

# Heriot-Watt University's Mapping to the UK Quality Code Assessment

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## Regulatory contexts for the Quality Code

The Expectations and Core practices of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code) are mandatory for higher education providers in all parts of the UK. Common practices are mandatory in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and while providers in England may choose to work towards them, they are not required to do so as these are not regulatory requirements and will not be assessed as part of the OfS's regulatory framework. National regulators and QAA are not bound by the information in this advice and guidance and will not view it as containing indicators of compliance. This guidance does not interpret statutory requirements.

## Terminology

**Formative assessment:** Assessment with a developmental purpose, designed to help learners learn more effectively by giving them feedback on their performance and how it can be improved and/or maintained. Reflective practice by students sometimes contributes to formative assessment.

**Summative assessment:** Used to indicate the extent of a learner's success in meeting the assessment criteria to gauge the intended learning outcomes of a module or course. Typically, within summative assessment, the marks awarded count towards the final mark of the course/module/award.

**Module:** A self-contained, formally structured unit of study, with a coherent and explicit set of learning outcomes and assessment criteria. Some providers use the word 'course' to refer to individual modules.

## Expectations and Practices

The advice underneath the Expectations and Practices is not mandatory for providers but illustrative of a range of possible approaches.

**Assessment is a fundamental aspect of the student learning experience. Engagement in assessment activities and interaction with staff and peers enables learning, both as part of the task and through review of their performance. It is a vehicle for obtaining feedback. Ultimately, it determines whether each student has achieved their course's learning outcomes and allows the awarding body to ensure that appropriate standards are being applied rigorously. Deliberate, systematic quality assurance ensures that assessment processes, standards and any other criteria are applied consistently and equitably, with reliability, validity and fairness.**

EXPECTATIONS FOR STANDARDS		EXPECTATIONS FOR QUALITY	
<p>The academic standards of courses meet the requirements of the relevant national qualifications framework.</p> <p><i>Assessment ensures that the qualifications are awarded only to those students who meet specified learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are specified for each course, which are consistent with the relevant national qualification frameworks' descriptors, and assessment determines whether each student has achieved them.</i></p>	<p>The value of qualifications awarded to students at the point of qualification and over time is in line with sector-recognised standards.</p> <p><i>Assessment regimes include processes ensuring the qualifications awarded by a degree-awarding body are consistent with the standards recognised within the sector and continue to be so over time. This consistency is important for the value of a qualification and the trust stakeholders place in it.</i></p>	<p>Courses are well-designed, provide a high-quality academic experience for all students and enable a student's achievement to be reliably assessed.</p> <p><i>Courses are designed so that curricula, learning outcomes and assessment are aligned with each other, enabling reliable assessment and an effective learning experience. Assessment measures accurately and consistently, the extent to which students have achieved the learning outcomes for the course.</i></p>	<p>From admission through to completion, all students are provided with the support that they need to succeed in and benefit from higher education.</p> <p><i>Assessment supports students' learning: it is designed to enable students to learn through preparing for and undertaking the assessment and from feedback on their performance in the assessment.</i></p>
<p><i>HWU is able to confirm that it meets the above Expectations for Standards. Reference should be made to the detailed mapping provided against each of the Guiding Principles.</i></p>		<p><i>HWU is able to confirm that it meets the above Expectations for Quality. Reference should be made to the detailed mapping provided against each of the Guiding Principles below, as well as the mapping documents to the 'Course Design and Development', 'Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access' and 'Enabling Student Achievement' themes.</i></p>	
Core Practice (Standards)		Core Practice (Quality)	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The provider ensures that the threshold standards for its qualifications are consistent with the relevant national qualifications frameworks.</li> <li>The provider ensures that students who are awarded qualifications have the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers. <p><i>In practice, this means that learning outcomes are specified for each course, consistent with the relevant national qualification frameworks' descriptors, and assessment determines whether each student has achieved them.</i></p> <p><i>Providers operate processes that ensure learning outcomes are consistent with the requirements of the relevant national qualifications frameworks. They ensure assessments measure the extent to which students achieve the learning outcomes both at, and beyond, the threshold level. Providers also ensure measurement and representation of students' achievement beyond the threshold is reasonably comparable with those of other UK providers - via external examining and the use of external input and/or reference points in course design and assessment frameworks.</i></p> </li> <li>Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the standards of its awards are credible and secure irrespective of where or how courses are delivered or who delivers them. <p><i>In practice, this means that degree-awarding bodies remain responsible for the academic standards of all credit and qualifications granted in their name; this responsibility is never delegated. They ensure that any partner involved in design or delivery of assessment understands and follows the requirements they approve.</i></p> </li> <li>The provider uses external expertise, assessment and classification processes that are reliable, fair and transparent. <p><i>In practice, this means that providers operate processes for assessment and classification that ensure student achievement is measured reliably, fairly and transparently. They use external examiners for independent confirmation that their processes have been applied appropriately, and ensure qualifications have been awarded equitably and in accordance with national standards. Providers also make sure assessment policies and procedures are published and readily accessible to all stakeholders.</i></p> </li> </ol>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The provider designs and/or delivers high-quality courses. <p><i>In practice, this means that providers operate processes that ensure learning outcomes are consistent with the requirements of the relevant national qualification frameworks. They ensure that assessment measures the learning outcomes for the course, supports students' learning, and is appropriately tailored to different environments, for example, in the workplace for some apprenticeships. Providers operate effective institutional policies and procedures on assessment design and delivery.</i></p> </li> <li>The provider has sufficient appropriately qualified and skilled staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience. <p><i>In practice, this means that providers ensure that recruitment, progression and development of staff involved in teaching and assessment includes consideration of their knowledge and expertise in assessment.</i></p> </li> </ol>	
Common Practice (Standards)		Common Practice (Quality)	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The provider reviews its core practices for standards regularly and uses the outcomes to drive improvement and enhancement</li> </ol>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The provider reviews its core practices for quality regularly and uses the outcomes to drive improvement and enhancement.</li> <li>The provider's approach to managing quality takes account of external expertise.</li> <li>The provider engages students individually and collectively in the development, assurance and enhancement of the quality of their educational experience. <p><i>In practice, this means that providers regularly review and enhance assessment policies, procedures and processes as they relate to quality, to ensure they remain fit for purpose and take account of changing circumstance, demands and pedagogical developments. They consider and act on reports of external examiners, focus on assessment in their course reviews, and engage students in the development, assurance and enhancement of the quality of their student experience.</i></p> </li> </ol>	

<i>In practice , this means that providers regularly review and enhance their assessment policies, procedures and processes as they relate to standards to ensure they remain fit for purpose. They consider and act on reports of external examiners and focus on assessment in their courses reviews.</i>	
<b><i>HWU</i></b> <i>is able to confirm that it meets the above Core and Common Practices (Standards). Reference should be should be made to the detailed mapping provided against each of the Guiding Principles, as well as the mapping documents to the ‘Course Design and Development’, ‘Partnerships’, ‘External Expertise’ and ‘Monitoring and Evaluation’ themes.</i>	<b><i>HWU</i></b> <i>is able to confirm that it meets the above Core and Common Practices (Quality). Reference should be made to the detailed mapping provided against each of the Guiding Principles below, as well as the mapping documents to the ‘ Course Design and Development’, ‘Monitoring and Evaluation’, External Expertise’ and ‘Student Engagement’ themes.</i>

## Guiding Principles with Mapping from HWU Practices

A 'Reference' document is available to use in conjunction with this mapping document.

The guiding principles given here are not mandatory for any provider. They are a concise expression of the fundamental practices of the higher education sector, based on the experience of a wide range of providers. They are intended as a framework for providers to consider when establishing new or looking at existing higher education provision. They are not exhaustive and there will be other ways for providers to meet their requirements.

