

Assessment Handbook



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1 Introduction to Assessment Handbook

The Assessment Handbook is designed for all those involved in the assessment of students at the University of the West of Scotland. It contains the policies, procedures, and guidance relevant to assessment at UWS. Where the policies and procedures in this Handbook are referred to by the Regulatory Framework, 'these shall be adhered to as if they were part of the Regulatory Framework' (Regulatory Framework, 1.4).

The Assessment Handbook contains the 'must know' information on assessment and feedback and aims to make it easily accessible to colleagues. More developmental material is available from Learning Transformation, Innovation & Environments. The Assessment Handbook provides the standard of what assessment at UWS must be (fair, reliable, rigorous, and so on). However, its aim is not to constrain colleagues but to encourage them to try something new.

At UWS, we believe in assessment *for* learning. Principle 1 of UWS's Principles of Assessment is 'Assessment is integral to the student learning experience. It facilitates student learning and informs and supports student progression'. Colleagues are therefore encouraged to consider the ways in which assessment and feedback can be used to engage students and facilitate learning. Assessments should be designed as a key part of the learning process. Just for starters, assessments can ask students to communicate, collaborate, learn new skills, engage in research and enquiry, and develop their professional identities. Students can build a sense of autonomy by taking part in the assessment process itself, whether that's through peer feedback, co-creating rubrics, negotiating assessments, or something else entirely.

Colleagues who are interested in developing their assessment and feedback practice will find support from Learning Transformation, Innovation & Environments Those with particular interest in digital assessment will also find support from the Learning Environments team. Resources and details of the many events run throughout the year are available online.

The Education Advisory Committee (EAC) has responsibility for the regular review and update of assessment practice and policy within UWS in line with sector or University requirements.

The 2021-22 Assessment Handbook was approved by the Academic Quality Committee on behalf of EAC on 25/10/21

2 Principles of Assessment

Assessment at the University of the West of Scotland is underpinned by 10 key Principles:

Principle 1 Assessment is integral to the student learning experience. It facilitates student learning and informs and supports student progression.

Principle 2 Assessment should be transparent, valid, and reliable and conducted with fairness, probity, and rigour.

Principle 3 Assessment should be inclusive, accessible, and free from bias.

Principle 4 Assessment is an integral part of the course design process, appropriately aligned with learning outcomes at module, stage, and programme level.

Principle 5 Assessment design and practice should, as far as possible, incorporate innovative approaches and engage students in authentic, 'real-world' experiences.

Principle 6 Assessment practice should be varied, using an appropriate mixture of methods and an effective balance of formative and summative assessment.

Principle 7 Assessment design and grading practice should be supported through clear and consistent assessment criteria linked to learning outcomes and appropriate generic criteria.

Principle 8 Students should be provided with feedback on each assessment assignment that is timely, that promotes learning and facilitates improvement, and that is framed against the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

Principle 9 Assessment practice should be facilitated by effective and efficient management and administration and underpinned by appropriate staff development activities.

Principle 10 Students have a responsibility to participate in assessments honestly and with academic integrity. Students should be given opportunities to engage in all stages of the assessment process, including assessment design and feedback.

3 Requirements for Assessment

3.1 Ensuring Assessment is Fit for Purpose

'Assessment should be transparent, valid, and reliable and conducted with fairness, probity, and rigour' (UWS Principle of Assessment 2).

All assessments are subject to University-wide Quality Assurance procedures (e.g. Module Review Forms, Programme Annual Monitoring and the external examiner system).

3.1.1 Transparency

Information about assessment should be made readily available to all students and staff involved. This includes placement or practice providers, assessors, and External Examiners. The information required includes:

- the criteria by which students will be assessed
- the size/time limit of the assessment
- its weighting
- arrangements and dates for submission and return
- the grade scale to be applied

Students should be provided with clear and timely information through written Module Descriptors, Programme Specifications, and handbooks. These should be complemented by assessment information when the module commences.

Assessment criteria should be based on the Learning Outcomes for the module and should indicate clearly what is expected from students in terms of their assessment.

Where specific assessment outcomes or other criteria must be met to fulfil the requirements of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies these must be clearly published.

All students should be provided with access to the University's [Marking and Grading Scheme](#) (see Appendix 1).

Students should be made aware of and helped to understand University Regulations regarding academic conduct, including cheating and plagiarism, extenuating circumstances, and appeals.

3.1.2 Validity

At its core, *validity* means measuring what we intend to measure.

Assessment should allow for clear, robust, and effective measurement of student attainment against the Learning Outcome(s) being assessed.

Assessments should always be designed, moderated, and evaluated according to published marking/grading criteria that are an expression of all or some of the module Learning Outcomes.

All assessment assignments should be mapped to relevant level/grade descriptors and Module Descriptors.

3.1.3 Reliability

Reliability can be defined as the extent to which an assessment provides *consistent* information about what is being measured.

The term *consistent* has further implications: staff need to ensure there is consistent practice at all stages of assessment – design, delivery, marking, feedback, and administration.

Considerations for reliability include:

- It should not make any difference to the results whether a student takes the assessment in the morning or afternoon; one day or the next.
- Internal consistency of the assignment.

Reliability can be ensured through a variety of means but it should be noted that the assessment of students depends fundamentally on the academic judgement of professional staff. This is supported through:

- appropriate CPD;
- systematic application of assessment criteria;
- internal moderation of grading;
- corroboration from external examiners;
- cross-institutional evaluation.

Validity and *reliability* are closely linked and in many cases inter-dependent. It is possible to think of cases where a valid assessment could not be conducted reliably, for example, certain practical activities which produce transient results. It is also possible to think of assessments that would be highly reliable but not particularly valid, for example, certain multiple choice tests, or the use of a spelling test to assess linguistic ability.

3.1.4 Fairness

Fairness means that an assessment should provide all students with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their learning.

Ensure the assessment can be taken by all students regardless of mode of study (e.g. part-time or distance) and that appropriate adjustments have been provided where there is individual need (e.g. for student with disabilities).

Assessment methods should accurately reflect the range of expected behaviours as described by the Learning Outcomes and the details in Module Descriptors and handbooks and programme specifications and any other published information available to students.

Time should be taken during teaching to discuss assessment with students and explain parameters such as content to be covered by the exam and the marking schedule.

Where possible, protect student identity at all stages of the assessment process, for example, through anonymous marking in order that any possible bias is eliminated.

3.1.5 Probity and Rigour

Probity and *rigour* are related to all of the above in that the assessment process should be sound and fair.

Clear policies and regulations covering all aspects of the conduct of assessment are in place to meet the University's requirements for assessment procedures, whilst allowing an appropriate degree of flexibility at individual module level.

Assessments should be conducted in a manner that upholds academic standards across the University. This includes, for example, consistent University-wide procedures in dealing with extenuating circumstances; specialist arrangements; amount and timing of assessments; examination invigilation; and penalties regarding late submission of assessed work.

3.2 Assessment and Equal Opportunities

The University is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all students studying on its modules and programmes. All assessments should test students' abilities fairly, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Inclusive practice tends to be good pedagogic practice with value for all learners. The fundamental aim of inclusive practice is to promote equality, support, and the development of an inclusive culture within UWS that will lead to success for all students.

UK legislation requires institutions to anticipate and address the needs of students within all policies and practices. As such, UWS is committed to avoiding less favourable treatment of any student by making learning, teaching, and assessment accessible.

