

Assessment and Feedback Code of Practice

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This Code of Practice sets out the University's minimum expectations in relation to the design and implementation of assessment, and associated feedback processes. These expectations have been developed in line with *Keele's Curriculum Expectations*, the *UK Quality Code for Higher Education*, the *Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*, the *UK Professional Standards Framework (PSF)* and individual subject benchmark statements, as appropriate. It is for use by Keele staff and external partners, including external examiners and external reviewers. A separate guidance document is available for students.

Purpose

1.2. The purpose of the Code of Practice is to set out the University's minimum expectations in relation to the design and implementation of assessment and feedback processes and provide clear guidance to staff and external partners, including external examiners and external reviewers. This Code of Practice is one of the key reference points used in curriculum design and review, and alignment with this Code of Practice will be tested through quality monitoring processes, including at validation and revalidation.

1.3. The Code of Practice is designed to:

- Ensure a more consistent, institution-wide approach to the design and implementation of assessment and feedback practices.
- Ensure assessment is designed at a programme level and is clearly linked to programme-level intended learning outcomes.
- Ensure students are treated fairly and equitably in assessment and feedback, and that all students have opportunities to excel and to achieve their best.
- Enhance staff and student assessment and feedback literacies to facilitate the design of high-quality assessment and effective feedback processes, and support students in taking responsibility for their own learning.

Scope

1.4. This Code of Practice applies to all undergraduate and taught postgraduate degree programmes, including degree apprenticeships, Keele University International College programmes, Foundation Year, online-only courses, and on Keele programmes taught at international partner institutions.

- 1.5. The University is mindful of the role of Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) in curriculum design and acknowledges that for some subject areas with very strict PRSB requirements (e.g., Medicine, Pharmacy, Veterinary Sciences, Nursing, Midwifery, and other Allied Health professions) the ability of a programme team to have full autonomy over the design of assessments *may* be more restricted. Nonetheless, programmes in these subject areas are expected to follow the Code as closely as possible and this will be tested at validation, review, and revalidation.
- 1.6. This Code should be read in conjunction with several other policies and procedures, as noted in the text at the relevant sections. These are also referred to in the document control information.

2. DEFINING ASSESSMENT

2.1 Assessment forms an integral part of a student's learning process. Students learn from engaging with and completing assessments, through their interaction with peers and staff in relation to assessment activities, and from their engagement with carefully designed feedback processes. Assessment can determine whether a student is ready to progress to their next level of study. Assessment outcomes reflect whether a student has met programme or module-level learning outcomes and enables a student's level of performance to be established. Assessment also ensures that an individual student has attained a level of achievement that reflects the academic standards of the institution, the UK Framework for Higher Education, and any relevant PSRB requirements.

2.2 Assessment can be:

- **Diagnostic:** which is used to provide an indicator of a students' prior knowledge or readiness for a task or programme of study.
- **Formative:** which is assessment with a developmental purpose. Formative assessment helps students to monitor their own progress and to identify their strengths and limitations. It provides an opportunity to feed forward into subsequent learning which may be assessed summatively. For staff, formative assessment can provide insights into areas or topics that students may be struggling with and enable teaching methods and plans to be adapted accordingly.
- **Self-Assessment:** where students reflect upon their own learning and provide feedback and/or marks to themselves based on this reflection.
- **Peer-Assessment:** where students reflect upon and provide feedback and/or marks on the work of other students.
- **Summative:** which counts towards credit and is used to evaluate student learning and assign a mark or grade. It determines whether a student has met the intended learning outcomes of a module or programme. In most cases, the marks awarded for summative assessment count towards the final mark of a module and/or award.

2.3 The University has established agreed terminology relating to the different types of assessment that students might be expected to undertake (Annex 1).

3 ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES & ASSESSMENT DESIGN

- 3.1 Assessment must be designed at the programme level, clearly linked to programme-level intended learning outcomes (ILOs) and intentionally diverse to allow all students opportunities to excel.
- 3.2 Assessment must be designed to include a balance of authentic assessment, disciplinary practice and the development of skills and knowledge for future employability.
- 3.3 Students' experience of different types of assessments must be built up progressively throughout their programme of study. For example, it is not good practice to introduce a new assessment type in the final stages of a student's course without appropriate scaffolding.
- 3.4 Assessment must be designed to be inclusive, with the learning needs and requirements of different groups of students in mind. This means considering all aspects of the assessment process to ensure that the ways we assess do not exclude or unfairly disadvantage some students.
- 3.5 Assessment design must consider opportunities for supporting flexibility and student autonomy. For example, by allowing students to choose how they demonstrate they meet module learning outcomes or by giving students choice over questions/topic, study areas, data sets or type of submission. Student choice in assessment must be carefully monitored at a programme level to ensure that all students have opportunities to develop a broad range of skills and competencies.
- 3.6 Assessment design must be informed by i) feedback from students, in particular concerning the nature, timing, sequencing and support for assessments; and ii) creative approaches to minimise the risk of [academic misconduct](#) and inappropriate use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (i.e., where AI tools can be used to the extent that the final submission is no longer the students' own work).
- 3.7 Staff are encouraged to engage a diverse range of students in the co-design of assessment, facilitating a sense of ownership in relation to the assessments they shape, and ensuring co-production is equitable for all learners. Students may be involved in the design of their own assessment in a particular module, and/or the assessment of future cohorts in a specific module, or more broadly at programme level.
- 3.8 Staff must avoid using assessment types that would be considered inequitable and/or would disadvantage some groups of students. For example, by assessing attendance or student oral contributions to discussions in class, unless explicitly required by a PSRB.
- 3.9 Assessment must be manageable for both staff and students by requiring only the minimum number of assessments across a programme to demonstrate attainment of programme-level learning outcomes. This enables students to demonstrate their highest levels of attainment and staff to manage their workloads effectively.