Guiding Principles (Standards and Quality)	Heriot-Watt University Practice
<p><b>1. Assessment methods and criteria are aligned to learning outcomes and teaching activities.</b></p> <p>There is alignment between intended learning outcomes, teaching strategies, methods of assessment and assessment criteria. Constructive alignment is a model where learning environments and activities are designed to enable all students to achieve the desired learning outcomes, measured through assessment activities using clearly aligned criteria. Learning outcomes, assessment criteria and learning and teaching activities are developed in accordance with the academic level of study, using appropriate descriptors and consistent language. They reflect course and module aims as well as other factors where appropriate, such as professional, statutory and regulatory body (PSRB) requirements. Figure 1 outlines the four major steps to constructive alignment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All the University's courses/programmes must sit within the SCQF framework, be consistent with the Subject Benchmark Statements, and adhere to the QAA Quality Code.</li> <li>Where programmes are accredited by UK Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB), their requirements and guidelines will be taken into account.</li> <li>Mandatory requirements, in relation to course and programme design, are communicated and guided by various policies and procedures, as outlined within the University's mapping document to Section 4 of the UK Quality Code's Advice and Guidance: Course Design and Development.</li> <li>The University has in place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curriculum Structure guidelines for the development of courses and programmes, which cultivate the introduction of a diversity of teaching, learning and assessment approaches, within a coherent, University-wide academic framework. The guidelines recommends that a variety of assessment methods be used which may include peer assessment.</li> <li>The Curriculum Structure guidelines and a series of Curriculum Structure Toolkits, provide guidance on the design of assessment activities. An Assessment Design Briefing Paper advises that assessment methods should be aligned with intended learning outcomes and fit well with teaching approaches.</li> <li>Approved descriptors for all courses detailing course aims, learning outcomes, syllabus and assessment methods and weightings.</li> <li>A four-part Code of Practice (COP) for the Management of Multi-Location, Multi-Mode Programmes for managing the University's provision delivered across various locations and by various modes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All four parts of the COP set out that "the University's position on spectrum of choice underpinned by common safeguards for its multi-location/mode provision is encapsulated in, and summarised by, the following fundamental principle: identical academic standards; diversity of learning experiences".</li> <li>Part 1 of the COP outlines expectations in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic experience and sufficiency for students to achieve intended learning outcomes (<i>Principle 1.2</i>)</li> <li>The provision to students of course descriptors, showing intended learning outcomes and teaching, learning and assessment methods (<i>Principle 1.11</i>).</li> </ul> </li> <li>Part 2 of the COP requires that all Schools must have a formal moderation policy for the moderation of assessment which must adhere to the University's Policy on the Moderation of Assessment (<i>Principle 2.12</i>). The policies incorporate all stages of the assessment process, from design of, and criteria for, assignments, to the final marking (including double marking) and confirmation of results. Information is also provided within a Guide for Schools on the Moderation of Assessment document.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>Assessment is the focus of the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy (2018-2025). As part of the 'Inspiring Learning' vision, HWU Assessment will be developed through, and articulated in, a series of University-wide Assessment Principles. The specification of HWU Assessment will be informed by evidence and analysis (eg inventory of existing assessment practices; research, benchmarking and trend analysis in assessment practice/innovation).</li> <li>Assessment activities provide scaffolding for development of student learning. In order to support assessment literacy, programmes and courses may include group coursework, peer and self-assessment, formative feedback supported by staff consultation hours/in-class consultation.</li> <li>Monitoring and review activities (such as AMR, Chief/External Examiners and Periodic Review) provide natural mechanisms by which policies for marking and moderating assessments are consistently monitored ensuring they continue to be robust, transparent, fair and fit for purpose. Issues raised as part of the monitoring and review activities may result in a formal review and revision/development of a policy, procedure or regulation.</li> <li>School moderation policies are in place which evaluate student performance across all campuses and locations of delivery, which provides a further mechanism by which assessment practices are evaluated.</li> <li>Whilst developing and revising courses and programmes (and their assessments), information sourced externally and internally will be reflected upon, for example (but not exclusively): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outcomes of quality assurance processes that receive feedback from external subject specialists, feedback from students and review of Key Performance Indicators (including student performance).</li> <li>Student feedback received through other forums such as course surveys, Student/Staff Liaison Committee meetings and student representation at School Learning and Teaching Committees.</li> <li>Discussions at Examination Boards which consider student performance as a whole and at Course Assessment Boards where unusual course results and cross-campus results are considered.</li> <li>Professional, Regulatory and Statutory Bodies (PSRBs)</li> <li>Chief/External Examiner reports</li> <li>Advisory Boards</li> <li>Industrial links</li> <li>Erasmus activities such as teaching exchanges</li> <li>Scholarship activities, such as acting as an external examiner at other institutions.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Students are able to share their views on the provision of appropriate and timely feedback through various feedback mechanisms, such as Academic Reviews, Student/Staff Liaison Committee meetings, the Student Representative process, student surveys and face-to-face.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As well as internal factors, external sector-wide initiatives may result in the evaluation/revision of assessment policies, regulations and processes.</li> <li>• Staff engage in scholarship activity to inform the currency of the curriculum at the subject level.</li> <li>• Staff will also engage in scholarship activity at a national level, eg through the Quality Assurance Agency, reviewing benchmark statements. Therefore, as well as designing programmes of study that meet benchmark statements, they are also engaged in setting them.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Assessment is reliable, consistent, fair and valid.</b></p> <p>The assessment process is objective and repeatable over time. All assessment activities have clearly articulated assessment criteria, weightings and level descriptors that are understood by all students and staff involved in the assessment process. To ensure equity, academic standards for each award are rigorously set and maintained at the appropriate level (in accordance with the relevant national qualification frameworks). Awards at the same level are comparable in terms of qualification and level descriptors, assessment criteria, Subject Benchmark Statements, and, where applicable, PSRB requirements. Assessment criteria are sufficiently robust to ensure reasonable parity between the judgements of different assessors. Policies and procedures for marking assessments and moderating marks are clearly articulated, consistently operated and regularly reviewed. Where borderline marks are identified, policies for the consideration of grades to be awarded are consistent, fair and freely available to staff and students. The validity of an assessment - how well a test measures what it claims to measure - is reviewed through annual and periodic review, supported by external subject specialists and external examiners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All the University's courses/programmes must sit within the SCQF framework, be consistent with the Subject Benchmark Statements, and adhere to the QAA Quality Code.</li> <li>• Where programmes are accredited by UK Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB), their requirements and guidelines will be taken into account. At a School/discipline level, regular communication with Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies is maintained to ensure compliance and alignment with specific requirements; this may at times include liaison with the PSRB.</li> <li>• The development of assessment Regulations, Policies and Procedures are informed by internal and external sector-wide influences, taking account of relevant sector guidance, such as the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and the QAA's Guide 'Contracting to Cheat in Higher Education'.</li> <li>• Assessments and examinations are managed by University Regulations (which outline requirements for assessment, including formats, the grading scheme and opportunities for reassessment), Policies, Procedures and Guidelines, which are easily accessible on the web: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Regulations 9, 46, 48, 48A, 49, 51, 53</li> <li>◦ Heriot-Watt Assessment and Progression System (HAPS)</li> <li>◦ Guidelines on Complying with SCQF</li> <li>◦ Policy on Examinations and other assessment held around the world in different time-zones and implementation procedures</li> <li>◦ Policy on the Moderation of Assessment</li> <li>◦ Policy for Undergraduate Degree-Classification Borderline Cases</li> <li>◦ Other examination guidance and procedures can be found on the Academic Policy Bank including guidance for off-campus examinations.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Recognition of Prior Learning is governed by Regulation 46 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer and underpinned by a Policy and Procedures. A one page briefing paper is also available.</li> <li>• Part 1 of COP: The Student Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• requires that all students should be given an equal opportunity to learn and acquire a HWU degree, and that students have an equal right to contribute to, and benefit from, the rich experience of participating in the University (<i>Principle 1.1</i>)</li> <li>• requires that in all versions of a programme, assessment must be designed so as to promote effective learning (<i>Principle 1.19</i>). The Principle provides guidance as to how this might be achieved, and makes reference to the University's Curriculum Structure guidelines. Both documents recommend a variety of assessment methods. (<i>See also Guiding Principle 1 above regarding assessment of online students</i>).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Part 2 of the COP: Management and Assurance of Quality and Standards requires that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality and standards must be identical across all modes and locations of study and, although learning outcomes at the course level must be identical for all locations and modes, they may be assessed in a variety of ways. (<i>High level expectation + Principle 2.9</i>)</li> <li>• Institutional and School Moderation Policies must be in place (<i>Principle 2.12</i>). The policies incorporate all stages of the assessment process, from design of, and criteria for, assignments, to the final marking and confirmation of results. Information is also provided within a Guide for Schools on the Moderation of Assessment document. Expectations are that policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• must be robust and transparent for the moderation of assessment to:</li> <li>• Provide assurances of the maintenance of academic standards and the consistent, fair treatment of students across the wide variety of its taught provision</li> <li>• Ensure that assessments are comparable and fair</li> <li>• Ensure there is equivalence between assessment activities on any given course</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• All courses have approved course descriptors detailing course aims, learning outcomes, syllabus and assessment methods and weightings. These descriptors are available to students.</li> <li>• Assessment criteria, which map to the level descriptors and learning outcomes, are available to students in course delivery documentation.</li> <li>• The weighting and timing of both formative and summative assessment set by Schools and approved by School Studies Committees are designed to promote fair opportunities for all students to achieve learning outcomes. These may also be set in line with PSRB requirements.</li> <li>• Sensitivity to cultural issues in relation to learning materials and assessment is adopted as appropriate. For example, contextualisation, which takes into account the local context for learning. Diversity within teaching teams operating across a range of locations, and students working across campuses, supports cultural inclusivity.</li> <li>• Specific learning needs of students are assessed by the Student Wellbeing Service, with reasonable adjustments to assessment (if required) being agreed with Schools in advance of the academic year wherever possible.</li> <li>• Statements on academic misconduct, including plagiarism and collusion, are published in student handbooks. Information Services (Library) provide training sessions on referencing and ethics in academic writing and Schools also deliver in-session/ in-course training on referencing.</li> </ul>

