



ASSESSMENT HANDBOOK



**PLYMOUTH
UNIVERSITY**

INTRODUCTION



As a student at University, there is no way of avoiding assessment in one form or another. Assessment is a big part of what, when and how you learn. It comes in all shapes and forms and there can often be lots of different rules and regulations around assessment. We have created this handy assessment guide to help you with all your assessment needs. The guide includes all the useful information we could think of and we hope to answer some of those questions you may have. Even better, this guide has been completely written for and by students making it a document that you can properly understand.

WHAT'S EXACTLY IN THIS HANDBOOK?

In this handbook, we have included a number of things which we think will be both useful and relevant to you. We want to take you through an assessment journey which looks at what to do before assessment occurs, during assessment and after.

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WHAT IS ASSESSMENT?

“Assessment is the engine which drives student learning.”

JOHN COWAN, 2005

This statement couldn't be truer. Assessment is the most important tool to help you recognise what you have learnt and reflect on the knowledge you have gained. Assessment can come in a number of different forms and can be formative (ongoing usually midway through a module) or summative (at the end).

If assessment didn't exist, it would be impossible to measure what has been learnt and what we can do better at.

WHY ARE WE ASSESSED?

Assessment is an extremely important part of education and really is essential to student learning. If it's designed well, it can have numerous benefits such as supporting student learning and engaging students. Assessment can also feel like the worst thing in the world. It's that dreaded time when you get given the essay question and realise you have two weeks to bring everything you have learnt together and squash it into a 1000 word reflective essay, it's not always very fun and often a real challenge!

Despite the horrors of it, it is the only way to really understand and recognise the knowledge you have gained.



I TAUGHT MY DOG HOW TO WHISTLE

WOOF. 

I DON'T HEAR HIM WHISTLING?

I SAID I
TAUGHT HIM...
I DIDN'T SAY
HE LEARNED IT

There is a key difference between being taught and learning. You can leave an hour lecture about the poetry of Yeats being taught everything there is to know but it's not until

you are asked to give a group presentation on it you have a chance to reflect and see what you have learnt.

That's the point of assessment!

TYPES OF ASSESSMENT



No matter what course you are studying over your time at University you will experience various kinds of assessment.

The most common types of assessment students seem to come across are:

EXAMS

They are on a specific day in a specific place and you have a set time to complete them. Exams are there to test your knowledge. Some are seen exams, some may have set questions and some may be a surprise (always the worst ones). Exams can also be both formative (so testing you throughout the year) and summative (testing your knowledge at the end of a course or module).

Different types of exams include open book, home exams or oral exams which all give different benefits to help you understand and learn.

Here are some tips to get you through your exams:

Check when the exam is!

Seems easy to do but there are students that in the past have gotten mixed up and turned up on the wrong date at the wrong time.

Take more than one pen with you.

Despite modern technology most exams you still have to hand write so have an array of pens so you don't get caught out. Try to stick to blue and black ink. Other colours can be hard to read and we don't want to give the examiner a harder time than is needed.

Only take into the exam hall what you need!

If you're caught with anything other than what you need during the exam it can be seen as an exam offence.

Items such as detailed notes, sample exam answers or books other than those explicitly permitted and any electronic devices could cause serious issues

and you don't want to be accused of cheating. If you're unsure, make sure you ask someone before you go into the exam.

Practice!

You know the saying practice makes perfect? Well we can't promise perfection but practising really will make you better. Check your electronic module pages to see if there are any past papers.

If not, check the library to see if they have any. Not only can past exam papers help you understand the type and wording of questions but they can also help you practice your time management and structuring.

Study skills and revision skills are things to really get right before the exam.

Revising 24 hours before the exam is really not a good way of retaining information, no matter how good you think you are last minute. Time management skills are another technique to watch out.

It is never good to spend too much time on a question or not enough time.

Swotting up on these skills can really take the anxiety out of exams and make you feel prepared. For more information on the skills visit the Learning Gateway.

They can help give you tips on how to revise and use your time the best you can.





ESSAYS

Essays are the most common type of assessment and more than likely, no matter what programme you study, you will come across an essay at some point. Essays are really useful for assisting you with your academic writing style and helping you get some research experience.

How are they structured?

For some assignments you will be given a title of an essay and be expected to write to that. For others, you may be given the option of creating your own topic or asked to choose a question from a number of topics offered. Either way, it's your chance to thoroughly explore a subject area and test your own academic knowledge.

It is always useful to create an essay plan to help structure your thoughts and give an idea of where you want your argument or persuasion to go.

