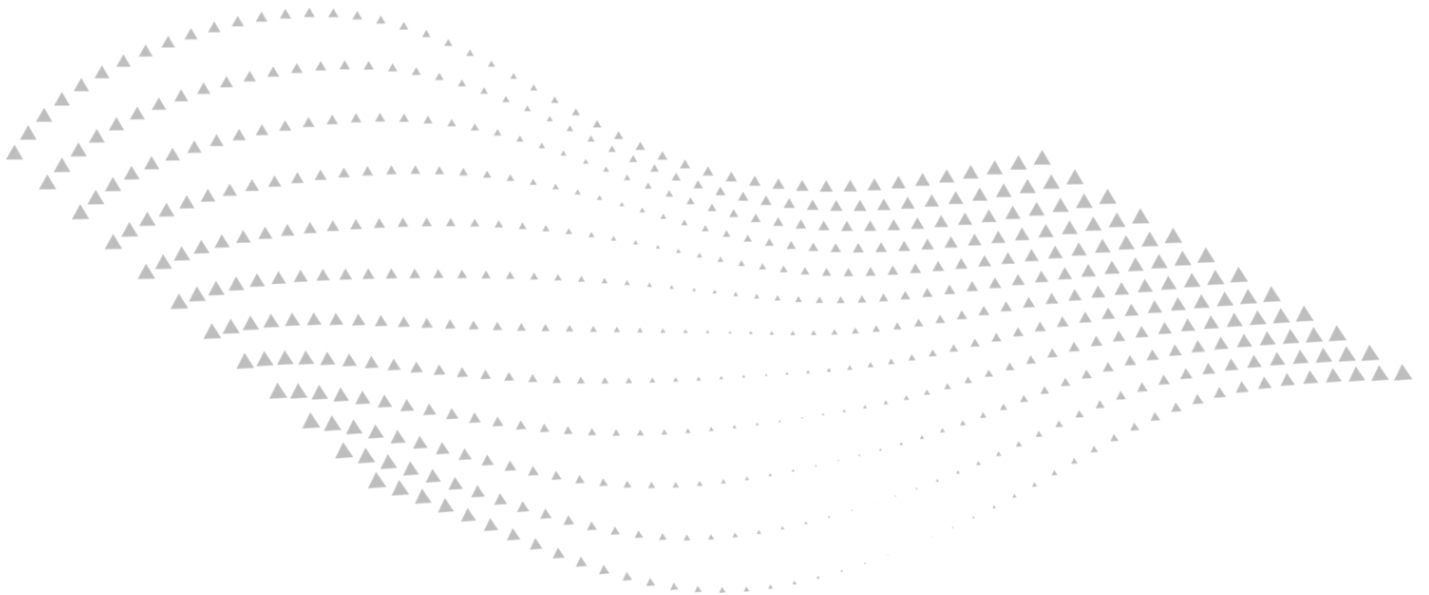


Higher Education Assessment Staff Handbook



Last approved: August 2026

Approved by: Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Committee

Review Date: August 2031

Policy and Guidance for Course Teams 2026

Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
FACULTY ROLES IN THE PROCESS OF ASSESSING STUDENT WORK	3
BIMM UNIVERSITY HIGHER EDUCATION STRATEGY	4
PART ONE: BIMM UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES	4
ASSESSMENT INFORMATION SCHEDULE & TIMETABLE	6
EXAMPLES OF MODES OF ASSESSMENT	6
COURSEWORK SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS	6
COURSEWORK SIZE LIMITS AND MARKING	7
ORAL AND PRACTICAL ASSESSMENTS	7
PART TWO: ACADEMIC STANDARDS	8
VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY IN ASSESSMENT	9
VARIABILITY IN ASSESSMENT JUDGMENTS	10
UNCONSCIOUS BIAS	11
THE BIMM UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT RUBRIC	11
PART THREE: CALIBRATION AND MODERATION	22
INTERNAL MODERATION	23
PART FOUR: MARKING THE WORK OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES	25

PART FIVE: FEEDBACK ON ASSESSMENT	28
WAYS OF PROVIDING FEEDBACK	28
FORMS OF FEEDBACK	30
ASSESSMENT LITERACY – HOW STUDENTS USE FEEDBACK	33
PARTNERSHIP – DEVELOPING ENGAGEMENT WITH FEEDBACK TOOLKIT (DEFT)	33

Introduction

This handbook is for all faculty involved in student assessment. It outlines BIMM University policy and procedures for setting and marking student work (including calibration and internal and external moderation), as well as the processes for providing effective and developmental feedback and for addressing issues such as specific learning difficulties.

This handbook applies to all BIMM University awards. However, the broad principles outlined here also apply to courses delivered in partnership with other awarding bodies.

BIMM University Assessment Policy is aligned with the Office of Students' conditions of registration, specifically B4, in that:

- students are assessed effectively... in a challenging and appropriately comprehensive way, by reference to the subject matter of the higher education course, and includes but is not limited to:
 - providing stretch and rigour consistent with the level of the course;
 - testing relevant skills; and
 - assessments being designed in a way that minimises the opportunities for academic misconduct and facilitates the detection of such misconduct where it does occur.
- Each assessment is valid... that an assessment in fact takes place in a way that results in students demonstrating knowledge and skills as intended by the design of the assessment.
- And reliable... in practice, requires students to demonstrate knowledge and skills in a manner which is consistent between the students registered on a higher education course and over time, as appropriate in the context of developments in the content and delivery of the higher education course.

The definitions provided by the OfS are consistent with those throughout this policy and guidance.

The Head of School (reporting to the Dean of Faculty) is accountable for maintaining faculty standards across all campuses and for ensuring that faculty are aware of their roles and responsibilities. Course Leaders (reporting to the Head of School) are accountable for ensuring that all faculty involved in assessing their students are familiar with BIMM University policy and with their responsibilities as outlined in this handbook.

Broadly, there are two types of assessment on BIMM University courses:

1. **Coursework** – assessments submitted online via the University's Canvas VLE.
2. **Face-to-face** practical assessments include performances, demonstrations, presentations, and other activities assessed in person.

In addition, we have:

1. **Formative assessment** – ungraded assessments designed to support student learning by providing feedback on the skills and knowledge they are developing.
2. **Summative assessments are graded assessments** designed to evaluate student achievement at the end of a module and to provide feedback on what they have done well and what they might improve in the future.
3. **Negotiated assessment** – where students can propose how they will meet the learning outcomes through assessment (proposals must be agreed with the Course or Module Leader).

Faculty Roles in the Process of Assessing Student Work

Dean of Faculty/Director of Postgraduate Studies

Responsible for the assurance of academic assessment standards across the Faculty.

Head of School

Responsible for assuring academic assessment standards within their subject at a BIMM University campus.

Course Leader

Responsible for the assurance of academic assessment standards for their course.