Assessment design should take account of the diverse nature of the student body and learning contexts. Inclusivity should be incorporated at the design stage of the curriculum and assessments, both during approval and review of modules and programmes. The Equality Act 2010 places an obligation on staff to anticipate the likely needs of students rather than relying on *ad hoc* adjustments in light of specific student needs.

However, where reasonable adjustments for an individual are required, the University has procedures in place, see section: [Adjustments for Assessing Students with Individual Needs](#).

There is a need to consider different types of assessment and identify where there is scope to be flexible with regard to assessing students. Some assessment strategies present challenges to students irrespective of the nature of their disability or other difference. Firstly, if students are assessed in a practical setting such as a laboratory, the specific needs of disabled or pregnant students will have to be addressed. In this type of situation communication with students can be the most useful approach, as many students have already developed mechanisms for working in and out of the classroom environment.

The academic standards that students must meet are embodied in the Learning Outcomes of programmes and modules. The criteria for marking and grading in the case of formal qualities of student work such as grammar and spelling, must reflect the stated academic standards. Marking criteria may only include specific and independent criteria relating to grammar, spelling or similar general characteristics of student work where these are explicitly set out in the Learning Outcomes.

3.2.1 Language of Assessment

The language of the instruments of assessment must reflect the language of instruction in all modules and programmes.

3.2.2 Time Zones and Cultural/Religious Holidays

Time-zone differences and cultural/religious holidays should be taken into account when setting assessment submission deadlines and exam dates e.g. Eid, Ramadan, and Saturday exams.

3.2.3 Assessment across Campuses

Assessment must be equitable across all campuses and modes of learning.

3.3 Volume and Timing of Assessments

Assessment should be set in manageable amounts for students within the context of their pathway of study.

The following should be considered:

- volume of assessment, which should be proportionate to the academic credit awarded for a module;
- timing of assessment, to avoid grouping assessments on the same deadline;
- efficiency of assessment, which should make good use of student and staff time but be sufficient to allow for formative development of student knowledge, understanding, and skills.

3.3.1 Volume

The School is responsible for monitoring the amount of assessed work required of students and to ensure that an appropriate level of comparability is maintained between modules. Within and between subject areas, the nature of assessed work will vary significantly and therefore any norms governing the amount of assessed work should not be applied in a mechanistic manner.

It is University policy that one credit point equates to a notional total learning time of 10 student effort hours. So, for example, a module worth 20 credit points equates to a notional total learning time of 200 student effort hours. This includes all taught/supervised components, independent learning, projects, placements, and *assessment*.

Since assessment design is an integral part of curriculum design, the design of assessment should be guided by consideration of the appropriate division of student effort hours.

3.3.2 Volume Norms

The University has norms for how much assessment should be set for a module. This is not an exact science but presented as a guide for consideration.

In those disciplines where assessment includes substantial amounts of discursive work (for instance, in the form of essays), Schools are expected to take into account the following norms in order to limit the extent of variation in the amount of assessed work per module:

- For modules of 20 credit points, the guidelines are: between one examination of two hours and an assignment or assignments of 1,000 words (or 3,000 words and no examination) and one examination of two hours and an assignment or assignments of 2,500 words (or 4,500 words and no examination).

It is recognised that not all forms of assessment can be quantified in terms of word ranges or limits.

In many disciplines the above norms will not be applicable due to the differing nature of the assessments employed. In these cases Schools should seek to establish norms that, as far as possible, enable comparability in the amount of assessed work across modules.

Where continuous assessment takes place in class time, a School may consider that such norms could be exceeded in specific modules. In addition, such norms should not be used in a manner that constrains the variety of assessment methods nor innovation in such methods.

3.3.3 Size of Masters Dissertations

With regard to length of Postgraduate Masters dissertation (normally a 60-credit dissertation), there is an exception of up to 18,000 words or a valid equivalent, if the student is conducting field studies, experiment or laboratory research etc.

It is accepted that in some Masters programmes the dissertation may be assembled in two or more components completed during the period of the module, provided the total work of the components is equivalent to the sustained independent effort required for a 60-credit module at SCQF level 11.

Examples of valid equivalents of a 60-credit dissertation include;

- (i) A substantive piece of written work (up to 18,000 words) which is referred to as something other than a 'Dissertation' (e.g. 'Project' or 'Written report');
- (ii) A piece of written work and another summative assessment (e.g. an oral presentation, a set of exercises, or a research proposal) where the credit awarded to the written work and other assessment is proportionally weighted to the work involved i.e. written work up to 9,000 words contributing towards 50% of assessment;
- (iii) Several linked pieces of written work with a cumulative total of up to 18,000 words (e.g. a literature review, lab book, and a scientific research paper/report) which cover different stages or processes involved in the completion of a sustained piece of work equivalent to a 60-credit dissertation;
- (iv) Production of an output/service/product (e.g. software program), accompanied by a short contextualising piece of written work (up to 5,000 words).

3.3.4 Timing

Module Co-ordinators should seek to avoid the grouping of assessments in ways that create an uneven schedule of work for students over the term. As far as possible, timing of assessment should be considered in relation to the other modules in students' programme of study.

The timing of assessments should also be considered in terms of when students will receive feedback and what opportunities they will have to reflect and act upon it.

3.4 Variety of Assessment

Assessment practice should be varied, using an appropriate mixture of methods and an effective balance of formative and summative assessment.

Methods refers to the type of assessment that is used (for example, a presentation, an essay, a portfolio, an examination).

Formative assessment is defined here as assessment that provides students with opportunities for feedback but does not contribute to their overall grade. Feedback may be provided to an individual or group, and may come from self-evaluation, the students' peers or a member of staff.

Summative assessment refers to assessment that provides a mark contributing to a student's overall grade. Summative assessment is also formative in that feedback should be provided.

The balance between different methods of assessment and their respective contributions to overall marks and grades should be regularly reviewed by Module Co-ordinators in light of student performance and feedback.

Learners from different backgrounds may be advantaged or disadvantaged by heavy reliance on particular methods of assessment, and therefore variation in such methods may contribute to the goal of equity.

It is worth noting that there may be more than one way to assess student learning against a given Learning Outcome.

Assessment of the same Learning Outcomes by different means may be appropriate in some circumstances, but assessment practice should be sensitive to effects on the student experience and student motivation. In order to avoid over-assessment, there should not normally be multiple summative assessments of a specific Learning Outcome within a given module. Nevertheless, over the course of a programme of study, it will often be appropriate to assess the same analytical, transferable or professional skills at differing levels of attainment or sophistication.

3.5 Preparing Examinations

When preparing an *examination*, staff need to be aware of all the basic principles of assessment discussed earlier in the Handbook and also consider the following:

- How many questions are being set? The answer will very much depend on factors such as what type of questions (short answers, long essay type, calculation type, etc.) and the length of the exam (which will have been pre-specified in the Module Descriptor).
- Will the students have a choice or will all questions be compulsory? Where choice is provided, will students still be fairly and comparably assessed against the same Learning Outcomes as each other?
- Is the time allocated for completion realistic? This can be based on previous exemplars, test papers, etc.
- Have all aspects of submission, especially where students may be taking the exam remotely, been considered?
- Prepare a draft exam paper (hard copy or digital) for the examination comprising a set of questions which will be asked of candidates.
- Consider whether the preparation of a set of questions, from which a sample will be selected for each candidate, will help reduce the risk of collusion. In preparing and approving such an exam paper, attention should be paid to devising a set of questions and selection procedure that will ensure each candidate is given an equivalent challenge. The questions asked of a candidate must not be influenced by prior knowledge of the candidate.
- To reduce the risks of collusion, it may also be necessary to establish arrangements which prevent contact between candidates who have already undertaken the examination and those yet to undertake it.

