio feedback

Staff using audio feedback have found that it provides efficient and more personal feedback to students.

In this [case study](#) Sonia Ross talks about the experience of using this technique.

In this [short paper from JISC](#), Bob Rotherham provides some tips for audio feedback.

Turnitin's GradeMark allows staff to record audio feedback for assessments:

- [Turnitin interactive GradeMark tutorial](#)

The benefits of audio feedback for both the student and the tutor are highlighted in this video by Professor Jamie Quinton, School of Chemical and Physical Sciences at Flinders University, Adelaide. He illustrates using Adobe Acrobat to record written and audio assessment comments.

- [Assoc. Prof. Jamie Quinton - Using audio feedback using Adobe Acrobat](#) (Youtube)

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- Practicing Organization Development: Leading Transformation and Change [online]. Available at: <https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=VfilCgAAQBAJ&pg=PA224&lpg=PA224&dq=%E2%80%99CWe+do+not+learn+from+experience+%E2%80%A6.+We+learn+from+reflecting+on+our+experience%E2%80%9D.&source=bl&ots=3rg-VQxZTN&sig=Yt8Xqx9tzxWY8zh2RBgGENsJQ6A&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjTnYK39qnMAhXlvRoKHxAWDygQ6AEIzAA#v=onepage&q&f=false> [07 March 2015]
- REAP, Re-Engineering Assessment Practices in Scottish Higher Education [online]. Available at: <http://www.reap.ac.uk/reap/index.html> [07 March 2015]
- Rotherham, B., JISCn [online]. Available at: <https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbnxz3VuZHNnb29kdWt8Z3g6M2ZhNTYxZDU5MjM5MzZiOA> [07 March 2015]
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University of Hong Kong, guides on Assessment [online]. Available at: <http://ar.cetl.hku.hk/index.php> [07 March 2015]

University of Strathclyde, Principle 6 [online]. Available at: <http://www.strath.ac.uk/learnteach/informationforstaff/staff/assessfeedback/12principles/principle6/> [07 March 2015]

Writing Essay Test Items [online]. Available at: <http://citl.illinois.edu/teaching-resources/evaluating-student-performance/writing-good-test-questions/writing-essay-test-items> [07 March 2015]

Brightspace tools for assessment and feedback

Brightspace, the university's virtual learning environment, has many built-in tools to support assessment and feedback practice. To help you make the most of these tools the EDU has produced a variety of **illustrated guides**:

- [Assignments, feedback and grades](#)

This resource offers an introduction to the Brightspace Assignments tool, including setting up, using Turnitin, rubrics and the Grades tool.

- [Brightspace quiz tool](#)

This resource introduces the quiz tool, including where to find it and instructions on how to set up a new quiz. The following are two associated guides:

- [Previewing quizzes](#)
- [Question library vs. Question pool](#)

Brightspace can also be used to set up assignments designed for groups, not just individuals:

- [Group assignments](#)

Anti-plagiarism guidance:

- [Turnitin staff guide](#)
- [Urkund staff guide](#)

Assistance in dealing with the practicalities of assessing student work at UHI:

- [Entering marks in Brightspace](#)
- [Attaching a feedback file to a grade item](#)
- [2nd marking in Brightspace](#)
- [External examiner guidance](#)

There is also considerable guidance available in two Brightspace modules (all UHI staff are enrolled):

- [Brightspace Professional Development](#)

- [Supporting Learning Online](#)



[Free Stock Photos](#) / [CC0 1.0](#)

LinkedIn Learning

One valuable, but underused, resource available to all UHI staff is LinkedIn Learning (previously Lynda.com). This online training resource has thousands of training videos for both personal and professional development.

You can build playlists for yourself, teams and colleagues to provide tailored and focused development whether it be new software, dealing with software problems or getting a heads up on some forthcoming software launches.

LinkedIn Learning is available via its own tile in MyDay and from the Staff section of the UHI web site (shown below).