Length

Essays can really range. You may be asked to do a 500 word reflective piece or a 4000 exploration of a

topic. No matter what the length is, don't panic. It's always a useful tip to break your essays into bite size pieces and work on one section at a time.

For help on how to write essays visit the Learning Development team. They will be able to help structure your essay and can also give you tips on academic writing to help you out there.

You can also visit the Writing café located on the top floor of the Babbage Building on the main campus or use WRASSE, the online resource that learning development have created.

When writing an essay it's always useful to speak to the person who set it to get some idea of what sort of things to include. Ask what they are looking for to put in a good essay and use the marking criteria when writing it. Also, try your best to avoid trouble!

No one wants to get accused of cheating or plagiarism so make sure you read the Universities guidance and reference properly. If you are unsure, pop along to learning development or ask your tutor to help you out.

“I always like doing essays. They give me a chance to really think about what I want to say. I reflect quite a lot so essays also give me a chance to reflect and redraft”

2ND YEAR B. ED STUDENT

PRESENTATIONS

Presentations can seem like the scariest type of assessment and can really cause a lot of people a huge amount of stress. The idea of standing up in front of a group of other students can seem terrifying but you will not be asked to do this without being able to prepare. It is also very unlikely that you will be asked to stand up in front of your whole course.

Presentations are usually presented in front of a small group of students in order for you to get more specific feedback.

It is a very good idea for you to prepare before the presentation, especially if you are nervous. Try practicing beforehand a few times to get a feel for how long it is going to be and the sort of things you are going to say.

Make some notes with key words on to jog your memory so you don't have to practice a full script; it'll make it easier to remember and you'll be more natural on the day. The Learning Gateway and the Careers and Employability Service have lots of tips and help for presentation skills training so if you are unsure, pop along to see them.

You may find the presentations you are asked to deliver are often in a group situation. It's good to give everyone in the group a role and have plans to support each other in case someone forgets a line or someone gets nervous.

“Presentations really allow for creativity, you could include role play and videos. One group from our year did a comedy sketch on dental hygiene.”

2ND YEAR, DENTISTRY STUDENT

POSTERS

Sometimes in assessment your tutor may want you to produce something a bit more creative. This may involve creating a poster using words and visuals to explain your ideas. Posters can be one of the most difficult types of assessment as there is a lot of information to put on a little bit of space.

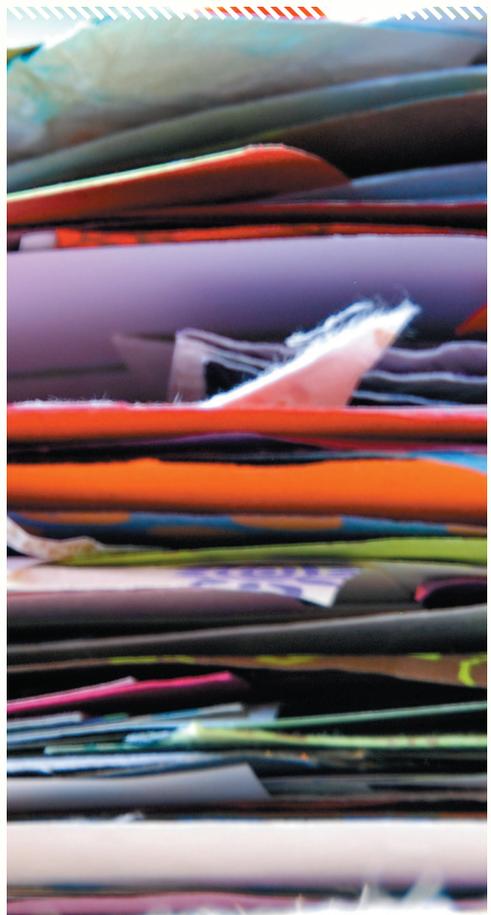
Like other assessments, it is always useful to speak to your tutor who set the poster beforehand to find out exactly the sort of things that you need to include such as images, word count etc. It is also useful to remember that you will need to print the poster so plan ahead for this.

Remember to include references on your poster or as an addition to it, it is still a piece of academic assessment so you need to validate where your ideas have come from.

You may find that often when you are asked to create a poster, you will also be asked to present it giving you a great opportunity to explain your ideas and get qualitative feedback.

“It is a different type of assessment which can be quite good fun! Get use to the software as early on as you can”

**2ND YEAR, ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR
AND WELFARE STUDENT**



REPORTS

Reports are quite similar to essays but usually have a really specific expectation or format of what is included in them. A useful tip is to speak the person who set you the report before you start to see exactly the sort of things you should be including.