3.6 Work-Based Learning/Work-Related Learning

The University recognises the value in offering all of its students, including those studying part time and online, the chance to learn through work placement experience and to be awarded credit for this as part of their programme of study. The University also wishes to offer people who are in work new ways of engaging with Higher Education. In particular, UWS is keen to support initiatives that are designed to assess and provide academic credit for learning that takes place through work.

In both of the above situations, it is likely that students will undergo some form of assessment of work-based learning.

Initially staff need to decide if the credit being awarded for the placement is Additional or Embedded; it is imperative that staff refer to the UWS Work-Based Learning Procedure which can be accessed here: <https://www.uws.ac.uk/current-students/supporting-your-studies/your-rights-responsibilities/student-policies/>

As with any other mode of learning, assessment instruments for Work-Based Learning and Work-Related Learning should be designed to test all of the Learning Outcomes which have been defined by or agreed with the University and conform to the requirements of assessment discussed above (transparent, valid, etc.).

4 Implementing Assessment

4.1 Adjustments for Assessing Students with Individual Needs

UWS has established procedures for putting in place reasonable adjustments to teaching, learning and assessment. These procedures involve creating opportunities for students to disclose disabilities, professional assessment where appropriate, and reasonable adjustments that academic and administrative staff may make in the case of specific student needs.

Any student who discloses a disability will be invited to an appointment with a Disability Service adviser. The adviser will provide advice, guidance and support to the student. This will cover many areas, including notifying academic staff to a student's needs; advising staff of ways to provide support; implementing special arrangements for exams; dyslexia support; and demonstrations on the use of specialist software or equipment. Similarly adjustments should be made in assessment for students who have requirements in relation to, for example, pregnancy and maternity or religious observance.

Effective support relies on communication and partnership between academic and administrative staff, Disability Service advisers in Student Services, and the student. The University advises staff to take appropriate advice before refusing any proposed adjustment to the form or conditions of assessment to ensure that such action is not discriminatory. The University accepts that adjustments must be consistent with the maintenance of academic standards and fair to all students. Where concerns are raised regarding academic standards, the appropriate course of action is the consideration of alternative adjustments. In the rare case of disagreement that cannot be resolved between any two of the relevant academic staff member, Disability Service adviser, and student, matters relating to proposed adjustments must be referred to the appropriate Dean of School and, in exceptional circumstances, to the Chair of the Education Advisory Committee.

The Disability Service team provide a central point of contact for students and staff. The team offers information and advice regarding the support and procedures the University has in place to ensure accessibility of its educational programmes to prospective students with disabilities and supports a network of Disability Service Co-ordinators throughout the University. This network, covering all academic schools and support departments, provides direct support to students.

More information can be found on the [UWS Disability Service](#) website.

4.2 Use of Dictionaries in Examinations

The use of print based English/first language dictionaries may be permitted in formal examinations for international candidates whose first language is not English, except where the Module Co-ordinator for the module has previously indicated in writing that dictionaries will not be permitted. Dictionaries will not be permitted in language examinations. Where used, dictionaries may be scrutinised by Invigilators. Electronic dictionaries are not permitted in any examination.

4.3 Further Guidance on Inclusive Practice

For further guidance on inclusive practice, staff should refer to the [UWS Disability Service](#) website and the information on the following sites:

<https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/policies-procedures-guidance/>

<https://www.uws.ac.uk/media/7187/uws-edihr-code-april-2021.pdf>

<https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/uws-commitments/equality-diversity-inclusion/>

4.4 Anonymity

Anonymous marking will be used in all assessments that contribute to the award of academic credit except where the nature of the assessment itself renders anonymity impossible to achieve.

In line with Regulation 3.4, anonymous marking is carried out and designed to improve reliability and to ensure that the assessment of students' work is free from bias.

The principles underpinning anonymous marking are as follows:

- assessments should test all students' abilities fairly (see also section on [Assessment and Equal Opportunities](#));
- assessments should test students' abilities without influence from other knowledge or experience of the student;
- once an assessment has been designed, procedures to anonymise the assessment process should be standard practice wherever it is possible to introduce them.

The above principles commit the University to striving to ensure that assessment of students' work is as free from any potential bias (both positive and negative) as possible. The assessment process should therefore be designed to ensure that the assessment of students' work is separate from any previous knowledge or experience of the student. In

addition, anonymous marking should reduce students' cause for concern that assessment could be influenced by such factors.

The University encourages the use of Turnitin Feedback Studio™ as a tool for facilitating anonymous marking where appropriate.

Interpretation of anonymous marking is variable so it is useful to provide the following general guidance statements:

- Best practice means no identities at all;
- Next best (but still considered anonymous) means Banner IDs only;
- Names are to be avoided at all costs.

It is recognised that working with small cohorts of students may present a challenge to maintaining anonymity, and that certain types of assessments (e.g. personal or reflective pieces or dissertations) may also present a challenge to maintaining anonymity. Nevertheless, written work should be submitted using Banner ID numbers (rather than student names) so that anonymity can be maintained insofar as this is possible. Anonymity should be maintained through the first and second-marking processes.

Anonymous marking applies to all assessments except where the nature of the assessment itself renders anonymity impossible to achieve, for example, placement observations, presentations or practical assessment. One other exception is where a compelling justification based on sound pedagogic principles has been made at the point where the assessment method was determined. In such cases, the assessment design and process should clearly demonstrate how the first two principles of anonymous marking outlined above are achieved i.e. the assessment must still test all students' abilities fairly and without influence from other knowledge or experience of the student.

Anonymity in the case of specific assessment methods:

- **Written examinations:** It is University practice/policy to use anonymity tabs on all examination papers. Students include their Banner ID and write and sign their names on the portion of the cover sheet with the anonymity tab which is sealed. Markers should not unseal the cover sheet to identify names until the marking, second marking and moderation is complete.
- **Other forms of examination:** Oral, portfolio, log or practical examinations typically cannot be assessed effectively and efficiently in this manner and anonymous marking would not normally be used in such examinations. Nevertheless, the assessment design and process should clearly demonstrate how the principles of fairness outlined above are achieved.
- **Hard copy written coursework:** It is University practice/policy to use anonymity tabs on coursework submission sheets. Students include their Banner ID and write and sign their names on the portion of the cover sheet with the anonymity tab which is sealed. Students are also required to attach an Anonymous Marking header sheet to their assignment. Markers should not unseal the cover sheet to identify names until the marking, second marking and moderation is complete.
- **Online coursework:** It is University practice/policy to use Turnitin Feedback Studio™ for typed coursework which includes the use of anonymity features.

- **Practical or performance coursework:** Anonymous assessment is less likely to be appropriate where coursework consists of (for example) art work, exhibitions, performance, oral presentations or practical presentations. Nevertheless, the assessment design and process should clearly demonstrate how the principles of fairness outlined above are achieved.

4.5 Late Submission of Coursework

Coursework submitted after the due date without good cause, as determined by the appropriate academic member of staff, will be penalised by the reduction of **ten points** from the hundred available, from the mark awarded **provided that the work is submitted within one calendar week of the due date** (e.g. an original mark of 50 will be reduced to 40). The due date for submission should normally lie within the University term dates.

