

Higher Education Quality and Standards

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Description:

Whilst taking into account regulations within partner Universities, this code of practice makes clear the processes that must be adopted within higher education across the Grimsby Institute Group in relation to assessment of students. Assessment is described as any process that appraises an individual's knowledge, understanding, abilities or skills. The code of practice is a reflection of the Institute's commitment to ensuring students are given appropriate opportunities to achieve intended learning outcomes for a module or programme with rigour, fairness and probity and relates to undergraduate and post graduate assessment. In using this code of practice other documents may need to be considered:

Version 1.7 (DATE) introduces the following changes with immediate effect:

1. Inclusion of reference to Teesside University examination processes for invigilators (Section 8.7)

Document Reference:

QAEe.	External Examiners
QAWbl.	Work Based Learning
QAApl.	Accreditation of Prior Learning
QAMc.	Mitigating Circumstances
QAPcaum	Plagiarism, Cheating and Unfair Means

For further advice on how the code of practice works, you should contact the Quality and Standards Department.

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Additional guidance can be obtained by visiting <http://www.qaa.ac.uk> and referring to the UK Quality Code: Chapter B6 Assessment of Students and the recognition of Prior Learning (2013).

**This document is available in alternative forms
on request from the Quality and Standards Department**

1: Introduction

- 1.1 This code of practice makes clear the Institute's expectation regarding conduct in relation to assessment. The Code has been developed as a result of the Institute's own review processes and the recognition that coherency in relation to the assessment process is essential if effective quality assurance processes and the ongoing maintenance of academic standards are to be achieved without undue variance.
- 1.2 The code is mindful of the regulations specified by partner Universities who are in most instances the final arbitrator of quality and standards, in addition to the UK Quality Code specified by the Quality Assurance Agency.
- 1.3 The code of practice brings together a range of processes relating to assessment including:
 - i. designing, approving, monitoring and reviewing assessment strategies for programmes and awards;
 - ii. implementing rigorous assessment practices that ensure the standard for each award and award element is set and maintained at the appropriate level, and that student performance is properly judged against this;
 - iii. evaluating how academic standards are maintained through assessment practice that also encourages effective learning;
 - iv. encouraging assessment practice that promotes effective learning;
 - v. ensuring that assessment is carried out by competent and impartial markers using methods that enable rigour, probity and fairness and due regard for security; in accordance with the Equality and Diversity Policy/or the Equality Act 2010
 - vi. reasonable adjustments to examination and assessment arrangements may be made to enable students with disabilities to demonstrate their abilities

2. Modules and Assessment

- 2.1 Module tutors must provide students with clear and exact information about the means through which they will be assessed in each module. Students can expect that at the **start** of each module they will be provided with a module handbook that will describe the precise requirements of the assessment. This will include:
 - i. The nature of the assessment to be achieved e.g. case study, report, presentation;
 - ii. The methods of reassessment;
 - iii. Whether the assessment is formative or summative and what requirements exist for passing the module;
 - iv. The assessment title or brief;
 - v. Which learning outcomes are relevant for each assessment or brief;
 - vi. Whether there are any professional, statutory or professional requirements that impact the assessment;
 - vii. The assessment tariff (word count) for each assessment;

- viii. The assessment weighting e.g. what percentage of the grade awarded for the assessment will contribute to the overall mark of the module;
- ix. The assessment grading criteria;
- x. Supervision arrangements for any major pieces of assessed coursework, e.g. projects, dissertations;
- xi. The assessment deadlines for submission;
- xii. How and where to submit work;
- xiii. Penalties for late submission;
- xiv. Penalties for over length assessments;
- xv. What methods will be used to provide assessment feedback;
- xvi. What timescale can be expected with regard to assessment feedback of marked work.

2.2 Summative assessments in every instance must be communicated to all students in advance: advance means at the beginning of the module.

2.3 Module tutors will provide assessment information within module handbooks to ensure all students (including those who join the programme late) are fully aware of matters relating to assessment conduct.

2.4 Module tutors will make every effort to plan assessment submission dates in light of other assessments that a student is undertaking within the same period. Further, module tutors will plan appropriately to ensure that students are able to benefit from feedback in one piece of assessment to allow students to carry out subsequent assessments with greater insight.

2.5 Module tutors must ensure that assessment titles and/or criteria and other assessments such as examinations scripts are modified each time an assessment is released/ published to students. This includes 'titles' and/or criteria released to students for reassessments unless otherwise stated. The 'nature' of the assessment need not be changed (such as in cases of an essay, report, presentation).

2.6 The reason for changes in assessment titles and/or criteria forms part of the Institute's commitment to reducing opportunities for plagiarism and to ensure teaching, learning and assessment methods are revised, updated and remain relevant and appropriate.

2.7 In some instances assessment titles and/or criteria may not need changing as a 'routine' annual process. This is likely to be in situations where assessments do not lend themselves to ease of copying from other students who may have previously completed the same assessment. For example, this may include assessments that require the student to produce art work or to give a practical performance.

2.8 Students should note that the information provided about assessment is defined, approved and governed by the awarding Institution through which their programme of study is validated. For example, assessment type, tariff and weighting are classified by the respective awarding Institution's assessment regulations. If a student wishes to access these regulations, they can do so by contacting their programme leader or the Institute's Quality and Standards department.

2.9 Reasonable adjustments to examination and assessment arrangements may be made to enable students with disabilities to demonstrate their abilities. This must not change the

purpose of the assessment but may alter the method. It is important that academic standards are maintained and therefore when reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities are made, the procedure described in appendices 4-6 must be used to ensure parity for all students.

2.10 The person responsible for the assessment must consider appropriately the needs of any student with a particular health or other problem. Students with alternative needs are assessed through the Disability Services Office, and changes to the arrangements of assessments for these students must only be made on their advice. This applies equally to summative and formative assessments.

3. Anonymous Assessment

3.1 All summative assessments where practicable must be marked with respect to anonymity. In instances where this is not possible, the programme team must liaise with the Institute's HE quality and standards department for guidance. For examples, in some instances this may mean that an application for exemption of anonymous marking will need to be approved.

3.2 Where anonymous assessment by the first marker is not possible, for example, in instances of presentations, performances, the first marker must ensure that other methods are employed to safeguard academic standards. This may include:

- i. use of second markers in the observations of assessments such as in instances of presentations and performances; second markers should 'preferably' not be known to the student;
- ii. second markers should 'preferably' be present at the point when first marking occurs;
- iii. recording of assessments through for example audio-visual or photographic means must be used for presentation to second markers (where they have been absent at the time of students carrying out their assessment) and in every instance for the external examiner;
- iv. where second markers are known to the student, first and second marker feedback sheets must be provided to the external examiner.

3.3 For individual or group presentations, first and second markers must ensure the use of standardised summative feedback sheets used on the programme of study. An example of a summative feedback sheet for student presentations can be found in [Chapter 5 of the Quality Handbook](#)

3.4 The principle of ensuring anonymity in the marking of dissertations must be applied. For example, student names must not be identified on summative dissertations.