Reports are often linked to practical work (e.g a report on a lab or a placement) and should describe your own interpretation of the results or observations you have made. They are also an opportunity to link your findings to appropriate work or literature that is already out there to back up your points.

Try and make sure you write your report within days of the work that you have done, this way the work will still be fresh in your mind and you will write a more sufficient report.

“I like that it gives you a good structure to work on, you know what to include in your assessment which really helps but sometimes I get nervous it lacks individuality”

FINAL YEAR, BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES STUDENT

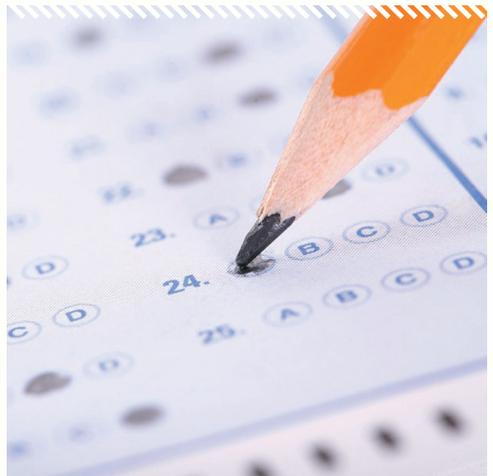
MULTIPLE CHOICE TESTS

Multiple choice tests give you the responsibility to pick the right (or best option) from several presented in front of you. Try not to look for what is right, instead look at all the options and figure out what is wrong with them until you are left with the best one to pick.

Multiple choice tests are often seen as the easy option but they are not. If you are worried visit your electronic module pages to see if there are any practice multiple choice tests available.

“Short and sweet, quick decision making, I like them!”

1ST YEAR, MARKETING STUDENT



OSCE'S

OSCE's are Objective Structured Clinical Exams and are a type of assessment that is often used in medical and other health-related university courses.

An OSCE is a series of stations where at each station you complete a different task within a set time limit and you will be marked on how well you did by the tutor. You may also be asked questions by the tutor at each station.

The tasks you will be asked to complete will have been covered in class and you will have had time to practise them before the OSCE. OSCE's often give you an opportunity to practise real life situation on a model or fellow student (e.g. listening to their chest sounds using a stethoscope or measuring how much movement they have in one of their limbs).

It is really important you practice before an OSCE as they are a real unique type of assessment that you may not have come across before.

Ask your tutor or module lead if there is an opportunity to do a formative practice OSCE before the real thing is upon you!

“Most OSCE's happen in your final year and they have a really obvious use, helping us to be involved in scenario's we will often find ourselves in but they can be quite stressful as you have to act. Definitely practise as much as possible.”

FINAL YEAR, MEDICINE STUDENT



GROUP WORK

Group work can truly be one of the most difficult but rewarding types of assessment. Group work gives you a chance to work with your student colleagues and learn from each other as well as use each other's skills.

Throughout group work it is important you work together as a team and use the time you have been set appropriately. If you feel the team are not working constructively, don't be afraid to talk to your programme lead to see if they can help with the group dynamics. Group work is chance to use each other's strengths and when working in a team, students often create a really successful piece of assessment.

Group work can give you skills such as negotiation, time keeping, managing conflict and giving constructive feedback; skills which will all help you when going for future roles!

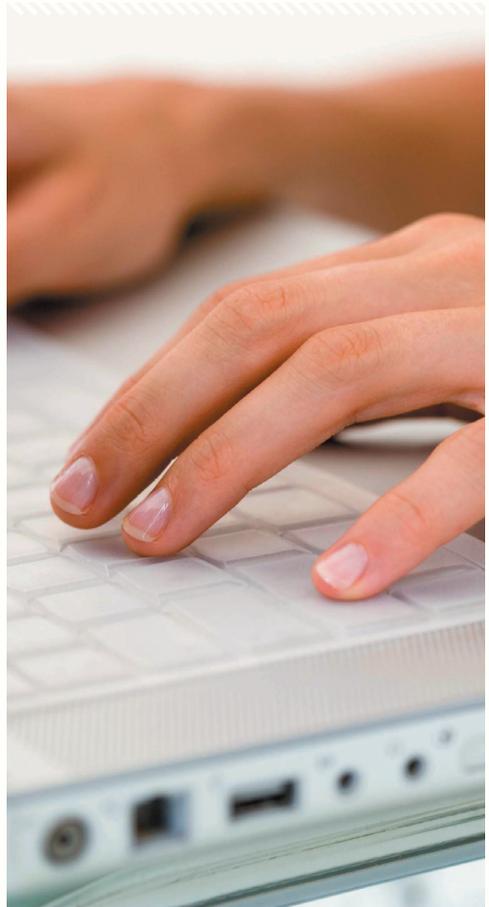
A great resource to help with group work has been helpfully created by LearnHigher.