- Academic staff are supported for the development of learning and teaching skills in order to fulfil the requirements of assessment, including development, marking and moderation. For example:
  - the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching Programme
  - Learning Enhancement and Development Skills (LEADS) course
  - Academic Mentors (as part of the Probationary Procedures)
  - Programme Teams/Peers
  - Information Services' Power Hours
  - Newly-introduced guidance/policy on Peer Support of Teaching
  - Activities at a national level (eg Quality Enhancement Themes and review of benchmark statements)
- Learning and Teaching Enhancement Services (LTES) supports the staff and student experience at Heriot Watt by encouraging the application of good learning and teaching practice. From September 2019 the newly launched Learning and Teaching Academy will be to provide the institutional focal point for identifying and sharing good practice in learning and teaching across all five campuses.
- The Research Futures Academy offers training for PhD students and early career researchers, as well as training for researchers at all levels in the University. All training courses produced for delivery to PhD students and research staff are mapped to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. The University follows the principles of the Concordat to Support the Development of Researchers and has received an award from the European Commission for HR excellence in research which recognises the positive actions the University takes to support the career development of researchers which is vital in ensuring continued research excellence.
- Assessment is a focus of the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy (2018-2025). As part of the 'Inspiring Learning' vision, HWU Assessment will be developed through, and articulated in, a series of University-wide Assessment Principles. The specification of HWU Assessment will be informed by evidence and analysis (eg inventory of existing assessment practices; research, benchmarking and trend analysis in assessment practice/innovation).
- Marking criteria are used for all course assessment. As a mandatory requirement, the assessment criteria are made available in the course documentation contained on the University's Virtual Learning Environment.
- As outlined within the University's regulations, "examinations and other forms of assessment shall, where appropriate, be marked anonymously". An anonymous marking scheme is in place for all examinations.
- University Assessment Regulations and the Heriot-Watt Assessment and Progression System (HAPS) provide specific requirements for all Boards of Examination (Assessment, Progression, Award), including the purpose/role, exceptional decision-making, composition, quorum and voting.
- Guidance on the operation of Examination Boards is provided within Examination guidelines: Undergraduate and Postgraduate Assessment Procedures.
- Minimum expectations for Progression and Award requirements are clearly defined within the Heriot-Watt Assessment and Progression System (*Schools can have higher progression rules to incentivise student performance*). Approved programme regulations are in place for all programmes which detail specifically: progression/award requirements; pre-requisites; assessment opportunities and methods. These are made available at a Board of Examiners and are also made available to students through Student Handbooks.
- Academic Quality publishes Examination Guidelines documents on an annual basis to assist academic and administrative staff in assessment related activities such as inputting marks and reaching decisions at examination board meetings.
- It is standard practice for conflicts of interest to be declared openly; staff concerned will abstain from decision-making/voting.
- A minute of all decisions reached at Examination Boards must be taken (as per the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Assessment Procedures).
- A Dean or a Dean's representative is in attendance at all Exam Boards at which progression and award decisions are made. These representatives are required to submit a report commenting upon the efficiency of the boards, particularly that fair and consistent consideration of students has taken place in accordance with University and Programme Regulations.
- The University delivers briefing sessions to Chairs of Examination Boards and Deans' Representatives at Examination Boards. The session includes the interpretation of policies and procedures and defining roles and responsibilities.
- Administrative staff across the University with specific assessment and examination responsibilities work closely with the relevant academic staff to ensure the effective and efficient operation of all assessment procedures, including the administering of examination boards.
- As per Heriot-Watt Assessment and Progression System, for each semester there shall be a Course Assessment Board which shall meet after the appropriate diet of examinations to confirm the results of the course assessments. The Course Assessment Board will consider unusual course results and comparison of course results across campuses and 'approved learning partners' which would allow any disparity with course assessment to become apparent. Other areas of the course will also be considered, such as delivery, the syllabus and student feedback, which may result in revisions being made for future years.
- The University's Chief/External Examiner system is one of the processes by which the University maintains academic standards and retains oversight of the assessment process, ensuring that tasks provide students with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their achievement.
  - The Chief External Examiner has oversight across all modes and locations of delivery as well as the School moderation procedures, Examination Boards and External Examiners.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ External Examiners will review all draft degree exam papers and other forms of assessment contributing to the final award, including resit papers (and model answers). Although not a formal requirement, External Examiners may be invited to do the same for assessments at earlier stages of study.</li> <li>• Monitoring and review activities provide natural mechanisms by which assessment policies, procedures and regulations are consistently monitored ensuring they continue to be robust, transparent, fair and fit for purpose. Issues raised as part of the monitoring and review activities may result in a formal review of a policy or procedure. Examples of activities, which include a range of qualitative and quantitative data, are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Chief/External Examiner System</li> <li>○ Academic Reviews</li> <li>○ Annual Monitoring and Review</li> <li>○ Consideration of Key Performance Indicators</li> <li>○ Examination Board processes (including consideration of grades, progression, awards, unusual results etc)</li> <li>○ Feedback from staff, externals and students through various feedback mechanisms.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Students are also able to share their views on course assessment through various feedback mechanisms, such as Academic Reviews, Student/Staff Liaison Committee meetings, the Student Representative system (including student representation on School Studies Committees and Learning and Teaching Committees) and student surveys. The Academic Review process provides an opportunity for input from external representatives.</li> <li>• The University's Academic Management Structure clearly sets out responsibilities at the School level in relation to learning and teaching, assessment, monitoring and review and quality assurance. The Committees of the Senate (UCQS, UCLT and UCRI) have University-level responsibility and oversight of such matters on behalf of the Senate. Academic Quality staff provide support to Schools via key roles (ie, Directors of Learning and Teaching and Directors of Academic Quality) and act as a key link between Schools and University-level committees.</li> <li>• The Committees of Senate receive for approval, reports and action plans following the completion of key quality assurance activities, as well as end of year annual summary reports, and a 'summary of summaries'. Quality assurance activities are in place to assure and enhance the academic standards and academic quality of the University's provision, and in turn confirm the robustness and validity of assessment and qualification outcomes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Assessment design is approached holistically.</b>  Assessment is designed 'top down' - beginning with the award, then going down into module level (where appropriate). Assessment design considers all modes of course delivery and environment, including where employers may be involved in assessment for work-based learning programmes such as apprenticeships. Variety in modes of assessment meets a need, based on academic judgement, and is not just for the sake of variety. Variety helps develop a range of skills and competencies and assesses a range of learning styles - the variety itself should not become a barrier to learning.  Assessment design needs to develop across stages as the student develops, as well as levels of study, as part of the overarching award design process and on an ongoing basis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessments and examinations are governed by University Regulations, Policies, Procedures and Guidelines (as outlined at Guiding Principle 2 above), which are easily accessible on the web.</li> <li>• The development of assessment Regulations, Policies and Procedures are informed by internal and external sector-wide influences, taking account of relevant sector guidance, such as the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and the QAA's Guide 'Contracting to Cheat in Higher Education'.</li> <li>• Recognition of Prior Learning is governed by Regulation 46 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer and underpinned by a Policy and Procedures. A one page briefing paper is also available.</li> <li>• Where assessments are undertaken with industrial input only (ie at a HWU campus), academic staff have full control and supervision of all assessments. Where assessments take place away from a University campus (eg industry or exchange), policies, procedures and guidelines are in place which set out the parameters for the planning, approval, delivery, management and assessment of student placements (work and academic), ie, Students Placement Policy and briefing paper, a Guide to Exchange Partnerships; Guidelines on Work Placements. The design of assessment of student placements will provide for reassessment opportunities where these are required. Assessment arrangements for Graduate Apprenticeships are also outlined within the Graduate Apprenticeship Handbook.