3.5 All staff marking dissertations or equivalent projects involving 40 credits or more at undergraduate level must follow the principle of concealed double marking. Concealed double marking is a process whereby a second person or persons, without sight of the first markers comments or feedback, marks the work and allocates a mark and provides comment. It is acknowledged that for some project equivalents it is not appropriate to operate this principle and in such a circumstance the Head of School and programme team must agree an alternative approach.

3.6 All dissertations must be provided to the external examiner for moderation.

4. Over Length Assessments (for HNC/D see [Appendix 1: 13.2](#))

- 4.1 All written assessments are given a tariff (word count); in some instances some tutors may use a word limit range.
- 4.2 Word counts exclude (unless otherwise stated) footnotes, reference lists, bibliographies, diagrams, appendices, graphs, charts, tables and other similar features.
- 4.3 Students are required to declare a word count on the coversheet where a word limit is specified.
- 4.4 *An erroneous word count declaration will be dealt with as suspected use of unfair means.*
- 4.3 Students will be penalised if the word count of a summative assessment is 10-20% over the word count or uppermost limit specified. **Penalties are a percentage of the maximum mark available for the assessment element which is overlength.**

For example,

- i. if a student is 10 to 20% over the published word count, a 10% penalty will be applied to the mark for the assessment element which is over length;
- ii. if a student is 21% or more over the word limit - a mark of zero will be awarded;
- iii. other penalties will not be applied.

When the work is marked students will be given the actual mark and then a clear indication of why a penalty has been applied followed by the modified result.

5. Failure to submit and late submissions

- 5.1 Module tutors will encourage good time management skills to deter late submissions. This will be supported through a transparent 'assessment submission schedule' that details the range of assessment deadlines that students need to work towards within each programme to encourage effective planning and preparation for key dates in respect to others. 'Assessment submission schedules' will be published in such places as notice-boards, the VLE or programme handbooks
- 5.2 The process of assessment submissions will be made clear to staff and students from the start of a particular programme of study. Individual assessment deadlines will be communicated clearly within each module handbook. The procedures for handing in assessed work to the HE Admissions office will be detailed in programme handbooks
- 5.3 Penalties for late or non submission will be communicated clearly within programme handbooks. In cases of all late work, work will be marked 'Late' upon submission and also commented upon within assessment feedback. The process of submission and penalties for late or non submission will also be clearly advertised within the HE Admissions and Administration office

- 5.4 Assessments will always be marked in the normal way and penalties will be applied afterwards. The original mark and the penalty will be clearly communicated on the feedback sheet and indicated in documentation submitted to Examination Boards
- 5.5 In **exceptional** circumstances Examination Boards may modify decisions that have been implemented even when they have been done so in accordance with standard procedures and yet seem excessively harsh. For example, a student who repeatedly submits late assessments for previously unknown reasons may need some specific form of assistance or supportive intervention rather than a penalty; in such instances it may only be at the exam board that the consistency of lateness across modules is identified
- 5.6 External examiners will be informed where student work shown to them has had marks reduced because of late submission

Extensions and penalties for late or non submission of work (see [Appendix 1: 13.1](#) for HNC/D)

- 5.7 In agreement with the module tutor, programme leaders are permitted to give a student a five working day 'standard extension', where the student provides evidence of good cause for not meeting the prescribed summative deadline
- 5.8 The proforma to be used for the approval of a 5 working day deadline can be found at [Appendix 2](#)
- 5.9 Where a student feels that a 'standard extension' is not appropriate, the student must apply for a 'non standard extension' through mitigating circumstances as detailed in the [Code of Practice 'Mitigating Circumstances'](#)
- 5.10 The use of penalties is intended to discourage and penalise late or non submission, encourage good time-management skills and assist in identifying students with problems. The use of penalties for late or non submissions will at all times be operated in a clear, rigorous and transparent manner
- 5.11 In instances when **no extension** has been granted, or there is **not sufficiently good cause** for work being submitted late (such as when mitigating circumstances have been granted), a penalty will be applied; penalties are a percentage of the maximum mark available for the assessment element which has been submitted late.
- 5.12 **Late submission penalties (excluding Teesside University awards) which will be applied to coursework submitted after the published deadline are:**

- Up to and including 24 hours after the deadline, a penalty of 10%;
- More than 24 hours and up to and including 7 days after the deadline; either a penalty of 10% or the mark awarded is reduced to the pass mark, whichever results in the lower mark;

- For University of Hull provision; more than 7 days after the deadline, a mark of zero is awarded.
- For Grimsby Institute provision; where the assessment work is submitted more than 7 calendar days after the published deadline the work will be unmarked/ungraded

Supplementary Note:

Examples applying the penalties in 5.12 for coursework submitted **up to and including 24 hours** after the deadline:

- If the maximum mark for the assessment is 100 and a student submits the assessment 2 hours after the deadline, the student's mark will be reduced by 10 (so that a mark of 65 will be reduced to 55, a mark of 48 will be reduced to 38 and so on).
- If the maximum mark for the assessment is 50 and a student submits the assessment 2 hours after the deadline, the student's mark will be reduced by 5 (so that a mark of 40 will be reduced to 35, a mark of 36 will be reduced to 31 and so on).

Examples applying the penalties in 5.12 for coursework submitted **more than 24 hours and up to and including 7 days** after the deadline:

Where the maximum mark for the assessment is 100

Student	A	B	C	D	E
Pre-penalty mark	100	50	45	40	30
10% penalty (of the maximum mark – in this case 100)	90	40	35	30	20
<i>or</i>					
Mark awarded is reduced to the pass mark	40	40	40	40	40
Outcome (the lower mark)	40	40	35	30	20

- Where multiple submissions (hardcopy and electronic copy) are required guidance in programme handbooks (see 5.2) must make clear to students whether failure to submit in only one format constitutes 'non submission'.

5.13 Late submission penalties (for Teesside University awards) which will be applied to coursework submitted after the published deadline will be:

- a maximum mark/grade awarded associated with the minimum pass requirement, provided it is submitted within 7 calendar days of the published deadline
- unmarked/ungraded where the assessment work is submitted more than 7 calendar days after the published deadline.

Where the student is submitting assessed work as a reassessment/resubmission and an extension has not been approved, any work submitted after the published deadline will not be marked/graded and the student will be deemed to have failed the assessment concerned.

