

Owner: Academic Quality
Version number: 3.4
Effective date: May 2023
Date of last review: July 2021

This document is part of the Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures which govern the University's academic provision. Each document has a unique document number to indicate which section of the series it belongs to.

6E - Assessment Feedback and Return of Assessed Work: Policy and Procedure

1 SCOPE AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 This policy and procedure is intended for Bournemouth University (BU) staff and outlines the process of providing assessment feedback, returning assessed work to students including students' access to assignment and examination papers and the publication of results.
- 1.2 This policy and procedure should be read in conjunction with the documents listed in section 3 below.

2 KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 **Senate:** to approve new policies or amendments to existing policies relating to assessment feedback and the return of assessed work to students.
- 2.2 **Education Committee:** to consider the effectiveness of the arrangements for assessment feedback and the return of assessed work to students and recommends changes to current policy to Senate. Education Committee will approve new and revised procedures by exception.

3. ACCESSING OTHER RELEVANT BU DOCUMENTS

- 3.1 All documents can be accessed [here](#):
- 3.2 Other documents with direct relevance to this are:
- *6C - Principles of Assessment Design: Policy*
 - *6D - Marking, Independent Marking and Moderation: Policy and Procedure*
 - *6F - Generic Assessment Criteria: Procedure*
 - *6H - Academic Offences: Policy and Procedure for Taught Awards*
 - *6K - Assessment Boards: Policy*
 - *6L - Assessment Board Decision making, including the implementation of Assessment Regulations: Procedure*

Policy

4. PRINCIPLES OF FEEDBACK

For these principles to be effective, students must take responsibility to fully engage with feedback provided to them. Feedback should be flexible and suited to student needs through the following principles:

- 4.1 **Feedback is for learning, as well as a measure of learning**
 - i. Students should receive a mark and feedback for every piece of work submitted as a formal summative assignment¹;
 - ii. It should be used as a learning tool and support future learning as well as providing a measure of learning;
 - iii. Feedback should consist of constructive comments to accompany marks. Feedback where the grade is given but constructive comments are not provided can have negative effects on the self-esteem of students;
 - iv. Students should always be offered the opportunity to discuss their assessed work with markers to seek further clarification and advice.
- 4.2 **Feedback is a continuous process**
 - i. Academic staff should give advice on how to improve the next element of the work;
 - ii. Feedback should allow a student to reflect and develop their learning for the purpose of greater achievement.
- 4.3 **Feedback should be timely**
 - i. Timeliness of feedback provides students with the necessary opportunity to learn lessons prior to completion and submission of the next assessment;
 - ii. Staff should ensure students are aware of timing of receipt of feedback, especially if this exceeds the University's standard service turnaround.
- 4.4 **Feedback should relate to clear criteria**
 - i. Objectives for assessment and grade criteria need to be clearly communicated at the start of the unit and at the time of the issue of assignment briefs. Students should engage with assessment criteria at the earliest opportunity and ensure that assessment requirements are fully understood;
 - ii. Effective dialogue regarding assessment and grading criteria will aid a clear and common understanding between staff and students;
 - iii. Exemplars of good and poor performance and the types of feedback given could be used at the beginning of the course and/or at the time of the issue of assessment briefs;
 - iv. Guidelines around plagiarism and self-plagiarism in particular, as well as other academic offences, should be noted in assignment briefs.
- 4.5 **Feedback should be legible and clear**
 - i. Written feedback must be legible/typed and oral feedback should be clear and understandable. All individual verbal feedback should be conducted in an appropriate manner/setting;
 - ii. Avoidance of jargon and acronyms is desirable except where they relate to the subject/discipline.
- 4.6 **Feedback can be provided on exams**
 - i. Students can request feedback on examinations. BU follows the Information Commissioners Office recommendation of good practice and is 'open, transparent, and accountable', with regard to examination processes.
- 4.7 **Feedback should be accessible to all students**
 - i. Feedback should take into account the needs of all students (full-time, part-time, students with disabilities, student-parents, international, partnership, distance, etc.), and utilise different technologies as appropriate to the context of the mode of study.

Procedure

5. ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK

¹ Exceptions to this rule are outlined in section 5.11.