</li> <li>• The Curriculum Structure guidelines and a series of Curriculum Structure Toolkits, provide guidance on the design of assessment activities across different stages of the programme of study. The Guidelines cultivate the introduction of a diversity of teaching, learning and assessment approaches, within a coherent, University-wide academic framework. They recommend that a variety of assessment methods be used which may include peer assessment. (<i>See Guiding Principle 1 regarding assessment of online students</i>).</li> <li>• The Assessment Design Briefing Paper specifies characteristics that a well-designed assessment strategy should have, one of which is the importance that assessments demonstrate progression so that students are challenged at increasingly sophisticated levels as they progress through their studies (scaffolding of learning).</li> <li>• The University supports staff in making use of a variety of assessment methods in order to promote a more effective learning experience for students (<i>COP Principle 1.20: The Student Experience</i>).</li> <li>• Institutional and School Moderation Policies are in place, which incorporate all stages of the assessment process, including the 'Design of Assessments'.</li> <li>• Academic staff are supported for the development of learning and teaching skills in order to fulfil the requirements of assessment, including development, marking and moderation. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching Programme</li> <li>○ Learning Enhancement and Development Skills (LEADS) course</li> <li>○ Academic Mentors (as part of the Probationary Procedures)</li> <li>○ Programme Teams/Peers</li> <li>○ Information Services' Power Hours</li> <li>○ Newly-introduced guidance/policy on Peer Support of Teaching</li> <li>○ Activities at a national level (eg Quality Enhancement Themes and review of benchmark statements)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning and Teaching Enhancement Services (LTES) supports the staff and student experience at Heriot Watt by encouraging the application of good learning and teaching practice. From September 2019 the newly launched Learning and Teaching Academy will be to provide the institutional focal point for identifying and sharing good practice in learning and teaching across all five campuses.</li> <li>• The Research Futures Academy offers training for PhD students and early career researchers, as well as training for researchers at all levels in the University. All training courses produced for delivery to PhD students and research staff are mapped to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. The University follows the principles of the Concordat to Support the Development of Researchers and has received an award from the European Commission for HR excellence in research which recognises the positive actions the University takes to support the career development of researchers which is vital in ensuring continued research excellence.</li> <li>• Academic Quality publishes Examination Guidelines documents on an annual basis to assist academic and administrative staff in assessment related activities such as inputting marks and reaching decisions at examination board meetings.</li> <li>• The University delivers briefing sessions to Chairs of Examination Boards and Deans' Representatives at Examination Boards. The session includes the interpretation of policies and procedures and defining roles and responsibilities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Assessment is inclusive and equitable.</b> Every student has an equal opportunity to demonstrate their achievement through the assessment process, with no group or individual disadvantaged. In designing assessments, the needs of students are considered, including those studying at different locations, from different cultural/educational backgrounds, with additional learning needs, or with protected characteristics. Assessment procedures and methods are flexible enough to allow adjustments to overcome any substantial disadvantage that individual students could experience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University Regulations require that each course within a programme will include both summative assessment (for the purposes of the award of credit points and an overall grade) and also formative assessment to enable students to evaluate the extent of their learning (Regulation 3, para 13.2 for undergraduate; Regulation 48, para 14.2 for postgraduate taught).</li> <li>• The University's academic approval procedures ensure the adherence to University regulations, policies and procedures, in relation to programme/course design and development. All programme approvals are submitted through a Programme Approval Management System (PAMS), which was implemented in September 2015 (a new Global Curriculum Management System is due to come into effect from September 2020). Standard programme/course proformas and templates are embedded within the Programme Approval Management System. Guidelines on the Approval of Disciplines, Programmes and Courses (as well as a summary and briefing paper), provide direction to staff on the approval process. Curriculum Structure Guidelines and Toolkits are available for the design and development of courses. There are user guidance notes for operating the Programme Approval Management System.</li> <li>• At School level, Directors of Learning and Teaching and/or Directors of Academic Quality chair School Studies Committees, which are the initial approval bodies for programme/course and course/module design.</li> <li>• The University's Studies Committee, which is chaired by a Dean of the University and includes representatives from all Schools, and the Senate, is responsible for (as delegated by the Senate and the University Committee for Quality and Standards) undertaking consideration and approval of the academic conditions associated with the establishing, modifying, or withdrawing undergraduate and postgraduate taught courses, programmes and disciplines.</li> <li>• The University's student population is significantly diverse as the University delivers programmes at many locations across the world. A range of learning opportunities are offered, which are underpinned by fair, transparent and contextualised admissions policies. Other policies which recognise the diversity of the student population include for example, Equality and Diversity, Disability, Mental Health, Religious and Cultural Observance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The key principles of these policies inform the operation of assessment practices and procedures at School and University level thereby supporting the University's commitment for ensuring that all students are awarded equal opportunity to achieve course and programme learning outcomes.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Part 1 of the Code of Practice for the Management of Multi-Location, Multi-Mode Programmes (Student Experience) outlines a number of expectations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ all students should be given an equal opportunity to learn and acquire a HWU degree, and that students have an equal right to contribute to, and benefit from, the rich experience of participating in the University (<i>Principle 1.1</i>).</li> <li>○ all versions of a programme, assessment must be designed so as to promote effective learning. <i>Principle 1.19</i> provides guidance as to how this might be achieved, and makes reference to the University's Curriculum Structure guidelines. Both documents recommend a variety of assessment methods. (<i>See Guiding Principle 1 above regarding assessment of online students</i>).</li> <li>○ all programmes should incorporate a balance between exams and other forms of assessment. Where examination is the principal form of assessment in non-campus based programmes, Schools must be able to demonstrate how other forms of assessment are used to support and develop student learning (<i>Principle 1.20</i>).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The University's Curriculum Structure guidelines for the development of courses and programmes, cultivate the introduction of a diversity of teaching, learning and assessment approaches, within a coherent, University-wide academic framework.</li> <li>• As detailed within the Threshold Criteria Policy and Briefing Paper, the University does prescribe a minimum threshold for the learning experience of all students, irrespective of mode or location of study, namely: The quality of the learning experience will enable students to achieve all of the programme's specified learning outcomes.</li> <li>• Specific learning needs of students are assessed by the Student Wellbeing Service, with reasonable adjustments to assessment (if required) being agreed with Schools in advance of the academic year wherever possible.</li> <li>• Sensitivity to cultural issues in relation to learning materials and assessment is adopted as appropriate. For example, contextualisation, which takes into account the local context for learning. Diversity within teaching teams operating across a range of locations supports cultural inclusivity.</li> <li>• Academic staff are supported for the development of learning and teaching skills in order to fulfil the requirements of assessment, including development, marking and moderation. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching Programme</li> <li>○ Learning Enhancement and Development Skills (LEADS) course</li> <li>○ Academic Mentors (as part of the Probationary Procedures)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Programme Teams/Peers</li> <li>○ Information Services' Power Hours</li> <li>○ Newly-introduced guidance/policy on Peer Support of Teaching</li> <li>○ Activities at a national level (eg Quality Enhancement Themes and review of benchmark statements)</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning and Teaching Enhancement Services (LTES) supports the staff and student experience at Heriot Watt by encouraging the application of good learning and teaching practice. From September 2019 the newly launched Learning and Teaching Academy will be to provide the institutional focal point for identifying and sharing good practice in learning and teaching across all five campuses.</li> <li>• The Research Futures Academy offers training for PhD students and early career researchers, as well as training for researchers at all levels in the University. All training courses produced for delivery to PhD students and research staff are mapped to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. The University follows the principles of the Concordat to Support the Development of Researchers and has received an award from the European Commission for HR excellence in research which recognises the positive actions the University takes to support the career development of researchers which is vital in ensuring continued research excellence.