- 5.14 Penalties must not include weekends and public holidays. When setting deadlines weekends and holidays should be borne in mind to minimise student manipulation of penalties. Penalties must take into account weekdays and will include student vacations.
- 5.15 When the work is marked students will be given the actual mark and then a clear indication of why a penalty has been applied, followed by the modified result

6. Formative and Summative Assessment

- 6.1 Summative assessment is used to indicate the extent of a student's success in meeting the assessment criteria used to gauge the intended learning outcomes of a module or programme.
- 6.2 Summative deadlines must always be published in module handbooks.
- 6.3 It is expected that programme teams will make good use of formative assessment methods where practicable .
- 6.4 Formative assessment is recognised as having a developmental purpose and is designed to give students more effective opportunities for learning and feedback on their performance. Tutors will sometimes engage students in reflective practice as a form of formative assessment.
- 6.5 Assessments that are formative and do not count towards the final assessment *may* be announced to students in advance.
- 6.6 Formative assessments and their date for submission should be identified in the module handbook.
- 6.7 Students should be encouraged to comply with formative assessment dates to protect the module tutors work load and to assist the tutor in planning and organising their time for marking appropriately.
- 6.8 Should a student not submit assessment by the formative deadline, module tutors may refuse to mark the work if submitted later than the prescribed date.

7. Marking and Grading

- 7.1 Students can expect that in all instances assessment briefs and marking schemes will be fair and transparent.
- 7.2 Student assessments will in every instance be 'first marked'. First marking is a process in which usually the module tutor will attach a numerical score (or Pass, Merit or Distinction in cases of HNC/HND assessments) to the piece of assessment.
- 7.3 Summative marking refers to the marks awarded that contribute to the overall assessment of the module.

7.4 Formative marking refers to the marks awarded that do not contribute to the overall assessment of the module but are designed to provide the students with feedback and guidance on their progress.

Second Marking and Moderation

7.5 This section of the code of practice is intended to provide clarity over the differing terms used within the marking process.

7.6 Second marking is the process whereby a student's numerical score (or categorisation of result) is checked and validated by a second marker. Second marking will include a sample of the students work and will operate according to the following principles:

- i. All fails, borderlines and firsts must be second marked;
- ii. 10 scripts/ assessments or 10% of the whole group (which ever is the largest) must be second marked;
- iii. At the time of second marking the second marker should have access to the full list of results for the student group i.e. it is not sufficient for a first marker to merely give the second marker a sample of work without the second marker seeing the list of marks awarded for all students in the group;
- iv. The second marker should specify which scripts/ assessments are to be second marked although the first marker may request that some scripts are considered. The second marker should keep records of all marks awarded;
- v. The documentation of second marking should demonstrate that there has been discussion between the first and second marker particularly where disagreement between both markers has manifested.

7.7 It is considered good practice that first and second markers observing performances or presentations sit separately within the performance/ assessment venue and mark independently from one another on feedback sheets, subsequently evidencing how the final and agreed grade is reached.

7.8 In cases where the first marker is less experienced in marking within higher education (tutors with less than one years experience of assessment marking), or when issues of concern have been identified about the competency of a first marker, second marking should include 'whole group' second marking. It is the responsibility of the Head of School to make clear which module(s) will warrant 'whole group' second marking.

7.9 Moderation refers to the process through which an independent other such as the External Examiner or academic tutor from a partner Higher Education Institution will sample all or a percentage of the assessment from a student group. Programme teams should operate the system as defined by the relevant awarding body in such instances.

8. Examinations

- 8.1 The Institute's Data Coordinator (HE), under the guidance of the Group Examinations Manager is responsible for issuing instructions to invigilators prior to the start of each exam period.
- 8.2 The HE Administration Office is responsible for ensuring all HE invigilators are competent and are aware of their duties and responsibilities.
- 8.3 The Data Coordinator (HE) will provide annual invigilator training. All invigilators will be given a policy and regulations file; the HE Examinations Officer must keep policies and regulation files updated.
- 8.4 New invigilators must not work on their own until they are deemed competent by the Examinations Officer.
- 8.5 The HE Examinations Officer will ensure invigilators receive appropriate instructions, materials, and regulations prior to the exam taking place.
- 8.6 The HE Examinations Officer or nominated other and the invigilator will carry a mobile phone during examinations in the event of any assistance that may be required.
- 8.7 All Teesside University examinations will have a minimum of two invigilators present.
- 8.8 Students are required to present their student identification cards (including photo identification) to the invigilator on entry to the exam room. Students will not be allowed to sit the exam without identification.
- 8.9 Examinations may be video-recorded as a deterrent to cheating in examinations. The video-recording of exams must not be used as a process to reduce the minimum numbers of invigilators required within an examination at any one time.
- 8.10 Invigilators are to inform the HE Examinations Officer immediately if a student has failed to show an ID card.
- 8.11 Module tutors responsible for the exam taking place are advised to be present immediately prior to the start of the examination, or to be contactable by telephone at this time.
- 8.12 It is the responsibility of the invigilator to contact the HE Examinations Officer within reasonable time should they be unable to fulfill their rostered examination invigilation.
- 8.13 In the event of an invigilator failing to attend, the HE Examinations Officer will be responsible for sending a replacement invigilator.

9. Assessment and Examination Boards

- 9.1 Whilst exam boards where appropriate are operated according to the policies, procedures and processes determined by the awarding Institution, all exam/ assessment boards operated within the Institute require each module to be represented by a module tutor.
- 9.2 Chairs of boards are to be approved by the Institute's quality department and must have received appropriate training.
- 9.3 Where possible a person familiar with policies, procedures and processes yet independent to the programme team will also attend boards.
- 9.4 When in exceptional circumstances an External Examiners presence at an exam board is waived, the programme team must have in place contingency arrangements that enable the External Examiners views to be taken into account. e.g. teleconference, detailed module reports.

10. Assessment Feedback

- 10.1 Students can expect in every instance timely feedback on assessed work to ensure that they are able to use feedback to inform other assessments. For example, receiving feedback on academic and study skill performance can help a student make informed changes in subsequent work.
- 10.2 Students can expect to receive written feedback on their assessment within 4 working weeks of the assessment being submitted for marking. Students should recognise that were group sizes are larger, timescales may vary slightly. Additionally timescales may vary were submissions occur just before recognised vacation periods such as the Christmas period.
- 10.3 Students can be given generic oral feedback (as a means to temporarily supplementing written feedback) about their performance before the work has been subject to second marking, but tutors are advised that written feedback should occur after the second marking process is complete.
- 10.4 To prevent delay, written feedback must be given prior to ratification of the assessment result at the examination board; in such instances students must be made aware that the results are provisional and are not final until that time. In the latter instance this should be communicated to students clearly in programme documents i.e. module handbooks.
- 10.5 Written feedback to students must include an indication of whether the assessed learning outcomes have been achieved, not achieved or partially achieved. The learning outcomes must be detailed fully on the assessment feedback sheet. i.e. it is not sufficient to merely refer the students to the learning outcomes in their module handbook. This also relates to other types of assessment such as in instances of group presentations.
- 10.6 Where learning outcomes have been partially achieved or not achieved, written tutor feedback must provide a clear explanation and offer suggestions for development.

