

Tameside College

HE Assessment Policy

2024/25

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Introduction

- 1.1. At Tameside (we), our HE Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) Strategy identifies our aim of ensuring continuous improvement in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and to attain consistently high-quality outcomes across all HE provision in terms of student (you) achievement, retention, progression, and satisfaction.
- 1.2. The purpose of our HE Assessment Policy is therefore to provide a framework for your assessment, detailing how the assessment aspects of our [HE Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy](#) will be implemented.
- 1.3. It addresses:
 - Assessment for Learning
 - Evaluation of assessment

Scope

- 2.1. This policy and procedure applies to all students (you) completing Higher Education (HE) courses at Tameside College. It explains how assessment of our HE programmes will be developed, delivered, and evaluated, regardless of delivery venue or staff involved. It covers all assessed work that you will complete during your time on your chosen programme.
- 2.2. This document should be read in conjunction with the following relevant documents:
 - [HE Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy](#),
 - [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Policy](#),
 - [HE Academic Misconduct policy](#),
 - [HE Extenuating Circumstances & Extensions policy & procedure](#)
 - [HE Academic Appeals Policy](#)
 - [HE Compliant Policy](#)
- 2.3. This policy has been written in accordance with in line with the [Equality Act 2010](#).
- 2.4. We work with university partners, Huddersfield University, Chester University and The Open University. The regulations and procedures for The Open University, Huddersfield University and Chester University can be found in [Appendix 1](#). Where

there is difference between our regulations and that of our partners, we will signpost you to the relevant information.

Recognition of prior learning

- 3.1. Where permitted by the awarding body, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) enables students to receive credit for any relevant prior experience or certified learning, and to avoid duplication of study.
- 3.2. Provided that the learning outcomes of a given unit, module or qualification can be demonstrated as achieved, the use of RPL is acceptable for admissions purposes within any constraints set by the awarding body. For further information please see the [HE Admissions and Recruitment policy and the Academic Regulations](#).
- 3.3. The student record system should formally note any assessments that have been achieved through RPL.

Reasonable adjustments

- 4.1. In compliance with the [Equality Act 2010](#), we will ensure students who have a disability, long term health condition, mental health difficulty or specific learning difficulty that affects their studies, as well as students facing accessibility issues for other reasons, are effectively supported.
- 4.2. As part of this commitment, we offer the provision for students to apply for reasonable adjustments for their assessments under our [Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy](#) and contact [Student Support Services](#) for further information.

Roles and responsibilities

Assistant Principal

- Establishing and maintaining the overall assessment policy.
- Ensuring the policy aligns with the college's mission and strategic goals.
- Providing resources and support for effective implementation of the policy.

Teaching Staff

- Designing assessments that align with learning outcomes.
- Providing clear and timely feedback to students.
- Participating in professional development activities related to assessment.

Administrative Staff

- Coordinating assessment schedules and logistics.
- Ensuring compliance with college and external regulatory policies.
- Managing assessment data and reporting results.

Students

- Actively participating in assessments.
- Reflecting on feedback to improve learning.
- Adhering to academic integrity standards.

Senior Leadership Team (Quality Assurance)

- Reviewing and updating the assessment policy regularly.
- Conducting audits to ensure policy compliance.
- Identifying areas for improvement based on assessment data.

External Examiners

- Providing an independent review of assessment processes and standards.
- Offering recommendations for improvement.
- Ensuring comparability of standards with other institutions.

Understanding assessment principles

- 5.1. Assessments are a crucial part of your academic journey. They provide a platform for you to showcase your understanding and mastery of the programme content. They also ensure that the standards of your award or programme are met. Here are the main principles of assessment:

Purpose: Assessments allow you to demonstrate your achievement of the learning outcomes of a programme.

Fairness: Assessments should be objective, impartial, consistent, and free from bias.

Referencing: Accurate referencing is essential.

Clarity: The purpose and objectives of assessments should align with the learning outcomes of the programme.

Progression: You should understand what is required to progress to the next module or academic year.

Methodology: Assessment methods should be suitable for the course objectives and capable of testing the learning outcomes.

Communication: The relevant learning outcomes and assessment criteria will be communicated to you, typically in a course handbook.

Information: You will receive information about any different approaches used by awarding bodies.

Standards: Procedures are in place to maintain marking standards, including comparability with previous years.

Credit: Academic credit is awarded only when the relevant learning outcomes have been achieved.

Feedback: Assessment outcomes are communicated promptly, with meaningful and honest feedback to support learning.

- 5.2. At the start of your course, you will receive a course/subject handbook and an assessment schedule. This schedule helps manage your assessments throughout the

year and aims to prevent multiple submissions in a short period. It is agreed upon before the course starts.