You can find it here:

goo.gl/EiVsWM

“Group work is what I do best at. I am a team player so being able to put forward what I am good at and use other peoples strengths always help me do the best I can in the long run.”

3RD YEAR, ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE STUDENT



INCLUSIVE ASSESSMENT & YOUR NEEDS

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To make sure you get everything you possibly can out of assessment, it is important to make sure you have all your assessment needs covered.

Not everyone is the same, some students may need a little extra help or more time so before any assessment occurs, make sure you check whether you need a Modified Assessment Provision (MAP).

MAP's cover all types of additional needs students may have during assessment with things such as; additional time, own room, computer or a scribe (including many other things).

In line with University policy, students who may need MAP's must be assessed by Disability Assist Service prior to any provisions being put in place.

For more information about getting MAP's, visit your faculty office or Disability Assist Service for advice.

Another way of addressing your assessment needs is by making assessment inclusive. Inclusive assessment ensures all students are fairly evaluated and are offered tasks that are the same as real world challenges.

In order to make assessment as inclusive as possible the University have made guidance of how to arrange assessments.

Some of the tips for lecturers to consider when arranging assessments include:

- **Assessment information being given at the start of the academic year**
- **Learning outcomes and assessment criteria is given well in advance of the assessment**
- **The encouragement of student participation in practice assessment**

Participating in inclusive assessment can really help your chance of improving your results and learning skills to help you in future positions.

If you are worried about MAP's or inclusive assessment visit Plymouth Universities MAP's website for more information:

 goo.gl/c07MIA

“When I was sitting my exams I was allocated in a room with less than 25 people, compared to sitting my exam in Plymouth Pavilions with a few hundred. This really helped my anxiety, I spent less of the exam worrying about everyone else and was more able to focus on my own paper.

I found that by disclosing information about my disability I was able to receive the support that I so vitally needed to get through my second year of university, as I didn’t sit my exams in the 2014 season due to my ill health and concerns linked to the examination season.”

2ND YEAR, PSYCHOLOGY STUDENT

I used to stress that everyone else had finished their paper before me and this really distracted me from my work.

My anxiety was a lot calmer knowing that I was in a room with other people that felt similarly to me.

It was a more relaxed environment where I felt at ease rather than intimidated.

All of this really aided my mental health in the examination process.



WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE WORRIED

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No matter what happens and no matter what information you have, assessment can still cause a huge amount of worry and stress. Firstly, if you are stressed go and see someone! Make an appointment with your tutor or visit the Listening Post or Writing Café in the Student Gateway. It could be that talking through your issues and worries make you feel hugely better.

There are some things that can help on top of talking. Make sure you have all the relevant information available to you before you start your assessment.

Do you know what the learning objectives are?

Have you checked the assessment criteria and marking criteria?

You can find all of this information in your module handbook so make sure you go over it and don't make a mistake like this past student.

"In my first year I wrote a really well structured and well argued essay about a piece of my favourite literature. I spent so much time doing it and really put my all into it. Imagine the disappointment when I received my mark back and found out I'd failed.

The feedback stated it was a very good argument but on the wrong book! I hadn't read the assessment criteria before I started so ended up writing a whole 3000 essay on the wrong book. Never again!"

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PAST ENGLISH AND CREATIVE WRITING STUDENT

A good way to get the best out of you during assessment is to practice. Take practice tests and practice presentations in front of friends, family or your pet. Create drafts of essays and posters so when it comes to the final product you are happy.

Book an appointment with your tutor and ask for formative feedback so you can see what you have done and how to improve. Make sure you do this in good time, most tutors won't be able to help if you ask them last minute! When revising, make sure you revise well in advance and don't leave it to the last minute. You are testing your own knowledge so give yourself the best chance to do a good job!

If you are still worried visit the Learning Gateway for specific sessions on reducing exam anxiety and how to get through assessment.



Here is some advice your School Reps have given:

“Listen to what your lecturer’s say. Approach them as they are really helpful & want you to do your best”

“The best thing about Plymouth is that there are so many different places you can go for help. The writing café, the library, loads of places!”