- 10.7 Written feedback must refer to the student's strengths and weaknesses and include actions for future. Actions for future development should take into account:
- i. General academic features such study skills;
 - ii. Presentation, style, structure;
 - iii. Criticality;
 - iv. Focus on the question/ establishment of a key and relevant question.
- 10.8 Feedback should not only also refer to areas for improvement, but also how a student can practically go about this. For example:
- i. If a tutor points out to the student that an area for improvement is 'the need for consistent rigour in accuracy of referencing', then the tutor may also refer the student to the Institute's [Referencing booklet](#) (which details specific examples of Harvard Referencing).
- 10.9 Teaching staff should try to take into consideration different forms of assessment feedback that are effective in providing early responses to students about the assessment performance in particular circumstances. For example;
- i. encouraging students to reflect on their own performance;
 - ii. using peer feedback;
 - iii. using 'generic' group feedback i.e. Making available a summary of comments about how the group performed in relation to the learning outcomes and other issues. This can be placed on the VLE or disseminated in class;
 - iv. recognising the role of oral feedback, either in a group or on an individual basis as a means of supplementing written feedback;
 - v. providing clear feedback to students about the point in the module where it is not appropriate to continue seeking feedback i.e. As summative deadlines approach.

11. Archiving and module boxes

- 11.1 Student work must be appropriately archived; archived work is an important source of evidence that may be used in programme reviews, monitoring of trends, instances of query, complaint or appeal.
- 11.2 All student work to be archived means work that has been summatively assessed including examinations, presentations, essays, laboratory work, records of performances etc.
- 11.3 For each module a 'module box' will be maintained which will include a sample of the marked student work across a range of the grade boundaries awarded. The sample must be a representative sample of the whole group. Tutors should refer to the Institute's 'useful templates' site or contact the Quality office for a copy of 'module box criteria'.
- 11.4 Archived work within module boxes must be retained for a period of 3 years excluding examination scripts which must be retained for 3 years or until the students has left the Institute, whichever is the longer.

12. Responsibilities

12.1 It is the responsibility of the Institute to ensure that systems related to assessment comply with the procedures specified within this code of practice and with the regulations of awarding Institution.

12.2 Whilst the partner University has overall responsibility for quality assurance and the academic standards of its awards, the Institute also recognizes its responsibility to:

- i. assess students fairly;
- ii. provide proper invigilation of examinations undertaken in the Institute;
- iii. to publish the results of students' assessments as far as they relate to progression or final awards;
- iv. issue individually to students, on request, their marks or grades;
- v. investigate allegations of malpractice during assessment;
- vi. conduct boards for claims of unfair practice;
- vii. consider applications for mitigating circumstances;
- viii. consider academic appeals,

12.3 It is the responsibility of student to:

- i. undertake the learning activities specified for each module for which they are registered;
- ii. attend examinations and submit work for assessment and/ or reassessment;
- iii. verify that marks have been recorded accurately to avoid transcription errors;
- iv. undertake assessments honestly and in a manner that does not attempt to gain unfair advantage;
- v. ascertain the results of their performance in any assessment;
- vi. collect returned assessments from the HE office within the specified time frame;
- vii. ensure the Institute is aware of any special need or requirement (already known to the student) for which provision will need to be made in the assessment of a module.

Appendix 1

13. HNC/D Penalties

13.1 In instances when no extension has been granted, or there is not sufficiently good cause for work being submitted late (such as when mitigating circumstances have been granted), then the following penalties will apply;

For work that is 1 to 9 days late the grade awarded will be reduced by one grade

For example:

An unpenalised grade of a Distinction would become a Merit

An unpenalised grade of a Merit would become a Pass

An unpenalised grade of a Pass would become a Refer

Penalties do not take into account weekends and public holidays.

In instances where assessed work is submitted 10 days late or more beyond a submission date the work will receive a mark of Refer.

13.2 In instances when the word count is 10% or more over the word count or uppermost limit specified, then the following penalty will apply;

- If a student is 10 to 20% over the word count or upper limit, a grade reduction will be imposed upon the summative assessment element which is overlength e.g. a Distinction becomes a Merit, Merit becomes a Pass, Pass becomes a Refer;
- If a student is 21% or more over the word limit, a mark of REFER will be applied to the summative assessment element which is overlength;
- Other penalties must not be used.

When the work is marked students will be given the grade and then a clear indication of the why a penalty is to be implemented followed by the modified result.



THE GRIMSBY INSTITUTE
of Further & Higher Education

HE Admissions & Administration Office

Extension Approval Form

For authorisation of 5 WORKING DAYS extension ONLY.

Students must apply through mitigating circumstances for longer extensions (see [Chapter 9 of the Quality Handbook](#) or visit Rm: OH01).

You must present this form when submitting your assignment.

Module Tutor _____

Module Title _____

Course _____

Assessment Type
(e.g. Report/Essay, Case Study, _____)

Original Assignment Deadline Date

Approved Extension Date

_____	_____
Student Name	Student Signature
_____	_____
Tutor Name	Tutor Signature

Top Copy—With Assignment

Second Copy— HE Office file

Third Copy— To tutor

Appendix 3

By using this sheet you are making the following declaration.

I wish the examiners to be aware of my disability and to follow the University guidelines for marking the work of students with disabilities when marking my work. I am registered with Disability Services and they have agreed that I am entitled to use this cover sheet. I understand that claims for allowances not authorised by Disability Services or the Examinations Office will be considered an offence under the University's Code of Practice on the Use of Unfair Means.

Please sign in the corner and fold over and staple the flap, this will ensure that the university's policy of anonymous marking is maintained.

ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT/EXAMINATION COVER SHEET FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL ALLOWANCES

This form should be attached to the appropriate Assessment/Examination Cover Sheet or Examination Answer Book

Student Number

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Degree Programme _____

Module/Exam Code

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Module/Exam Title _____

Assignment Title (if applicable) _____

- I have a specific learning difficulty (e.g. Dyslexia, Dyspraxia)
- I have a visual impairment
- I have a hearing impairment
- I have another disability which affects my ability to produce written English (please specify) _____

Appendix 4

Guidelines and Procedures for Alternative Examination Arrangements for Students with disabilities or Students with Health Problems

Purpose

The aim of reasonable adjustments to examination and assessment arrangements is to enable students with disabilities to demonstrate their abilities by making reasonable adjustments to standard forms of assessment. This does not change the purpose of the assessment but may alter the form. It is important that academic standards are maintained and therefore reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities must be made using the following procedure to ensure parity for all students.

Examination Procedures for Students with a Known Disability or Health Problem

Declaring a disability or health problem

If a student declares a disability when they apply to the Institute, Disability Services Office will contact them prior to arrival to make her/him aware of the provision of reasonable adjustments to examinations. The Disability Services Office will also contact these students in the first semester to ask them to visit the service to discuss reasonable adjustments to examinations.

Students who declare a disability to Disability Services Office at any point during the academic year will be given the opportunity to discuss reasonable adjustments to examinations.

Between 6 and 8 weeks before each main examination period Disability Services Office will email all students, using their Institute email address inviting them to declare any disability or health problem that may impact on their performance in examinations. Students who declare a disability or health problem at this point will be given an opportunity to meet with a Disability Advisor to discuss reasonable adjustments to examinations.

Students who are pregnant should discuss their needs with Occupational Health who will make appropriate arrangements.