Coursework submitted **more than one calendar week after the due date** will be treated as a non-submission and a mark of 0%, grade N, will be applied.

4.5.1 Extensions

Extensions to coursework deadlines of up to one calendar week on the basis of good cause may be determined by the Module Co-ordinator.

Where a request is made for an extraordinary extension of more than one calendar week, the request must be reviewed and decided on by the Deputy Dean or nominee.

The agreed revised date for submission will thereafter be deemed to be the due date for submission.

Coursework submitted **after the revised due date but within one calendar week afterwards** will be penalised by the **reduction of ten points** from the hundred available, from the mark awarded.

Coursework submitted **more than one calendar week after the revised due date** will be treated as a non-submission and a mark of 0%, grade N, will be applied.

For the application of Extenuating Circumstances Submission (ECS) where an extension has been granted, see the [Extenuating Circumstances Submission Procedure](#).

Where the decision of the School Board of Examiners involves a requirement to resubmit coursework, penalties for late submission will not be carried forward to the resit diet.

Deadlines for coursework re-assessment can be set at Programme or School level. The deadline should allow sufficient time for students to complete the work required and for marking and moderation processes to take place ahead of the relevant School Assessment Board. Extensions may be permitted for re-assessments. Where this is the case, the possibility of later submissions should be considered when the initial deadline is set.

If assessment has a pass/fail grade and there is a late submission the penalty shall be that a fail is recorded.

4.6 Fit to Sit and Extenuating Circumstances

For details of Fit to Sit and Extenuating Circumstances see [University Regulations 3.36-3.38](#) and the [Extenuating Circumstances Submission Procedure](#).

4.7 Student Conduct in Examinations

See the [Student Conduct in an Examinations](#) instructions.

4.8 Discovery/Suspicion of Cheating, Plagiarism or Collusion during Formal Examination

If an examination invigilator discovers or suspects a case of cheating or plagiarism during a formal examination, he or she should note the name of the candidate and the candidate's desk number or computer name and report the circumstances to the Senior Invigilator.

The Senior Invigilator should note the point the situation arose and the candidate should be informed that the circumstances will be notified to the appropriate University Officer. Where appropriate the invigilator may confiscate items (See [Student Conduct in an Examination](#)). The candidate should then be permitted to continue the examination.

Incidents of suspected cheating or plagiarism should be referred immediately after the examination by the Senior Invigilator to the Head of Registry. A full report of the circumstances will be provided in the Senior Invigilator's Report to the Head of Registry. The Module Co-ordinator and the School Assessment Board Chair will be informed by the Head of Registry that the examination script should be marked but marks not confirmed pending the outcome of possible disciplinary procedures.

The Head of Registry will make a decision (on whether or not the matter referred to him or her is to be treated as a substantial academic irregularity) as soon as practicable. If the Head of Registry decides that the disciplinary procedure should be invoked, the matter will be referred to the Secretary to the Disciplinary Committee and thereafter it will be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Discipline. If the Head of Registry decides that the disciplinary process should not be invoked, this decision will be communicated to the student.

4.9 Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

UWS prides itself on upholding a high standard of academic integrity. This entails ensuring that credit is given to the original authors of all source material. Students are therefore expected to demonstrate proper referencing practices in all their assessed work. Acquiring good referencing skills develops confidence in academic writing and helps prevent unintentional plagiarism. UWS recognises the challenges which students face in this respect, and is committed to making the necessary resources and support available in order for students to engage honestly and actively in the assessment process.

University Regulation 3.49 defines **cheating** as the attempt to gain an unfair advantage in an assessment by gaining credit for work of another person or by accessing unauthorised material relating to assessment.

University Regulation 3.51 defines **plagiarism** as a type of cheating. It is also defined by the University as the attempt to gain an unfair advantage in an assessment by gaining credit for work of another person or by accessing unauthorised material relating to assessment.

Full details relating to the above can be found within the [Regulatory Framework](#).

Procedures for dealing with plagiarism are laid out fully in the UWS [Plagiarism Procedure](#).

4.10 Penalties for Assessment Length

All assessment briefs should make explicit to students what is expected from them in terms of word count. All details must be made clear, so students are aware that not meeting the brief may have a negative impact on their overall mark for the assessment.

Where a penalty is to be applied for falling short of or exceeding the stipulated word count, then the level of penalty and the point at which it will be applied must be made clear to all students as part of the assessment brief and in the module handbook.

Work which clearly falls short of, or significantly exceeds (by 10%), the stipulated word count may be subject to a reduced mark. It is expected that a submission which fails to reach the stipulated word count is likely to lose marks because it does not address all the requirements of the assessment. It is therefore likely that any penalty applied will relate to exceeding the given word count.

Word counts are not always intended to be used as word *limits* but as a *guide*. For this reason there is no UWS policy which enforces the application of a penalty; programme teams should consider whether it is appropriate within their subject discipline to apply a penalty to students who exceed the stipulated work count for an assignment. It should be made clear to students whether the stipulated word count is to be used as a *guide* or a *limit*.

In deciding whether or not to apply a penalty, programme teams may wish to take account of the following:

- Whether the Learning Outcome(s) being assessed explicitly requires a student to meet the stipulated word count (for example, “the ability to write concisely to a given brief”).
- Whether any penalty will take account of the extent to which the student’s work exceeds or falls short of the stipulated word count.
- Whether a comparable penalty should be applied for assessments which are not word based (for example, for presentations or performances).

4.11 Turnitin Feedback Studio™

All text-based coursework assignments should be submitted electronically using the Turnitin Feedback Studio™ facility. The assignment should be set up in Turnitin Feedback Studio™ or in Moodle Assignment with the Turnitin Feedback Studio™ option enabled. The settings should allow the opportunity for students to submit, receive the originality report and then resubmit, as part of a formative phase. Sufficient time should be allowed for students to access the originality report and to discuss these with their tutors prior to the final submission date – this will ensure that students are able to receive valuable formative feedback on their approach, particularly with respect to how to reference/cite correctly.

Students should be given instruction on coursework briefs that assignments may be subjected to processing through Turnitin Feedback Studio™ to detect possible plagiarism.

Hard copy submissions are the exception and only if a justifiable reason can be presented and agreed by the appropriate Dean of School.

Students will not be expected to submit both in hardcopy and electronic submission.

5 Marking and Moderation

5.1 Marking

Marking may be defined as the process of reviewing student work with the aim of the first marker (the person designated to apply a mark to a piece of assessment) giving it a mark/grade.

Where **second/double** or **double-blind marking** takes place, the aim is to give an agreed mark. Additional marking may be required where there is significant difference between the marks awarded to a piece of assessment following second/double or double-blind marking that cannot be resolved without the opinion of another marker.

- i. **Second/double marking:** marking of an assessment by a second marker with knowledge or sight of the first marker's comments.

This may be appropriate for new modules and where the marker(s) are recently appointed members of staff (or new to the module marking team).

- ii. **Double-blind marking:** marking of an assessment by a second marker with *no* knowledge or sight of the first marker's comments.

This may be appropriate for cohorts of fewer than 20 students where there is less likely to be a normal distribution of grades, or where marking has identified an unusual pattern of performance. This may be particularly appropriate to dissertations.

- iii. **Additional marking:** marking of an assessment by a third (or subsequent) marker following second/double or double-blind marking, where there is significant difference between the marks awarded that cannot be resolved without the opinion of another marker.

