**Changes to Assessment: Policy on Approvals and School Decisions**

The University introduced adapted approvals procedures for 2020/21 and 2021/22 due to the impact of the pandemic. Under these adapted processes, Schools were able to change their assessment methods for 2020/21 and 2021/22 without going through their own internal full approval process and without updating assessment information on the Global Curriculum Management (GCM) (ie where these were temporary changes due to the pandemic).

This temporary arrangement has now ended, and Schools now need to re-establish their formal, internal process of approving assessment changes in accordance with the University’s Academic Management Structures (via the School Studies Committee) and then updating assessment information on GCM for 2022/23. This process was agreed by the L+T Academic Year Group at its meeting on 9 February 2022. RAS will provide support to Schools to assist them in updating GCM to reflect their assessment methods for 2022/23.

It is noted that, as a consequence of changes to the Structure of the Academic Year (2-week assessment diet in April and 5-day assessment diet in August) and the Transforming Assessment Initiative, there will be further changes to assessment approaches being made during 2022/23 in time for implementation in 2023/24. Such changes likewise have to be approved internally by Schools and updated on GCM.

Therefore, the pre-COVID process for managing changes to assessment will be re-introduced from 2022/23 as follows so that all 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 aligned with the University’s Regulations and Policies on Assessment, providing a balanced approach and including formative assessment/formative feedback;
- are ultimately the responsibility of the School’s Executive Dean, 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 changes to assessment should be communicated to External Examiners and PSRBs. Requirements for External Examiners to review assessment materials for courses contributing to the final award are set out in the External Examining Handbook, paragraph 3.1 (p.10) (this has been revised following UCQS on 29 June 2022 so that there is no longer a requirement for Externals to review 70% of a course's assessments at the design stage; from 2022/23, there is no percentage specification, rather Schools are to determine an “appropriate and sufficient” selection of assessment components for Externals to review before the Award Board, ie assessment tasks do not need to be considered by Externals before being issued to students).

It is essential, following approval of changes to assessment, that assessment information is updated in GCM (as GCM is the University’s single source of accurate information on programmes and courses, and will be used for assessment-related information for exam timetabling and Faculty Grade Entry). Other sources (such as student handbooks, information on Canvas) must likewise be updated.

**Designing Assessment: Guidance from the Learning and Teaching Academy**

The Learning and Teaching Academy provides a wide range of support for Schools in planning for and designing assessment. Teaching teams refreshing course and assessment design are encouraged to make use of these resources:
Additionally, there is a suite of Watt Works Quick Guides on Assessment and Feedback. Further support and guidance are available from the LTA: LTAcademy@hw.ac.uk

As part of the institutional action plan on addressing NSS2022 issues related to Assessment and Feedback and as part of the Transforming Assessment initiative (a key strand within the Learning and Teaching Strategy), there will be a further suite of resources and support provided by the LTA, including in undertaking assessment redesign in preparation to the shift to a 2-week April diet of assessments and a 5-day August diet of assessments from 2023/24.

Assessment and Changes: Guidance on Communicating to Students

Once the official record on GCM has been updated, all assessment changes should be communicated to students and should be correct on Canvas pages and other key information provided to students. Additionally, the three Student Representative Bodies have recommended that the following guidance on assessment (and feedback) is provided to students:

1) advice and support on time-limited coursework assignments which are non-invigilated and held online during the formal Exam and Assessment Diet (known during the pandemic as “take home exams”);  
2) advice and support on invigilated in-person exams (exam venue or computer lab) held during the formal Exam and Assessment Diet;  
3) clarification on how assessments relate to learning outcomes;  
4) inclusion of descriptive criteria or a rubric each assessment;  
5) scale of assessment task is proportionate to the weighting;  
6) co-ordination of deadlines for assessments across the course and wider programme to ensure that they are reasonably spread out and students are not being over-assessed and submission dates are not clustered together;  
7) clarification on submission methods and signposting to students of guidance on how to use these tools;  
8) promotion of academic integrity, through resources and integration into the curriculum, and availability of resources on how to properly use referencing;  
9) information and help on understanding assessment expectations, eg through providing exemplars or class discussion of marking criteria;  
10) information on feedback (date, type and method of availability) and how to engage with feedback to help with subsequent assessments. Students should be notified of coursework which will not be returned within the institutional policy of 3 working weeks, including, for example, projects and also summative coursework where the marks will need to be reviewed by a Course Assessment Board prior to release. See separate Summary paper on Feedback on Assessment (Coursework and Exams) on providing feedback on such assessments prior to the release of results.

*The Administrative Definitions of Assessment Types in 2022/23 (see separate paper and also SCIBE Approved Definitions) will be a critical piece of student communications on assessment for the start of AY 2022/23, particularly the re-categorisation of the former take home exams as timed, online coursework and the re-definition of exams as in person, invigilated assignments held in a University-approved venue; both types of assessments will be held in the formal Exams and Assessment Diets.