The last date for submission of requests for reasonable adjustments to examinations will be 4 weeks before the examination period. After this time requests will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and there is no guarantee that requests can be accommodated, although every attempt will be made to do so.

If students contact their school to request reasonable adjustments to examinations departments must refer the student to the Disability Services Office. This is to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made on an equitable basis across the Institute.

Evidence and Recommendations

Students who request reasonable adjustments to examinations will be required to provide evidence to support their request e.g.: a Doctors' letter, or psychologists report for students with specific learning difficulties. The Disability Services Office can advise individual students

about appropriate evidence and can arrange assessments with an educational psychologist for students who may have specific learning difficulties.

It should be noted that obtaining the appropriate evidence can take some time; if a student declares a disability shortly before an examination period there may not be time to obtain this evidence and it will not be possible to make reasonable adjustments. Where a student is awaiting evidence they may be allocated to the alternative exam room with no other adjustments put in place. This means that if evidence does arrive before the examination other adjustments such as additional time can be put in place. If the evidence does not arrive no reasonable adjustments will be made and the student will simply sit the examination in a different room to their cohort.

Students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs)

Students who suspect they may have SpLDs have an initial screening test with Disability Services using the Dyslexia Adult Screening Test (DAST). This is a nationally normed diagnostic test and is used as the basis of exam recommendations in FE. There can be a significant delay between students having an initial screening for SpLDs with Disability Services and them having a full psychological assessment often up to 9 weeks. This means that students can sit one set of examinations without additional time. The vast majority of students who are referred for Psychological Assessment are subsequently diagnosed as having SpLDs.

Students who have been identified as being at risk of SpLDs following the use of the Dyslexia Adult Screening Test should be offered 15 minutes additional time for the subsequent examination period only. If students fail to attend an educational psychology assessment before the next examination period they will be expected to sit their examinations without additional time. If there are exceptional circumstances which justify the student's lack of educational psychology assessment the Disability Services Office may authorise additional time for one further examination period.

Disability Services Responsibilities

Once the Disability Advisor has received information about a student's disability they will make recommendations for reasonable adjustments to the examination or assessment. The reasonable adjustments listed below can be made on the recommendation of the Disability Advisor without further approval..

1. *Additional writing time*
2. *Rest breaks*
3. *Use of an amanuensis (scribe)*
4. *Use of a reader*
5. *Use of a PC*
6. *Alternative exam room*
7. *Separate room within the department*
8. *Use of coloured overlays in exams*
9. *red answer booklets*
10. *Papers in alternative formats (e.g. large print/ Braille)*
11. *Use of specialist equipment e.g. chair/ writing slope*
12. *Use of specialist software*
13. *Timetabling of exams in morning or afternoon sessions only*

Where these arrangements do not meet the students needs the Disability Services Office will discuss alternative arrangements with the school. Where a change of format of assessment is requested such as coursework in place of an exam or splitting an exam into 2 sessions this request will have to be agreed with the school. The school must then seek approval from Regulations, Progression and Performance Committee (RPPC). Where it is not possible for the Disability Services Office and the school to reach an agreement about reasonable adjustments either party should contact the chair of RPPC who will make a decision as to what is reasonable in that situation.

The Disability Services Office will enter exam recommendations onto the student's student record. Where voice recognition software is required the Disability Services Office will provide a suitable machine; either by transferring the students voice files to another machine or by removing the students files from their own machine before the examination.

Location of Exams

Students who do not sit their exams in the main exam room will be recommended one of the following locations:

Alternative Exam Room- this room is for students with mobility needs or who require additional time, rest breaks or who need to be in a smaller examination room

PC Room- this room is for students who need to type rather than write their examinations.

Separate room in the school- this recommendation will be made where students need specialist equipment, use an amanuensis or need to be in a room by themselves.

The Examinations Office's Responsibilities

The Examinations Office will make appropriate examination arrangements for the majority of students with disabilities who sit their exams in the alternative exam room or the PC room. The Examinations Office will write to students with reasonable adjustments for examinations to inform them what arrangements have been made. The Examinations Office will write to departments to inform them of students sitting exams in the department

It is the responsibility of the Examinations Office to provide an additional room that meets the student's needs, any recommended equipment and invigilation. Amanuenses and readers are also trained as invigilators so an additional invigilator is not required.

If specialist equipment is required the Examinations Office should contact the Disability Services Office to discuss this

School Responsibilities

Any costs incurred are the responsibility of the school, although the school should contact the Disability Services Office to discuss whether any costs may be met by the Disabled Student's Allowance.

Complaints

Where a student feels aggrieved by the recommendations of the Disability Advisor s/he should contact the Academic Registrar and HE Quality Manager to discuss this. The Academic Registrar and HE Quality Manager may liaise with the academic school to find an appropriate solution.

Anonymous Marking

Students may have difficulties presenting information as a result of a number of different impairments. For example, students with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia may have difficulties with handwriting, spelling, punctuation or grammar. Students with visual impairments may present information poorly, if they are unable to re-read their own work. Students with hearing impairments who are pre-linguistically deaf may also have difficulties with the grammatical structure of English.

Where a student's disability may lead to discrimination within the marking process, a student will be given the opportunity to declare this disability on the examination script by signing a declaration on a *Disability Declaration Cover Sheet*. These cover sheets can be obtained from the Disability Officer, from school offices or downloaded from the website. Disability Declaration Cover Sheets allow the student to retain their anonymity and alert the examiner to the nature of the student's impairment. For marking guidelines about marking the work of students with a variety of impairments please see document entitled Marking the Work of Students with disabilities (appendix 6).

Departmental module and programme boards

Reasonable adjustments to examinations and assessment are put in place to enable students with disabilities to have the same opportunity as all students to demonstrate their ability. Whilst such arrangements may level the 'playing field', it is recognised that an individual student's difficulties may not be fully accommodated by such arrangements.

For example, the alternative assessment arrangements for students with a visual impairment may not adequately compensate them if they have been unable to access the teaching of the course at an equivalent level of the other students on the course. It should also be taken into account that, as the nature of some disabilities is variable, students may have significant difficulties during a particular stage of their course. As such, the opportunity for further consideration of a student's difficulties by the school module and programme boards should occur where appropriate and advice should be sought from the Disability Advisor. Where a personal supervisor or tutor is aware that a student has been disadvantaged as a result of their disability it is their responsibility to inform the module or programme board.

Appendix 5

Information about Reasonable Adjustments to Assessment for Students with disabilities

This document explains a number of alternative examination strategies which may be recommended by the Disability Services Office. This list is not exhaustive as recommendations are based on individual student's needs.

All alternative examination arrangements must be agreed with the Disability Services Office and are based on evidence of a student's difficulty. For example, the amount of extra time for a student with dyslexia is based on their Psychological Assessment Report.

Time-related Changes (e.g. additional time, rest breaks)

Extra Time

A specified amount of extra time per hour may be recommended for students with disabilities if the process of reading the examination paper, formulating, writing and/or checking their examination answers takes them longer than their non-disabled peers for reasons relating directly to their disability. This includes students with physical impairments, sensory impairments or dyslexia, as well as students with conditions resulting in the early onset of fatigue or chronic pain.