Teaching Faculty

Responsible for assuring academic assessment standards for the modules they mark or moderate.

BIMM University Higher Education Strategy

Our Higher Education Strategy 2024-2029 states that:

Assessment is fair, relevant, authentic, collaborative, diverse, inclusive and accessible.

In addition, the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#) requires us to:

- Ensure that the academic standards for our qualifications are consistent with the UK [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications \(FHEQ\)](#).
- Ensure that students who are awarded our qualifications can achieve academic standards beyond the level of a pass and that our academic standards are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK Higher Education Institutions.
- Ensure that our assessment and classification processes are reliable, fair and transparent.

To achieve these aims, we set the aims and outcomes for our modules and courses to meet the requirements of the FHEQ, and we test the alignment of assessment with outcomes against the framework through the [course approval process](#).

However, we also need to ensure that the standards we set are understood by students and staff and applied consistently, which requires us to develop a shared understanding of the principles of assessment and of how we recognise when these standards are met in our students' work.

Part One: BIMM University Assessment Procedures**The Module Specification sets out:**

- The Learning Outcomes for the module and each assessment are statements that describe what students need to be able to do to pass the module.
- A description of what the assessment entails, the week it is due in each semester/trimester, how to submit, present, or attend the assessment, and any required elements or sub-components.
- The format of the assessment (we call this an assessment mode) and of re-assessment (the Retrieval assessment in case the student fails their first attempt).
- The assessment criteria (Assessment Fields against which students are assessed for each assessment).
- If a module has more than one summative (graded) assessment, each assessment will have a percentage weighting that reflects its relative size and/or importance. These weightings must total 100% and will be used to calculate the final module mark. For example, if Assessment 1 is

30% and Assessment 2 is 70%, a single grade will be assigned to each assessment. If Assessment 1 is assigned a mark of 55% and Assessment 2 a mark of 68%, combining the marks in their weighted proportions produces a module mark of 64.1%, which would be rounded to a final module grade of 64%. However, markers do not need to perform these calculations, as the Assessment Team conducts them before submission to the Assessment Board.

Student Information and Expectations:

- At the start of each academic year, students will be informed via the Module Specifications on the VLE of the arrangements for learning and teaching, the module content, and the assessment and reassessment requirements.
- Students must be available throughout the academic year, which may include Retrieval periods (dates available [here](#)) if they need to retrieve any fails. Therefore, students should not make holiday plans during these times until marks have been confirmed by the Assessment Boards. After that, they will normally be given at least two weeks' notice of any required Retrievals.
- All assessments that contribute to the classification of an award (typically Levels 5, 6 and 7) shall also be subject to External Examiner External Moderation unless weighted at 30% or less of the overall module mark.
- Students must adhere to the published dates and deadlines for all assessments. Students unable to participate in an assessment on the specified date due to medical or other reasons beyond their control should be referred to the [Exceptional Circumstances Policy](#).
- All material submitted for assessment must be the student's own work, except where group work is specifically part of the assignment; see our [Academic Integrity Policy](#).
- In addition, all quotations from other people's or organisations' published or unpublished work must be appropriately attributed, both at the relevant point in the text and in the bibliography or reference list. Study skills resources are available to students [here](#).
- If a student submits a recording, composition or lyrics not in English, a translation of the lyrics must also be provided for marking and moderation purposes.
- When a module is no longer taught, its related assessment(s) will typically be offered for one year after the discontinuation date. However, Assessment Boards may provide alternative forms of assessment beyond that date if required.
- Reasonable adjustments for students may be made, on the advice of Student Support and on an individual basis, to compensate for a disability or unforeseen circumstances, provided that this does not compromise the achievement of the Learning Outcomes. See our [Exceptional Circumstances Policy](#).
- If a faculty member suspects a student of breaching our Academic Integrity Policy, an investigation will be conducted in accordance with the University's [Academic Integrity Policy](#).
- If there is any personal interest, involvement or relationship between a marker and a student, the marker should not mark the student's work and must declare the interest to the relevant Course Leader.

Assessment Information Schedule & Timetable

- Course Leaders are responsible for ensuring that their students receive complete, accurate, and timely module information and are aware of their responsibility to make themselves available for assessment throughout the academic year.
- Course Leaders will ensure that students are informed of the assessment arrangements and requirements at the start of each semester/trimester.
- Course Leaders will likewise ensure that the course assessment timetable is fit for purpose, appropriately resourced and staffed, and made available to students, detailing the dates, times, and venues of all practical assessments and submissions for modules on their course.
- The complete assessment timetable will be published for students at least two weeks before the first assessment.
- Course Leaders will ensure that students are aware of the University's Academic Assessment Regulations for [undergraduate](#) and [postgraduate](#) courses, as appropriate, and of the policies on [Exceptional Circumstances](#) and [Academic Integrity](#).
- In particular, students should be made aware of any penalties for late submission of assessments, the importance of academic integrity, and their right to [appeal](#) marks in certain circumstances.
- Teaching teams should emphasise to students the importance of keeping a record of the dates, times, and venues of their assessments, including Retrievals, and of checking their timetables for any possible clashes or omissions, flagging them with their Course Leader.

Examples of Modes of Assessment

Assessments are tasks that students must complete and submit for grading, and they contribute, in whole or in part, to module marks and course-level awards. Examples may include:

- **Practical:** A performance, educational or professional practice-based assessment.
- **Oral:** An individual or group presentation, discussion, marketing/sales pitch, performance or teaching exercise.
- **Portfolio:** Normally, a series of creative tasks or artefacts collated as part of one assessment.
- **Artefact:** A piece of work, such as a visual, audio, software, composition, design or artistic output.
- **Text-based:** A report, essay, review, analysis, case study, creative or professional written brief, research proposal or project report.
- **Online assessment:** multiple choice questionnaire/quiz, test or online task.

Coursework Submission Requirements

Unless otherwise specified in the Module Specification Assessment Brief, coursework submissions should comply with the following guidelines:

- All coursework that draws on external sources (text or otherwise) should include a reference list and be correctly cited in accordance with the University's Harvard Referencing Guide, available [here](#).
- Electronic data files should be checked to ensure they are in the correct format and meet the file size requirements, as set out in the relevant Module Specification Assessment Brief.
- When students submit a file, they will be asked to confirm their intention to upload it and to

affirm that the work is theirs.

- It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they submit the correct file, in a valid format, within any specified file size limits, by the deadline and to the correct submission point published on Canvas.
- If a student submits a file that fails to meet the requirements listed above and the deadline has not yet passed, the file may be resubmitted.
- If the deadline has passed and a resubmission has been made, the original file submitted will be marked. This may result in a low or fail mark, depending on what was submitted (including all required assessment elements) and when and whether the Marker can open it.
- To avoid loss, students should back up all digitally stored work (we recommend doing so at least twice on different media).
- In addition, text-based submissions should follow the following guidelines:
 - A cover sheet containing the student number, the module name, the assessment number/title and the word count.
 - A4 page size, submitted in a format permitted by Canvas.
 - 11 or 12-point type in a clear font, such as Arial, Calibri or Tahoma.
 - Each page must include the student number in the header and a page number in the footer.
- All text-based work is expected to be readable, clearly expressed, and correctly spelt, with good grammar (a UK spelling/grammar checker and/or proofreader is advised).