Assessment of learning

Types of assessment

5.3. There are two main categories for assessment formative assessment and summative assessment.

5.4. **Formative assessment** is often informal and ungraded. It provides ongoing feedback to support your learning during your course and are an integral part of your learning process. The aim of formative assessment is to identify areas where you are performing well and areas that you require further support. They allow your teacher to adjust their teaching methods where necessary and help you understand what you need to focus on and improve. Examples of formative assessment include (but not limited to):

- Short quizzes
- Class discussions
- Peer review
- Question and Answer sessions
- learning logs and reflective diaries/reports
- peer and self-assessment
- role-playing exercises

5.5. **Summative assessment** evaluates your learning at the end of a module and/or programme. They are formal and graded assessments designed to assess your knowledge of the programme material against defined standards and benchmarks for that programme. Summative assessments count towards your final grade in the programme. Examples of summative assessment include (but not limited to):

- Timed examinations (open and closed book)
- Portfolios
- Presentations
- Projects (individual and group)

- Multiple-choice tests,
- Data interpretation,
- Laboratory reports,
- Case studies,
- Posters,
- Essays or Assignments,
- Computer-based assignments,
- Group-based activity,
- Problem- and practice-based experiential activity,
- Viva voce (oral examination),
- Critiquing published information,
- Independent research.

Setting of assessments

- 5.6. We encourage the development and use of authentic assessment to encourage genuine individual contributions and minimise opportunities for academic misconduct. To this end we make use of Turnitin software to assist teaching staff in detecting plagiarised material in assignments.
- 5.7. We will ensure that, at each assessment point, you understand:
- how the assessment supports your development and learning.
 - the relationship between and contribution from a particular assessment and others in the same module
 - the purpose of the assessment
 - the method of assessment
 - the assessment task
 - the learning outcomes covered by the assessment task
 - the assessment grading criteria
 - the deadlines for, and method of submission
 - who will be responsible for assessing and verifying/moderating your work

Submitting assessments

- 5.8. The method for submitting assessed work varies between our awarding bodies, and whether work is submitted directly to the awarding body or to the College. The approach applying to your course will be fully explained to you during your course induction and in Course Handbooks.
- 5.9. For student studying with on our University Partnership courses with The Open University, Huddersfield University and Chester University, please refer to [Appendix 1](#) for your submission methods and regulations.
- 5.10. The cut-off time for submitting assessments is dependent on the awarding body of your course. This deadline is dictated by individual awarding bodies and will be clearly communicated in your Course Handbooks and the assessment brief.
- 5.11. Late submissions are only permitted with formally approved extensions or extenuating circumstances. In such approved cases, your work will be marked as if it had been submitted on time. Please see the [HE Extension and Extenuating Circumstances policy](#) for details. Late submissions without approval will incur penalties in accordance with the awarding body regulations (see [Appendix 1](#) for this information).
- 5.12. You are strongly advised to submit your assessment in advance of the deadline, to give sufficient time to resolve any technical difficulties that you may encounter. Technical requirements are determined by individual courses and if guidance is required it will be issued to you in course handbooks. Take care to ensure that you upload the correct file for submission. Whilst not all awarding bodies permit a second submission, if you do submit an incorrect file by accident before the deadline date, you must notify your teacher and the [HE Quality Officer](#) who will be able to advise.
- 5.13. You are strongly recommended to keep a copy of your assessments and to make regular backups of your computer memory.

Academic integrity

- 5.14. You are expected to maintain academic integrity throughout your period of study in accordance with the [HE Academic Misconduct policy](#).

- 5.15. It is your responsibility to ensure that any work presented for assessment is your own, and that any work (e.g., a collaboration) or opinions of others are appropriately acknowledged. To reinforce this responsibility, you are required to include a declaration of integrity with every piece of work you present for summative assessment.
- 5.16. When completing assessments, you will use a variety of sources such as textbooks, journals, the Internet, teacher handouts and class notes. Any information taken from these sources must be cited in the body of the assignment and details included in a properly formatted reference list at the end of the work.
- 5.17. Teaching staff use anti plagiarism software called [Turnitin](#) to assist their judgement regarding the academic integrity of your work. Full details of this are available in the [HE Academic Misconduct Policy](#).