Students with conditions which can be exacerbated in an examination setting (such as those affecting students with mental health difficulties) may require additional time to relieve time pressure.

Usually the extra time allowance is calculated as a percentage, according to the student's level of need. For example, a student may be entitled to receive 25% extra time, or an extra 15 minutes per hour.

Most students with additional time sit their exams in the Additional Needs Room.

Rest Breaks

Some students with disabilities need additional time in the form of a rest break or rest breaks. For example, a student with a disability that causes pain may need to spend several minutes each hour standing and walking around to relieve pain. A student with arthritis affecting their hands may need to take a break from handwriting to rest their hands. Some students may require rest breaks in order to attend to personal needs.

Rest breaks may also be provided so that the examination session does not become an endurance test for the student, particularly if extra time has been allowed.

Time for rest breaks should be additional to the length of the exam. A student cannot use the rest-break to continue working on the exam paper. Students who need to move around during rest breaks will be required to take their exams in their department to minimise the disturbance to other students.

Flexible Time Arrangements

Some students with disabilities may require flexibility in the scheduling of their examinations. This may involve any of the arrangements listed below. Specific arrangements would have to be negotiated with the school, the Disability Services Office

and the Examinations Office. The Examinations Office will be responsible for ensuring that the arrangements ensure the security of the examinations process.

Changes to scheduled examination times within a given day

For example, students with conditions that result in early fatigue and impaired concentration may require morning examinations in preference to afternoon examinations.

Changes to scheduled examination dates and times within the examination period

For example, a student who experienced fatigue as a result of a physical disability, may find it difficult to manage a number of examinations in quick succession. Examinations may need to be scheduled so that, where possible, rest periods are provided between examinations.

Examinations split into more than one session.

When additional time is provided for an examination which is already lengthy (e.g., three hours) the result may be too fatiguing, physically and mentally, for some students with disabilities. Splitting such examinations into more than one session may be a more suitable arrangement.

The Use of Specific Personnel

Some students may require the use of specific personnel within examinations. Disability Services recruit and train examination support personnel. Their roles are detailed below. Where specific personnel provided by Disability Services are used they will also be trained as invigilators and a separate invigilator is not required.

Amanuensis (also called a Scribe)

Students whose ability to write or type is impaired may require an amanuensis to write for them. For example, the student may not be able to handwrite at all, may write very slowly, or may experience a high level of pain when handwriting. A student who is not able to maintain the posture for writing may require an amanuensis, as may a student who is able to present information better in an oral rather than a written format. Usually the Disability Services Office will first establish if the student is able to type as opposed to handwrite, however if typing is not a suitable option, then it may be decided that they should use an amanuensis.

The student dictates his/her answers to the amanuensis and the amanuensis will either handwrite or type the student's answer verbatim. It is suggested that the student and the amanuensis should meet prior to the examination for a practice session so that both parties are familiar with each other and with the process of using a scribe. Amanuenses are recruited and trained by the Disability Services Office and undertake a typed and written assessment as part of the selection process.

Reader

Students who are unable to read print or who access auditory information better than visual information because of a disability may require a reader. A reader dictates the examination paper as it is written and does not paraphrase or explain questions. A reader may also be required to read the student's examination answers back to them.

Interpreter

If any instructions are delivered orally, students who are deaf and who use sign language will require an interpreter. The interpreter may be necessary to allow the student to clarify information on the examination paper. Students who are deaf may require an interpreter if the assessment involves the student giving an oral presentation.

Personal Assistant

A student who requires assistance in personal and/or practical ways during the course of an examination may require a Personal Assistant. The Personal Assistant may be required to provide assistance with manual tasks at the student's instruction; for example, turning pages, inserting a disk into a computer, removing the student's cardigan. A Personal Assistant may also be required to assist with personal care tasks during rest breaks.

Alternative forms of assessment

In certain circumstances a student may be unable to sit part of an assessment due to the nature of their disability. In this situation, it is important for the module leader to consider the learning outcomes and skills which the module is assessing and whether they can be assessed via an alternative method e.g. coursework. Changes to the format of the assessment should be discussed by the Disability Services Office and the student's school. In such circumstances a request for an alteration to the assessment should be made to Regulations, Progression and Performance Committee.

Use of Computers in Examinations

There has been an increasing demand by students with disabilities to take their examinations on computers. This is not surprising as students with disabilities are now often recommended computer equipment to support them in their studies. The use of computers in examinations may be for the purpose of providing examination questions in an appropriate format for the student. In addition, or alternatively, the personal computer may be used by the student to formulate and produce examination answers.

Most students who require the use of a standard computer in exams will be seated in the computer examination room. The Examinations Office is responsible for this type of arrangement. Students who require specialist computer software or who need rest breaks or specialist ergonomic equipment will need to sit their examinations in their departments. Where specialist equipment is required the HE Examinations Office should liaise with the Disability Services Office.

The computer software that can be used in the examinations will include software such as word processing and spreadsheet packages. Word processing packages should be in accordance with the Institute standards and include spelling and grammar checkers. Specialist software may only be used if it has been explicitly recommended by the Disability Services Office.

Guidelines for the Use of Computers in Examinations:

The following guidelines apply to a student using a personal computer to produce examination answers.

Generally students will not be allowed to use their own computer equipment, as the Institute will attempt to provide any equipment that they may require. In rare cases where the student requires personalised software the student's own computer may be used. This

must be set up by a qualified technician and all of the student's files should be copied onto 2 portable storage devices. These files can be restored after the examination.

A memory stick should be supplied by the Institute, which will be initialised and labelled with the student's name, student number and time of the examination. The answers will be printed out immediately after completion of the examination. The printed answer paper will be checked and each page signed by the student. Where students are unable to sign the examination paper their personal assistant or the invigilator will be required to sign the printed answers for them in their presence.

To ensure that the answers can always be printed out there should ideally be at least one printer available near to the examination room. If it is not possible to have a printer available or there is a printer failure then the completed examination paper may be copied onto another memory stick as a back-up.

Extra time should be allowed for printing of the examination answers and checking the quality of the printout. Both these tasks should be carried out under supervision. The memory stick should be returned with the printed examination script and any rough working the student wishes to hand in.

In order to minimise the chance of the student's examination being lost due to equipment failure, the answers should be saved to the memory stick every 10 to 15 minutes these should also be provided by the Institute. In the event of a PC break down the student will be required to change PC and continue working. In this case the amount of time lost during the change over plus the 10-15 minutes since the last file save shall be added to the examination writing time.

Types of impairment and related alternative examination strategies

This section outlines the broad types of disability and the associated difficulties for which an alternative assessment strategy may be required. Underneath each difficulty is a list of appropriate alternative assessment. It is important to remember that students may have a number of difficulties associated with their disability and may also have more than one type of disability. As such, some students require a mix of alternative assessment strategies.

