

Academic Policy and Procedures

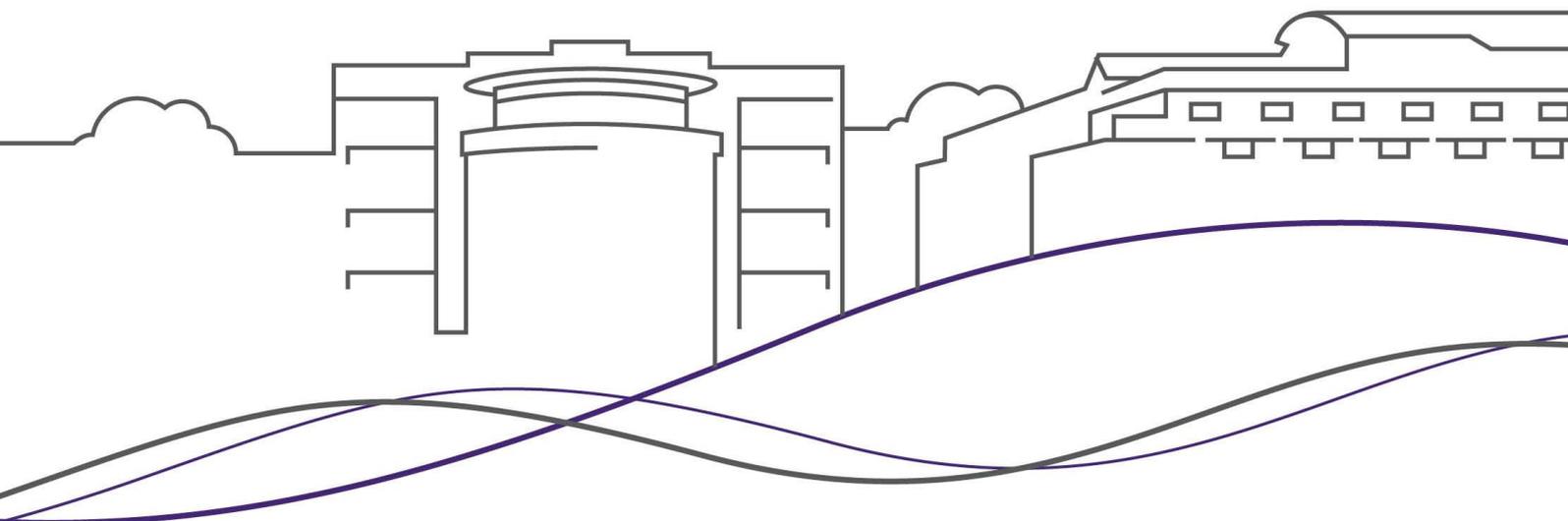


UNIVERSITY
CENTRE
SOUTH DEVON

[] South Devon College

HIGHER EDUCATION

(HEACRP6) HE Assessment Policy v5.0



Document Control

Document Approved by: HEAB	Date of Approval: June 22
Review by: HETLAG	Review Date: May 2023
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Version: 5.0	Author: A Wilson

REVISION HISTORY

Ver	Date	Author	Description
1.0	May 17	A Wilson	Conception
2.0	4 th May 2018	A Wilson	Updated to reflect Turnitin and anonymity in marking
3.0	May 2019	L Hardman	Updated to reflect clearer terminology of draft feedback templates
4.0	June 2020	I Hallam	Updated to reflect clear terminology in the Module Guide and Assessment Brief; QAA guidance; equity statement and updated links and terms.
5.0	June 2022	I Hallam	Totally revised to reflect principles with accompanying guidance on the website, based on the University of Plymouth policy.

APPROVAL

Ver	Committee	Date Approved	Comments
1.0	CHEBOS	19 th May 2017	Approved
2.0	CHEBOS	24 th May 2018	Approved
3.0	CHEBOS	10 th June 2019	Approved
5.0	HEAB	June 22	Approved

This Assessment Policy applies to all students on Level 4 or above programmes at the University Centre South Devon (UCSD). It should be read in conjunction with the assessment practice guidelines on the UCSD website.