- 5.1 Feedback on all written assignments (with the exception of dissertations/projects) must be provided to students within the University's service standard turnaround for assessment feedback from the submission date (refer to *6D - Marking, Independent Marking and Moderation: Policy and Procedure* for further details and rulings relating to this).
- 5.2 **Each Faculty is responsible for the production and use of a standard Faculty-wide template for written assignment feedback.** Examples of templates based on good practice developed within the University are provided in Appendix 2. It is acknowledged that the use of a Faculty-wide standard template may not be appropriate in all situations (e.g. electronic feedback in Brightspace, audio feedback and verbal face to face feedback). In these cases, Faculties should try and align standard headings and principles where possible. However it is important that in all situations, students understand when they are receiving structured assignment feedback.
- 5.3 The template, displaying a clear heading, **Assignment Feedback** should be developed in an electronic format following the assignment feedback form contents guidance provided at Appendix 1. Ideally the feedback template should be capable of being mail merged with individual student details.
- 5.4 The minimum requirements for the assignment feedback template (Proforma) are:
- student and examiner details;
 - programme/unit/level details;
 - agreed percentage mark awarded;
 - assignment title;
 - feedback details.
- 5.5 Feedback on summative assessments should normally be given to students on an individual basis, but may be supported by more generic feedback for the whole group, which would typically be made available in the relevant unit pages on Brightspace. The use and dissemination of audio feedback may be made available in a variety of ways. Unit leaders may contact their Faculty Lead Learning Technologist (Section 10.4) for advice on best practice.
- 5.6 Students should be clearly informed, normally on the assignment brief, how they will receive their feedback for the assessment concerned. Written feedback must be legible; it may be hand-written on the feedback template but is normally typed. Oral feedback should be clear and understandable and conducted in an appropriate manner/setting etc. The format, e.g. written, verbal, audio, video or electronic, for providing feedback should be appropriate to the assessment and may vary between assessments and units. Online feedback can be accessed through the Gradebook in Brightspace.
- 5.7 The agreed percentage mark awarded for each assessment should be provided to students as part of any summative assessment feedback. Students should not normally see first and second marks. Students should be made aware that all marks for coursework / examinations are provisional and subject to ratification by the Assessment Boards and therefore may be subject to change. This also applies to work submitted online.
- 5.8 Feedback to students should be constructive and include the percentage mark. Feedback should:
- be appropriately critical, highlighting areas of strength and areas for development;
 - focus on how an improved mark could have been achieved and should help students to improve on their performance in subsequent assessments;
 - explain why the students gained the mark awarded;
 - be directly related to the intended learning outcomes and relevant generic assessment criteria as well as more specifically to the marking criteria as set for the assignment and detailed within the assignment brief;
 - refer students to additional/further support when and where appropriate.
- 5.9 Students should always be offered the opportunity to discuss their assessed work with their markers to seek further clarification and advice.

5.10 Staff should be able to provide all of the above for examinations. Although it is acknowledged that written feedback on examination papers tends to be fairly limited, more detailed feedback should be provided verbally, particularly for students who have failed.

5.11 **Assessment deadlines and feedback**

Feedback on coursework submitted on time and after the deadline should be managed as outlined in this section.

The '72 hour rule' referred to below only applies to the submission of written coursework and artefacts and only applies to first attempts including any subsequent attempt taken as a first attempt due to mitigation (see also 5.11.4 below). It does not apply to reassessments (see 5.11.3 below).

For further ruling and information relating to the '72 hour rule' and non-submissions please refer to section 9 of 6A – *Standard Assessment Regulations* and section 6.6 of 6L - *Assessment Board Decision-Making, Including the Implementation of Assessment Regulations: Procedure*.

5.11.1 **Coursework submitted on time or within 72 hours of the deadline**

- a) The work must be marked as per 6D – *Marking, Independent Marking and Moderation: Policy and Procedure* and feedback provided;
- b) For work submitted within 72 hours of the deadline (referred to as Late Submissions), the maximum mark that can be awarded for the piece of work will be the capped mark, although the mark the student would have received had they submitted on time should be included.

5.11.2 **Coursework submitted after 72 hours of the deadline**

- a) Work submitted after 72 hours of the deadline will be recorded as a Non-Submission (NS) and a mark of zero (0%) will be given;
- b) Where work is submitted after 72 hours of the deadline but within three weeks, staff are advised to mark the work and provide feedback to students, although the mark the student would have received had they submitted on time should be included;
- c) Staff are not required to mark work submitted more than three weeks after the deadline but may choose to provide feedback (but no mark) to the student if the piece of work informs a subsequent submission.