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (or Myalgic Encephalomyelitis)

This may cause tiredness, headache, pain, general weakness and impaired concentration. The condition may gradually improve but can be subject to relapse. It is important that appropriate furniture is considered including desk/chair heights and the use of a sloping writing surface. Flexibility may be needed in scheduling examinations.

Difficulty: *impaired concentration due to fatigue, especially in the morning.*

Alternative: *extra time, rest breaks, flexible time, afternoon only exams.*

Difficulty: *low endurance for writing/ slow writing speed.*

Alternatives: *scribe, extra time, rest-breaks, computer.*

Conditions which cause chronic pain

There are a number of causes of chronic pain. Students with this difficulty may require rest breaks to change posture. Appropriate furniture should be provided e.g. supportive chair.

Difficulty: *unable to maintain posture to write for length of exam.*

Alternatives: *scribe, extra time, rest breaks, flexible time, computer if easier to type.*

Dyslexia / Specific Learning Difficulty

This term refers to a range of difficulties with receiving, processing, expressing or retrieving information. Students may have difficulties with reading, writing (organisation/structure, spelling, grammar, and punctuation) and memory. Some students may have difficulties with using numbers. The amount of extra time recommended will be based on the students psychological report.

Difficulty: *accessing information in a written form*

Alternatives: *Reader, extra time.*

Difficulty: *expressing own knowledge in a written form.*

Alternatives: *extra time, scribe, computer with use of spell-checker.*

Deaf, Deafened and Hard of Hearing

Students may have a hearing loss that can range from partial to a total loss. Depending on the extent of loss, communication is through hearing aids, lip reading, 'cued speech', sign language/signed English. A hearing loss can affect the development of language skills such as speech, reading and writing depending when the loss occurred. Sign language may be a first language to individuals whose hearing loss occurred prior to language development.

Difficulty: *unable to access oral information (e.g. examination instructions). A separate examination venue may also be appropriate.*

Alternatives: *interpreter, facing student and speaking clearly (for lip-reading), all instructions produced in writing, use of an induction loop.¹*

Difficulty: *English difficulties*

Alternatives: *additional time, dictionary/thesaurus, computer with spell-checker.*

Medical Condition

There are obviously too many conditions to list individually. While individual conditions may cause difficulties, students on prescribed medication may also have associated difficulties. Specific permission may be required to take medication, move around or lie down, eat or drink. A Personal Assistant may be required if a condition is severe. Attention should be paid to the furniture and examination venue. All alternative arrangements may be appropriate.

Mental Health Difficulties

Students may have a range of difficulties such as anxiety, depression or obsessive compulsive difficulties. Some students may be subject to panic attacks. Difficulties may affect concentration and attention. If students are taking prescription medication they may be affected by side effects such as drowsiness. These difficulties may become acute under exam conditions. Students with high anxiety levels and/or panic attacks can take their exams in the alternative examination room. A separate examination venue may also be appropriate.

Difficulties: *extreme examination related anxiety/stress, reduced ability to maintain concentration*

Alternatives: *separate examination room, rest breaks, flexible time.*

Physical Disability

This may involve impaired function in a part of the body, inability to move a body part or inability to co-ordinate movement. Students may require a separate examination venue. Appropriate furniture should be provided and attention should be paid to the physical environment. A student, who has difficulty manipulating the immediate environment e.g. turning pages, inserting computer discs may require a Personal Assistant.

Difficulty: *inability to write using a pen/reduced writing speed*

Alternatives: *scribe, computer if typing accuracy not affected, extra time, rest-breaks if fatigue occurs.*

Difficulty: *involuntary head movements interfering with reading and writing.*

Alternatives: *reader, scribe, large print, computer with voice synthesiser or large print, extra time.*

Repetitive Strain Injury

A range of injuries caused by overuse resulting in pain/stiffness in hands, wrists, forearms and neck. A student may have difficulty in manual tasks such as writing. Consideration needs to be given to appropriate furniture: desk and chair heights, sloped writing board, and to adequate space for equipment and personnel. Extra time for the student to write can create difficulties as this may make the students condition worse. Advice should be sought from the student's GP.

Difficulty: *difficulty with writing / slow writing speed.*

Alternatives: *scribe, additional time, flexible time, rest-breaks, computer if typing is easier.*

Visual Impairment

A person with a visual impairment will have a loss of vision, which can range from low vision to no functional vision. Consideration needs to be given to the physical environment especially the lighting when a student has low vision. A separate examination venue should be considered which includes space for both equipment and personnel.

Difficulty: *unable to read examination questions in standard print.*

Alternatives: *reader, taped questions, Braille papers, large print, closed-circuit television (CCTV), computer with large print or voice synthesiser.*

Difficulty: *unable to see handwriting when answering questions.*

Alternatives: *scribe, CCTV, computer with specialist software.*

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UNDER REVIEW

Appendix 6

Guidelines for marking the work of students whose disability affects their ability to produce written English

Background

The Equality Act 2010 states that Universities have a responsibility to ensure that students with disabilities are not treated less favourably than non-disabled peers and that reasonable adjustments are made so that students with disabilities can demonstrate their abilities. This applies to all aspects of learning, teaching and assessment within the Institute. The Institute has produced Guidelines and Procedures for Alternative Examination Arrangements for Students with disabilities or Students with Health Problems (appendix 4) which give more information about the nature of alternative examination arrangements and the impact of different impairments on students in examinations. These marking guidelines should be read in conjunction with the above document.

The Guidelines and Procedures for Alternative Examination Arrangements for Students with disabilities or Students with Health Problems recognises that Students with a number of disabilities may have difficulties in presentation of information. As part of the nature of their disability, students with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia may have the above difficulties in handwriting, spelling, punctuation or grammar. Students with visual impairment may present information poorly, if they are unable to re-read their own work. Students with hearing impairment who are pre-linguistically deaf may also have difficulties with the grammatical structure of English.

These students are entitled to use the Institute's disability declaration cover sheets to alert markers to their difficulties. The cover sheets ask students to state the nature of their disability and markers are then expected to use the following guidelines when marking this work.

Students' work should be marked in accordance with the learning outcomes for the module. Learning outcomes and assessment criteria should be stated clearly in module handbooks. Students should be aware which learning outcomes are being assessed in any piece of assessed work or examination.

Punctuation, grammar and presentation should only be assessed where they can be justified in the learning outcomes of the module. Where these elements are assessed they should not be assessed under examination conditions with the exception of foreign languages.

Extensions to Coursework Deadlines

Schools are asked to consider requests for extensions to coursework deadlines from students with disabilities. Students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs) often take longer to produce written work than their peers as their reading speed can be slow and problems with working memory and structuring and organising information may make the process of writing itself much slower. Extensions may be a way of compensating for these difficulties on particular occasions but should not be used for every piece of assessed work as this results in the student being persistently behind.

Students with visual impairments may take longer to read information and to produce written work. Students with other disabilities may experience particular difficulties in relation to their disability e.g. pain, an epileptic seizure which may mean they are unable to complete work on time.