- 3.10** Across a programme there must be a balance of both formative and summative assessment. Staff must design and sequence formative and summative assessment so that students have opportunities to use feedback effectively in subsequent assessments.
- 3.11** At the module level, there must be constructive alignment of assessments with module-level ILOs and for apprenticeships programmes alignment with Knowledge Skills and Behaviours (KSBs). No assessment should be issued/released to students without direct reference to the ILOs and/or KSBs it is associated with.
- 3.12** The rationale for any time-restricted assessment (e.g., in-situ or online examinations, class tests, open-book assessments) must be justifiable in relation to the learning outcomes. In-situ or online unseen examinations are permitted where there is a clear pedagogic rationale and/or PSRB requirements to do so. Where staff wish to introduce new assessments of this nature, a case should be presented to the relevant Faculty Dean of Education. Where open-book assessments are used they must be implemented according to the principles of 28-hour open-book assessments set out in Annex 2.

4 FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

- 4.1** Opportunities for students to engage in formative assessment must be an integral part of curriculum design, helping to support students' understanding of what is required of them, enabling students to make judgements about their own work, and encouraging students to take responsibility for their learning.
- 4.2** Formative assessment must be timed to enable students to apply formative feedback to subsequent summative assessment tasks.
- 4.3** Formative assessment does not mean creating additional assessment tasks for students to complete, which staff are then required to mark and provide feedback on. Examples of formative assessment include:
- a structured session within a module for students to bring along drafts of work to discuss with their peers and/or staff.
 - providing exemplars of a completed/model assessment which students then critique in small groups.
 - presenting a draft report/essay plan in class and receiving feedback from peers and staff.
 - holding a drop-in session for students to bring along drafts of their work to discuss.
 - completing a series of small tasks in (e.g.,) the field, laboratory, practical session or seminar, where students are in regular discussions with staff and their peers during the activity, which then feeds into a summative piece of work (e.g., a field/lab notebook, a reflective diary).
- 4.4** Formative assessment activities help students to understand and engage with summative assessment criteria. In turn, this encourages student autonomy, helps develop students' assessment literacy, and means that students are more likely to make use of feedback.

4.5 Staff should encourage students to engage with and understand how to learn from different types of feedback including formative and summative feedback, peer and self-feedback, automatic feedback (e.g., feedback generated following completion of a KLE quiz), and continuous feedback via informal conversations with staff and their peers in class.

5 SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

5.1 The number of summative assessment components in a module must be kept to the minimum number needed to demonstrate attainment of module learning outcomes.

5.2 The workload of summative assessment items should be considered in terms of 'hours of student effort' required, as appropriate to the level of study.

5.3 The role and purpose of summative assessment must be clearly communicated to students via module handbooks and verbally via module introductions, assessment briefings, and any associated tutorials/seminars.

5.4 An assessment schedule (or calendar) of summative assessments at the programme level must be published at the beginning of each Semester and stored on the KLE to help both staff and students map out assessment deadlines across modules and years of study.

5.5 An Assessment Brief must be completed for all summative assessment. An example Assessment Brief template is provided in Annex 3. The Assessment Brief template should be approved by Faculty Education Committee to provide greater consistency for students undertaking modules across Faculty. Assessment Briefs should be provided to students at the beginning of a module and published on the relevant module KLE page.

5.6 External Examiners must have opportunity to provide feedback on summative assessment briefs that count towards a student's final award. It is the responsibility of Academic Assessment Officers to ensure that external examiners are provided by the PSS team in the School in a timely manner with the documentation needed to ensure they can carry out scrutiny of assessment briefs ahead of each Semester.

5.7 Following consideration of feedback from External Examiners, all summative assessment briefs (at Levels-3-7) must be approved by the relevant School Education Committee prior to the start of each Semester and before publication to students. This approval can be conducted as a virtual exercise with Committee members being invited to comment on Assessment Briefs, as appropriate. School Education Committees should ensure that all summative assessment meet or exceeds the University's minimum expectations in relation to the design and implementation of assessment and associated feedback processes, as described in this Code of Practice.

5.8 Guidance on how to manage the approval of Assessment Briefs is provided in Annex 4. A central record of all approved Assessment Briefs must be maintained at School or Faculty level. This will support ease of access for External Examiners and other administrative functions.

5.9 More detailed information about assessment should be provided at the appropriate point in a module, ensuring that there is sufficient time between the setting of the assessment task and

the submission deadline for students to carry out the work, whilst enabling some flexibility for students to manage their own workloads.