Coursework Size Limits and Marking

The purpose of an assessment size limit is to give all students across the University a clear indication of the maximum size of a piece of assessed work, the amount of work expected, and how they should allocate time to one piece of assessed work in relation to others. Working to set limits is an academic requirement at university and a practical skill required within the creative industries.

Setting a Limit

Our policy is that assessment briefs must include an assessment size or time limit, as appropriate, and it must be made clear whether any required elements of the assessment fall within or outside this limit.

Work Outside of the Limits

There is no prescribed penalty for exceeding the assessment limits. However, students should be aware that staff are allocated a set amount of time to mark each assessment and are under no obligation to assess work that exceeds the limits. Faculty will use their discretion, but work that is considerably over-length will be disregarded, and work that is substantially under-length is unlikely to address the brief fully. Therefore, in both cases, students are likely to lose marks. Moreover, if working to a strict limit is a critical element of the brief, markers will always deduct marks if the work is too long or too short.

Oral and Practical Assessments

Oral and practical assessments shall be conducted by faculty in the subject area. Students may bring only authorised materials to oral or practical assessments. Possession or use of unauthorised materials may infringe the University's [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

Students are not permitted to record oral or practical assessments. However, faculty will record such assessments for Internal and External Moderation. Students may request permission to view recordings if they are reviewing a failed assessment, or to copy specific recordings from performance-based assessments for their showreel. The Head of School will process any such requests. Video material for showreels will be released only once the module has been marked and passed.

All face-to-face assessments will be supervised by the faculty member. Any incidents or abnormalities during an assessment will be recorded and reported to the Course Leader.

Students must arrive in good time for practical and oral assessments and are advised to arrive 15 minutes before the assessment commences. The assessor(s) may allow late arrivals to undertake the assessment if the assessment schedule permits. However, if a late student cannot be accommodated and arrives 30 minutes or more late, they will be considered to have missed the assessment submission opportunity, and a zero mark will be recorded. In addition, students may present evidence to the Mitigating Evidence Committee to mitigate late arrival.

Part Two: Academic Standards

Following the Higher Education and Research Act (2017) and the subsequent establishment of the Office for Students (OfS), there has been an increasing focus on the consistency of Higher Education academic standards across the university sector. Work on this has been facilitated by the Degree Standards Project, run by Advance HE from 2016 to 2021.

Firstly, clarifying what we mean by 'academic standards' is essential. To do this, we will draw on the approach increasingly used in the literature on quality assurance and external moderation, and on the structure of the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#), which separates expectations about academic standards from those about academic quality.

According to this accepted definition, academic standards are an 'output' measure, demonstrated in what students produce in their practical assessments, performances, text-based work, and demonstrations of practical skills, etc. In other words, standards are not situated in the quality of processes, documentation, or grading criteria we use, but in our students' work.

Current practice within the sector is to mark student work against written criteria and then moderate markers' judgements by sampling their work. However, this approach has unintended consequences, including a tendency to level student achievement and, arguably, does not ensure equity for students but rather provides justification and accountability for institutions and regulators.¹

Measurement of Judgement?

There are two ways to conceptualise the task of assessing student work:

1. Measurement:

- Standards are objective and measured against precise criteria.
- The assessor is objective.
- Assessors' values play no part in assessment.
- Student context (background) is irrelevant.
- Measurements are reliable indicators of achievement.

¹ Bloxham, S., et al. (2015). "What's the point of moderation? A discussion of the purposes achieved through contemporary moderation practices." *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 41(4): 638-653.

- Assessors design assessment.

2. Judgement:

- Standards are normative, consensual and measured against broad criteria.
- Performance is assessed against these criteria.
- The assessor assesses the extent to which performance aligns with the criteria.
- Value positions are embedded in the criteria as norms.
- Assessors may consider the student and institutional contexts.
- Assessments are judgements of the extent to which achievements meet expectations.
- Tasks are selected by students to suit their strengths and interests and may be co-designed with assessors.

In the creative arts, we favour judgement over measurement (which may be more appropriate in subjects such as science and mathematics). Moreover, BIMM University's Assessment Rubric is designed to align with these principles.

Norm-referenced Assessment

- Norm-referenced assessment implies a frame of reference based on the performance of students in a cohort: it uses a statistical model to assign grades in line with a 'normal' distribution. A normal distribution is a symmetrical, bell-shaped probability distribution in which most data points cluster around a central average. It is fully defined by its mean (centre) and standard deviation (spread).
- Although this method may work well where numbers are large (e.g., GCSEs and A-Levels), small cohorts produce deviations that make grading to a curve inequitable.
- Assessment using a normal distribution also allows regulatory bodies to adjust 'norms' to meet particular aims.

We do not use norm-referenced assessment on BIMM University Higher Education courses.

Criterion-referenced Assessment

Criterion-referenced assessment implies a frame of reference fixed against a set of criteria used to judge the artefact or activity being assessed: the validity of this method relies on the precision with which the criteria are used and consistently applied. Criterion-referenced assessment can, in theory, assess a broader range of outputs, but it is also more open to interpretation, as it relies on a shared understanding of how to apply the criteria.

BIMM University uses criterion-referenced assessment based on a common, university-wide Assessment Rubric.

Validity and Reliability in Assessment

The validity and reliability of assessment methods are regarded as the two most important characteristics of a well-designed assessment procedure.

Validity:

- Does the assessment address what we think we are assessing?
- Are we considering judgements about past or future performance rather than what is in front of us?

Reliability:

- Do assessors agree on grading?
- Is the student's performance replicable or a one-off event?

Variability in Assessment Judgments

It is generally accepted that individual assessors may interpret tasks and criteria differently. Grading is also likely to vary between subjects and disciplines, but this is considered acceptable if standards within subjects and disciplines are consistent.

Moreover, recent research indicates that university staff often learn to apply standards 'on the job' without formal training, make comparative rather than analytical judgements, ignore or cherry-pick grading criteria, or combine the use of criteria with norm referencing/tacit knowledge.

Even highly experienced staff can award very different grades for the same work.² As Bloxham et al. point out:

Repeated studies over many years demonstrate considerable inconsistency in academics' judgements about student performance and variation in the meaning they accord to written standards.³

The research evidence also shows that three key factors account for this variation in the application of standards:

1. **People** – the differences in individuals' experience, beliefs, expertise, and habits.
2. **Tools** – the information and processes used to guide and quality assure assessment.
3. **Tasks** – the nature of assessment methods in higher education.