Students With Specific Learning Difficulties

Marking exam scripts of students with specific learning difficulties

Students with SpLDs are usually allocated additional time in examinations. This means students have more time to read the question and to plan their work but this will not improve sentence structure, grammar or punctuation.

Correct spelling of technical terms may be a justified learning outcome for some modules e.g. where it is vital to spell technical terms correctly as in nursing or pharmacology. Where this is highly relevant this may be assessed under exam conditions but students must be aware of this criteria. Where correct spelling is a marking criterion a percentage of marks not exceeding 5 percent should be allocated to this.

If a student's exam script is illegible suggest to them that they contact Disability Services to look at options such as the use of a computer in future exams

Focus on the clarity of the argument, rather than on details of expression.

Attempts should be made to separate marking of transcription errors and marking of content. However, while sympathetic treatment of assessed work submitted by students with SpLDs involves disregarding errors of spelling and grammar, the communication itself must be effective.

If academic standards are to be safeguarded, sympathetic treatment cannot extend to written expression so poor that coherence and intelligibility are in question.

Marking of written assessments by students with specific learning difficulties

Be aware that many students with SpLDs will have experienced negative reactions to their written work throughout their educational careers. Therefore consider using two different pens, neither red: one for the material, one for spelling and other language aspects. Red ink has highly negative associations for some students; a two-colour approach makes the different categories of feedback clear.

Correct selected spellings only (e.g. technical vocabulary) and let the student know this.

Correct spelling of technical terms may be a justified learning outcome for some modules e.g. where it is vital to spell technical terms correctly as in nursing or pharmacology. Where correct spelling is a marking criterion a percentage of marks not exceeding 5 percent should be allocated to this.

Write comments legibly, many dyslexic students struggle to read handwriting.

Word processed feedback is preferable.

It is important that it be made clear to dyslexic students whether they have lost marks because of a lack of subject knowledge or because of failure to communicate their ideas about the subject sufficiently clearly.

Do not say 'please use the spell-checker.' The student is probably using it a lot, and choosing the wrong options.

Although assessed work, other than unseen examination scripts, is likely to be word-processed and spell-checked, you should be aware of the limitations of a spellchecker and of other assistive software resources. Many problems remain in dyslexic students' work even with the benefit of assistive software resources and spell-checking including:

- *homophone substitutions (e.g. there/their, effect/affect, course/coarse)*
- *phonetic equivalents (e.g. fernetec for phonetic, homerfone for homophone)*
- *incorrect word substitutions, (distance for disturbance)*
- *American spelling (e.g. colorful, fueling).*

When marking on ideas alone, make this clear on the script.

When offering written feedback avoid using innuendoes or nested/double negatives; dyslexic students often find it hard to 'read between the lines'.

If a student spells phonetically, misses out word endings or has very poor handwriting, try to detect the sense of the text. Fast reading can also make it easier to find the holistic thought patterns which the student may have been trying to convey.

Be clear about specific problem areas, so that the student can see a way forward and seek further help.

In addition, avoid penalising wherever possible:

Long paragraphs that look like a single sentences but are actually made up of an undifferentiated string of simple sentences linked by conjunctions

Short sentences that lack links with those that precede and follow

Sentences where it is possible to see that prepositions have been omitted or mistaken, e.g. 'of' in place of 'on'

Sentences that change direction mid stream: this may be because the student has realised that the sentence requires the use of a word that they cannot spell and so needed to rephrase the sentence to avoid a spelling error

The use of a repeated sentence structure

Apparent preference for simple words rather than the more complex academic terms. This may reflect the student's difficulties with rapid word retrieval or with spelling and often creates a false impression of an immature understanding of the topic

Repetition of ideas, often using slightly different phrasing. This may be because the student is not certain the point has been clearly made and has had a second (or third) attempt

Marking presentations of students with SpLDs

Students with SpLDs often have very strong verbal skills. However, they may have difficulties finding the correct word or pronouncing words. It may be appropriate to allow additional time for presentations for students with SpLDs. When marking presentations concentrate on what the student said rather than errors on visual aids. If students are required to read aloud as part of the assessment ensure adequate preparation time is allowed as reading aloud on the spot can be very difficult for lots of students with SpLDs.

Visually Impaired Students

Marking exam scripts of visually impaired students

Students with visual impairments may receive additional time in examinations to allow them to read the question and to proofread their work. Students with visual impairments may present their work poorly and marks should not be deducted for this. They may also miss errors when re-reading their work as a result of their visual impairment and consideration should be given to this when marking.

Correct spelling of technical terms may be a justified learning outcome for some modules e.g. where it is vital to spell technical terms correctly as in nursing or pharmacology. Where this is highly relevant this may be assessed under exam conditions but students must be aware of this criteria. Where correct spelling is a marking criterion a percentage of marks not exceeding 5 percent should be allocated to this.

If a student's exam script is illegible suggest to them that they contact Disability Services to look at options such as using a computer or an amanuensis in exams.

Students who use Braille may make grammatical errors when producing written English as the structure of Braille is different from the structure of written English. Marks should not be deducted for poor grammar in written exams.

Marking assessed work of visually impaired students

When producing coursework students with visual impairments should have access to technology that will enable them to overcome their difficulties. However, reading and writing can be a time consuming process when using this technology so requests for extensions should be viewed sympathetically. Extensions may be a way of compensating for these difficulties on particular occasions but should not be used for every piece of assessed work as this results in the student being persistently behind.

Students who use Braille may make grammatical errors when producing written English as the structure of Braille is different from the structure of written English. Feedback should be given electronically so that the student can convert it into Braille. Persistent grammatical errors should be highlighted once and explained.

Marking presentations of visually impaired students

Needs of students with visual impairments vary considerably when giving presentations. Please contact Disability Services for advice.

Deaf, Deafened and Hard of Hearing Students

Marking exam scripts and assessed work of hearing impaired students

Students who have developed hearing impairments as adults will not have difficulties producing written English relating to their hearing impairment. Students who were born deaf or who developed a significant hearing impairment at a very young age may have difficulties with the structure of written English as the grammar and syntax of British Sign Language is very different to that of English, and they may have no auditory memory to support their acquisition of English. The latter group of students are entitled to use students with disabilities cover sheets. The latter group of students is usually allocated additional time in examinations. This means students have more time to read the question but this will not improve sentence structure, grammar or punctuation.

Focus on the clarity of the argument, rather than on details of expression. Use different coloured pens (neither red) one to comment on structure, spelling, grammar and linguistic expression and one to comment on content.

Do make constructive comments about both the factual content and the use of language. Explain what is required or what is wrong.

If possible, discuss the piece of work with the student. Talk through the errors in the course work and explain why the corrections are necessary. An interpreter may be needed to facilitate this.

Check the student's level of understanding of the technicalities of language and presentation

Marking presentations of hearing impaired students

Needs of students with hearing impairments vary considerably when giving presentations. Please contact Disability Services for advice.

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