- 5.10** The assessment criteria used in summative assessment must be explicitly addressed in teaching activities to help students understand what is expected of them. It is good practice to talk through summative assessment briefs as early as possible within a module.
- 5.11** Staff may provide students with anonymised examples of previous work completed as part of a module to enable students to better understand what is expected of them. Before sharing example work, staff should seek permission from the student to whom the work belongs. Staff should use their academic judgement and discretion as to whether providing exemplars is appropriate and constructive, or not.

6 THE SETTING & SUBMISSION OF SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

- 6.1** Summative assessment deadlines must be co-ordinated at the programme level so that the assessment load for students is balanced over each year of study.
- 6.2** Submission deadlines for summative assessment must not be set on weekends, University closure days (i.e., between Christmas and New Year), Bank Holidays in the UK and, where possible, be mindful of other religious festivals.
- 6.3** When setting submission deadlines, staff must be mindful of the automatic 7-day extension that is available to students. Staff must avoid setting deadlines for assessment where the 7-day extension period would result in students submitting work on University closure days and Bank Holidays in the UK, or where staff are not available to provide help and advice.
- 6.4** [Regulation D1](#) requires that all assessment be submitted online/electronic wherever possible, using one of the University's supported systems. Where this is impractical for a particular type of assessment, students should be informed in the module handbook of the alternative submission format.
- 6.5** All summative submissions must, where practical, be submitted through a system that allows similarity reports to be generated for those submissions (e.g., Turnitin). All students will have the opportunity to submit practice submissions to Turnitin (or equivalent) at least once per academic year.
- 6.6** Staff must provide clear instructions to students on where to submit assessment in module handbooks, including any specific instructions relating to the submission of different types of assessment (e.g., submission of presentations, audio files or spreadsheets etc).
- 6.7** The default system for all assessment submission is the KLE. Where the KLE cannot meet the requirements of a specific assessment submission an alternative may be permitted. Students should not be required to submit the same piece of assessment to multiple systems.
- 6.8** Students must ensure that they follow assessment instructions and submit their work correctly to the appropriate dropbox.

- 6.9** If a student becomes aware that they have submitted their work to the wrong location, it is their responsibility to notify the School immediately. Provided the work can be located, and is shown to have been submitted on time (as shown by the time and date stamp on the KLE submission), the work must be marked.
- 6.10** The deadline for the submission of assessed work for all taught students is standard across the University. It is set at 1pm on the date of submission, as specified in [Regulation D1](#).
- 6.11** Students are responsible for downloading the submission receipt for their work which must be done at the time of submission. Submission receipts are no longer automatically emailed to students. Students must store this receipt in case there are subsequent queries regarding the successful submission of their work.
- 6.12** Rules concerning the late submission of assessed work are covered in [Regulation D1](#).

7 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA, MARKING & MODERATION

- 7.1** The University has established Generic Assessment Criteria for [Levels 3-6](#) and [Level-7](#) and all UG and PGT student work will be assessed using the principles of these criteria, including use of the 24-point marking scale.
- 7.2** It is expected that the Generic Assessment Criteria may need to be adapted for different types of assessments, particularly for those assessments which focus more on presentation and communication skills (e.g., presentations, podcasts, vlogs, posters). However, such adaptation must comply with the 24-step marking approach, must be published to students at the beginning of a module, and the bands used must reflect as closely as possible the University's Generic Assessment Criteria. Any adaptations from the University's Generic Assessment Criteria must be approved by the relevant School Education Committee at the beginning of each academic year.
- 7.3** To avoid conscious or unconscious bias and to increase students' trust in the fairness of the process, marking must be carried out anonymously unless it falls into one of the exempt categories or has been exempted from anonymous marking by the relevant Faculty Education Committee. [Regulation D1](#) provides a list of assessment types that have been identified as approved exemptions from anonymous marking.
- 7.4** All marking and moderation must be carried out in line with the [University's Marking and Moderation Policy](#).
- 7.5** Programme teams are expected to engage in collaborative activities that support the consistency of marking and feedback. For example, the use of a 'calibration exercise' to support the consistency of marking and reduce moderation workloads.

8 FEEDBACK ON SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

- 8.1** Students must receive meaningful feedback on all summative assessment which is clear and concise, summarizes the strengths and limitations of the work, and relates back to the assessment criteria for that specific assessment. Concise points of developmental feedback to improve future work must also be included.
- 8.2** Feedback must be professional and constructive in nature and tone, avoid competitive language, and should promote and encourage student achievement.
- 8.3** Feedback from staff on student assessment needs to be in a format which is documented and auditable (e.g., typed, audio and/or video feedback).
- 8.4** Students must receive timely feedback on all summative assessment. [Regulation D1](#) states that students can normally expect to receive feedback on their assessed work within **15 working days**. Day one of the 15 working days turnaround period is considered as the day immediately after the original submission deadline. For example, if the date of submission for a summative assessment is (e.g.,) 1 pm, Wednesday 6th March 2024, day one of the 15-working day turnaround period is Thursday 7th March 2024 and all students, including those who submitted within the 7-day automatic flexible extension period, should expect marks and feedback to be released by 1 pm, Wednesday 27th March 2024. An expected date for the return of marks and feedback must be published to students before they undertake their assessment.
- 8.5** In cases where a large volume of students submit for automatic 7-day extensions, there may be an additional 7-day delay to the return of marks and feedback to students. In these situations, module leaders must follow the process outlined in 8.6.
- 8.6** Where feedback cannot be provided to students within the normal 15 working-day timescale, including instances where this is the result of a large volume of students submitting for automatic 7-day extensions, the module leader must notify the relevant Programme Director and School Director of Education at the earliest opportunity. The School Director of Education will in turn notify the relevant Faculty Dean of Education, so that they can advise on next steps and ensure that the communication to students is appropriate. Students should be communicated with at the earliest opportunity. The communication to students should explain the rationale for the late feedback and marks and provide an indication of when students can expect to receive their feedback and marks.
- 8.7** Schools must ensure that robust processes are in place to monitor the adherence to feedback and marking return times and, where the 15 working-day turnaround cannot be met, ensuring that there are clear processes in place for module leaders to notify the relevant Programme Director and School Director of Education.
- 8.8** Feedback and grades must not be released to students on weekends, University closure days (i.e., between Christmas and New Year), or UK Bank Holidays, and where possible be mindful of other religious festivals. Ordinarily, feedback must not be given on a Friday unless this feedback is face-to-face (i.e., in class or via individual/group meetings with students).