</li> <li>• There are University Policies in place to manage exceptional circumstances (individual or otherwise) in relation to the assessment of students. For example (but not exclusively): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mitigating Circumstances Policy</li> <li>○ Policy on Management of Examination Scripts (on and off-campus)</li> <li>○ Guide to Medical Certificates</li> <li>○ Severe/Adverse Weather Guidance For Students</li> <li>○ Temporary Suspension of Studies</li> <li>○ Support for students who are pregnant</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Academic Quality publishes Examination Guidelines documents on an annual basis to assist academic and administrative staff in assessment related activities such as inputting marks and reaching decisions at examination board meetings.</li> <li>• The University's Assessment Regulations and the Heriot-Watt Assessment and Progression System allow provision for exceptional decision-making by Examination Boards. The justifications for which must be recorded within the Examination Board minutes. The University delivers briefing sessions to Chairs of Examination Boards and Deans' Representatives at Examination Boards. The session includes the interpretation of policies and procedures and defining roles and responsibilities.</li> <li>• The University's Chief/External Examiner system is one of the processes by which the University maintains an oversight of the assessment process, ensuring that tasks provide students with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their achievement. The Chief External Examiner has oversight across all modes and locations of delivery as well as the School moderation procedures, Examination Boards and External Examiners.</li> <li>• All Schools must have a formal moderation policy to ensure that there is equivalence between assessment activities on any given course. This should include equivalence: over time; between different authors; across different activities that may be used in different locations; between different graders/markers; between different languages. Each School's moderation policy must adhere to the University's Policy on the Moderation of Assessment. (<i>COP Principle 2.12: Management and Assurance of Quality and Standards</i>).</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Assessment is explicit and transparent.</b> Assessment policies, regulations and processes are explicit, transparent and accessible to all staff and students involved in the assessment process. Students are clearly informed of the purpose and requirements of each assessment task and the standards expected. Feedback on assessments explicitly relates to the stated learning outcomes and assessment criteria, and students have the necessary support to understand and interpret assessment criteria and how these are used to enable staff to recognise differential student achievement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University Policies, Procedures and Guidelines for the management of assessments and examinations are explicit, transparent and readily available on the University's website (see Guiding Principle 2 above).</li> <li>• University Assessment Regulations and the Heriot-Watt Assessment and Progression System (HAPS) provide minimum expectations for progression and award (<i>which Schools may set higher in order to challenge students to perform above minimum standards</i>). Approved programme regulations are in place for all programmes which detail specifically: progression/award requirements; pre-requisites; assessment opportunities and methods.</li> <li>• Principle 1.17 of the COP: The Student Experience, requires that students have access to general information on assessment such as methods, criteria and regulations, but also need to be made aware of the results required to pass each stage and progress.</li> <li>• Regulations and policies relevant to students are highlighted to them through various methods such as enrolment, induction, programme handbooks; emails in relation to examinations; Personal Tutors; School/Campus administrative offices; the Student Union.</li> <li>• Programme learning outcomes are communicated to students through mechanisms such as programme specification documents published on the web and/or provided within programme handbooks.</li> <li>• University guidance to students on the operation of assessment and examinations are explicit, transparent and readily available on the students' Examinations and Assessment website.</li> <li>• Students have access to assessment marking criteria detailed within course documentation, which is made available on the University's Virtual Learning Environment (there is a mandatory minimum criteria for all courses).</li> <li>• Assessment criteria which map to the level descriptors and learning outcomes are published in course documentation on the Virtual Learning Environment. At module (course) level, academic staff will often engage in dialogue with students on assessment criteria to promote a shared understanding of assessment requirements and the criteria to perform at the different grade bands. Feedback addresses the steps required for development and performance at a higher level.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback following assessment is an important mechanism for enhancing students' ability to interpret assessment criteria and develop an awareness of assessment standards. Expectations in relation to feedback following assessment are outlined within Part 1 of the COP: The Student Experience and also a number of individual guidance documents, available on the web <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Feedback on Assessment - University Statement</li> <li>○ Feedback on Examination Performance - Guidance</li> <li>○ Submission of Coursework Policy</li> <li>○ Feedback on Coursework - Policy</li> <li>○ Feedback on Coursework and Examinations Policy - Briefing Paper</li> <li>○ Giving Effective Feedback</li> <li>○ Providing Effective Feedback to Students – Briefing Note</li> <li>○ Providing Effective Feedback to Students – Planning Tool</li> <li>○ Students: How to make it work for you</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Academic Quality publishes Examination Guidelines documents on an annual basis to assist academic and administrative staff in assessment related activities such as inputting marks and reaching decisions at examination board meetings.</li> <li>• The University delivers briefing sessions to Chairs of Examination Boards and Deans' Representatives at Examination Boards. The session includes the interpretation of policies and procedures and defining roles and responsibilities.</li> <li>• Academic staff are supported for the development of learning and teaching skills in order to fulfil the requirements of assessment, including development, marking and moderation. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching Programme</li> <li>○ Learning Enhancement and Development Skills (LEADS) course</li> <li>○ Academic Mentors (as part of the Probationary Procedures)</li> <li>○ Programme Teams/Peers</li> <li>○ Information Services' Power Hours</li> <li>○ Newly-introduced guidance/policy on Peer Support of Teaching</li> <li>○ Activities at a national level (eg Quality Enhancement Themes)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Learning and Teaching Enhancement Services (LTES) supports the staff and student experience at Heriot Watt by encouraging the application of good learning and teaching practice. From September 2019 the newly launched Learning and Teaching Academy will be to provide the institutional focal point for identifying and sharing good practice in learning and teaching across all five campuses.</li> <li>• The Research Futures Academy offers training for PhD students and early career researchers, as well as training for researchers at all levels in the University. All training courses produced for delivery to PhD students and research staff are mapped to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. The University follows the principles of the Concordat to Support the Development of Researchers and has received an award from the European Commission for HR excellence in research which recognises the positive actions the University takes to support the career development of researchers which is vital in ensuring continued research excellence.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Assessment and feedback is purposeful and supports the learning process.</b></p> <p>Assessment relates directly to course aims and learning outcomes, reflecting the nature of the discipline or subject and ensuring that students have opportunities to develop a range of knowledge, skills and attributes. Assessment is fit for purpose and methods are valid in measuring achievement against learning outcomes. Assessment enables students to benchmark their current level of knowledge or skills, identify areas for improvement and make judgements about the overall progress made. Feedback (including 'feed-forward') reflects attainment relevant to learning outcomes and marking criteria for the assessment task. Feedback on assessment builds on dialogue and opportunities for students to reflect on their learning. The teaching and assessment strategy progressively enhances students' assessment literacy to enable them to increasingly regulate their own learning and performance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All the University's courses/programmes must sit within the SCQF framework, be consistent with the Subject Benchmark Statements, and adhere to the QAA Quality Code.</li> <li>• University Regulations require that each course shall feature formative assessment to enable students to evaluate the extent of their learning.</li> <li>• The University has in place Curriculum Structure guidelines for the development of courses and programmes, which cultivate the introduction of a diversity of teaching, learning and assessment approaches, within a coherent, University-wide academic framework. The guidelines recommend that a variety of assessment methods be used which may include peer assessment. (<i>See Guiding Principle 1 regarding assessment of online students</i>).</li> <li>• Assessment activities provide scaffolding for development of student learning. In order to support assessment literacy, programmes and courses may include group coursework, peer and self-assessment, formative feedback supported by staff consultation hours/in-class consultation.</li> <li>• Part 1 of COP: The Student Experience outlines expectations in relation to academic experience and sufficiency for students to achieve intended learning outcomes (<i>Principles 1.2, 1.17, 1.19, 1.21, 1.23</i>). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Academic experience must be sufficient to allow all students to complete their programme of study and to achieve intended learning outcomes in all locations and by all modes of learning.</li> <li>○ Assessment must be designed so as to promote effective learning, and formative assessment must be incorporated into all courses in order to provide students with the opportunity to learn and improve their performance.</li> <li>○ Designing a feedback loop into assessment tasks so that students can apply formative feedback (from staff or peers) to improve their performance in the next assessment</li> <li>○ The number and timing of assessment tasks must be fit for purpose and students must have adequate time to reflect on learning before being assessed.</li> <li>○ Inclusion of formative assessment, as a means of informing students of the progress of their learning, is a mandatory part of all courses.</li> <li>○ Students need to be aware of the ways in which assessment results contribute to progression within a programme and to the overall programme outcome. The results required to pass each stage and to progress to the next stage of a programme need to be clearly stated and explained to students at the beginning of the programme.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Information under the above Principles also signpost to the Curriculum Structure guidelines and toolkits for the design of assessment activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ An Assessment Design Briefing Paper advises that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assessment methods should be aligned with intended learning outcomes and fit well with teaching approaches; a range of valid, reliable and stimulating assessments should be used.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a well-designed assessment strategy should incorporate a number of characteristics, for example, 'assessments demonstrate progression so that students are challenged at increasingly sophisticated levels as they progress through their studies'.</li> </ul> </li> <li>An Assessment Design Planning Tool is available to help design assessments and incorporate these standard expectations.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback following assessment is an important mechanism for enhancing students' ability to interpret assessment criteria and develop an awareness of assessment standards. In addition to the expectations outlined in Part 1 of COP: The Student Experience, there are a number of individual guidance documents, available on the web <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback on Assessment - University Statement</li> <li>Feedback on Examination Performance - Guidance</li> <li>Submission of Coursework Policy</li> <li>Feedback on Coursework - Policy</li> <li>Feedback on Coursework and Examinations Policy - Briefing Paper</li> <li>Giving Effective Feedback</li> <li>Providing Effective Feedback to Students – Briefing Note</li> <li>Providing Effective Feedback to Students – Planning Tool</li> <li>Students: How to make it work for you</li> </ul> </li> <li>University Assessment Regulations and the Heriot-Watt Assessment and Progression System (HAPS) provide minimum expectations for progression and award. Approved programme regulations are in place for all programmes which detail specifically: progression/award requirements; pre-requisites; assessment opportunities and methods.</li> <li>Academic staff are supported for the development of learning and teaching skills in order to fulfil the requirements of assessment, including development, marking and moderation. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching Programme</li> <li>Learning Enhancement and Development Skills (LEADS) course</li> <li>Academic Mentors (as part of the Probationary Procedures)</li> <li>Programme Teams/Peers</li> <li>Information Services' Power Hours</li> <li>Newly-introduced guidance/policy on Peer Support of Teaching</li> <li>Activities at a national level (eg Quality Enhancement Themes and review of benchmark statements)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Learning and Teaching Enhancement Services (LTES) supports the staff and student experience at Heriot Watt by encouraging the application of good learning and teaching practice. From September 2019 the newly launched Learning and Teaching Academy will be to provide the institutional focal point for identifying and sharing good practice in learning and teaching across all five campuses.</li> <li>The Research Futures Academy offers training for PhD students and early career researchers, as well as training for researchers at all levels in the University. All training courses produced for delivery to PhD students and research staff are mapped to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. The University follows the principles of the Concordat to Support the Development of Researchers and has received an award from the European Commission for HR excellence in research which recognises the positive actions the University takes to support the career development of researchers which is vital in ensuring continued research excellence.</li> <li>Academic Quality publishes Examination Guidelines documents on an annual basis to assist academic and administrative staff in assessment related activities such as inputting marks and reaching decisions at examination board meetings.</li> <li>The University delivers briefing sessions to Chairs of Examination Boards and Deans' Representatives at Examination Boards. The session includes the interpretation of policies and procedures and defining roles and responsibilities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. Assessment is timely.</b></p> <p>Assessment tasks and feedback are timed appropriately to promote student learning and facilitate improvement. Students are given sufficient time and opportunity to engage in learning and teaching activities that build their capacity for assessment. A holistic view of assessment deadlines can help to ensure that they are timed appropriately, to avoid over-burdening students. Expectations in relation to feedback and feedback turnaround time for each assessment are consistent and clearly articulated. Feedback comments are provided in sufficient time to enable students to enhance their performance in subsequent assessment tasks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As previously outlined in earlier Guiding Principles above, expectations around assessment practices are incorporated within the University's Regulations, Policies, Procedures, Codes of Practice and Guidelines.</li> <li>Part 1 of COP: The Student Experience outlines a number of expectations, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principle 1.2 requires that academic experience must be sufficient to allow all students to complete their programme of study and to achieve intended learning outcomes in all locations and by all modes of learning.</li> <li>Principles 1.17, 1.18 and 1.21 outline expectations in relation to assessment and the promotion of effective learning, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number and timing of assessment tasks are fit for purpose and students must have adequate time to reflect on learning before being assessed.</li> <li>Benefits of formative and summative assessment to promote effective learning and provide adequate opportunity to show the extent to which students have achieved intended learning outcomes.</li> <li>Co-ordination of assessment deadlines to avoid clashes and excessive assessment burdens</li> <li>Information on assessment, including the form and timing of feedback on academic performance.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>The Curriculum Structure Guidelines and Toolkits incorporate expectations around assessment design, methods, timing, feedback and enhancing learning, provision of information to students.</li> <li>As required by the University's VLE Minimum Criteria Policy, all courses should have a mandatory presence on the Virtual Learning Environment to ensure equality of provision for all students, including assignment and assessment details and hand-in timelines.</li> <li>Assessment information is provided to students in various ways, including for example, Programme Handbooks and course documentation on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff endeavour to ensure that students have an understanding of assessment performance standards and expectations, through various discipline-specific actions, for example, group discussions and provision of past examination papers.</li> <li>• The University has a maximum 3 week turnaround for the return of formative feedback on assessed coursework. Timing and staging of assessment within a semester allow for return of feedback so that it can be applied to the next assessment. Various guidance documents on the web provide expectations around feedback on assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Feedback on Assessment - University Statement</li> <li>○ Feedback on Examination Performance - Guidance</li> <li>○ Submission of Coursework Policy</li> <li>○ Feedback on Coursework - Policy</li> <li>○ Feedback on Coursework and Examinations Policy - Briefing Paper</li> <li>○ Giving Effective Feedback</li> <li>○ Providing Effective Feedback to Students – Briefing Note</li> <li>○ Providing Effective Feedback to Students – Planning Tool</li> <li>○ Students: How to make it work for you</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Individual Schools and/or disciplines apply their own arrangements for the provision of feedback following coursework assessment which are articulated within Programme Handbooks. The principles adopted ensure that feedback can be applied to the next assessment or more generally across the stage/programme of study. Assessment performance is discussed in more detail with Personal Tutors, helping students reflect on their performance.</li> <li>• The process for informing students of their results, and the timing, is publicised through the Examinations and Assessment website managed by Academic Registry. Dates for release of online results are publicised, as are scheduled resit diets (providing sufficient time for further learning between initial assessment and resit).</li> </ul>
