

Section 33 Feedback policy

33.1 Definitions

- 33.1.1 **Feedback:** Feedback is included in summative assessment to explain and justify assessment judgements. It is an indicator of where the work being assessed currently sits in relation to the published assessment criteria or rubric. It should be focused on what is currently being successfully demonstrated to the assessor. The term 'feedback' may also reference such comments provided by the student's peers, external sources, themselves and other university staff such as academics, library support, technical staff and postgraduate researchers. The term feedback is frequently used generally to include feedforward as recognised effective practice.
- 33.1.2 **Feedforward:** This should indicate where a student can aim to improve their work, based on the assessment criteria or rubric, with clear and constructive suggestions on how the student can achieve these improvements. It is expected that feedforward should be used in all formative activities to develop learning.
- 33.1.3 **Formative assessment:** Assessments with a developmental purpose, designed to help students learn more effectively by giving them feedback on their performance and how it can be improved and/or maintained.
- 33.1.4 **Summative assessment:** Formal assessment of students' work, contributing to the final result for the module. Used to indicate the extent of a student's success in meeting the assessment criteria to gauge the intended learning outcomes.

33.2 Overview

- 33.2.1 The University's policy is that marking should be completed within **15 working days of the assessment submission or examination date for taught modules**. The 15 days begins the working day after the assessment or examination date. This is to facilitate the timely return of marks and feedback to students. Schools have discretion to set a longer deadline for returning feedback for dissertations and research projects; the expectation is that this would be 20 working days but if longer is given this would not exceed 30 days.
- 33.2.2 Any exceptions to the marking turnaround times must be approved by School Quality Panels and Quality and Standards Committee, and be communicated clearly to students.
- 33.2.3 An exemption is currently in place for students on occupational therapy programmes, where marks and feedback are released to students at 17:00 on the closest Friday to the 15-day turnaround deadline.
- 33.2.4 In cases where a student submits work late that incurs a penalty mark of zero (for more information, see Agreed Penalties [section 32.3](#)) it is at the School's discretion to decide if they will mark the work and provide feedback. There is no obligation to mark work and provide feedback for work submitted after 5 working days. If marked, any mark given would be indicative only, and the student would retain the penalty mark of zero.
- 33.2.5 In cases where a student submits work late and is eligible to receive a capped penalty mark, there may be a delay in the provision of feedback to the individual student.
- 33.2.6 Feedback is information about the merits of and any areas for development in a piece of work. In the case of summative assessment, feedback is also specifically related to the criteria and standards for assessment. Feedback is also intended to be formative – supporting learning, prompting reflection, facilitating improvement, and helping to develop students' evaluative skills. In addition to feedback at the point of summative assessment, formative feedback should be provided by staff and by peers throughout a module.
- 33.2.7 **Timing is important:** students benefit from feedback on their work at a time when they can use it to best effect and in a way that does not increase the burden of assessment for staff or students.

33.2.8 The University does not insist upon a uniform 'Feedback' form being adopted, but feedback should be fit for purpose. Feedback should be focused on what students can improve on or develop within the immediate future. To this end, feedback must be useful to students in respect of their future development whether towards their next formative/summative assessment or application beyond academia. As such a range of feedback forms are currently used across the University but, in each case, markers should focus upon assisting students to learn from assessment rather than just being informed of where their performance could have been improved i.e., feedforward.

33.3 Principles of feedback

33.3.1 The University's feedback principles emphasise:

- A programme-level approach to feedback
- Student self-evaluation
- Dialogue between students, tutors and peers
- The importance of formative feedback and 'feedforward' (constructive guidance on how students can improve their next assignment)

33.3.2 The University's feedback principles are:

- a) Developing a shared understanding of assessment and feedback within staff teams and students to create a coherent programme-level approach.
- b) Supporting students to develop evaluative expertise, self-regulation of their learning and to be able to articulate judgement about their own work and the work of others.
- c) Designing formative activities that provide students with feedback which they can act upon within a module.
- d) Enabling students to solicit feedback on areas that matter most to them in order to more specifically direct future learning (e.g., through the use of feedback forms, dedicating time in class for assessment discussions).
- e) Designing feedback strategies that require students to engage in dialogue with Module Directors/Tutors and peers to stimulate reflection on their learning.
- f) Supporting students to synthesise feedback from a variety of sources to develop longer term personal and professional development plans.

33.4 Feedback on examination scripts

33.4.1 Examination scripts are the property of the University and will not be released to students. Nevertheless, students are entitled to receive feedback on examination performance in the same way as they are entitled to feedback on other assessed work. Furthermore, the 2018 Data Protection Act entitles students to access the comments of their examiners on examination scripts which are regarded as personal data. Comments on examination scripts must therefore be appropriate and in keeping with the approach of treating a student and their work with respect. All written comments should be written on a separate document which can be returned to the student.

33.5 Disclosure of marks and feedback

33.5.1 In accordance with the 2018 Data Protection Act, that provisional marks will be disclosed to students. This is important so that feedback is provided to students as close to the completion of the assessment as possible. All marks must be clearly accompanied by the word 'provisional' and the student made aware that the mark could go up or down as part of the mark verification processes undertaken by the School Assessment Board.

33.6 Feedback and return of marks to students

Feedback consistency

33.6.1 Where there is more than 1 marker, to ensure consistency of feedback, the Module Director/Tutor should check a sample of feedback prior to feedback being released to students.

Return of marks and feedback to students

33.6.2 The internal moderation process must be completed within the **15 working days** turnaround period for marking (except for exempted assessment tasks such as dissertations).

- 33.6.3 Marks are to be returned to students with the caveat that all marks are provisional until final approval by the School Assessment Board. Students should understand the processes for assessment and of assuring standards, but the mechanics should not be evident on their individual assignments. For example, internal moderators' comments should not be provided to students, but rather recorded on an agreed template which is then made available to the external examiner.

Audit trail

- 33.6.4 A record of the processes and outcomes of internal moderation for each module should be kept and provided to the external examiner. Advice on use of Moodle and Turnitin to support the process is provided by the TEL team. For more information, please visit our [Moodle](#) and [Turnitin](#) pages.