Purposes

UCSD acknowledges the principal purpose of assessment is to ensure the value of awards. We also recognise there are other purposes of assessment, including:

1. To communicate the academic standards expected of students to students and staff.
2. To communicate UCSD's values and aims to students and staff.
3. To support students to develop the knowledge, skills, and behaviours required for an award
 - a. by providing the student with timely and constructive feedback on their performance, as well as feed-in and feedforward, throughout a programme
 - b. by identifying areas for development that require students' focus
 - c. by identifying strengths, as well as areas for development, and encourage improvement through growth in performance
 - d. by providing grades that enable a student's performance to be established in relation to programme learning outcomes
4. To use feedback on student performance to inform curriculum planning and faculty training.
5. Where appropriate to ensure that a programme satisfies the accreditation standards required by a PSRB.
6. To prepare UCSD students for further study, future employability and life-long learning.

Principles

1. Assessment within a programme will include assessment for learning (formative), draft assessment for developmental feedback and assessment of learning (summative). Although necessarily an intermittent process, assessment will be continual with frequent opportunities for feedback, feed-in and feedforward [*algorithm 1].
2. Assessments will be mapped to learning outcomes [*algorithm 1].
3. Assessments will have a clear purpose and be valid, reliable [*algorithm 1], and fair [*algorithm 2].
4. Credit will be allocated for achieving learning outcomes to the required standard [*algorithm 3].
5. The assessment programme will be proportionate but not excessive and will typically, periodically reviewed at not less than 5 year intervals to assure quality with input from students, academic and non-academic staff and PSRBs as appropriate [*algorithm 4]; with a focus on acceptability, defensibility, cost effectiveness, currency and educational impact.
6. Data will be analysed to identify and help eliminate any attainment gaps associated with demographic variables attributable to processes [*algorithm 5].
7. Clear regulations (requirements that must be complied with) and policies (principles) and practice guidance (recommendations that are our usual or normal practice) will underpin all assessments and be communicated to students [*algorithm 6].
8. Assessment policies and practices will be informed by evidence and relevant educational theory.
9. Assessment policies and practices will be sensitive to students' best interests. Wherever possible, steps will be taken to minimise the amount of assessment stress placed on students (e.g. by using inclusive assessments, and timetabling assessments to avoid bunching).

10. Assessment aims to be cumulative, integrated and authentic, and reflect student performance across the programme.
11. Assessment with assess technical proficiency in the English language in a manner which appropriately reflects the level and content of the applicable higher education course
12. Assessment processes and IT developments will be integrated, to support learner-centred personalised, holistic approaches to learning.
13. Assessment and teaching will be aligned, and designed to support deep and mastery learning.
14. Requests for additional consideration during assessments should be minimised by use of *inclusive* assessment processes wherever possible.
15. Disability Needs Assessment recommended reasonable adjustments will be considered for students with disabilities, subject to requirements to meet competence standards.
16. All assessors will receive appropriate instruction for the purpose.
17. Assessment processes will be regularly reviewed by external examiners.
18. Assessment policies will permit innovation in order to facilitate improvement and ensure sustainability.

*UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment (UKSCQA) 2020. Principles for effective degree algorithm design. <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/sites/default/files/field/downloads/2021-07/principles-effective-degree-algorithm-design.pdf>

Strategic aims

We want to offer a *personalised*, flexible, socially mobile, responsible, authentic, research-led experience that is fit for the future by preparing our students for a world of both expected and unexpected challenges.