There is also broad agreement that setting standards within marking teams is most effective when opportunities are provided for socially constructing standards (through the process of pre-marking calibration, as described by Sadler) within subject disciplines. We should also seek to do this with our students by discussing how assessment works, what it is for, and how we do it.

Within BIMM University, we have already begun introducing opportunities to calibrate marking across teams at the module level and to enhance the existing cross-campus moderation process. These changes have also been driven by feedback from our external examiners, who have noted variability in grading between campus teams delivering the same module.

² Bloxham, S., et al. (2011). "Mark my words: the role of assessment criteria in UK higher education grading practices." *Studies in Higher Education* 36(6): 655-670.

³ Bloxham, S. Reimann, N and Rust, C. Calibration Synthesis Report. Advance HE 2018:
<https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/downloads/Calibration%20synthesis%20report.pdf>

Unconscious Bias

It is essential to recognise that everyone has unconscious bias. Therefore, it is critical to minimise the impact of unconscious bias in assessment and feedback processes by interrogating any potential areas where it may affect marking practice.

The BIMM University Assessment Rubric

A rubric is a tool that allows us to standardise the grading process, making it more efficient, saving time for faculty and providing students with effective feedback that promotes their learning. Rubrics feature appropriate criteria and describe them across a range of performance levels.

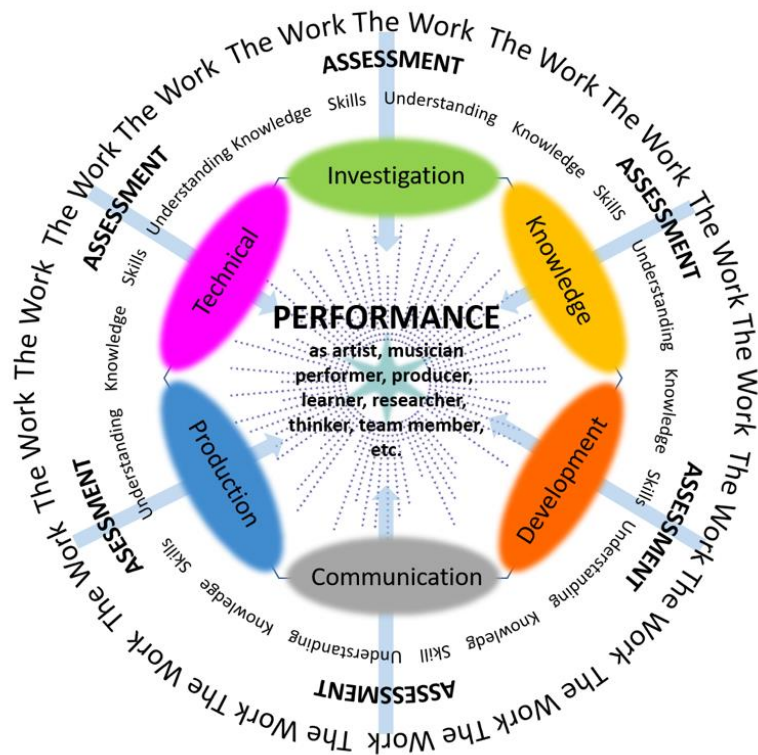
The BIMM University Assessment Rubric recognises the need to adopt an assessment approach appropriate to the creative arts. Accordingly, our rubric is designed around six specific Assessment Fields:

- ***Investigation;***
- ***Knowledge;***
- ***Development;***
- ***Communication;***
- ***Production;***
- ***Technical.***

These six Assessment Fields measure achievement by the quality of evidence in student work.

Furthermore, we use these fields selectively for each assessment task, making them applicable to different assessments across our provision (most assessments will be marked using three to four fields). Marks will be awarded holistically, with each assessment given a single mark using the categorical marking scheme and the rubric to make a grading judgment. Where there is more than one assessment on a module, marks are then combined by weighting to provide a module mark, as outlined in part one.

Assessment teams will upload the rubric for each module assessment directly to Canvas. Module marking teams will use the Assessment Rubric to evaluate student work. By calibrating their marking, they will establish a shared understanding of the required academic standard for the work they mark. Course teams may also produce written guidance, using the Assessment Rubric template, that articulates the kind of evidence they expect within each categorical grading band, and share this with their students, along with the exemplars used in calibration.



12

Level 3 Rubric:

Grade	Pass						Marginal Fail	Fail
Assessment fields:								
Investigation/ contextualisation Informed through the exploration of ideas and perspectives.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Knowledge/ideas Through assimilation and comprehension of information.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Development/Process Realisation through investigation and evaluation.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Communication/ articulation Of ideas and their evaluation and interpretation.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Production/realisation Selection of approaches to achieve desired outcomes.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Technical/technique The quality of the technical aspects of the product.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence

Level 4 Rubric:

Grade	Pass						Marginal Fail	Fail
Assessment Fields:								
Investigation/ contextualisation Informed through the exploration and evaluation of relevant ideas and perspectives.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Knowledge/ideas Through assimilation and comprehension of relevant information.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Development/Process Realisation through reflective practice experimentation and evaluation.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Communication/ articulation Of relevant ideas and their evaluation and interpretation.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Production/realisation Selection of appropriate approaches to achieve desired outcomes.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Technical/technique The quality of the technical aspects of the product.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence

Level 5 Rubric:

Grade	90, 95, 100	80, 85	72, 75	62, 65, 68	52, 55, 58	42, 45, 48	30, 35, 38	0, 5, 10, 20
Assessment Fields:								
Investigation/ contextualisation Informed through the critical exploration of relevant ideas, approaches and perspectives.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Knowledge/ideas Through comprehension and analysis of relevant practical, technical and theoretical information.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Development/Process Realisation through practice, experimentation, risk-taking, evaluation, reflection and problem-solving.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Communication/ articulation Of ideas, arguments and intentions.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Production/realisation Through the selection and application of effective methods to deliver high-quality outputs.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Technical/technique The quality of the technical aspects of the product and their delivery.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence

Level 6 Rubric:

Grade	90, 95, 100	80, 85	72, 75	62, 65, 68	52, 55, 58	42, 45, 48	30, 35, 38	0, 5, 10, 20
Assessment Fields:								
Investigation/ contextualisation Informed through the critical exploration and conceptual understanding of complex ideas and diverse perspectives.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Knowledge/ideas Through the synthesis and critical analysis of relevant practical, technical and theoretical information.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Development/Process Realisation through experimentation, risk-taking, reflection evaluation and problem-solving in complex and unpredictable contexts.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Communication/ articulation Of complex ideas and arguments that is clear and persuasive to a range of audiences.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Production/realisation That meets the expectations of relevant professional standards.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Technical/technique The quality and utility of the technical features of the product and the Level of skills with which it is produced or delivered.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Satisfactory evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence

Level 7 Rubric:

Grade Assessment Fields:	90, 95	80, 85	70, 75	60, 65	50, 55	40, 45	0,15,35
Investigation/ contextualisation Informed through comprehensive critical analysis and evaluation of complex and diverse concepts, theories and practices.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Knowledge/ideas Through the articulation of creative vision and/or the critical evaluation of conceptual, practical, technical and theoretical information.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Development/Process Realisation through experimentation, risk-taking, critical reflection, evaluation and problem-solving in complex emergent contexts.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Communication/ articulation Of complex and contradictory arguments and theories that is in-depth, critical, insightful and appropriately pitched for the intended audience.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Production/realisation That fully meets the expectations of relevant professional and academic standards.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence
Technical/technique The quality and utility of the technical features of the product and the skills with which it is produced or delivered.	Exceptional evidence	Outstanding evidence	Excellent evidence	Very good evidence	Good evidence	Insufficient evidence	Little or no evidence



Categorical Marking Scheme (Undergraduate)

Mark Category	Equivalent Classification	Level 4 Pass/Fail	UG Assessment Rubrics
100 95 90 85 80 75 72	First	Pass (40%)	Exceptional Evidence
			Outstanding Evidence
			Excellent Evidence
68 65 62	2:1		Very Good Evidence
58 55 52	2:2		Good Evidence
48 45 42	3rd		Satisfactory Evidence
38 35	High Fail	Marginal Fail (35%)	Insufficient Evidence
30 20 10 5 1 0	Fail Non-submission	Fail (1%)	Little or No Evidence

Categorical Marking Scheme (Postgraduate)

Mark Category:	Equivalent Classification:	Level 7 Assessment Rubric:
95	Distinction	Exceptional Evidence
90		
85		Outstanding Evidence
80		
75		Excellent Evidence
70		
65	Merit	Very Good Evidence
60		
55	Pass	Good Evidence
50		
45	Fail	Insufficient/ Little or No Evidence
40		
35		
15		
1		
0	Non-submission	

Part Three: Calibration and Moderation

To ensure that assessment criteria are applied consistently by markers, that students are treated fairly throughout the assessment process, and that there is a shared understanding of the academic standards students are expected to achieve, we deploy three strategies:

- 1) **Calibration** – a process that ensures standards are understood by faculty and consistently applied. We use examples of previous work to align all markers for a module.
- 2) **Internal Moderation** – a process that checks that standards are applied consistently at the module level, within or across campuses. We ask markers who did not mark the work initially to review the consistency of colleagues' marking by examining samples of assessed work.
- 3) **External Moderation** – this process is undertaken by External Examiners who work at other universities and are experts in the subject area your students are studying. They review work from across all campuses and compare standards with those they are familiar with across the sector. External Examiners can raise any concerns they have about marking in their annual reports.

The Head of School is responsible for ensuring consistent marking through subject-based, course-level calibration. Calibration is a peer review process that provides an opportunity, before marking begins, to mark, discuss, review and compare examples of previous student work to reach a shared understanding of the academic standard the work needs to meet. These social moderation processes can involve sharing and agreeing on examples of student work that meet the standard for each marking band.⁴

Sadler's model⁵ holds that an academic standard cannot be determined simply by a written description but requires examples (assessed work) combined with dialogue that leads to a description of why the examples meet the relevant standard.

The process we have adopted for calibration is as follows:

- First, course leaders will select a representative sample of assessments from the previous year, and these will be anonymised.
- Three weeks before the event, participants will be provided with examples, the BIMM University Assessment Rubric/Categorical Marking Scheme, and the relevant assessment brief.
- Participants will grade the work and provide feedback (anonymously), and the feedback will be shared one week before the calibration event.
- In small groups of four to six, participants will share outcomes and discuss them to agree on a final grade.
- Groups will give feedback to the larger group and highlight the three most important characteristics used to determine a grade.
- Following the calibration event, Course Leaders will produce a calibration report and assessment rubric-based guidance for marking teams and students.

⁴ Adapted from: Bloxham, S. Reimann, N and Rust, C. Calibration Synthesis Report. Advance HE 2018.

⁵ D. Royce Sadler (2012) Assessment, evaluation and quality assurance: Implications for integrity in reporting academic achievement in higher education, Education Inquiry, 3:2, 201-216, DOI: 10.3402/edui.v3i2.22028

Calibration Process

📌 Advice for Effective Calibration

- Timing; calibration needs to be completed early enough in the year, before significant summative assessment takes place.
- Focus on calibrating against a specific standard defined by our Assessment Rubric and the relevant Assessment Fields.
- Avoid narrow or unique specialism debates, and try to find common ground.
- Focus on the Learning Outcomes to be demonstrated by the task, not the task itself. Don't get distracted by assessment design issues (although these should be noted and fed into module/course monitoring/modifications).
- Allow enough time for quality dialogue.
- Ensure participants are aware of the pre-meeting tasks.
- Distribute pre-meeting work in good time.
- Keep judgements as anonymous as possible to allow for free discussion, avoid defensive marking, and avoid problems arising from perceived differences in faculty experience or status.
- Encourage participation by starting with challenging assessment tasks for a subject.
- Focus on agreeing on what is important in making judgements, drawing out examples, and sharing descriptions of why the pieces were marked at that level. Both exemplars and descriptors are needed.
- Use technology to facilitate both pre-work and the calibration event.
- Staff may also use the examples from the calibration process as exemplars for students.

Internal Moderation

Heads of School ensure that internal moderation and double marking are conducted in accordance with the policy below:

- Internal moderation of assessed work ensures that the marks awarded for an assessment task across a module fall within reasonable limits of the relevant Assessment Fields and Categorical Marking Bands against which students' work is assessed.
- We also conduct cross-campus moderation to ensure that standards are consistently applied across campuses for the same course.
- Moderation may be limited to sampling and, second, to marking a representative number of pieces of assessed work across the marking range from a cohort of students. It may also involve second marking the whole cohort's work (double marking).
- Double marking is the process of assigning a second set of marks to a piece of work by a second internal marker (who cannot see the marks and comments of the first marker). Dissertations and final projects should always be double-marked.

The University's rules for Internal Moderation are as follows:

- Level 3 and 4 work does not contribute to the final award category and will be marked by a single Marker.⁶
- All summatively assessed work at levels 5, 6 and 7, except assessments weighted at 30% or less of the module total, must be moderated or double-marked using a sample spanning the full range of grades to verify the overall marking standard. The process for completing moderation paperwork is set out in the University's [Quality Handbook](#). Please remember that External Examiners will see the moderation paperwork, and it may be shared with students in the event of a complaint or appeal.
- The table below outlines the moderation required at each level. There are ten separate mark 'bandings' (0-9, 10-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70-79, 80-89, 90-100).