- 8.9** Staff must ensure that help and advice is available when marks and feedback are returned to enable students to discuss feedback in more detail and answer questions, as appropriate.
- 8.10** Except for group submissions, students must receive individual feedback on each assessment component, including the opportunity to receive individual feedback on exam scripts, open-book assessments, and dissertations/research projects. Students must be provided with clear information about how they can request and receive individual feedback on such assessments.
- 8.11** Generic and/or group feedback can be provided in addition to individual feedback, but not as a substitute for individual feedback.
- 8.12** Staff must ensure that information on how to access marks and feedback, along with who to contact if they have queries or questions relating to the feedback provided, is communicated to students.

9 RELATED POLICIES & PROCEDURES

- 9.1** This Code of Practice relates to several other policies and procedures, as noted in the text at the relevant sections. These are also referred to in the document control information.

10 REVIEW APPROVAL & PUBLICATION

- 10.1** This code of practice must be reviewed a minimum of every three years, though may be updated more frequently to reflect developments in University policy and assessment and feedback practices, or if deemed necessary by University Education Committee.
- 10.2** In accordance with the University Policy Framework, Codes of Practice are approved by UEC, this document should be recommended for approval by Education Committee and any updates reported to Senate.

11 EQUALITY IMPACT ANALYSIS

- 11.1** Equality issues have been considered during the development of this Code of Practice and all protected characteristics have been considered as part of the Equality Analysis undertaken.

12 ANNEXES

Annex 1 – Glossary of general assessment terms and terminology relating to different assessment types

Annex 2 – Procedures for implementing 28-hour open-book assessments

Annex 3 – Example Assessment Brief Template

Annex 4 – Guidance for Schools on how to manage the approval of Assessment Briefs

13 DOCUMENT CONTROL INFORMATION:

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<i>For Office Use – Keywords for search function</i>	

Annex 1: Glossary of key terms relating to assessment and assessment types

General Terms:

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Portfolio: A portfolio of work in recognition of prior learning. Typically used to assess a learner who is entering the University at a 'non-standard' point in a programme of study (e.g., transferring from other institutions), or to exempt an individual from specific modules and/or assessments.

Active-Working Time: This is the amount of time that a typical student should spend working on a specific assessment during the 28-hour assessment window. All open-book assessments should have a suggested active-working time, which helps to set clear expectations of students. The suggested wording by which this would be presented to students would be: *'the time available to complete this assessment is 28 hours but you would normally not be expected to invest more than 2 hours of active-working time on this assessment'*.

Assessment Component: An assessment item which is listed in the module descriptor separately as a single assessment item and recorded on SCIMS with a single mark.

Assessment Window: All open-book assessments should have a clearly defined assessment window in which students are able to access, complete and submit the assessment. This is normally 28 hours (from 9 am (local time) on the first working day until 1 pm (local time) on the second working day). Assessment windows are designed to be inclusive and supportive of all students, and to allow for all technical issues and reasonable adjustment requirements. All open-book assessments that specify an assessment window should also state a suggested 'active working time.' There is no requirement for students to remain online for the duration of the assessment window. Once students have accessed their assessment paper or brief, they can work offline and submit their assessment online when ready.

Authentic Assessment: is assessment that is discipline-specific and often designed to replicate tasks that students might undertake as working professionals in that disciplinary context. Authentic assessment requires students to apply their skills and knowledge to specific scenarios or problems, and often uses creative ways to assess students. Authentic assessment is designed to assess students' critical thinking, creativity and problem-solving skills.

Diagnostic Assessment: is assessment which is used to provide an indicator of a students' prior knowledge or readiness for a task or programme of study.

Formative Assessment: is assessment with a developmental purpose. Formative assessment helps students to monitor their own progress and to identify their strengths and limitations. It provides an opportunity to feed forward into subsequent learning which may be assessed summatively. For staff, formative assessment can provide insights into areas or topics that students may be struggling with and enable teaching methods and plans to be adapted accordingly. Providing opportunities for students to engage in formative assessment activities should be an integral part of curriculum design, helping to support students' understanding of what is required of them in an assessment task, enabling students to make judgements about their own work, and encouraging students to take responsibility for their learning.