<p><b>8. Assessment is efficient and manageable.</b> The scheduling of assignments and the amount of assessed work required provides a reliable and valid profile of achievement without overloading students or staff involved in the assessment process. Assessment requirements take into account the notional learning hours for any given unit of study. The spread, number and methods of assessment are considered with other, concurrent modules in mind to ensure that the burden of assessment is not excessive. For example, an overview of assessment deadlines across the course of study is taken to avoid 'bunching' where possible, given students' choice around modules.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As previously outlined in earlier Guiding Principles above, expectations around design of assessment are incorporated within the University's Regulations, Policies, Procedures Codes of Practice and Guidelines.</li> <li>• Principle 1.21 within Part 1 of the COP: The Student Experience outlines the following expectations in relation to the efficiency and management of assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How the organisation and delivery of the curriculum, including formal teaching, are linked to opportunities for students to demonstrate the extent of their achievement of the intended learning outcomes through appropriately scheduled assessment.</li> <li>○ How to avoid excessive amounts of summative assessment and emphasise support for student learning, especially through formative assessment.</li> <li>○ To ensure the intended learning outcomes are assessed and that students have sufficient opportunities to show the extent to which they achieve them, while simultaneously promoting efficiency and assuring that assessment loads for students and staff are realistic and not over-burdensome.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Information under the above Principles also signpost to the Curriculum Structure guidelines and toolkits for the design of assessment activities. An Assessment Design Briefing Paper advises that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ assessment methods should be aligned with intended learning outcomes and fit well with teaching approaches;</li> <li>○ consideration to be given to the timing of assessments to avoid overloading students and staff.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• As per the Submission on Coursework Policy each School is responsible for ensuring that coursework deadlines are coordinated to ensure workloads are manageable for students.</li> <li>• Academic Quality uses an examination scheduler for the timetabling of all the University's examinations. The software assists with efficient scheduling to avoid, where possible, the bunching of examinations.</li> <li>• Expectations in relation to notional student effort hours for learning (which includes a variety of methods) and the duration of examinations, are specified within the University's Regulations. Additionally, guidance on minimum contact hours is provided within the Curriculum Structure Guidelines.</li> <li>• University Assessment Regulations and the Heriot-Watt Assessment and Progression System (HAPS) provide minimum expectations for progression and award. Approved programme regulations are in place for all programmes which detail specifically: progression/award requirements; pre-requisites; assessment opportunities and methods.</li> <li>• Where students require reassessment, sufficient time for further learning is available between the initial assessments and resit diets.</li> </ul>
<p><b>9. Students are supported and prepared for assessment.</b> Students are given opportunities to develop assessment literacy, practise subject-related skills and knowledge, engage with content and develop the competencies required to meet learning outcomes. This often involves formative assessment opportunities. Students are provided with appropriately timed feedback that is understandable, constructive and helps them meet their developmental needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As previously outlined in earlier Guiding Principles above, expectations around the design of assessment are incorporated within the University's Regulations, Policies, Procedures Codes of Practice and Guidelines, ensuring all students are awarded sufficient and equal opportunity to acquire the relevant skills and knowledge that will enable them to achieve intended learning outcomes.</li> <li>• University Regulations require each course within a programme will include both summative assessment (for the purposes of the award of credit points and an overall grade) and also formative assessment to enable students to evaluate the extent of their learning (Regulation 3, para 13.2 for undergraduate; Regulation 48, para 14.2 for postgraduate taught). This expectation is re-emphasised within Part 1 of the COP: Student Experience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Principle 1.2 requires that academic experience must be sufficient to allow all students to complete their programme of study and to achieve intended learning outcomes in all locations and by all modes of learning.</li> <li>○ Principles 1.17, 1.18 and 1.21 outline expectations in relation to assessment and the promotion of effective learning, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number and timing of assessment tasks must be fit for purpose and students must have adequate time to reflect on learning before being assessed.</li> <li>• Benefits of formative and summative assessment to promote effective learning and provide adequate opportunity to show the extent to which students have achieved intended learning outcomes.</li> <li>• Co-ordination of assessment deadlines to avoid clashes and excessive assessment burdens.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- Information on assessment, including the form and timing of feedback on academic performance.
  - Principle 1.19 advises that for all versions of a programme, assessment must be designed so as to promote effective learning, and formative assessment must be incorporated into all courses in order to provide students with the opportunity to learn and improve their performance.
  - Information under the above Principles also signpost to the Curriculum Structure guidelines and toolkits for the design of assessment activities, including an Assessment Design Briefing Paper and an Assessment Design Planning Tool which incorporates the requirement to consider the matching of assessment, learning outcomes and materials.
- The University's student population is significantly diverse delivering programmes at many locations across the world and to an increasing number of students with additional learning support needs. As managed by the University's Policy on Examinations in Different Time-Zones, common practice across the University is to hold identical assessment and examinations across multiple locations across the world. The Curriculum Structure guidelines and a series of Curriculum Structure Toolkits, provide guidance on the design of assessment activities across different stages of the programme of study, including consideration of equality and diversity in assessment.
- Academic staff are supported for the development of learning and teaching skills in order to fulfil the requirements of assessment, including development, marking and moderation. For example:
  - the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching Programme
  - Learning Enhancement and Development Skills (LEADS) course
  - Academic Mentors (as part of the Probationary Procedures)
  - Programme Teams/Peers
  - Information Services' Power Hours
  - Newly-introduced guidance/policy on Peer Support of Teaching
  - Activities at a national level (eg Quality Enhancement Themes and review of benchmark statements)
- Learning and Teaching Enhancement Services (LTES) supports the staff and student experience at Heriot Watt by encouraging the application of good learning and teaching practice. From September 2019 the newly launched Learning and Teaching Academy will be to provide the institutional focal point for identifying and sharing good practice in learning and teaching across all five campuses.
- The Research Futures Academy offers training for PhD students and early career researchers, as well as training for researchers at all levels in the University. All training courses produced for delivery to PhD students and research staff are mapped to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. The University follows the principles of the Concordat to Support the Development of Researchers and has received an award from the European Commission for HR excellence in research which recognises the positive actions the University takes to support the career development of researchers which is vital in ensuring continued research excellence.
- Given the multi-location/multi-mode organisation of learning and teaching, Senior Course Leaders are responsible for the management and organisational role for assessment across all locations. This requires teaching teams to collaborate on assessment design/timing of assessment. Such a team approach fosters enhancement through the sharing of a variety of experience. The role of the Senior Course Leader is outlined within the Academic Management Structures (Schools) at Multiple Campuses document.
- The University provides support for developing the academic skills needed to succeed at university and beyond. Information Services provide classes, online materials and one-to-one appointments to help staff and students to develop a range of skills. Other subject specialist support is also available. There are also a range of other services across the University which provide help and support on a range of issues related to academic skills development, including the Disability Service and Careers Service.
- Programmes of study are designed to take account of the need for scaffolding learning. Learning activities and assessment are, therefore, designed to support skills and knowledge development required in order to proceed to the next stage of study.
- Feedback following assessment is an important mechanism for enhancing students' ability to interpret assessment criteria and develop an awareness of assessment standards. Expectations in relation to feedback following assessment are outlined within Part 1 of the COP: The Student Experience and also a number of individual guidance documents, available on the web:
  - Feedback on Assessment - University Statement
  - Feedback on Examination Performance - Guidance
  - Submission of Coursework Policy
  - Feedback on Coursework - Policy
  - Feedback on Coursework and Examinations Policy - Briefing Paper
  - Giving Effective Feedback
  - Providing Effective Feedback to Students – Briefing Note
  - Providing Effective Feedback to Students – Planning Tool
  - Students: How to make it work for you
- The Student Wellbeing Service will assess students' individual assessment needs, to identify for example, special marking considerations, extra time etc.
- Academic Quality publishes Examination Guidelines documents on an annual basis to assist academic and administrative staff in assessment related activities such as inputting marks and reaching decisions at examination board meetings.
- The University delivers briefing sessions to Chairs of Examination Boards and Deans' Representatives at Examination Boards. The session includes the interpretation of policies and procedures and defining roles and responsibilities.