Second/double or double-blind marking may involve every assessment within a cohort, or a sample of assessments within a cohort (such as fails; marks just above/below the threshold for a pass; marks just above/below the threshold of a grade; or final attempts), subject to the purpose of the marking.

5.1.1 Online Marking

It is recommended as good practice that staff adopt online marking and the use of rubrics where possible. The 'Comments' feature in Turnitin Feedback Studio™ can be used to provide high quality feedback to students (with or without the provision of grades).

5.2 Who Can Assess Students?

All members of full-time academic staff with a regular teaching commitment, plus those with sufficient experience or a basic level of staff development that understand how to assess and/or those with sufficient mentoring or supervision from a more experienced member of staff (or Learning Transformation, Innovation & Environments), which would include recognised teachers of the University or specialist input from, for example, clinical colleagues.

This is a standards issue as overall quality and standards of assessment results and performance could be compromised if the assessor does not have sufficient experience.

Part-time staff and PhD students should consult with their supervisor and/or Learning Transformation, Innovation & Environments prior to assessing students.

5.3 Moderation

Moderation may be defined as the process required to ensure *validity* and *reliability* of assessment procedures, of the instruments of assessment, and of the resulting student grades.

5.3.1 Responsibility for Moderation

School Assessment Board Chairs are required to satisfy themselves that appropriate moderation arrangements are in place for the modules for which they are responsible.

Every module will have a designated Moderator named on the Module Descriptor. It is recognised that other members of staff may be involved in second marking samples or cohorts (as outlined above). Nevertheless the responsibilities of the Moderator lie with the individual named as Moderator within the Module Descriptor.

For collaborative arrangements (validated award), the responsibility for the standard of the UWS award remains with the University (Regulation 1.42). External Examiners are still required to undertake external moderation and the partner will be required to carry out satisfactory internal moderation. The partner is required to provide evidence that internal and external moderation has taken place and should complete moderation pro-formas for submission to the appropriate Degree Assessment Board (DAB).

5.3.2 Moderation of Assessment Instruments

Formal Examination: Module Moderators should expect to receive the examination paper or other instruments of assessment including a full marking schedule by Week 8 of the relevant term.

The schedule should include model answers or, if this is not appropriate, extended criteria and guidance on marking each element of assessment.

The resit paper should be created at the same time as the first diet formal examination paper and the same procedures for its moderation should be followed. If no resit is required, the paper can be used as the basis of exam for the next session.

For a formal examination, the marking schedule should be forwarded to the External Examiner at least one month before the beginning of the relevant diet to allow for a response and any follow up action to be taken.

Continuous assessment items:

The Module Moderator should expect to receive these before the end of Week 1.

Moderators should ensure that:

- (i) The instruments of assessment are appropriate to the module Learning Outcomes and are of the correct standard or level of difficulty;
- (ii) There is the appropriate balance of knowledge, skill and understanding;
- (iii) The questions or assignments contain no technical errors and are unambiguous in meaning.

5.3.3 Moderation of Marked Assessments

Moderation assures that assessments have been marked in an academically rigorous manner with reference to agreed marking criteria.

Internal moderation is the responsibility of the named Module Moderator, and aims to check that marking has been carried out correctly, that marking criteria have been properly and consistently applied, and that the total mark awarded is arithmetically correct. The purpose of internal moderation is to check on standards across a cohort.

Types of internal moderation may include:

- (i) Cohort moderation: moderation of all assessments within a cohort (such as assessments being delivered for the first time; cohorts of small numbers; or where the assessment is a significant project/dissertation);
- (ii) Sample moderation: moderation of a sample of assessments from within a cohort. Following a review of good practice across the sector and consideration of workload, from academic session 20/21 a typical representative sample has been agreed to constitute the following:

Module enrolment	Number of assessments to be moderated
2-10	2-3
10-50	3-7
50-150	7-12
150-500	12-20
500+	20

A sample typically captures work across each grade band including a selection of work from grade borderlines, all markers and campuses.

Sample moderation may also specify additional samples (such as all fails; all final attempts; a larger sample of those assessments with marks just above/below the threshold for a pass, or of a grade).

The representative sample should be such as to give the moderator confidence that the marking is appropriate, equitable and robust. If an assessment's marking or feedback has been identified as raising concern, this may require that the moderation sample size is increased until such time as the concern is resolved.

Approaches to internal moderation may include:

- (i) Individual moderation: moderation by a single internal member of staff, usually the named Module Moderator.
- (ii) Team moderation: moderation by a team of staff. This team may include the first markers, moderating the assessments marked by other marking team members. This approach recognises that other members of staff may be involved in the moderation process.

The particular approach to moderation which is taken should be agreed by the Module Co-ordinator in conjunction with the School Assessment Board Chair, who is required to satisfy themselves that appropriate moderation arrangements are in place for the modules for which they are responsible.

The approach to internal moderation should be formally published clearly for students and staff. New programmes and modules should indicate the agreed approach for the internal moderation of assessments.

Consideration should be given as to how internal moderation of practical assessments or presentations will be carried out and how such assessments will be made available for review by External Examiners. For example, this may be achieved through video recording or through the provision of students' slides or handouts. The Module Co-ordinator, with the module team, should agree the approach to internal moderation and make arrangements for this to take place. The Module Co-ordinator should agree through discussions with the External Examiner the method by which such assessments will be made available for them to review.

Overall responsibilities of the Moderator lie with the individual named as Moderator within the Module Descriptor.

5.3.4 Managing Differences between Markers and Moderators

Differences between markers and internal Moderators should not be left unresolved. Where the process of internal moderation identifies or raises concern over standards and/or consistency (for example, in the standards of marks awarded or in the quality and/or quantity of feedback), these must be addressed as part of the internal moderation process. Actions to address such issues may include:

- (i) where applicable, the moderation of a wider sample of assessments;
- (ii) discussion and negotiation between the marker(s) and Moderator;
- (iii) return to the marking process (second/double/additional marking) may be required, where there is significant difference between the views of the marker and Moderator that cannot be resolved without the opinion of another marker;
- (iv) changes to the marks of an individual assessment. If this is undertaken as part of the internal Moderation process, any changes must be considered in the context of the whole cohort.

Moderation is also the process to ensure marking criteria have been properly and consistently applied, and that the total mark awarded is arithmetically correct. The purpose of external moderation is to check on standards across a cohort, and only differs from the internal process in that it is carried out by an External Examiner.

5.3.5 Evidencing the Process of Moderation

It is policy that a record of the moderation process must be maintained.

Examples of recording Moderation can be provided by Learning Transformation, Innovation & Environments; these may be amended for local requirements as necessary. Alternatively, a different method of recording moderation may be used.

The final marks should be signed off by the Module Co-ordinator and Moderator and be presented to the School Assessment Board Chair and External Examiner for signature. By putting their signatures to the final marks, the Module Co-ordinator and the Moderator confirm that the following procedures have been met:

- the approved marking scheme has been adhered to by all markers, and that comparable standards are achieved among markers;
- all marks have been received and collated for all modes of delivery and from all campuses and sites of delivery;
- the correct weighting between examination and coursework components has been used in calculation of final mark;
- the marks have been transcribed correctly from examination scripts and coursework submissions prior to calculation of final marks;

- in cases of anonymously marked and moderated work, anonymity has been preserved;
- consideration has been given to the need for standardisation;
- a selection of examination scripts and coursework has been made available to the appropriate External Examiner (on whatever basis may be required by the External Examiner) including a marks list identifying where each of the sample papers lies.