Peer Assessment: is a type of assessment where students reflect upon and provide feedback and/or marks on the work of other students.

Summative Assessment: is assessment which count towards credit. It is assessment which is used to evaluate student learning and assign a mark or grade. Summative assessment can also help students to monitor their own progress and to identify their strengths and weaknesses but is considered

more 'high stakes' than formative assessment. Feedback on summative assessment can help students to improve subsequent assessments and can help staff to develop teaching methods and plans for subsequent cohorts.

Self-Assessment: is a type of assessment where students reflect upon their own learning and provide feedback and/or marks to themselves based on this reflection.

Assessment Glossary:

The University has established agreed, consistent terminology relating to the different types of assessment that students might be expected to undertake which are as follows:

Assignment : A generic term which should be used for all assessment which does not fall under any other assessment definition. "Assessment" should be used for work completely independently, where no other assessment codes are considered suitable. All group assignments/assessments should be categorised under 'Group Assessment'.

Class Test: An opportunity for students to apply their knowledge and/or understanding within time-restricted conditions (typically up to 1 hr) during a timetabled session as an integral part of a module. Class tests may be conducted on campus or online (e.g., via the KLE) and are set and scheduled by module leaders. Students should be informed of the date, time, and duration of any class test at the beginning of the module.

Competence: An evaluation of a learner's skills and abilities against a defined set of criteria.

Creative Brief: A description, outline or plan of a creative piece of work.

Dissertation: A research project, usually conducted during a students' final, or penultimate, year of undergraduate study.

Dissertation Plan: A structured, concise written document which outlines the plan of research, usually completed in preparation for a final year, or penultimate year, dissertation.

Essay: A piece of formal writing on a specific subject, or in response to a specific question that develops an argument using evidence.

Essay Plan: The basic outline of an essay which helps learners to organise ideas and highlight key arguments.

Examination (Exam): An opportunity for students to apply their knowledge and/or understanding under invigilated conditions (typically 2-3 hours but can be shorter). All examinations should take place on campus, or in an alternative agreed setting (e.g., the Clinical Education Centre). Examinations can also be practical in nature. All examinations should be scheduled centrally by Student Records and Exams. Where exemptions are permitted, Schools should report the date and time of such assessments to Student Records and Exams.

Exercise: A task or activity which requires learners to apply their skills and knowledge to complete the task, or series of tasks successfully.

Externally Developed Assessment: for some programmes, externally developed assessments are used which must comply with Professional and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements. These assessments can continue to be used as part of a varied assessment diet, as per PSRB requirements.

Flexible Class Test: An opportunity for students to apply their knowledge and/or understanding within time-limited conditions (typically up to 1 hr) but within a flexible assessment window (typically one week). The questions set for students should be constructed in a way that prevents

students from being able to simply 'look up' the answers. Flexible class tests usually take place online (e.g., via the KLE or similar). Students have the flexibility to choose when they take the test however, once students have started the test the countdown timer begins to run.

Field Notebook: A record of key observations, tasks completed, and/or data collected in the field.

Group Assignment: An assessment completed as a group, typically formed of around 4-6 learners. Many assessment types can be completed as a group assessment (e.g., presentations, posters, podcasts, essays, reports). Staff should provide clear guidance on group size, the nature/format of the task to be completed, whether any form of peer assessment is being used, and how marks will be allocated to group members.

Laboratory Book: A record of specific tasks, actions and/or research undertaken in the laboratory.

Laboratory Practicals: An assessment of specific practical task undertaken in the laboratory

Laboratory Report: A lab report describes the aim, methods, results and conclusions of an experiment conducted in a laboratory.

Literature Review: A written assessment which demonstrates a learner's knowledge and understanding of the academic literature on a specific topic, or in response to a specific question. Literature reviews also include critical appraisal and evaluation of published material (e.g., journal articles, books etc).

Listening Assessment: A listening assessment tests a learner's ability to process, understand and respond to information delivered by audio.

Marketing Plan: An outline of the strategy that will be implemented to sell or advertise a product or service.

Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE): a type of examination specific to Medicine and Health Sciences that assesses competency in a structured way through direct observation. OSCEs are used to test a wide range of clinical skills and can be written or practical in nature.

Open-Book Assessment: An opportunity for students to apply their knowledge, understanding and skills within a **28-hour assessment window**. Students can access and utilise any resources available to them during the assessment window (e.g. notes, textbooks, journal articles, internet resources, KLE resources etc.). Students should work independently on the assessment unless specified otherwise. The questions set for students in an open-book assessment should be constructed in a way that prevents students from being able to simply 'look up' the answers online. The requirements of the open-book assessment should be clearly articulated to students via the module KLE space. All open-book assessments should specify an **active working time**, which helps to set clear expectations for students. All open-book assessments should normally be scheduled centrally by Student Records and Exams. Where exemptions are permitted, Schools should report the date and time of such assessments to Student Records and Exams.

Options: A student has choice in the nature of the assessment to be submitted. For example, a student may be able to choose between submitting an essay, podcast or presentation, which all enable the module ILOs to be met. Staff should provide clear information on acceptable forms of assessment submission.