“Join an academic society, often they have society help sessions or PALS which can be useful for understanding referencing and difficult topics that you get taught in lectures”

The Learning Support Wellbeing Service deliver group and individual sessions on topics such as dealing with exam anxiety, relaxation techniques and mindfulness.

 goo.gl/TnKYsj

PLYMOUTH UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT POLICY

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To help you understand what you should expect from assessment, a new helpful policy has been created by the University. The link to the policy can be found in the tools section of the handbook. But here is a helpful summary!

WHY DO WE HAVE ASSESSMENT AT PLYMOUTH UNIVERSITY?

Assessments are there to help you perform whilst supporting your learning to help you when you go on to get a job. Assessment should help you develop and learn through feedback!

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM ASSESSMENT?

- To be able to take part in practice assessment so you can understand how it works and receive feedback on how you can improve for marked assessments
- Simple and easy to understand assessment briefs and a marking criteria so you know what is expected and how you are going to be marked
- To take part in different types of assessments so you can experience the variety of assessments on offer
- To have assessments that are spread throughout the year so you aren't having them all lumped together at one time
- An opportunity to submit your work online and check for plagiarism using originality software
- To have assessments that are linked to learning outcomes that you can realistically achieve
- To be set two officially marked assessments for each 20 credit module unless there are specific requirements from an overriding disciplinary or professional body

- To have assignments marked anonymously where possible and relevant
- To get given provisional marks on assessed work and receive feedback within 20 working days

WHAT SHOULD YOU BE DOING?

- Engaging with feedback and working on what to improve
- Work towards the marking criteria showing how you meet standards through completing assignments
- Meet University regulations including those on assessment offences
- Engage with the University if you are struggling or need specific support and help
- Tell your programme lead about any medical or reasonable adjustments you may have so they can help arrange modified assessment for you

The policy has been written to help you throughout your assessment so make sure you read it and if you have any questions, take it to your programme lead.

If you feel parts of the policy are not being met, don't be afraid to talk to your programme lead to discuss issues and problems you may have.



REFERENCING



Referencing can be one of the most difficult things to grasp but is important to get right. Not referencing properly can result in you being found plagiarising which is an academic offence. When writing a report or essay you are expected to fully reference the materials you have used.

Unfortunately, there are a number of different systems and depending on your course; you may use a different one than you are used to.

More than likely, you will be asked to use one of the following five:

The best way to check is to ask your tutor, they will be able to point you in the right direction and if you are struggling, visit learning development or the Writing Café to get some extra support.

You need to make sure you are using the right referencing style, don't just pick one because your housemate uses it and can help you figure it out, check with your module tutor.

Different types of referencing styles can vary from module to module so if you are unsure, check every time.

More than likely, you will be asked to use one of the following five referencing methods:

APA

 goo.gl/FqfxqI

Documentary Note Style

 goo.gl/fY16ro

Harvard

 goo.gl/yWKOKL

IEEE

 goo.gl/pQXJJ1

MLA

 goo.gl/7ugyt8

Vancouver

 goo.gl/rxUJhE

LEARNING DEVELOPMENT

Learning Development is a service at the University which are there to support you. If you are worried before an exam or struggling a little before an essay, it is definitely worth giving them a visit!

They offer a range of services such as one to one and small group tutorials, taught sessions within programmes and online resources and study guides.

Learning Development also has a Writing Café located on the top floor of Babbage.

WRASSE

The Writing for Assignments E-Library is a resource to help people learn about writing at university. It includes examples of student essays and other assignments comments from lecturers about why the writing is good, or how it could be improved comments from students on their own work other writing resources.

Learning development also has a number of online study guides to help with academic assessment and writing. These include:

THE WRITING CAFE

The Writing Café can help with:

- Writing and presenting
- Developing thinking
- Using literature critically
- Managing projects
- Articulating knowledge
- Communicating your ideas
- Preparing for exams and assessment

goo.gl/Xzu8VK

"I went to the Writing Café on advice from a tutor, so glad I did. I feel a lot more confident and have so many tips! My writing confidence was low but I've come away feeling much happier. The team are amazing, very helpful and kind, and made me comfortable talking about my writing. If only I'd have come here before!"

SUM UP:

Offers expert advice on all aspects of undergraduate mathematics and statistics. The SUM UP drop in centre is open 10am to 4pm every weekday during term time in the Seale Hayne library.

goo.gl/uf0t3r

HANDING IN & DEADLINES

It is imperative that you hand in your work on time and in the correct place. Make sure you have your student card with you and if you are attending an exam, make sure you take it with you.