The screenshot displays a web interface for staff services. On the left is a vertical 'Services' menu with items: Brightspace VLE, Log your own ticket, Library, MyUHI, Email, IT Help, UHI records, Dropbox, Calendar, Mahara, Toolkit, Bridge Reporting, and MyDay. To the right is a grid of eight resource tiles:

- Remote Teaching**: Information for staff delivering programmes during the Coronavirus
- Resources**: Academic misconduct guidance, Personal Academic Tutor pack, Mental health conditions toolkit, Student Representation Resource
- LinkedIn Learning** (highlighted with a purple border): Staff have free access to LinkedIn Learning - an online library of instructional videos on creative and business skills as well as the latest software. See the Servicedesk Bitesize LinkedIn Learning page.
- EDU**: Supporting the development of blended and online learning
- Careers and Employability Centre**: Resources and information for staff
- Learning and Teaching Academy**: Enhancing Learning and Teaching

LinkedIn tile on the Staff section of the UHI web site

Bookshelf

Introduction

There are a wide range of high quality resources to support assessment feedback and feedforward in teaching and learning. Here are a selection that were regarded as particularly useful or relevant to this content. If you have other relevant resources you would like to share with colleagues please contact us and we'll add them to the bookshelf. The bookshelf contains downloadable documents, background papers and links to relevant websites referred to in these resources.

University of the Highlands and Islands

[Assessment, feedback and feedforward policy implementation](#)

[\(Word\)](#)

[Assessment and Feedback Resource](#)

[\(PDF\)](#)

[UHI Blended Learning Standards](#)

[UHI Social Media Policy](#)

[SCQF Revised Level Descriptors](#)

[\(PDF\)](#)

[Bloom's Revised Taxonomy](#)

Higher Education Academy

[Higher Education Academy: A Marked Improvement](#)

[\(PDF\)](#)

[Higher Education Academy: 10 Strategies to engage students with feedback](#)

[\(PDF\)](#)

[Higher Education Academy: Transforming assessment in higher education](#)

[\(PDF\)](#)

[Transforming the Experience of Students Through Assessment](#)

[\(TESTA\)](#)

[Programme assessment strategies](#)

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)

[QAA assessment resources 2010 - 2015](#)

[\(Word\)](#)

[Assessing with integrity in digital delivery \(COVID-19 support resource\)](#)

[\(PDF\)](#)

[QAA SHEEC Focus on: Assessment and Feedback](#)

Resources from other universities

[University of Edinburgh: Enhancing feedback](#)

[University of Hong Kong: Assessment resources](#)

[REAP Project](#)

[\(Re-engineering Assessment Practices in Higher Education\)](#)

[Video overview of the REAP Project](#)

JISC resources

[Transforming assessment and feedback with technology](#)

[\(PDF\)](#)

[Transforming the assessment and feedback landscape: Students as partners \(Youtube\)](#)

[Changing assessment and feedback practice](#)

[\(Reading time: 15 minutes\)](#)

[Electronic management of assessment](#)

[\(Reading time: 15 minutes\)](#)

[Engage students with mobile learning](#)

[\(Reading time: 5 minutes\)](#)

[Enhancing student employability through technology-supported assessment and feedback](#)

[\(Reading time: 15 minutes\)](#)

[Feedback and feed forward](#)

[\(Reading time: 10 minutes\)](#)

[Law, technology and assessment](#)

[\(Reading time: 10 minutes\)](#)

[Making assessments accessible](#)

[\(Reading time: 10 minutes\)](#)

[Transforming assessment and feedback with technology](#)

[Inclusive assessment](#)

Oxford Brookes assessment resources

[How to make your feedback work in three easy steps](#)

[Using generic feedback effectively!](#)

[Getting the most from groupwork assessment](#)

[Using Turnitin to provide powerful formative feedback](#)

Other resources

[SQA Guide to Assessment](#)

[\(PDF\)](#)

[Writing assessment questions for online delivery: Principles and guidelines](#)

[Writing effective essay questions](#)

[Suggestions for scoring essay items](#)

[How to write good multiple-choice questions, Dianne E Campbell](#)

[\(Journal articles\)](#)

[The lecturer's toolkit : a practical guide to assessment, learning and teaching. Race, P. \(2014\)](#)

[\(eBook\)](#)

[Assessment and feedback benchmarking tool](#)

[Glossary of terms](#)

[\(PDF\)](#)