Placement: An assessment of the tasks undertaken and/or skills and knowledge applied whilst on placement (e.g., a work placement, industrial placement, overseas placement, clinical placement).

Podcast: A digital audio file made available for downloading, typically short in duration, which may form part of a series which listeners can subscribe to.

Portfolio: A series of tasks and/or collection of evidence which evidences a learner's application of skills and knowledge. The artifacts within a portfolio may be in written, physical and/or digital format, or as a combination of formats.

Poster: A summary of a topic, idea, or key research findings presented in a visual way. Poster assessments may, or may not, be accompanied by short oral presentations and/or question and answer sessions.

Practice-based Assessment: An evaluation of a learner's ability to apply skills and knowledge in a professional context.

Professional Development: An individual evaluation of skills, values, interests and/or work performance.

Presentation: A talk given to an audience which may be accompanied by visuals such as PowerPoint slides and which typically includes the opportunity for the audience to ask questions.

Problem Sheets: A series of short answer questions or tasks, typically related to material recently covered in classes, which require individual's to apply their skills and knowledge in order to arrive at an answer.

Project: A task or activity which seeks to achieve a specific aim and/or series of objectives.

Reflective Diary: A reflective diary, sometimes referred to as reflective journal, learning log or learning journal, is a place for learners to demonstrate and consolidate their learning through the process of reflection.

Report: A concise, written account of a task or activity, or something that has been investigated. Reports often involve analysing a problem and/or data, summarising key findings and providing solutions.

Research Paper: A piece of formal academic writing, written in publication format that presents data and/or key findings of an investigation and/or piece of research.

Research Participation: An assessment which allows students to participate in research conducted by staff and students. Students will take part in a set number of minutes of research as defined by School/module requirements.

Research Proposal: A structured, concise written document which outlines the plan of research. A research proposal typically describes a projects' aims and objectives, outlines key methods and provides a timeframe within which the research will be completed.

Research Report: A structured document which presents a comprehensive account of a research project including the results of the investigations, a summary of key findings and conclusions.

Review: A piece of work requiring learners to critically reflect upon and/or evaluate a book, journal article, podcast, website or other piece of written, printed, audio or audio-visual work. Reviews can be in written, audio or audio-visual form.

Speaking Assessment: A test to evaluate a learner's speaking skills and abilities.

Video Blog: A blog or log where the format of materials is in video format.

Viva: An oral discussion in which a learner has opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of topics and/or ideas. Vivas usually provide learners with an opportunity to expand on written work, or they may be used to test the authenticity and authorship of a piece of work.

Workbook: A series of exercises of tasks relating to a specific topic.

Website: A collection of content, identified by a common domain name, relating to a specific topic or purpose.

Annex 2: Expectations of how to implement the principles of 28-hour open-book assessments

This document sets out the expectations for staff, in the form of FAQs, on how to implement the previously approved principles on examinations and open-book assessments approved at Senate in June 2022. These expectations should be implemented for all 28-hour open-book assessments from the 2023/24 academic year and should be read in conjunction with the [University's Code of Practice on Examinations and Open-Book Assessments](#).

1. What is an open-book assessment?

Open-book assessments are an opportunity for students to apply their knowledge, understanding and skills within a 28-hour assessment window. Students can access and utilise any resources available to them during the assessment window (e.g., notes, textbooks, journal articles, internet resources, KLE resources etc.). Students should work independently on the assessment unless specified otherwise.

2. Why use open-book assessments?

Open-book assessments are designed to be inclusive and supportive of all students and to allow for all technical and reasonable adjustment requirements. Whilst still time limited in nature, students have the flexibility to complete an assessment at a time which suits them within a pre-defined assessment window. Students are also permitted access to learning resources (e.g., notes, textbooks, journal articles, internet resources, KLE resources etc.) during an open-book assessment. This enables more authentic assessment tasks to be set by staff, requiring students to demonstrate skills that go beyond the simple recall of information. The move to a more flexible approach to open-book assessments has largely been welcomed by students and may have led to enhanced student performance and a reduction of attainment gaps for some APP groups.

3. What is an assessment window?

All open-book assessments should have a clearly defined assessment window in which students are able to access, complete and submit the assessment. This is normally 28 hours (from 9 am (local time) on the first working day until 1 pm (local time) on the second working day). Assessment windows are designed to be inclusive and supportive of all students, and to allow for all technical issues and reasonable adjustment requirements.

4. Is an open-book assessment not just another term for an exam - but with more time?

No. The tasks set for students in an open-book assessment should be constructed in a way that prevents students from being able to simply 'look up' the answers online. 28-hour open-book assessments need to be designed differently to traditional exams – and in a way in which it is difficult for students to collude on their answers. For example, each student might have a different study area or topic to focus on, or a different sub-set of data to work with, or students are all issued with a slightly different set of questions. Open-book assessments enable more complex questions to be asked compared to a traditional exam and usually require students to do more than simple recall of knowledge. Students should not be expected to spend the full 28-hours working on an open-book exam and all open-book exams should have a suggested 'active working time'.

5. What is meant by 'active working time'?

This is the amount of time that a typical student should spend working on a specific assessment task during the 28-hour assessment window. All open-book assessments should have a suggested active-working time, which helps to set clear expectations of students. The suggested wording by

which this would be presented to students would be: *'the time available to complete this assessment is 28 hours but you would normally not be expected to invest more than 2 hours of active-working time on this assessment'*.