Allow plenty of time to get to your exam or the desk where you are handing in your work, 'the bus was late' won't be a good enough excuse. **If you hand in up to 24 hours late your work will not be able to achieve more than 40% and after that nothing at all!**

Respect deadlines, you don't want to fail a great piece of work just because you missed the date or time it was due in.

Your deadline dates should be in your module handbook so you know well in advance and can pop them in your diary or add them onto your phone calendar.

E-SUBMISSION

An introduction that could make handing in a lot easier is E-Submission. Where possible (so not for assessments such as exhibitions and placement observations) Plymouth University are giving students the opportunity to hand in their work online. This

means rather than travelling in and queueing at a desk to give in your essay you could do it via a few clicks online.

To see if your module allows E-Submission, ask your module lead or check your handbook. Remember, with e-submission it is still imperative you keep to the hand-in deadlines.



EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

Through the most part you will undertake your studies without any problems, but unfortunately, there are times when you may face difficulties that will affect your academic progress.

This is why the University has an extenuating circumstances policy in place. It ensures that no student is disadvantaged by circumstances beyond their control whilst maintaining academic standards.

If you wish to make a claim for extenuating circumstances you can obtain a form as soon as possible from your faculty office or download one from the student portal. Try to make sure you fill the form in as accurately as possible including relevant evidence and supporting documents.

You should submit your form to the faculty office as soon as you feasibly can and normally no later than ten working days after the deadline for the submission of the work.

Extenuating circumstances claims with respect to formal examinations should be submitted no later than the Monday after the end of the formal examination week.

Retrospective claims cannot be considered so unless there are exceptional circumstances, retrospective claims will be deemed invalid.

For more information on extenuating circumstances visit the policy online to get the full information.

 goo.gl/NeugPb

Extenuating circumstances can be the difference between you passing and failing so make sure you consider them carefully.

FEEDBACK & FEEDFORWARD

Feedback is so important when it comes to assessment as it's how you find out how well you have done and what you may need to improve on.

A lot of students see feedback as formal and written but it can be given in various ways. This could be formally on written work, in a podcast, email, a tutorial or a face to face conversation or as comments during an art installation.

As with everything, there is good feedback and bad feedback. Good feedback should:

- **be clear;**
- **be accurate;**
- **be specific and related to the assessment criteria;**
- **be positive;**
- **be forward looking;**
- **offer detailed points including strengths as well as suggestions for improvement;**
- **encourage self-evaluation.**
- **be timely.**

Normally, coursework should be returned within 20 working days (working days comprise the normal working week, excluding periods when the University is shut, weekends, and dates of approved annual leave).

Timeliness is a really important aspect of feedback. University policy states that feedback should be returned within 20 days. If this isn't the case, do get in touch with your tutor to ask why.

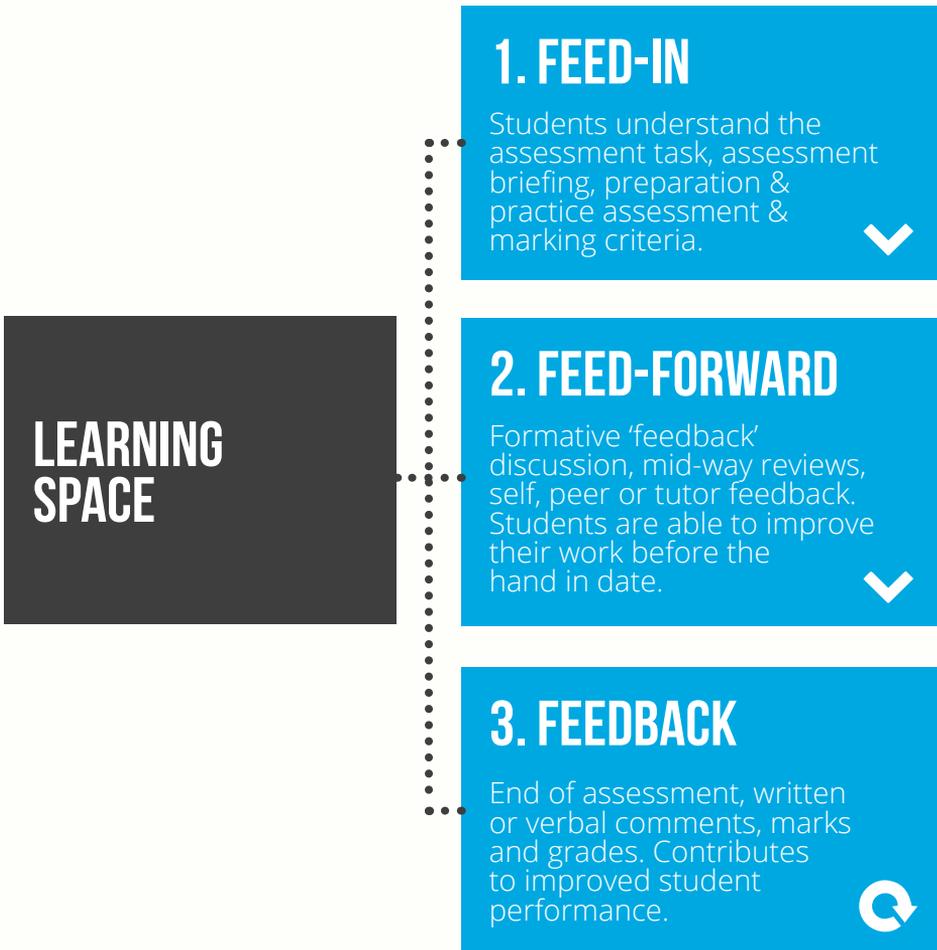
Usually they will have an explanation of the delay but if not ask why. When it comes to feedback you really do have the right to hold your tutors to account.