Details of moderation requirements at each academic level are provided in the table below.

BIMM University Moderation Requirements

Level:	Internal Moderation Requirements:
4	None required.
5	10% of assessments (minimum of two from each banding; maximum of 50) across the full range of First Markers, subject to availability.
6	For all 15 credit modules, 10% of assessments (minimum of two from each banding; maximum of 50) across the full range of First Markers, subject to availability. For all 30 credit modules, all assessments will be double-marked.
7	For all 15/30 credit modules, 10% of assessments (minimum of two from each banding; maximum of 50) across the full range of First Markers, subject to availability. For all 60 or 90-credit modules, all assessments will be double-marked.

The Procedure for the Marking and Moderation of Assessments is as Follows:

- The First Marker grades the student's work using the University Assessment Rubric and Categorical Marking Scheme, annotates the work as necessary, and provides feedback to students on how their mark has been determined.
- The Moderator reviews a percentage of assessments, as outlined in the table above, to ensure that the Assessment Rubric and Categorical Marking Scheme have been applied consistently and at the

⁶ Whilst assessments at Level 4 are not subject to moderation, marking by new markers or faculty assessing on new modules or courses will be monitored as appropriate (this may include double marking) until competence in the application of appropriate standards has been demonstrated. Markers will only engage in solo marking after completing calibration.

correct pitch by the First Marker(s), and to evaluate the quality of feedback. For small batches of assessments, a sufficient number should be reviewed to assess the appropriateness of the First Marker(s)' work.

- If the Moderator identifies no issues, they complete the moderation form by clearly identifying the student and module data and stating that the process has been completed satisfactorily.
- Where a Moderator identifies a non-categorical provisional mark, it should be changed to the closest available categorical mark. If such a provisional mark falls between two categorical marks, it should be changed to the higher mark.
- If the Moderator identifies a problem with the consistency of marks awarded by a First Marker, this is reported to the Course Leader. All the First Marker's assessments are double-marked, and the new marks are agreed, recorded on the moderation coversheet, and amended in the original location.
- If the Moderator identifies a problem with the quality of feedback from a First Marker, the Moderator reports it to the Course Leader, who then works with that First Marker to revisit and improve their feedback. This process will be recorded on the moderation coversheet.
- If the Moderator identifies a problem with the pitch (i.e., consistent over- or under-marking), the Moderator will report it to the Course Leader, who will report it to the Deputy Chair of the Assessment Board. A recalibration will then be agreed in consultation with the External Examiner. The markers do not need to double-mark all assessments. Instead, the recalibration is annotated on the moderation coversheet, and the marks are amended.
- All practical assessments will be recorded, and the First Marker will attend and mark all students' performances. Moderation of these marks may occur during the performance via a marking panel or later using the recordings.
- Once the internal moderation/double-marking process is complete, External Examiners carry out External Moderation.
- The requirements detailed above constitute the minimum moderation requirements for the University. Other moderation may be carried out if, for whatever reason, a Head of School deems it appropriate.

The Procedure for Double-marking Assessments is as Follows:

- The First Marker marks using the University Assessment Rubric and Categorical Marking Scheme, annotates assessments as necessary, clearly states how the mark has been arrived at, and provides feedback.
- The Double Marker independently assesses all the assessments.
- The two markers meet and agree on a single set of marks and feedback.
- The Course Leader will adjudicate when the markers cannot agree on marks.

Part Four: Marking the Work of Students with Specific Learning Difficulties

Understanding the nature of students' disabilities and how they may affect students' responses to assessments informs an inclusive approach to marking. Students with disabilities have a legal right to additional support and reasonable adjustments. This is achieved by providing an Individual Support Plan (ISP), prepared in consultation with your Course Leader and Student Support, and shared with relevant teaching and administrative staff. The ISP will detail agreed adjustments to delivery and assessment and make

recommendations to teaching staff on strategies that may be deployed to support students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs).

Even if a student does not have a formal diagnosis, we will still provide an Individual Support Plan if we have knowledge that disability-related adjustments would support the student. This aligns with universities' legal responsibilities, including those of teaching staff, as outlined in the *Abrahart v Bristol* decision. The court held that a university need not have formal knowledge of a disability and its effects to owe a duty to make reasonable adjustments. Provided it has 'constructive knowledge' of the effects of the condition (for example, through the student's behaviour or language), it should be able to deduce that a student has a disability. The decision also said that student-facing staff cannot pass on the duty to consider reasonable adjustments to a disability or wellbeing Service but must consider what proactive steps they should take in a timely way to ensure the student is not disadvantaged because of their disability. For more information, see the [Equality and Human Rights Commission's advice note](#) for the higher education sector on this case.

A specific learning difficulty (SpLD) is a difference or difficulty in particular aspects of learning. The most common SpLDs are Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder, Dyscalculia and Dysgraphia. However, sometimes a diagnosis of Specific Learning Difficulties is given rather than Dyslexia or Dyspraxia, because the individual experiences a unique combination of difficulties that cannot be readily categorised but may include features of one or more recognised SpLDs. Similarly, some people will have an assessment for more than one SpLD; overlap is very common.

SpLDs are lifelong neurological differences that can present barriers to new learning, recalling, processing information, and literacy acquisition. A guide to common neurodivergent types can be found [here](#).

SpLD traits can present themselves in many positive ways, such as:

- Above-average intelligence.
- Exceptional creativity.
- Unique problem-solving skills.
- A keen sense of empathy and justice.
- Good intuition.

However, someone living with an SpLD may also experience the following:

- Poor focus and attention.
- Poor handwriting.
- Poor spelling and sentence construction.
- Short-term and working memory difficulties.
- Difficulties with reading, absorbing information and comprehending text.
- Trouble synthesising information.
- Difficulties in organising thoughts for writing.
- Poor personal organisation and coordination skills.
- Left/right confusion.

The effects of SpLDs can be challenging to manage, but with the right guidance, interventions, technologies, and strategies, they don't need to limit academic attainment or career aspirations.

- Give students time to prepare and provide clarity and structure:

As appropriate, provide assessment questions, details and deadlines as far in advance as possible, using clear, concise language and specific instructions.

- Always use the Assessment Rubric criteria linked to the module Learning Outcomes.
- Notify students of changes to assessments or deadlines in good time. Give examples of different assessment types and discuss the structure with students, including how the material should be presented and the expectations for each assessment.
- Provide regular opportunities for formative feedback.
- Give direct feedback in typed, audio or video format, using specific examples of how a point could be improved, setting comments against assessment criteria.

Our university Assessment Rubric sets out the knowledge and skills that must be demonstrated for grades to be awarded. The Assessment Rubric includes an assessment field focusing on the technical aspects of work submitted for assessment. When this field applies to text-based work, markers should look for punctuation, spelling, and grammar errors and point them out to students in feedback. Students should also be encouraged to use spelling and grammar checkers when proofreading their work before submission. Markers may deduct marks where it is clear that students have not taken sufficient care over the technical aspects of their written work, particularly when such errors interfere with the reader's ability to understand what is written.

