

ACADEMIC QUALITY



Learning and Teaching Policy

Formalising Assessment Changes and Updating GCM

BACKGROUND Changes to Assessment: COVID Policy on Approvals and School Decisions

In accordance with the University's **adapted** approvals procedures which was introduced in March 2020 in response to the pandemic, Schools have been able to adapt their assessment methods for Spring/Summer 2020, AY2020/21 and AY2021/22 without going through their own internal full approval process and without updating assessment information on the Global Curriculum Management (GCM) (ie where these are temporary assessment changes due to the ongoing impact of COVID). Schools have been able to set their own internal approvals for assessment changes in this period, including via any specified School committees/groups.

The above "emergency/temporary" approach does not conflict with the current approach to managing changes to assessment:

- are managed and approved at School level in accordance with the [standard approval procedures](#), the [Academic Management Structures](#) and the University's [Codes of Practice](#);
- are ultimately the responsibility of the Head of School, delegated to the Director of Learning and Teaching and overseen by the School Learning and Teaching Committee, and maybe delegated further to the Director of Academic Quality and the School Studies Committee;
- do not require approval by the University Studies Committee;
- are part of the roles of Course Leaders/Senior Course Leaders, Programme Directors of Studies/Senior Programme Directors of Studies and remits of Programme Boards of Studies and Global Course Teams;
- are undertaken by Course Leaders in consultation with all stakeholders as appropriate, such as the entire Global Course Team and Programme Directors of Studies;
- should meet any Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) and in-country accreditation requirements as appropriate.

Additionally, Learning and Teaching Academic Year Group (LTAYG) agreed that "COVID" changes to assessment should be communicated to External Examiners and PSRBs.

It was further agreed that if a Course Team wished to make permanent any changes to assessment made temporarily for in response to the pandemic, then the standard, School-based approval process must be followed; additionally, assessment information provided in GCM and in other sources (such as student handbooks) must be updated.

PROPOSAL Formalising Assessment Changes and Updating GCM

In agreement with the Deputy Principal (Education and Student Life) and the Directors of Learning and Teaching, it has been recognised that the "emergency assessment response" cannot continue indefinitely for a number of reasons, eg:

- Schools have identified the need to review and rationalise all the different assessments which have been introduced during COVID;
- Public* Information on assessment (*ie available to students as well as other stakeholders), most notably GCM, is out-of-date and QAA/CMA are increasingly highlighting the need for updating information which has not been updated since pre-COVID.

Therefore, the following proposal is presented to the LTAYG for approval:

- 1) Where "COVID Assessment Changes" have already been approved by a School as permanent changes, GCM should be updated prior to the start of AY2022/23;
- 2) Where assessment changes are still temporary or the process of reviewing/redesigning assessment is still in progress, then changes should be finalised and updated on GCM prior to the start of AY 2023/24.

As part of the ongoing response to COVID and of [Responsive Blended Learning](#) (RBL), Schools have continued to adopt a range of different assessment methods. Consequently, there has been an ongoing need to revisit current assessment policies either to reaffirm or to adapt.

The following Assessment Policy Information was endorsed by the LTAYG at its meeting on 3 November 2021 and is available on the [Learning and Teaching Policy Bank](#).

- Changes to Assessment
- Types of Assessment
- Take-Home Open Book Exams
- Assessment Scheduling
- Submission of Coursework Policy
- Feedback on Assessment (Coursework and Take-Home Open Book Exams)

The Learning and Teaching Academy has provided through [Responsive Blended Learning](#) (RBL), associated resources, training and sessions, a wide range of support for Schools in planning for and designing [assessment](#) in 2021/22. Additionally, there is a suite of [Watt Works Quick Guides](#) on Assessment and Feedback.