Feedforward goes hand in hand with feedback. If feedback tells you how you have done, feed forward tells you how you can improve.

Feedforward is the process where you can receive information about your current piece of work and get constructive guidance on how to improve it before the hand in date.

A combination of feed forward and feedback ensures that the assessment you undertake will really help you develop.

The diagram below illustrates the importance of the feedback process to improved learning.



WHAT IF IT GOES WRONG?



Unfortunately, assessment doesn't always go the way we hoped.

An exam may be harder than expected or we may just not quite understand the question when writing an essay.

For each module, you have three attempts, so don't panic.

AT THE FIRST ATTEMPT:

If you fail 20 credits or less with a mark of 30% or more and the credits are compensable, you will be awarded a compensated pass. If you are a part time student, you will only be awarded a compensated pass when you have attempted 120 credits if a level.

If you fail up to 60 credits, you will be allowed to take appropriate referred assessments at the next available opportunity.

The referred assessment may not be the same assessment which was originally failed. The award assessment board will make the decision of what form the reassessment will take. If it is different, you will be informed in writing.

If you fail more than 60 credits without valid extenuating circumstances you will be required to repeat the failed modules with attendance or, depending on your course, you may be required to withdraw from the programme.

It is important to understand what could happen to you so if you are worried ask your course leader or personal tutor for information.

Unless you have valid extenuating circumstances, any referral or repeat will be capped at 40% and this will apply to all elements of assessment.

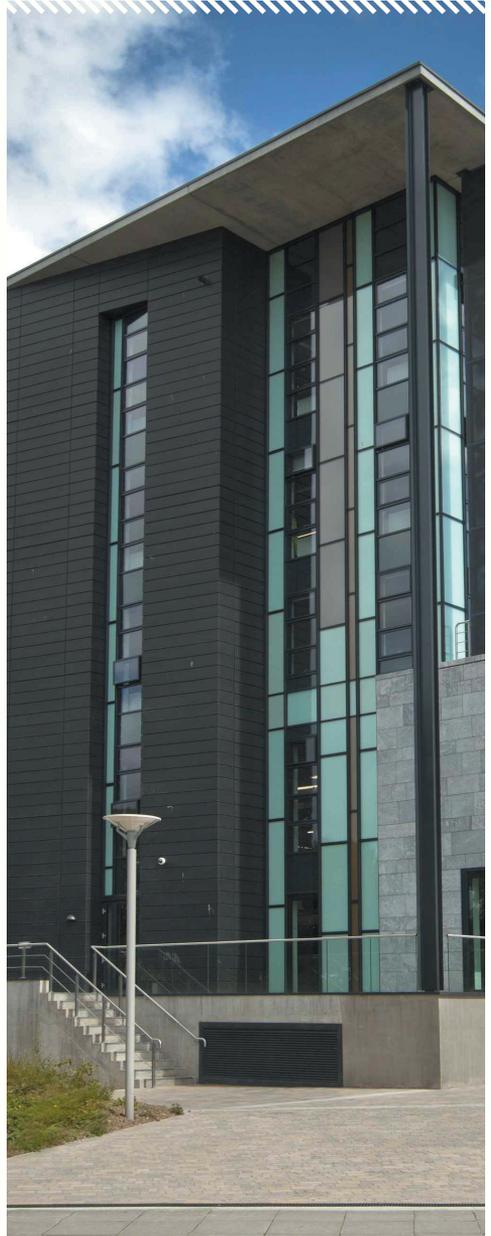
AT THE RESIT:

If you have passed a minimum of 100 credits after referrals you may be compensated for failure in up to 20 credits with a mark of 30% or more.