However, when marking the work of students with SpLDs, markers should be aware that SpLD students' written assignments may lack the polished writing demonstrated by their peers due to difficulties with spelling, grammar, and sentence structure. Errors may persist despite extensive proofreading. In normal circumstances, markers might reasonably consider such work technically flawed or careless and deduct marks for poor presentation. However, in the case of SpLD students, such errors should be understood and taken into account when assessing written work.

Consider SpLD when marking:

- Read the work and look for ideas, understanding, and knowledge.
- Be clear about the marking criteria (rubric), especially knowledge and understanding.
- Make constructive and positive comments.
- Explain your comments in a straightforward and accessible way.
- If you comment on spelling, grammar, and punctuation, select a sample section rather than correcting the entire essay. Inform the student of this approach.
- If a dyslexic student is marked down for minor spelling, grammatical and punctuation errors, this may be discriminatory. Therefore, be prepared to overlook such mistakes, provided the meaning remains clear.
- Be clear that comments on spelling, grammar, and punctuation foster skills development and do not penalise errors. However, if you have marked for content/ideas only (and not spelling/grammar/punctuation), make this clear.
- Attempt to ignore structural flaws, such as organisation and sequencing of information, and focus on marking based on content.

Please contact your Campus Student Support team if you have any concerns or questions about supporting your students with SpLDs, or if you believe one of your students might have an undiagnosed SpLD.

Part Five: Feedback on Assessment

Return of Marks & Feedback to Students

Course Leaders ensure that all Markers are aware of the deadlines for returning provisional marks and student feedback. The Head of School will closely monitor this.

- The University aims to return provisional marks and feedback to students via Canvas no later than 21 working days (plus any public holidays) after the submission deadline or final performance date. Please note that this period will be extended by a week during the winter break, as the University is closed entirely at this time.
- If students submit work after the published deadlines, they may not receive provisional marks and feedback until 21 days (plus any public holidays) after submission (where extensions are granted) or 21 days (plus any public holidays) after the late submission window closes.
- If, for any legitimate reason, the University cannot return provisional marks and feedback within 21 days (plus any public holidays), students must be informed in a clear and timely manner of the reason for the delay and the proposed new return date. The Course Leader is responsible for this communication.
- Provisional marks are for guidance only. The Internal and External Moderation process may result in revised marks, and the Module Assessment Board confirms final student marks.

Ways of Providing Feedback

The quality of feedback is closely monitored by the Head of School, with oversight from the Dean of Faculty/Director of Postgraduate Studies, who monitors academic quality across their subject area.

Feedback on learning and assessment is one of the most powerful tools available to educators.⁷ There are two critical elements to the process of providing feedback to students on their achievement in the assessments we set:

- Providing feedback.
- Receiving feedback.

First, we must consider the purpose of feedback and its value to our students. Feedback serves several overlapping purposes:

1. It clarifies the students' performance and achievement.
2. It is transformational in enabling students to reflect, improve their performance, and become more autonomous learners.
3. It builds student confidence and motivation.

Moreover, we aim to design assessment that is 'assessment for learning' rather than simply an 'assessment of learning', so points two and three are as important as point one. Assessment for learning encourages our students to become self-directed learners who can set their own goals and apply critical assessment to their performance. This is one of the key outcomes of Higher Education, as it promotes critical thinking and enables lifelong learning. Engaging with feedback in a number of ways, including self-assessment, goal setting, and peer assessment, also makes our students assessment literate, as they begin to understand the process of assessment from the inside and thus have a better understanding of what we, as assessors, are looking for from them.

⁷ Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research*, 77, 81-112.

What is Effective Feedback?

- It helps clarify what good performance is.
- Facilitates the development of self-assessment (reflection) in learning.
- Delivers high-quality information about their learning to students.
- Encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning.
- Encourages positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem.
- Provides opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance.⁸

To Provide Effective Feedback, You Should Pay Attention to the Following:**Clear, detailed and specific**

- It is important that students understand the feedback you give. To achieve this, feedback should be specific about where mistakes were made and where additional information can be found.

Forward focussed

- Feedback should be constructive, not merely backward-looking, and should focus on aspects of the work relevant to later assessments. For example, addressing generic issues such as skills, knowledge, understanding, or presentational factors helps feedback function as feed-forward, building skills for future work.

Build motivation and self-esteem

- Feedback should help students want to learn by being encouraging and supportive in tone, focusing on existing strengths rather than weaknesses, and providing guidance on how to improve.

Realistic and focused on your student's performance

- Make sure your students realise that the feedback is about their work rather than about them as people, and that it is appropriately challenging, asking them to do things they can do, not things they do not know how to do.

Target feedback on the purpose of the assignment and the criteria for success

- The functions of feedback vary with the nature of the assessment and its criteria for success (the Assessment Fields). Therefore, be flexible and avoid a one-size-fits-all approach.

Feedback should encourage a dialogue between you and your students as a way to make sense of their learning

- Feedback should not be seen merely as something faculty deliver to students, leaving individuals to try to understand what has been said about their work. Instead, dialogue between tutors and students, peer-to-peer feedback, and discussion about the meaning of feedback can help students learn more.

It helps your students develop their ability to make informed judgments about their work

- Feedback aims to enhance learning, improve future work, and develop students' ability to self-audit the quality of their work.

⁸ Nicol, D. J., & Macfarlane-Dick, D. (2006). Formative assessment and self-regulated learning: a model and seven principles of good feedback practice. *Studies in Higher Education*, 31,199-218.

Areas in Which We Can Provide Feedback Include:

Alignment to brief,
assessment fields and
Learning Outcomes

Subject
understanding,
communication skills,
academic skills

Style and approach,
transferable skills,
student effort and
points to work on

Comments should not, however, be too general. For example, brief comments such as the generic advice to 'be more critical' are not helpful because they don't explain what the phrase means in the context of the students' work.

What Feedback Should Cover:

- A clear and logical structure so students can 'follow' the message.
- A summary of the main feedback points.
- Reference to the Assessment Rubric and Module Learning Outcomes.
- Comments on different elements of assignment structure.
- Information as to what has been done well and why.
- Information on areas that need to be improved and why/how.
- Reasonably attainable targets for improvement – even for good work.
- Guidance as to how the improvements could be made.

Constructive Feedback

Give detailed
feedback but don't
overdo it and focus
on what is important

Focus equally on
what is good about
the work and what
could be better

Focus equally on
both the form and
content of the work

Forms of Feedback

- **Written feedback** is the most ubiquitous format and effectively supports several types of assessment, particularly text-based assignments, where markers may also provide annotated comments. It can be produced quickly, is easy to distribute, and can be sent electronically due to its small file size. It may also be printed and read in hard copy. However, it can be seen as overly formal, less substantial, and

less detailed, and it may not suit all markers or all students.

