

Plymouth University Assessment Policy 2014-20

This Policy replaces the Plymouth University Assessment Policy versions (2014 & 2007)

This Policy was reviewed and agreed by TLQC in June 2016 and will be reviewed in 2020 together with the Teaching, Learning and Student Experience Strategy.

This Assessment Policy applies to all students (Level 3-7 and CPD) at Plymouth University.

The purpose of assessment at Plymouth University is to

- help students to perform to the best of their abilities through assessment that is inclusive and supports their learning and future employment
- encourage, motivate and involve students in extensive learning
- provide a fair and reliable measure of students' performance, knowledge and skills against the learning outcomes and discipline pedagogy
- help students develop, through timely and constructive feedback,
- give our stakeholders confidence that a student has achieved the necessary level of achievement, giving a reliable and consistent basis for their award.

If you are a student, you can expect the following

1. The opportunity to take part in pre-assessment activities designed to help understand what assessment is and how it works.
2. Clear and transparent assessment guidelines and briefs, and marking criteria for each **assessment, with clear information on how and when feedback will be provided**, through programme and module handbooks.
3. The opportunity to take part in appropriate discussions on assessments with staff and other students.
4. To take part in a range of assessment methods (these may include self-assessment, assessment by (and of) other students, and technology-aided assessments).
5. Assessments are valid and aligned to clear and realistic learning outcomes, with normally two summative inclusive assessments for each 20-credit module, unless there are specific and overriding disciplinary or professional body requirements.
6. To take part in formative assessments where you can give, and receive (where appropriate), personal, group or general feedback which identifies where improvements can be made.
7. A schedule that spreads formative and summative assignment deadlines throughout the year.
8. The opportunity to use originality checking software and where possible to submit your assessment online.
9. To have assessments marked anonymously, unless the school has approved a specific exemption or it is not practical because the assessment method involves direct contact between you and the examiner.

10. To get provisional marks on all assessed work, **including examinations**, with personal, group or generic feedback as soon as possible, and within a maximum of 20 working days.

The University expects students to

1. Engage with 'feed-forward' and feedback in formative and summative-assessments and put in place any suggested improvements.
2. Demonstrate that you have achieved academic and where appropriate professional standards through the completion of assessments.
3. Meet the professional and ethical standards appropriate to the subject.
4. Tell the programme leader about any medical or other reasonable adjustments requiring modification to assessments at the start of the academic year or, as soon as possible.
5. Comply with Plymouth University academic regulations, including those on assessment offences.

Staff in our schools, colleges and partner institutions should make sure of the following:

1. Assessment is a fundamental part of the programme giving students a clear opportunity to demonstrate general and specific subject skills, knowledge and understanding, linked to learning outcomes and future employment.
2. Assessments are reliable, inclusive, and authentic and designed to minimise the use of modified assessment, and over-assessment of learning outcomes.
3. Assessments are valid and aligned to clear and realistic learning outcomes, with normally two summative inclusive assessments for each 20-credit module, unless there are specific and overriding disciplinary or professional body requirements.
4. Schedules of assessment spread formative and summative assessment deadlines across the programme.
5. Students have the opportunity to take part in pre-assessment activities, guidance and support to help them understand what assessment is and how it works.
6. Students are given clear and transparent assessment guidelines and briefs, and marking criteria for each **assessment, with clear information on how feedback will be provided**, through programme and module handbooks.
7. Students are given the opportunity to use originality checking software and where possible to submit their work online.
8. Assessments are marked fairly, using the published marking and grading criteria and appropriate second marking and moderation.

9. Assessments are marked anonymously, unless the school has allowed an exemption or it is not practical because the assessment method involves direct contact between the student and the examiner.

10. Students will receive constructive personal, group or general feedback and provisional marks as soon as possible, and within a maximum of 20 working days **for all assessment, including examinations**. In exceptional circumstances, students and the Associate Head Teaching & Learning or equivalent will be told of any reason for a delay and a revised date will be issued.

11. Conduct regular reviews of assessment practice, quality of staff feedback and external examiners, and invite students to comment on how assessment is provided.

The University will support this by

1. Providing staff development workshops in all aspects of assessment
2. Providing adequate resources and an ICT system that supports the assessment process
3. Providing digital tools to encourage innovative assessment
4. Appointing and training appropriately qualified external examiners
5. 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. Monitoring how the assessment policy is put in place across the university.

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The Plymouth University Assessment Policy is an integral part of and links to

- Plymouth University Strategy 2020 **Ambition 1**: Excellent learning in partnership with students
- Teaching, Learning and Student Experience Strategy (2013-2020)

Overarching aim

- Plymouth University will provide an excellent learning and stimulating student experience, where students are at the heart of all our considerations.

Goal 3: Flexible learning and digital literacy

We will endeavour to:

- develop inclusive learning and assessment opportunities that meet the needs of diverse learners through flexible learning and assessment options

The Policy is underpinned by

- The QAA (2013) Quality Code for Higher Education: Chapter B6: Assessment of students and recognition of prior learning
- the SEEC Level descriptors which describe the generic characteristics of learning at each level, and are used in programme and module assessment design.
- Plymouth University Academic Regulations which must be upheld when conducting assessments.
 - The NUS Charter on Feedback and Assessment (2010) and the Plymouth University NSS and SPQ results.