Our focus will be on students, and their education, for life in the modern world, by:

1. basing practice on the best available research evidence [****priority 1**]
1. prioritising understanding and application over content knowledge, and anchorage to transparent and communicated standards [****priority 2**]
2. emphasising the core transferable skills required to be able to cope with complexity and uncertainty [****priority 2**]
3. fostering a sense of belonging and behaviours associated with the culture of the discipline, and that is relatable to our graduates [****priority 2**]
4. providing education that's flexible to fit around student's lives [****priority 3**]

**Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) 2020. Assessment rebooted: from 2020's quick fixes to future transformation. <https://www.jisc.ac.uk/reports/assessment-rebooted>

What you can expect as a student / What staff in UCSD should provide

1. Pre-assessment guidance, designed to help you understand what assessment is and how it works.
2. A range of assessment methods (e.g. these may include self-assessment, assessment by (and of) other students, and technology-aided assessments).
3. Assessments that are valid and aligned to learning outcomes.
4. Clear and transparent assessment briefs, and marking criteria for each assessment, with clear information on how and when feedback will be provided.

1. Discussion of assessments with staff, and if appropriate with other students.
5. The opportunity to use originality checking software and where possible to submit assessments online.
6. Provisional grades, and personal, group or general constructive feedback for all assessments made available within a maximum of 20 working days of submission. In exceptional circumstances, students will be told of any reason for a delay and a revised date issued.
7. Personal Tutors will initiate a discussion about reasonable adjustments in light of a students' disability needs assessment and support plan

As a student, we'll expect you to

1. Communicate with the Personal Tutor about any modified assessment provision, reasonable adjustments or other requests for additional consideration during assessments at the start of the academic year or, as soon as possible
2. Engage with 'feed-forward' and feedback in formative, draft and summative assessments, and act on any suggested improvements
3. Demonstrate that you've achieved academic, and where appropriate professional, standards through the completion of assessments
4. Meet the professional and ethical standards appropriate to the discipline
5. Comply with Awarding Body academic regulations (NB. those on assessment offences).

How UCSD supports this policy

1. Providing staff development workshops in all aspects of assessment.
2. Providing adequate resources and an IT system that supports the assessment process.
3. Providing digital tools and guidance to encourage innovative assessment.
4. Appointing and training appropriately qualified external examiners.
5. Secure recording and storing assessment data on the Student Record System.
6. Making sure academic regulations and the assessment policy are accessible and regularly updated.
7. Undertaking regular review of programmes and their assessment practice, including external examiner, staff and student feedback.
8. Monitoring how the assessment policy is enacted across the University Centre.

Operational objectives during *Force Majeure*

Students must have an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to achieve the required programme outcomes and standards. All programme outcomes need to be achieved, and the award of module credits depends on having performed to a satisfactory standard in at least one summative assessment. Remote *e-assessments* remain subject to standard regulations.

1. Where face-to-face attendance is not integral to the programme learning outcome being assessed, an alternative must be provided.
2. Formal face-to-face invigilated assessments are to be replaced by alternative e-assessments as below:
 - a. Replacement coursework
 - b. 24-48 hour open book. This form of assessment is inclusive, has less inherent risk than time-limited, invigilated assessments and should be the first choice where possible

3. Time limited open book or closed book assessments (e.g. to meet PSRB requirements).
 - a. The delivery of these must be facilitated by UCSD, usually including provision of remote proctors for online invigilation in the case of closed book
 - b. Modified Assessment Provisions must be accommodated where appropriate
 - c. UCSD must pilot the assessment prior to summative delivery
4. Face-to-face assessments (e.g. OSCEs, practical assessments, performances), may take place where no alternative exists as long as appropriate safety precautions are taken.

The Policy is underpinned by

1. The QAA Quality Code for Higher Education: Chapter B6: Assessment of students and recognition of prior learning.
2. The SEEC Level descriptors that describe the generic characteristics of learning at each level and are used in programme and module assessment design.
3. The awarding body Academic Regulations that must be upheld when conducting assessments.
4. The NUS Charter on Feedback and Assessment, and UCSD NSS and SPQ results.
5. South Devon College Teaching and Learning (cross-college) Strategy.