- **Audio feedback** is becoming increasingly popular. It may be faster to produce (with practice), though it may be slower to distribute due to larger file sizes, and it requires the ability to use audio recording technology. It also has advantages in that it can be perceived as more personal, and tone and emphasis provide improved student understanding. In addition, it is more easily understandable and provides much more detail than written feedback.
- **Video feedback** is much more demanding for markers in terms of technology and can be slow to record and distribute because of large file sizes. However, this format is highly engaging, can be extremely sophisticated (including multimedia input), provides all the advantages of audio feedback, is perceived as dynamic, and offers students greater insight into performance.
- **Generic or group feedback** – with some assessments, it can be beneficial to provide feedback to a class, either alongside or ahead of individual feedback, as it allows faculty to have a dialogue with students based on some of the generic themes emerging from their collective work.
- **Peer feedback** – peer assessment and feedback can effectively engage students in the process and in understanding how assessment and feedback support learning.

As you can see, each feedback delivery mode has advantages and drawbacks.

Faculty at BIMM University are currently using both written and audio feedback, and there have been experiments with video feedback. The availability of faster video streaming is now commonplace, perhaps a good time for further work in this area. Whatever format you choose should be appropriate and accessible to you and your students.

All Feedback Should be as Follows:

- Phrased objectively and be as complete as possible across all sections of the assessment.
- Refer only to the requirements of the particular assessment task, i.e. the skills, knowledge, values and attitudes.
- Related to the Assessment Fields and Learning Outcomes, with comments for each.
- Match and justify the grade, balancing positive and negative comments in proportion to the mark awarded.
- Be directly actionable, so there is no uncertainty about what a student must do to address shortcomings.
- Be candid, but not cruel, about weaknesses.
- Do not attempt to be humorous about failings.
- Do not make comments of a personal nature.

Informal Feedback

There are many ways of doing this. For example, through practical explorations of feedback with music and dance staff working towards their fellowship, we have captured the following range of informal feedback mechanisms across BIMM University:

Teacher Feedback, such as:

- Individual feedback on activities and tasks in class.
- Recording classes, using these videos to show students their progress, to show their development, and to provide feedback.

- Giving verbal feedback to the whole class.
- Giving early feedback on a text-based assessment before students hand it in.
- Using partnering with students in learning activities and tasks as feedback.
- Focus groups for reflection or critical questioning.
- Tutorials at a point in the teaching provide a chance to reflect on individual progress.
- Weekly tasks are given to students, either face-to-face or by email or on Canvas.

Student Self-Assessment, such as:

- Asking individuals questions during class to assess their understanding.
- Asking students to self-monitor their progress.
- Ask students – how do you think it went? Then give feedback on how you, as the teacher, saw it. Students then reflect on their understanding of the standards you expect.
- Going through the assessment criteria before tutorials. Asking students to assess themselves and to use this as a starting point for discussion during tutorials.

Peer Assessment, such as:

- Role play (students can act as the teacher and give feedback).
- Listening to or watching students' performances in various contexts, then providing verbal or electronic feedback.
- Sharing's – an informal way of getting feedback from their peers and of self-assessing where they are in relation to others.

In Addition, Verbal Feedback Should:

- Be clear and focused.
- Use positive language.
- Check for understanding.
- Give students time for summary and reflection.
- Do not be personal or overly critical.

At the start of the course, teaching teams should make students aware of how feedback will be communicated to them, focusing particularly on any of the above methods (or other suitable ones) and how students can use them to help them progress.

Teaching teams should also take a proactive approach by involving students in their work to shape how feedback is given and its role in students' learning journeys. This should help counter the common perception that feedback is only connected to assessed work and instead promote recognition of the many times teachers give feedback to and with students. This will hopefully encourage good feedback literacy among students and staff and help promote the feed-forward approach.

It may be worth distinguishing for students between motivational language often used in classes to encourage (e.g. "Keep it up, that's great") and actual feedback (e.g. "You've engaged well with the task set."). If students believe that positive motivational language correlates with a future grade, they may expect to receive higher marks in formal assessments than they do and might, therefore, feel misled by their tutors or unfairly assessed.

In Summary

- Feedback should be a conversation between students and teaching staff.
- It should help develop assessment literacy among your students by clarifying what is expected of them (what good looks like) and explaining why and how they are being assessed.
- It should be a tool for learning and the personal development of your students as they develop the skills to self-assess their achievements.

Assessment Literacy – How Students Use Feedback

Despite your best efforts, research indicates there are good reasons why your students may not make the best use of the feedback you provide, including:

- Students do not find the feedback useful.
- They do not know how to act upon the feedback.
- The feedback is not sufficiently specific, detailed, or individualised.
- A perceived lack of agency to implement the feedback.
- The feedback style is too authoritative.
- Students find the feedback difficult to understand, i.e., they do not understand the complex academic or technical terminology.
- Students lose motivation to engage with feedback if they perceive their effort might not pay off.⁹

Partnership – Developing Engagement with Feedback Toolkit (DEFT)

To ensure your students can develop assessment literacy, you should consider giving and receiving feedback as a shared enterprise. We should spend time with our students discussing assessment, feedback, and how to utilise feedback. The 'Developing Engagement with Feedback Toolkit' (DEFT) was developed to support educators and students in working together to overcome critical barriers to student engagement with feedback. The toolkit's resources are designed to be flexible. Educators can choose elements that seem most applicable to their students' discipline area or level of study. The resources illustrate activities that support students' engagement with feedback. They should ideally be embedded within broader institutional or programme-level strategies for developing students' assessment literacy and self-regulation. We have produced our version of the DEFT Toolkit, including a student guide in PDF format and a series of bespoke workshop plans you can draw on and integrate into your teaching at the course or module level.

The following are examples of things faculty should consider when developing feedback literacy amongst their students:

- Discuss with the class or an individual student how the assessment will be managed, what the assessment criteria are, what was omitted from the assessment criteria, and why.
- Provide tutorials where written feedback can be discussed and next steps can be explored further.
- Provide examples of previously submitted work and describe the grade's rationale.

⁹ Jonsson, A. (2013). Facilitating productive use of feedback in higher education. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 14, 63-76., Pitt, E., & Norton, L. (in press). 'Now that's the feedback I want!' Students' reactions to feedback on graded work and what they do with it. Nash, R.A. and Winstone, N.E., 2017. Responsibility-sharing in the giving and receiving of assessment feedback. *Frontiers in psychology*, 8, p.1519.

- Running assessment workshops where students mark work submitted in previous years.
- Provide marks only after students have responded to your feedback.
- Reporting formative feedback in class with break-out discussions.