6. When and how should open-book assessments be scheduled?

For UG programmes which follow the traditional structure of the academic year, open-book assessments should take place during the University Assessment periods at the end of the Autumn and Spring semesters. It is recognised that not all programmes follow the traditional structure of the academic year and for these programmes, open-book assessments may be scheduled at other times. All open-book assessments will be scheduled centrally by the Student Records and Exams team. Where exemptions are permitted, Schools should report the date and time of such assessments to Student Records and Exams. Academic staff should liaise with relevant PSS colleagues in their Faculty to ensure that open-book assessments are centrally scheduled.

7. Do open-book assessments need to be approved by External Examiners?

Open-book assessment tasks and question papers should be treated as per any other assessment. External Examiners should have oversight of these assessments and have opportunity to comment on them in advance of the assessment being taken by students.

8. How long should I give students to complete an open-book assessment?

All open-book assessments should adopt the institution-wide assessment window of 28-hours, unless explicit permission has been granted for a different timeframe to be used. Schools wishing to adopt a different timeframe will need to provide a clear, pedagogic rationale for doing so and permission should be sought from the Faculty's Dean of Education in the first instance.

9. How and when should open-book assessments be released to students?

It is the responsibility of Schools to ensure clear processes are in place for the release of open-book assessments to students. Open-book assessment papers should be released at 9 am on day one of the assessment window via the KLE, with students required to submit their answers by 1 pm the following working day. Schools should ensure that relevant Turnitin dropboxes are set up for students to submit work to. It is possible to set up files on the KLE for a 'timed release'.

10. What format should open-book assessments be in?

Open-book assessments can be in any format, as long as clear guidance is provided to students in terms of what they need to do. Some open-book assessments may be in the form of a single task or question, others may require students to answer a series of shorter questions, draw and interpret data, or make calculations (and show workings). However, open-book assessments should be designed in such a way that prevents students from being able to simply 'look up' the answers to questions. Students will need to be able to adjust the format of any open-book assessment paper according to their needs (e.g., change font size, background colour etc.) and so PDF files should be avoided.

11. What resources are students allowed to use for an open-book assessment?

Staff should provide clear guidance to students on the type of resources they can use during an open book assessment at module leave. Unless specified otherwise, students should normally be able to access and utilise any resources available during the assessment window including notes, textbooks, journal articles, internet resources, resources on the KLE etc.

12. Are students allowed to collaborate with others as part of an open-book assessment?

Unless specified otherwise, students must not take any actions during the assessment that would be classed as academic misconduct. This includes plagiarising the work of others, distributing or sharing questions or other relevant information relating to the assessment during the assessment window, working with their peers, and obtaining or attempting to obtain unpermitted assistance in the creation of an assignment during the open-book assessment window. Further information can be found in the University's [Academic Misconduct Code of Practice](#).

13. What guidance should I give to students in terms of completing an open-book assessment?

Module leaders (or the relevant academic staff member) should provide students with the following guidance (see also the 'checklist for staff' at the end of this document):

- a suggested 'active working time' within which to complete the open-book assessment within the 28-hour assessment window. The suggested wording by which this would be presented to students would be: *'the time available to complete this assessment is 28 hours but you would normally not be expected to invest more than 2 hours of active working time on this assessment'*.
- an indication of the expected word/page limits for each question or section (if appropriate).
- examples of the types of resources students can use during the open-book assessment window and if there are any specific exceptions
- Information/instructions on when and how to submit their work
- contact details for an academic member staff member in the School (usually the module leader), who is available at the start (and end) of the 28-hour assessment window to answer questions (e.g., if an assessment paper is not visible to students at the designated time of release).

14. Can I answer questions from students about an open-book assessment during the 'assessment window'?

Yes, but only basic questions that relate to clarification of instructions (e.g., confirmation of word limits or time spent working on the paper), or issues with accessing question papers (i.e., technological issues) can be answered.

15. Can I provide formative feedback to students on drafts of their answers to open-book assessments?

No. In the interests of equality for all students' staff should not provide any formative feedback on draft answers during the designated 'assessment window'. However, staff may provide students with access to example open-book assessments (or past papers) as part of their preparation for the assessment (if appropriate).

16. What support should be available to students in Schools during the assessment window?

A relevant academic staff member, usually the module leader, should be available (via email or Teams) when open-book assessment papers are released to students to help with any immediate issues (such as an assessment paper not being accessible to students at the appropriate time). There are no requirements for staff to be available for the entire duration of the 28-hour assessment window.

17. What if a student is ill during the assessment window?

If a student falls ill during an open-book assessment and is unable to complete the assessment during the assessment window, then they should submit an EC claim for another assessment opportunity.

18. Does the 7-day automatic extension apply to open-book assessments?

No, the automatic 7-day extension does not apply to open-book assessments.

19. Can students submit work late (up to one week after the deadline) and receive a capped mark for an open-book assessment?

No. The nature of open-book assessments means that they are time-limited tasks. Students submitting after the 1 pm deadline should receive a mark of zero (0%) for the assessment. If a student has valid exceptional circumstances which prevented them from submitting the open-book assessment on time, then they should submit an EC claim for another assessment opportunity.