#### 10. Assessment encourages academic integrity.

Assessment is designed to minimise opportunities for students to commit academic misconduct, including plagiarism, self-plagiarism and contract cheating. Wherever possible, a suitable variety of assessment methods should be used, to minimise the availability of opportunities for students to incorporate plagiarised work by another author, or previous work by the student, either within the level of study or across levels. Policies and procedures relevant to academic integrity are clear, accessible and actively promoted rather than simply made available.

- The development of assessment Regulations, Policies and Procedures are informed by internal and external sector-wide influences, taking account of relevant sector guidance, such as the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and the QAA's Guide 'Contracting to Cheat in Higher Education'.
- Assessment design includes a range of types of assessment eg group work, individual coursework and examination (*as per the Curriculum Structure guidelines, explicit approval is required by the Studies Committee for assessment by 100% examination*).
- Turnitin is used as one tool in evaluating the academic integrity of work submitted by students.
- Part 2 of the COP: Management and Assurance of Quality and Standards, advises that, although learning outcomes at the course level must be identical for all locations and modes, they may be assessed in a variety of ways. Schools may choose to use supervised assessment for security reasons when assessing students located away from a main University campus (*Principle 2.9*).
- University Regulations require that each course within a programme will include both summative and formative assessment. This is re-emphasised within the Curriculum Structure Guidelines, which specify that all courses must include some formative assessment, which will enable them to practise, and understand, different assessment processes. The guidelines also encourage a variety of assessment forms. The Assessment Design Toolkit provides advice on how to evaluate the ways in which assessment strategies are impacting on students' learning.
- Academic staff are supported for the development of learning and teaching skills in order to fulfil the requirements of assessment, including development, marking and moderation. For example:
  - the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching Programme
  - Learning Enhancement and Development Skills (LEADS) course
  - Academic Mentors (as part of the Probationary Procedures)
  - Programme Teams/Peers
  - Information Services' Power Hours
  - Newly-introduced guidance/policy on Peer Support of Teaching
  - Activities at a national level (eg Quality Enhancement Themes and review of benchmark statements)
- Learning and Teaching Enhancement Services (LTES) supports the staff and student experience at Heriot Watt by encouraging the application of good learning and teaching practice. From September 2019 the newly launched Learning and Teaching Academy will be to provide the institutional focal point for identifying and sharing good practice in learning and teaching across all five campuses.
- The Research Futures Academy offers training for PhD students and early career researchers, as well as training for researchers at all levels in the University. All training courses produced for delivery to PhD students and research staff are mapped to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. The University follows the principles of the Concordat to Support the Development of Researchers and has received an award from the European Commission for HR excellence in research which recognises the positive actions the University takes to support the career development of researchers which is vital in ensuring continued research excellence.
- The University Policy "Ensuring Academic Rigour in Assessed Work" provides a framework for the University's Rigour in Assessed Work Policy and operates in conjunction with Regulation 50: Student Discipline and the Student Discipline Policy and Procedures. Academic Integrity and Conduct Guide for Students are yet to be developed. The Policy:
  - is based upon the UK Quality Assurance Agency's (2017) guidance on 'contracting to cheat in higher education: how to address contract cheating, the use of third-party services and essay mills'.
  - covers: Poor referencing; Paraphrasing; Plagiarism; Collusion; Self-plagiarism; Contract cheating.
  - requires that Schools: provide, and highlight, information in programme handbooks about appropriate referencing styles and academic integrity and conduct; promote awareness and encourages students to seek support and guidance; ensure students are aware of their rights within the discipline process.
  - outlines responsibilities of key stakeholders such students, Schools, Information Services, Student Conduct Officer and Discipline Committee.
- Part 1 of the COP: The Student Experience, outlines expectations in relation to students' responsibilities in assessment and the adoption of good academic practice. Principle 1.18 provides guidance on how this might be achieved.
- Students are exposed to good academic practice through various forums, such as programme handbooks, lectures, tutorials, skills development courses (delivered within the School and by Information Services). They are made aware of the need to adopt appropriate ethical behaviour and confidentiality as part of their programme of study as required. Advice is also given on professional standards and expectations.
- The University provides support for developing the academic skills needed to succeed at university and beyond. Information Services provide classes, online materials and one-to-one appointments to help staff and students to develop a range of skills, including citing and referencing. Training in appropriate approaches to academic writing is often embedded within a course in order that students develop literacy within the discipline for study.
- Students undertaking group coursework are provided with guidelines in-class and within course documentation available on the VLE about the roles and responsibilities of each individual within a team. A range of appropriate assessment methods is adopted across Schools to evaluate an individual student's contribution, for example peer assessment of student team members. Students can be asked to declare in writing that individual work is their own.
- Academic Registry provides for students general examination and assessment guidance (which includes examination conduct and cheating). Students are guided to the information through Programme Handbooks and email correspondence distributed prior to the examination period.
- Turnitin is used as one tool in evaluating the academic integrity of work submitted by students.

- As outlined within the Postgraduate Research Degree Candidate Code of Practice, Research Degree students are “expected to be aware of any ethical issues associated with their research and to conduct their investigations in a manner that is consistent with the Research Ethics Policy. Ethical issues must be disclosed to the Primary Supervisor in the first instance.” The document also provides further guidance on ethical issues and confidentiality.
- Ethical standards in the conduct of research in the University are the responsibility of the University Research Ethics Committee, and of School and Institute sub-committees, whose work it oversees. The Committee reports directly to the University Committee for Research and Innovation.
- The University has in place a Research Ethics Policy and Research Ethics Procedures.
- As per the Research Ethics procedures, Schools have in place mechanisms to ensure that, where necessary, projects that students undertake have the necessary ethical approval.
- As guided by the Policy “Ensuring Academic Rigour in Assessed Work” the University has procedures in place for dealing with unacceptable behaviour which provide a rigorous, fair, transparent and consistent process for investigation and consideration of cases of alleged misconduct and for imposing penalties where appropriate.
- Procedures for regulating student discipline (including academic misconduct) are contained in the Student Discipline Policy and Procedures and in Regulation 50: Student Discipline.
- The Student Discipline Policy and Procedures mean that students can be assured that any instances involving alleged misconduct will be investigated and considered under robust, consistent and transparent procedures and decision-making processes.
- The Policy and Procedures take into account the need to:
  - deal with disciplinary incidents in a way which is proportionate to their severity;
  - make provision for informality and flexibility in proceedings so that matters can be considered at the local level and at an early stage where appropriate; iii) Ensure, as far as possible, that all parties involved are on an equal footing procedurally and able to participate fully in proceedings.
  - Take into account protected characteristics, for example:
    - Documentation provided to all students can be formatted to suit a student’s individual requirements
    - Advice is provided to all students about accompaniment, support, guidance, ability to submit mitigating circumstances, etc.
    - Prior to academic misconduct meetings a student’s record is checked for a ‘Learning Profile’ and the Committee advised accordingly.
- Decisions taken by School and University Discipline Committees in relation to proven allegations of academic misconduct are made individually and take a holistic view of the student’s circumstances in so far as that is possible. At both School and University level appropriate specialist advice will be sought as necessary regarding the potential impact of any penalty on a student’s chosen programme of study so that informed decisions are made by the Committee and the student and School are given clear information and guidance about the impact of the decision.
- The University and Schools have processes in place for the secure storage, transportation of, and access to, examination papers and scripts. School processes, which vary, may include: the intranet, SharePoint and email, using encryption and passwords. As outlined within the Examinations in Different Time-Zones Policy, examination papers must not leave examination venues.
- The University’s Policy on Examinations in Different Time-Zones is key mechanism for assuring the academic standards of the University’s awards and minimises the risk of academic misconduct in examinations.
- The University also has in place a process for the invigilation of examinations; the role is undertaken by individuals who are external to the University. Training and Invigilator’s Handbooks are provided by the University. Invigilators are responsible for confirming the identity of st during examinations.
- The University operates an Anonymous Marking Policy.
- Academic Quality publishes Examination Guidelines documents on an annual basis to assist academic and administrative staff in assessment related activities such as inputting marks and reaching decisions at examination board meetings.
- The University delivers briefing sessions to Chairs of Examination Boards and Deans’ Representatives at Examination Boards. The session includes the interpretation of policies and procedures and defining roles and responsibilities.
- A University Student Administration System (Banner) is used for the accurate recording of assessment decisions and the Virtual Learning Environment is commonly used for the submission of coursework; restricted access permissions enhances security.
- Students have access to their marks and grades via the Student Portal, which operates using a secure login procedure.