Assessment grading and feedback

- 6.1. Your work is marked, and feedback given, within the timeframe defined in the awarding body guidelines. This is typically between 10 to 15 working days of submission, and details will be given in your course Handbook.
- 6.2. Formative assessment is given routinely as part of the teaching process. All formative assessments will be scrutinised, and feedback provided to you on what you have achieved (and not achieved), and on how to improve and prepare for summative assessments. This will enable you to monitor and track your own progress and identify your readiness to complete summative assessments.
- 6.3. Summative assessment is used to quantify your achievement and a grade will be awarded by your teacher. Feedback will also be given to explain the grade, and may be provided using a standardised rubric, or as written explanation from your teacher. In some cases, there will also be formative aspects to this feedback which may assist work in future modules or courses. Feedback, whilst typically given in writing, may also be given verbally, to individual students or to the whole group.
- 6.4. Peer and self-assessment may be used as part of the assessment of learning process within the classroom. Your consent will be obtained prior to your work being used in teaching, learning and peer assessment and/or marking activities.

- 6.5. Prior to the release of provisional summative grades, the marking process and grades are verified and moderated by another member of teaching staff to affirm that the grading criteria have been properly applied, and that learning outcomes have been achieved.
- 6.6. The marking process involves two stages prior to the release of provisional grades. In the first instance your work is marked by your teacher and then it is independently moderated by another marker. The moderator will not have been involved in the teaching of your programme and will be ensuring that your work has been marked fairly and consistently in line with the assessment criteria.
- 6.7. Where assessments are in the form of assignments, all assignments and provisional grades are returned at the same time before or on the hand back deadline. The format of the feedback may be dictated by our awarding bodies and thus may differ from course to course. Feedback is generally made available electronically.

Moderation and Verification

- 6.8. **Moderation** is a quality assurance process to confirm that assessment standards are applied consistently and accurately across all markers and over time.
- 6.9. We moderate your assessments by sample remarks.
- 6.10. **Verification** is a process that checks the accuracy of the assessment decisions made. It ensures that the assessment tasks are fit for purpose, the assessment decisions are reliable, and the feedback provided to students is appropriate and constructive.
- 6.11. Verification often involves an external examiner or verifier who reviews a sample of student work to confirm the assessment decisions.
- 6.12. Verification may also be used:
- when marks are out of line with previous years?
 - when there is a disagreement on marks between markers?
 - academic appeal outcomes?

Provisional marks

- 6.13. Provisional marks are preliminary grades that are given for summative assessments after they have been assessed, but before they have been finalised by the module,

course assessment or examination board. The purpose of providing provisional marks is to give you an early indication of your performance.

- 6.14. Provisional marks are expected to be available on Mark Book or the individual university systems 15 working days after final work is submitted in accordance with individual course assessment plans. You may also receive feedback and marks less formally in subject tutorials. Thus, both teachers and you can assess your progress on a periodic basis. Your marks will not be publicly displayed nor read out.
- 6.15. Your provisional marks are subject to change the verification/moderation process. The marks will only be confirmed after consideration by the relevant assessment/examination board and ratification by the awarding body. As part of this process, your work and marks may be reviewed by an external examiner, who is also asked to confirm whether the standards achieved align with national published expectations.
- 6.16. The various awarding bodies adopt different scoring systems (e.g., some use pass/merit/ distinction, some use percentage grades). For details of your course scoring system see your [course handbook](#) or [Appendix 1](#).

Assessment Boards

- 6.17. An Assessment Board plays a crucial role in maintaining the quality and credibility of academic assessments, providing assurance to students, teachers, and external stakeholders that the assessment process is rigorous, fair, and transparent.
- 6.18. The board sets the standards for each assessment, ensuring alignment with the programme learning outcomes and our academic regulations and policies. It also plays a pivotal role in the creation and review of examination/assessment papers, ensuring they are of appropriate difficulty and cover the necessary content areas.
- 6.19. It reviews extenuating circumstances applications, academic misconduct reports and decide if appropriate action should be taken and how.
- 6.20. The board verifies the assessment results before they are released, checking for errors and anomalies, and confirming that all students have been graded fairly and consistently.

Failing an Assessment

- 6.21. If you fail your assessment, you may be offered a further opportunity to successfully complete it, however this will depend on the regulations set out by the awarding body. For further information on each university partner see [Appendix 1](#) or refer to your [course handbook](#).

Evaluation of assessment

- 7.1. Our Annual HE Quality Cycle oversees assessment activities and outcomes, with a detailed Quality Assurance Mechanisms in place. For University partnered courses, the partner institution's academic regulations are followed, and the course team ensures compliance.
- 7.2. Assessment strategies are approved at validation events, and tasks are externally examined before issuing. Graded work is internally verified to ensure consistent grading and achievement of learning outcomes. The external examiner will scrutinise and engage with various elements of the course and college procedures including:
- Course resources
 - Approving the appropriateness of summative assessments that contribute to the classification of the award.
 - Sampling completed student assessments, feedback and standards achieved to confirm the accuracy of marking and affirm that the standards achieved both reflect achievement of the learning outcomes and align with national expectations.
 - Sampling evidence of the internal quality processes such as Internal Verification/ Moderation.
- 7.3. The external examiner provides an annual report, to which the College responds. Student achievement data, feedback, and assessment outcomes are tracked by subject staff, and this is monitored by Heads of Department and Assistant Principals. Senior management actively monitors teaching, learning, and assessment activities, intervening as necessary to maintain standards. Course teams regularly review data, develop action plans for assessment issues, and address urgent issues in annual reports and the College's Self-evaluation Report.