5.4 Timescales for Marking of Exams and Coursework

At UWS there is an expectation that feedback on coursework should be provided to students within three weeks (15 working days) of the assessment deadline, or earlier wherever possible.

In particular, students should receive feedback on a given assignment before the date of the next assignment. This feedback may take a form other than written comments on the work of the individual student.

In any exceptional cases where feedback will not be available within the period of three weeks specified above, students should be informed at the start of the module of the nature of the feedback that they will receive and of the date by which this feedback will be made available.

All modules will make explicit the type, timing and extent of feedback. It is therefore important that students are made aware of the timing of their assessments, and of the timings for receiving marks and feedback on their assessed work, from the outset. This information should be clearly provided in module handbooks and on Moodle/AULA.

Staff should take into account the need for work to be marked, second marked and then ratified at a School Assessment Board before module grades are formally released to students via Student Self-service Banner.

Normally, module grades will be ratified at a School Assessment Board no more than four weeks following the end of the assessment diet. The principle of providing feedback as quickly as possible may mean that unrated coursework marks are given to students prior to the School Assessment Board. In such cases, it is vital that the status of the marks as unrated is clearly explained to students, and that they are made aware that such marks may be subject to change following second marking, moderation or scrutiny by the External Examiner.

5.5 Gradebook: Electronic Submissions of Marks

All marks and grades should be entered into Banner using Gradebook by the Module Co-ordinator. These must be entered in sufficient time to enable the relevant documentation to be prepared for School Assessment Boards and School Boards of Examiners (SBEs). Appropriate guidance on timing will be provided via the School Assessment Board and SBE Chairs, respectively.

Module Co-ordinators can request appropriate amendments to Gradebook settings by contacting the Gradebook Administrator for their School. These should be done prior to the start of each term.

Data input of final marks onto Gradebook should be free from error and Schools should endeavour to ensure this is achieved consistently.

5.6 Release of Module Marks and Grades to Students

Students will have a right to information regarding module grades, the overall mark attained for a module, and the marks attained for each assessment instrument (that is, each distinct examination or submitted assignment or equivalent).

Details of a student's results in modules will be made available to the individual student via Student Self-service Banner.

Details of how to access Student Self-service Banner will be provided to all students.

Module results are communicated after confirmation at School Assessment Boards. This is done via Student Self-service Banner (SSB). School Boards of Examiners' decisions are available also via SSB and availability of results is communicated via automated e-mail to students.

6 Procedures and Guidance for Assurance of Standards

6.1 General Information

UWS Assessment Regulations are available on the [University website](#).

There is also access to general advice via the [UWS Student Services webpage](#).

6.2 Policy and Procedure for Liaison with External Examiners

Staff should consult Chapter 6 of the [Quality Handbook](#) and the [External Examiner Handbook](#) for detailed policy and procedures on liaison with External Examiners. Both are available from the [QuEST webpage](#).

6.3 Security of Assessment

The University's principles for security of assessment for all its taught provision have been aligned to address relevant external reference points including the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. In particular, the University recognises the need that assessment is carried out securely.

The QAA Code includes the following guidelines:

Staff should carry out all aspects of assessment in a way which ensures the integrity of the assessment process and in turn the integrity of the academic standards of each award.

Key areas of potential risk which staff should bear in mind when designing and delivering assessment tools included the following:

- Any circumstance where draft assessment questions/tasks are, or student work is, held or transported off-site (for example where marking takes place off-campus, and where scripts are sent to an external examiner);
- The invigilation of examinations;
- Confirming the identity of students undertaking assessments whether in an examination room or online, and when student work is submitted whether in person, online, or through other means;

- Students' marks and related information (such as Extenuating Circumstance Submissions) are held securely and disclosed only to those who need access to the information and have a right to see it.

Security issues relating to the authentication of a student's work should be considered when designing assessment processes. Schools should ensure that their assessment strategies should address the issues outlined above, particularly those relating to personal verification (confirming identity of students undertaking the assessment) and to the method by which assessment material is made available to External Examiners.

Security relating to the receipt and storage of question papers prior to an examination is the responsibility of the University's Registry. Registry also has responsibility for the secure transport of completed answer scripts after an examination until such time as the scripts are uplifted by School based staff.

6.4 School Assessment Boards and School Boards of Examiners

The University operates a two-tier system to assure the standards of its modules and awards:

1. School Assessment Boards
2. Schools Boards of Examiners

School Assessment Boards consider results from groups of subject-related modules; approve marks and grades for students on each module; and take account of any Extenuating Circumstances Submissions (ECS). Details of the membership and remit of the School Assessment Boards are to be found in the [Committee Handbook](#). The membership includes the subject External Examiner, who has specific roles in the assurance process; more details can be found in the [External Examiner Handbook](#) and the [Quality Handbook](#).

The School Assessment Board (SAB) is chaired by a senior member of academic staff from within the School. The Deputy Dean of School and all Module Co-ordinators for the modules under consideration and the appropriate External Examiner(s) are "ex-officio members". Others who may attend include the representative of any collaborating institution and other academic staff with an input to the delivery and operation of the modules being considered. The quorum for a meeting of the SAB is the Chair and the Module Co-ordinator or nominee for each module being considered. The External Examiner is not required to attend any or each meeting of the SAB but must have the opportunity to attend to assist them in their responsibilities.

Administrative support is organised and supplied from within the School. Guidance notes for the effective running and organisation of the School Assessment Boards can be obtained from Registry via the staff website.

The School Board of Examiners (SBE) reviews the performance of students on a programme of study within a School and to determine the eligibility of individual students to progress or gain an award. The SBE is chaired by a senior member of academic staff appointed by the Dean. The Deputy Dean of School and all programme leaders for the programmes under consideration are "ex-officio members", as is the appropriate External Examiner(s). The quorum for a meeting of the SBE is the Chair and the programme leader or nominee for each programme being considered. The External Examiner is not required to attend any or each meeting of the SBE but must have the opportunity to attend to assist them in their responsibilities.

All School Assessment Boards and School Boards of Examiners are subject to a number of requirements, contributing significantly to the student learning experience and the maintenance of standards. School Assessment Boards normally meet at the end of each term to confirm the marks and grades of modules undertaken by students in that term, prior to the confirmed marks being released to students. They are organised by the School and guidance notes are available on the staff website for Chairs and School administrative staff, providing a checklist of what needs to be done in advance, at and after the meetings, in addition to giving templates of agendas and reports.

School Boards of Examiners are organised by Registry in consultation with the Schools and dates of the meetings are agreed at the start of each academic session. Guidance Notes for Chairs and for administrative staff supporting the School Boards of Examiners will be made available on the staff website.

The confirmed marks from the School Assessment Boards form the basis of the material presented to the School Board of Examiners by Registry. The School Assessment Boards material focuses on a module and all the students registered on it, whilst the School Board of Examiners material considers an individual student and the modules which they studied. The progression and award decisions confirmed at the School Board of Examiners meetings are then communicated to the student electronically via Self Service Banner and, in some cases, by results letter. It is anticipated that greater use will be made of electronic communication of results to students and that the issuing of results letters will be phased out over time.

6.5 Processing of Assessment Results

The initial processing of results is the responsibility of Schools. Results should be processed using the Gradebook tool within Banner. This is covered in detail in the Banner section of the [IT Staff Training Portal](#).

Assessment results and feedback should be conveyed to students accurately.