20. What about students with reasonable adjustments? Do I need to make different arrangements?

Open-book assessments are designed to be inclusive and supportive of all students, and to allow for all technical and reasonable adjustment requirements. You should not need to make different arrangement for students with reasonable adjustments except in some very specific circumstances (e.g., a student requires a support worker to help with the assessment).

21. How can I help students prepare for their open-book assessment?

A similar guidance document has been written for [students](#). Students should be referred to their own guidance document for initial queries. You may also want to upload a copy of the guidance document for students to your module page on the KLE.

22. How should students submit their open-book assessments?

It is the responsibility of Schools to ensure clear processes are in place for setting up Turnitin submission drop boxes (or equivalent) for students to submit their answers to open-book assessments. Module leaders (or the relevant academic staff member) should provide students with guidance on when and how to submit their work.

Annex 3: Example Assessment Brief Template. The Assessment Brief template in use should be approved by the relevant Faculty Education Committee to provide greater consistency for students undertaking modules across Faculty



Assessment Brief

Module Title	
Module Code	
Assessment Type	
Assessment Title	
Weighting (% of module mark)	
Assessment Length (e.g., word count or duration)	
Submission Deadline	
Format of Submission	
Feedback Release Date	
Staff Contact Details	

Assessment Details:

[Include here clear and concise details of the task that students are expected to complete for this assessment]

Module Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) and/or Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs):

In this assessment the following module ILOs and/or KSBs will be assessed:

ILO1: xxxxxx

KSB1: xxxxxxxx

Assessment Criteria:

[Provide link to the University's Generic Assessment criteria, links to specific marking rubrics, or local adaptations of these, as appropriate. Alternatively, this information might direct students to a specific section of the module handbook, or location on the KLE.

Feedback to Students:

[Provide brief information here about how feedback will be provided to students and how they can access that feedback]

Academic Misconduct:

Academic misconduct is doing something that could give you an unfair advantage in an assessment. It includes, but is not limited to, the following: plagiarism; collusion; contract cheating; cheating in an examination; falsification of data or sources; falsification of official documents or signatures. The University treats academic misconduct very seriously and penalties will be given for proven cases, including termination of studies in serious cases. It is therefore very important that you understand how to prepare and take assessments honestly. In order to assist you with this there are various resources and help available both as part of your programme of study and also centrally. For more information please visit:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/students/academiclife/appeals-complaints-conduct/studentacademicconduct/>

Annex 4: Guidance for Schools on how to manage the approval of summative Assessment Briefs

Note: An indicative timeframe for implementing the approval of Assessment Briefs is provided below. It is suggested that this process is facilitated by using Sharepoint, so that External Examiners and module leaders can comment on and respond to comments on the same shared document, which is stored in a central location.

1. External Examiners must have opportunity to provide feedback on summative assessment briefs that count towards a student’s final award.
2. Module leaders, or the academic staff member responsible for setting the assessment, must make any changes to the Assessment Brief as deemed necessary as a result of the comments from the External Examiner.
3. Module leaders must provide a response to the comments from the relevant External Examiner. Where the module leader does not agree with the suggestions provided by the External Examiner, a brief rationale must be provided for this. Responses to the External Examiner’s feedback on Assessment Briefs must be retained and stored as a central record within Schools which can be viewed by External Examiners, as desired.
4. Following implementation of any feedback from External Examiners, all summative assessment briefs (at Levels-3-7) must be approved by the relevant School Education Committee prior to the start of each Semester and before publication to students. This approval can be conducted as virtual exercise with Committee members being invited to comment on Assessment Briefs, as appropriate.
5. Module leaders should ensure that the approved Assessment Briefs are published on the relevant module KLE page at the beginning of each Semester.
6. Once approved by School Education Committee, Assessment Briefs will not need to be re-approved each academic year unless there are significant changes to the content and/or nature of the assessment.

Indicative timeframe for implementing the approval of Assessment Briefs. The example provided below assumes teaching begins in Semester 1, Week 1 (September). Timeframes will need to be adjusted for other Semesters and programmes with different start dates.

Activity	Timeframe	Responsibility
Assessment Officers liaise with External Examiners to agree timeframe over the summer for reviewing Assessment Briefs	May/June	Assessment Officers
Module Leaders draft Assessment Briefs for all summative assessment for Semester 1	June/July	Module Leaders
Assessment Briefs (for all assessment that counts towards a student’s final award) are set to External Examiners for feedback	Late July or early August* - Two or three-week period for review and commenting	Assessment Officers working with PSS teams.
Module Leaders consider and respond to feedback provided by External Examiners	Late August/early September* Two-week period for consideration of feedback and	Module Leaders

	any changes made to the Assessment Briefs.	
Module Leaders submit Assessment Briefs to School Education Committee	Early September. Specific Deadline to be determined by School Directors of Education	Module Leaders, School Directors of Education
Assessment Briefs are approved by School Education Committee	Mid-September. Minimum of two weeks prior to the start of the next teaching session/Semester	School Directors of Education
Assessment Briefs are published on the relevant module KLE pages at the beginning of each module	Prior to the first teaching session for that specific module.	Module Leaders

**Timeframes will need to be flexible around research commitments, annual leave and other commitments especially in the summer months.*