Complaints and Academic Appeals

- 8.1. If you wish to appeal against a decision relating an assessment, please consult the [HE Academic Appeals Policy](#).
- 8.2. If you wish to complain about academic standards or a college service, please refer to the [HE Complaints Policy](#).

Equality, diversity, and inclusion

- 9.1. At the core of our institution's HE Assessment Policy is a steadfast commitment to fostering equality, diversity, and inclusion in full accordance with the [Equality Act 2010](#). We are dedicated to eliminating discrimination, advancing equal opportunities, and fostering an inclusive environment for all members of our college community. This commitment extends to every aspect of this policy, ensuring that it adheres to the legal obligations outlined in the [Equality Act 2010](#).
- 9.2. This policy and procedure are inclusive of all Tameside College students, enquirers, and alumni, regardless of age, civil status, dependency or caring status, care experience, disability, family status, gender, gender identity, gender reassignment, marital status, marriage and civil partnerships, membership of the Traveller community, political opinion, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, socio-economic background, sex, sexual orientation, or trades union membership status.

Data protection, confidentiality, and information provided

- 9.3. We are committed to ensuring that we comply with the requirements of the [Data Protection Act 2018](#) during college processes.
- 9.4. All assessment data will be managed and stored in line with our [Data Protection Policy, Privacy Notice and Data Retention Policy](#)..

Glossary

Academic integrity: encompasses principles such as honesty and responsibility in the execution of assessment writing and learning.

Assessment for Learning: An ongoing process that allows teachers to check students' understanding, and to guide teaching decisions.

Evaluation of assessment: The process of judging the quality, importance, or worth of an assessment after careful appraisal and study.

Examination Board: A body that sets the standards for each assessment, ensuring alignment with the programme learning outcomes and academic regulations and policies.

External Examiners: Individuals who provide an independent review of assessment processes and standards.

Formative assessment: An informal, ongoing type of assessment used to monitor student learning and provide ongoing feedback.

HE Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) Strategy: A strategy that identifies the aim of ensuring continuous improvement in the quality of teaching, learning, and assessment.

Moderation: A quality assurance process to confirm that assessment standards are applied consistently and accurately across all markers and over time.

Provisional marks: Preliminary grades given for summative assessments after they have been assessed, but before they have been finalised.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL): A process that enables students to receive credit for any relevant prior experience or certified learning.

Reasonable adjustments: Modifications or accommodations made to assessments or the learning environment to allow students with disabilities to participate fully.

Summative assessment: A formal type of assessment used to evaluate student learning at the end of a module or programme.

Turnitin: Anti-plagiarism software used to detect plagiarised material in assignments.

Verification: A process that checks the accuracy of the assessment decisions made.

Related documents

[HE Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy](#),

[Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy](#)

[HE Academic Misconduct policy](#)

[HE Extenuating Circumstances & Extensions policy & procedure](#)

[HE Recruitment and Admissions Policy](#)

[Internal Quality Assurance Policy and Procedure](#)

[HE Academic Appeals Policy](#)

[HE Complaints Policy](#)

[Data Protection Policy](#)

Appendix 1 – University Partner Regulations

Type of Information	Huddersfield University	Chester University	The Open University
Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)	Refer to Course handbook	Refer to Course Handbook	Through Tameside MS Teams site
Information on submissions	<u>Regulations for taught students - University of Huddersfield</u>	<u>Handbook-F---The-Assessment-of-Students-(Taught).pdf (chester.ac.uk)</u>	13.0 of the OU Validation <u>Academic Regulations</u>
Information on late penalties	<u>Regulations for taught students - University of Huddersfield</u>	<u>Handbook-F---The-Assessment-of-Students-(Taught).pdf (chester.ac.uk)</u>	13.0 of the OU Validation <u>Academic Regulations</u>
Assessment scores	<u>Regulations for taught students - University of Huddersfield</u>	<u>Handbook-F---The-Assessment-of-Students-(Taught).pdf (chester.ac.uk)</u>	14.0 of the OU Validation <u>Academic Regulations</u>

Resubmission information	Regulations for taught students - University of Huddersfield	Handbook-F---The- Assessment-of- Students- (Taught).pdf (chester.ac.uk)	17.3 of the OU Validation Academic Regulations
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