To support this:

- assessment decisions should always be recorded and documented accurately and systematically;
- students should be given clear information on how assessment decisions will be provided;
- staff involved in the computation, checking and recording of assessment decisions require appropriate training and information regarding their responsibilities;
- the disclosure of any assessment outcomes will be carried out in line with University policy on data protection.

6.6 Recording Results for Students Studying Overseas

Results for UWS students studying at institutions overseas (for example, through an exchange programme) should be recorded in line with the guidance available in Chapter 5 of the [Quality Handbook](#) available from the [QuEST webpage](#).

6.7 Retention of Assessed Work

All exam submissions, following each School Board of Examiners (SBE), to be retained for two months following the final SBE for the academic session in which the module was delivered. Thereafter, for hardcopy submissions, a sample of assessment material will be

retained as outlined below. The Dean of School will be responsible for arranging the collection, storage, retrieval and subsequent secure disposal of assessment material.

For coursework assignments: if not given back to students as part of feedback on assessment it should be disposed of as above.

For quality review purposes, where external or internal assessors may wish to review assessment material from a range of modules or student performance over time, a representative sample of module assessment material should be retained. A sample of module assessment material (following the School Assessment Board) for each module in the University at all levels should be retained on a rolling basis for five years. Mark sheets should be retained along with scripts and other assessed work. Students should not be required to submit two copies of coursework etc. The sample scripts should be copied by the School following marking to capture examiners' comments. The Module Co-ordinator is responsible for identifying the sample and the Dean of School should make administrative arrangements for scanning/photocopying, storage and retrieval.

Where professional and statutory bodies require retention of examination scripts and projects/dissertations and/or other assessed work for a longer period than specified in the University policy, then this requirement should be met: the programme leader will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is met.

It is recommended that all Schools adopt a system for organising the comprehensive storage of module material for quality review purposes. An ideal 'module pack' would contain:

- Module Descriptor;
- examination paper/coursework outline;
- assessment strategy;
- marking schedule;
- evidence of moderation;
- samples of assessed work and marks/grades (for the previous session).

7 Opportunity for Re-assessment

Regulations surrounding when re-assessment may or should be offered to students can be found in Regulation 3.39-3.42 and information on the timing of re-assessments can be found in the University Calendar and on the [University website](#).

Students should be provided with support in preparing for their re-assessments by academic staff in the Schools. More details of these support mechanisms can be obtained direct from the Schools, to whom students with resits are referred at the time when the confirmed results are issued. Programme teams are encouraged to timetable, where possible, re-assessments for students at the point closest to the original attempt.

8 Appeals

Students have the right to appeal against the decision of a School Assessment Board (including ECS and Plagiarism) or a SBE. Details of the Appeals Procedure can be found on the [University website](#).

9 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Details can be found in Chapter 2 of the [Regulatory Framework](#) and the [RPL Handbook](#). Designated staff members within Schools are available to provide support and guidance to staff on RPL issues.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Marking and Grading Scheme

University Regulation 3.19 states all student work that contributes to a module mark and grade will be assessed according to the following standard marking and grading scheme:

Grade	Numerical Range	Definition – SCQF 7-10	Definition – SCQF 11-12
A1	90-100	Exceptional	Exceptional
A2	80-89	Outstanding Significantly exceeds threshold standard for a pass	Outstanding Significantly exceeds threshold standard for a pass
A3	70-79	Excellent Very much exceeds threshold standard for a pass	Excellent Very much exceeds threshold standard for a pass
B1	60-69	Very good Well above threshold standard for a pass	Very good Above threshold standard for a pass
B2	50-59	Good Above threshold standard for a pass	Good Meets threshold standard for a pass
C	40-49	Basic competence Meets threshold standard for a pass	Does not meet threshold standard for a pass
D	30-39	Does not meet threshold standard for a pass	Well below threshold standard for a pass
E	1-29	Well below threshold standard for a pass	Significantly below threshold standard for a pass
N	0 (at first diet) 0-100 at second or subsequent diet	No work to assess	No work to assess

The exception to the grading scheme above is that Grade D may be assigned to a module at levels 7-10 where the numerical value is greater than 40% but where Regulation 3.9 has not been met; and Grade C may be awarded to a module at level 11/12 where the numerical value is greater than 50% but where Regulation 3.9 has not been met.

The Scheme demonstrates the grades which students may be awarded, the corresponding numerical range of those grades (%), a verbal definition of each of those grades and a descriptor for each grade in relation to the threshold standard for the assessment criteria for a piece of assessed work.

It is policy that all students, staff, placement practice providers, assessors and external examiners will be given access to the Marking and Grading Scheme.

Grade Descriptors – Undergraduate

Grade	Descriptor – SCQF – LEVELS 7 - 10
A1	Student work is exemplary and exceeds the threshold standard for a pass by a significant margin. It displays exceptional knowledge and understanding; insight, originality and exceptional ability in analysis, evaluation, problem solving or other process skills; very high ability in professional practice skills (where relevant) including evidence of high degree of almost complete autonomy and independent judgement relative to threshold expectations.
A2	Student work significantly exceeds the threshold standard for a pass. It displays a consistently thorough, deep and extensive knowledge and understanding; originality and/or very high ability in analysis, evaluation, problem solving or other process skills; very high ability in professional practice skills (where relevant) including evidence of high degree of autonomy and independent judgement relative to threshold expectations.
A3	Student work very much exceeds the threshold standard for a pass. It displays a consistently thorough, deep and/or extensive knowledge and understanding; originality and/or very high ability in analysis, evaluation, problem solving or other process skills; very high ability in professional practice skills (where relevant) including evidence of high degree of autonomy and independent judgement relative to threshold expectations.
B1	Student work is well above the threshold standard for a pass at levels 7-10. It displays a consistently very good level of knowledge and understanding; high ability in analysis, evaluation, problem solving or other process skills; high ability in professional practice skills (where relevant) including exercise of significant independent judgement relative to threshold expectations.
B2	Student work is clearly above the threshold standard for a pass at levels 7-10. It displays generally good knowledge and understanding; good ability in analysis, evaluation, problem solving or other process skills; evidences highly competent performance of professional practice skills (where relevant).
C	Student work is at the threshold standard for a pass at levels 7-10. It displays just satisfactory knowledge and understanding in most key respects; basic competence in analysis and most other process skills; evidences a basic level of competence in professional practice skills (where relevant).
D	Student work is marginally below the threshold standard for a pass at levels 7-10. It displays some knowledge and understanding but this is incomplete or partial; limited ability in analysis and other process skills; evidences lack of or partial competence in professional practice skills (where relevant).
E	Student work is well below the threshold standard for a pass at levels 7-10. It displays very limited knowledge and understanding; evidences very limited or no analytical or other process skills; very limited competence over the range of professional practice skills.
N	There is no work to be assessed at first diet, or there is incomplete or no engagement with re-assessment