5.11.3 **Reassessments submitted after the deadline**

The '72 hour rule' does not apply to reassessments. Staff are not required to mark reassessments submitted after the agreed deadline unless there are valid exceptional circumstances, but may choose to provide feedback (but no mark) to help inform future learning.

5.11.4 **Assessments in repeat mode**

The '72 hour rule' also applies to the first attempt in repeat mode or any subsequent attempt taken as a first attempt in repeat mode due to exceptional circumstances. The work should be capped and marked in accordance with section 5.11.1 and feedback provided.

However, where a further resubmission in repeat mode is late (a second attempt in repeat mode) unless there are valid exceptional circumstances, staff are not required to mark the work or provide feedback.

5.12 In cases of resubmission and/or repeat mode where the mark is capped (as per the scenarios outlined in 5.11), students should still receive useful and appropriate feedback on their submission.

6. **RETURN OF ASSESSED WORK TO STUDENTS**

6.1 Assignments may be returned to students directly or collected from the Programme Support Officer/HE Co-ordinator (or equivalent) according to Faculty practice. In the case of the former, Unit Tutors should inform the relevant Support Officer that this has taken place. Coursework assignments that are not collected may be destroyed after one academic year. For assessments submitted online the assessment would not be routinely returned to the student, but Faculties should ensure the assessments are archived electronically in line with University processes.). Faculties should also ensure that students are aware of how to view their feedback when it is returned electronically to avoid students missing important feedback that is intended to assist them in their learning.

6.2 Marked examination scripts are not routinely returned to students but may be viewed by students by arrangement. There is no administration fee charged for this. Faculties should forward examination papers to the Student Lifecycle Team after the Boards have met. All papers will be destroyed by the Student Lifecycle Team one year after the meeting at which the results for the year are finalised. Students may request access to their papers under the General Data Protection Regulation (see Section 8).

6.3 Partners are required to retain papers from all years contributing to the final classification and assessment of individual students for one year after the student's final examination.

7. UNITS COMPLETED MID-LEVEL OR IN-LEVEL

7.1 With the implementation of the Common Academic Structure (CAS), it is not the intention for any additional assessment boards to take place. Following each semester, where units have been completed mid-level or in-level, Faculties are strongly recommended to input marks to the Student Record System such that each provisional student profile detailing marks from the preceding semester might be considered. Where provisional marks indicate a student has failed any formal element(s) of assessment, Faculties are strongly recommended to request in writing that students attend a face-to-face² in-level progress review. This review should be managed by a level tutor, programme leader or equivalent, and should include discussion to allow a student to understand the implications of their current set of marks. The review will also give opportunity for tutors to identify any issues a student might be encountering and to counsel accordingly. Faculties may choose to offer the opportunity of a mid-level or in-level progress review to all students.

8. STUDENT ACCESS TO ASSIGNMENT AND EXAMINATION PAPERS

8.1 The General Data Protection Regulation gives students the right of access to information held about them including examiners' comments on examination papers or assignments and any feedback sheets. Justificatory comments, the use of symbols and underlines must therefore be balanced and explained by the use of some explanatory words and make reference to assessment criteria/marketing schemes, to ensure the comments are intelligible to students.

8.2 Students may access a copy of their paper by making a request to the relevant Programme Support Officer/HE Co-ordinator (or equivalent). Requests should be processed as soon as possible, with a target of 5 working days and by law, within one month of receiving a request. Note that the 10 working day deadline for the receipt of appeals will be extended if students need access to papers to check details before appealing. Before issuing either an original paper or a photocopy, it is essential the student provides proof of identity in the form of their Smart card, birth certificate or other appropriate documentation. Copies may be issued in person or by post, subject to verification of identity.

9. ARCHIVING

9.1 Faculties will need to ensure that assessments and feedback are archived in line with University processes

General

10. REFERENCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

10.1 [QAA Quality Code, Advice and Guidance: Assessment](#)

10.2 This policy was reviewed according to the University's [Equality Analysis Procedure](#) in July 2019.

10.3 Faculty Lead Learning Technologist contact details:
Faculty of Health & Social Sciences – HSSLearningTechnology@bournemouth.ac.uk
Faculty of Management – FMlearningTechnology@bournemouth.ac.uk
Faculty of Media & Communication - FMCLearningTechnology@bournemouth.ac.uk

² For programmes where students do not attend campus, e.g. for e-learning students, this review might take place via Skype or telephone

11. APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 [Assignment Feedback Template Contents Guidance](#)
- Appendix 2 [Examples of Faculty Assignment Feedback Forms](#)