

6F - Generic Assessment Criteria: Procedure

1. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 This procedure is intended for Bournemouth University (BU) staff, students and external examiners. It outlines the generic assessment criteria against agreed statements of student performance that relate to the University's marking scale and grade bands for taught programmes and units at BU Level 0/3 and Levels 4-7.
- 1.2 The generic assessment criteria provide an essential frame of reference for the development, review and use of Faculties' assessment criteria and a means to measure student achievement against specified learning outcomes. As such, they offer a consistent vocabulary for providing feedback to students on their assessment performance. Additional 'feedforward' statements are presented alongside the generic assessment criteria to encourage further learning and academic development.
- 1.3 The generic assessment criteria are presented in tables in Appendix 1. Section 4 explains the marking scale and grade bands against which the criteria are set. Section 5 provides guidance on how staff, students and external examiners should use the criteria.

2. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 **Academic Standards and Education Committee (ASEC):** to consider the effectiveness of the implementation of the generic assessment criteria and approve new and revised procedures by exception.
- 2.2 **Faculties:** to use the generic assessment criteria in line with the University's requirements and as outlined in this procedure.
- 2.3 **Students:** to consider feedback and feedforward

3. ACCESSING OTHER RELEVANT BU DOCUMENTS

- 3.1 All documents can be accessed [here](#)
- 3.2 Other documents with direct relevance to this one are:

- 6A – *Standard Assessment Regulations:*
- 6A - *Standard Assessment Regulations: Undergraduate Programmes*
- 6A - *Standard Assessment Regulations: Postgraduate Taught Programmes*
- 6A - *Standard Assessment Regulations: Foundation Degree Programmes*
- 6A - *Standard Assessment Regulations: Higher National Programmes*
- 6A - *Standard Assessment Regulations: Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma Programmes*
- 6A - *Standard Assessment Regulations: Integrated Masters Programmes*
- 6A - *Standard Assessment Regulations: Postgraduate Research Degrees*

- 6C – *Principles of Assessment Design: Policy*
- 6D - *Marking, Independent Marking and Moderation: Policy and Procedure*
- 6E - *Assessment Feedback and Return of Assessed Work: Policy and Procedure*
- 5A - *Welcome Guide and Programme Level Handbooks: Procedure*

4. BU MARKING SCALES AND GRADE BANDS

- 4.1 The University applies a pass mark of 40% to undergraduate provision (BU Level 0/3 and Levels 4-6) and 50% to postgraduate provision (Level 7) as outlined in the *Standard Assessment Regulations* for taught programmes. Assessments that contribute towards the award of credit ('summative assessments') are normally marked on a scale 0-100 to describe student performance above, at, and below the pass mark although a small number of assessments may be marked on a pass-fail basis where specified in the Programme Specification. 'Formative' assessments that do not contribute towards the award of credit but contribute towards learning may or may not be graded, though will receive written or verbal feedback.
- 4.2 The statements in Appendix 1 cover the full mark range from 0-100 and provide a description of students' assessment performance against the level of study and the same grade boundaries that are used to classify BU awards. The generic assessment criteria fall within the following bands:

Honours degree

- i. High First (80% +)
- ii. First (70% - 79%)
- iii. Upper Second (60% - 69%)
- iv. Lower Second (50% - 59%)
- v. Third Class (40% - 49%)
- vi. Fail (30% - 39%)
- vii. Very weak Fail (0% - 29%)

Foundation Degree

Higher National Certificate/Diploma
Graduate Certificate/Diploma
Foundation Year Certificate

- i. High Distinction (80% +)
- ii. Distinction (70 - 79%)
- iii. Merit (60 - 69%)
- iv. Pass (40 - 59%)
- v. Fail (30 - 39%)
- vi. Very weak Fail (0 - 29%)

Masters Degree

Postgraduate Certificate/Diploma
Integrated Masters Degree*

- i. High Distinction/ *High First (80% +)
- ii. Distinction/ *First (70 - 79%)
- iii. Merit/ *Upper Second (60 - 69%)
- iv. Pass/ *Lower Second (50 - 59%)
- v. Fail (40 - 49%)
- vi. Very weak Fail (0 - 39%)

* *The University uses Honours Classification to classify Integrated Masters Awards which have a pass mark of 50% at Level 7.*

- 4.3 The statements have been organised into the following categories which are used to describe learning outcomes: subject knowledge and understanding; intellectual skills; subject-specific skills; and transferable skills. It should be noted though that not all performance criteria in each category apply equally in all subject areas or in every method of assessment.

5. USING THE GENERIC ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Staff

- 5.1 Staff should use the generic assessment criteria for a range of assessment-related activities:
- i. as marking criteria for BU Level 0/3 and Levels 4-7 which may be:
 - a. used as they stand;
 - b. adapted for specific subjects or assessment types in taught units of study (e.g. presentations, fieldwork or laboratory work). Where this is the case, the generic assessment criteria in Appendix 1 must be used as a quality standard on which to base specific criteria.
 - ii. as a means of measuring student achievement relative to the level and intended learning outcomes (ILOs);
 - iii. as a basis for written and oral comments on summative and formative assessments through:
 - a. **feedback** based on a consistent and transparent vocabulary for the description of students' performance against institutional standard;
 - b. **feedforward** statements that demonstrate how students might enhance their learning and improve their future performance and grades.
 - iv. as reference points for discussions about standards between internal assessors and with external examiners.
 - v. they are **not** intended to be the only form of feedback and feedforward provided to students. Academic staff undertaking assessment should provide additional context-specific feedback and feedforward which refers to the particular assignment task and which enable the student to identify which strengths can be built on.
- 5.2 **Generic assessment criteria should be made available to all students in BU Level 0/3 and Levels 4-7 programme handbooks/equivalent. Unit Leaders should also ensure that relevant assessment criteria, generic or adapted, are always made available to students at the appropriate time in advance of, or as part of, the assignment brief.**

Students

- 5.3 Students can use the generic assessment criteria in Appendix 1 of this document to understand the broad rationale for the mark awarded, develop their academic performance further and self-assess their assignment prior to submission. The statements in the Generic Assessment Criteria are not the only feedback and feedforward that will be made available by markers.

External examiners

- 5.4 Generic assessment criteria should be made available to external examiners for each level of award that they are appointed to consider and may be used as reference points for discussions about standards and student performance with internal assessors.

General

6. REFERENCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

- 6.1 This document is informed by the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (QAA, May 2018),
This policy was reviewed according to the University's *Equality Analysis Procedure* in July 2019.

7. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Bournemouth University Generic Assessment Criteria