Grade Descriptors – Postgraduate

Grade	Descriptor – SCQF – LEVELS 11 - 12
A1	Student work is exemplary and exceeds the threshold standard for a pass by a significant margin. It displays exceptional knowledge and understanding; insight, originality and exceptional ability in analysis, evaluation, problem solving or other process skills; very high ability in professional practice skills (where relevant) including evidence of high degree of almost complete autonomy and independent judgement relative to threshold expectations.
A2	Student work significantly exceeds the threshold standard for a pass. It displays a consistently thorough, deep and extensive knowledge and understanding; originality and/or very high ability in analysis, evaluation, problem solving or other process skills; very high ability in professional practice skills (where relevant) including evidence of high degree of autonomy and independent judgement relative to threshold expectations.
A3	Student work very much exceeds the threshold standard for a pass. It displays a consistently thorough, deep and/or extensive knowledge and understanding; originality and/or very high ability in analysis, evaluation, problem solving or other process skills; very high ability in professional practice skills (where relevant) including evidence of high degree of autonomy and independent judgement relative to threshold expectations.
B1	Student work is above the threshold standard for a pass at levels 11-12. It displays a consistently very good level of knowledge and understanding; high ability in analysis, evaluation, problem solving or other process skills; high ability in professional practice skills (where relevant) including exercise of significant independent judgement relative to threshold expectations.
B2	Student work meets the threshold standard for a pass at levels 11-12. It displays generally good knowledge and understanding; good ability in analysis, evaluation, problem solving or other process skills; evidences highly competent performance of professional practice skills (where relevant).
C	Student work fails to meet the threshold standard for a pass at levels 11-12. It displays just satisfactory knowledge and understanding in most key respects; basic competence in analysis and most other process skills; evidences a basic level of competence in professional practice skills (where relevant).
D	Student work is well below the threshold standard for a pass at levels 11-12. It displays some knowledge and understanding but this is incomplete or partial; limited ability in analysis and other process skills; evidences lack of or partial competence in professional practice skills (where relevant).
E	Student work is significantly below the threshold standard for a pass at levels 11-12. It displays very limited knowledge and understanding; evidences very limited or no analytical or other process skills; very limited competence over the range of professional practice skills.
N	There is no work to be assessed at first diet, or there is incomplete or no engagement with re-assessment

Grade Descriptors – Pass/Fail

The following grades are used in exceptional circumstances where required by professional bodies:

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Descriptor</i>
Pass	Pass	Student has met the criteria for 'pass' as specifically defined in the Module Descriptor
Fail	Fail	Student has not met the criteria for 'pass' as specifically defined in the Module Descriptor

Appendix 2: UWS Grade Point Scale

UWS has introduced a Grade Point Average (GPA) scale to run alongside the existing UWS Grading Scale. This was rolled out progressively for undergraduate students, beginning in session 2016-17 with SCQF level 7 students. The scale is outlined below.

UWS Grade	UWS Grade Point Scale
A1	4.0
A2	3.5
A3	3.0
B1	2.5
B2	2.0
C	1.5
D	1.0
E	0.5
NS	0

A Grade Point is automatically calculated for each module, based on the student's UWS grade for the module. A student's Grade Point Scale can then be calculated based on grade points achieved across multiple modules. This will apply to all modules following the UWS Grading Scale (excluding those graded as Pass/Fail modules).

Further details can be accessed from University Regulation 3.18 and within the [GPA information leaflet](#).

Appendix 3: Arrangements for Class tests

Class tests may be perceived by students as a less formal type of assessment than an examination. However, class tests should be conducted under exam conditions, and they therefore require careful management and oversight.

Formally scheduled examinations are two or three hours long, occur during the examination diet, are scheduled by Registry, and are invigilated by designated invigilators (organised through Registry). In contrast, class tests are supposed to be carried out during the teaching period of the term, within one of the students' scheduled classes. If, for some reason, a class test is scheduled out with teaching weeks then students may have clashes with other commitments or with formal examinations, and classroom accommodation may not be readily available. Class tests are planned, organised and managed at School level, under the direction of or by the Module Co-ordinator.

Pedagogically, when deciding whether a class test is the most appropriate form of assessment to use, there are a number of issues to consider, including the content of the assessment and the Learning Outcomes which are to be assessed. Operationally, the decision to conduct a class test also requires careful and considered planning, management and organisation, particularly where the module is taught on more than one campus. Such practical issues include:

- a) Arrangements for invigilation: this should be conducted with the same rigour as formally scheduled examinations. Internal or external invigilators are acceptable;
- b) Timing of a class test: students must be made aware of the date, time and venue for the test. It is the responsibility of the module teaching team, under the direction of the Module Co-ordinator, to ensure that this information is made clear and is available to all students on the module;
- c) Re-assessment using class tests: it is essential to consider those students who may fail a class test and subsequently require a re-assessment opportunity. UWS only requires students to be in attendance for formal examinations during the August (Term 3) examination diet, and so they may not be on campus or even in the country, at other times over the summer period. Regulation 3.39 states that 'the forms of re-assessment should normally be the same as for the first attempt', and so offering a different type of re-assessment for a failed class test should not be an option. Choosing an appropriate time to offer the re-assessment opportunity for a class test is therefore an important part of the planning process;
- d) Arrangements for changes to the room layout: this will have to be done under the direction of the Module Co-ordinator, in conjunction with other members of the module teaching team, and may require advanced booking of Estates services to move furniture etc.;
- e) Managing students who have an identified need for additional support: this may require adjustments to individual student assessment arrangements. For example, entitlement to additional time, access to a PC and/or the use of assistive technologies, undertaking the assessment in a separate room to the other students. Such students are entitled to the same invigilation arrangements as all other students undertaking the class test, and so it is important to plan for equivalence of invigilation in all locations where the class test may be taking place.

These issues can make class tests a time and resource-intensive assessment method from the perspective of the academic staff responsible for their organisation. Where a class test is

considered to be pedagogically the most appropriate method of assessment to employ, then it may be necessary to have discussions with School management to ascertain whether additional resources can and should be made available to support the implementation of the class test.

The decision about whether a class test is the most appropriate form of assessment to use should take all of these factors – pedagogical and operational - into account. If the learning outcomes to be assessed could equally be demonstrated within a formally scheduled examination, then the practical issues outlined above and the resource implications for academic staff may make a formal examination the more appropriate choice. If the informality of the assessment environment is important then class tests may be the preferred option. If the Learning Outcomes being assessed relate to practical skills or competencies then again, a class test may be the preferred option.

Appendix 4: University Guidelines for Honours and Masters Projects/Dissertations

Staff must ensure that students are given appropriate information relating to the conduct, content and assessment of projects/dissertations. These many include the following:

- a) Clear statements delimiting students' responsibilities with respect to formulating topic proposals, working to timetables, and consulting supervisors;
- b) Clear statements regarding the role and responsibilities of the supervisor;
- c) Indications of the required nature of the project or topic, including guidance on how to choose a topic;
- d) A registration form to be signed by student and prospective supervisor detailing the topic or work to be undertaken;
- e) Details of requirements for the dissertation or project report, including length, presentation and – where relevant – structure;
- f) A list of key dates for the expected completion of major stages of the work, including for example research design, data collection, analysis, production of draft chapters and final submission;
- g) The learning outcomes for the module;
- h) Details of the nature of assessment, including the assessment criteria, assignment of marks between written report and oral presentation (if any), details of requirements for oral presentation and criteria used for assessment of the same, penalties for late submission;
- i) University regulations on plagiarism and guidance on their interpretation;
- j) Requirements and conventions with respect to referencing;
- k) Requirements with respect to Health and Safety, including guidance on personal safety where appropriate;
- l) Guidance on ethical issues in the area of study;
- m) Statement regarding equality and diversity and contact details for staff with responsibilities to support students from diverse backgrounds;

In addition, the following good practice is promoted for wider use:

- The use of formal programmes of preparatory sessions/workshops to brief students;
- The use of periodic report forms submitted by due dates to monitor student progress in project/dissertation work.