If after resits you have not achieved enough credits to complete the level the award board will:

- **Offer a further referral based on your overall performance and potential if valid extenuating circumstances have been submitted**
- **Require you to repeat failed modules with attendance**
- **Require you to withdraw from the programme**

If you are unsure about anything that could happen if you fail, make sure you have a look at the Universities regulations and go to speak to your tutor, course leader or the UPSU Student Advice Centre.



EXAMINATION & ASSESSMENT OFFENCES

“Academic offences occur when activity is undertaken which could confer an unfair advantage to any candidates in assessment.”

If you do something to make sure you have better chance at passing which is against the rules, this is an exam offence. Plymouth University recognises any of the below as an academic offense:

- a. Copying or paraphrasing of other people’s work or ideas into a submitted assessment without full acknowledgement (plagiarism).
- b. Unauthorised collaboration of students (or others) in a piece of work (collusion).
- c. Making false declarations in an attempt to obtain either modified assessment provisions or special consideration (e.g. of extenuating circumstances).
- d. Persuading another member of the University or partner institution (student, staff, or invigilator) to participate in any way in actions which would be in breach of these regulations.
- e. Misrepresenting or fabricating research outcomes and results.

f. Being party to any arrangement which would constitute a breach of these regulations.

g. Any other activity not described above which could confer an unfair advantage to any candidate(s) including purchasing work for assessment, cheating, self-plagiarism and ghosting.

Trying to get round an offense never works so don’t risk it, it really isn’t worth it!

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is one form of academic dishonesty or cheating. A simple definition is:

“the intentional use of other people’s words or ideas without due acknowledgement.”

RACE, 2001

Plagiarism is unfortunately one students misinterpret a lot and therefore can really catch them out.

The University of Plymouth student handbook states:

“Plagiarism is an offence under the University Examination and Assessment Regulations. It is defined as the representation of another person’s work (including another student’s) as your own, without acknowledging the source.

It can take the following forms:

- **direct copying from texts;**
- **paraphrasing (rewording) other people’s work;**
- **summarising other people’s ideas.**

Make sure you check your work and put it through a plagiarism checker (Turnitin is good for this) this will help you to check your work and give you a better understanding of plagiarism.

There are departments across the University that help recognise exam offences:

IN PSYCHOLOGY:

First year students have hour-long group tutorials every two weeks with their personal tutor, and in the second of these students work through a ‘What is Plagiarism’ worksheet containing examples of acceptable, poor, and unacceptable writing.

IN BUSINESS & MARKETING:

We provide a workshop on written communication in Induction for all new general business and Marketing students, which includes a session on plagiarism and referencing with examples and a ‘plagiarism test’. Additionally, other programmes include sessions on plagiarism during induction.

IN ENGLISH & CREATIVE WRITING:

There are several first year lectures and seminars that address essay writing and plagiarism in particular. Guidelines on plagiarism are also outlined in the Programme Handbook.

WHAT NEXT?

So, your assessment is all done so what next? Time to move into the next one! Assessment is really useless if you don't learn from it so make sure you use your past

assessments to feed into your next ones. Look at your feedback, what can you improve on? What are you skilled at? Don't let your past pieces of work go to waste.

USEFUL TOOLS

ASSESSMENT JARGON BUSTER

Anonymous Marking

The process of marking whereby the name of the student is not known to the marker. There are areas where this is not possible e.g a dance performance but the University should otherwise adhere to the regulation. The reason behind anonymous assessment is to stop bias and ensure equality in marking.

Assessment

The term used to describe the process used to measure student learning, skills, knowledge and understanding.

Alternative Assessment

A different approach to assessment which still meet the same learning

outcomes and assessment criteria to another method of assessment.

Assessment Brief and Guidance

These are documents that contain lots of detailed information about the assessment. It should be clear about what you are expected to do and include learning outcomes, standards required and how marks will be allocated through assessment, marking or grade criteria.

Assessment Criteria

Assessment (marking or grade) criteria explain to you what you need to demonstrate in order to achieve the learning outcomes that your grade will be based on. It is often set out at each level e.g. 2.1, 2.2 etc.

Assessment Offence

It is an offence if any part of the University or Programme regulations are not met or instructions issued are not followed (whether you intended to or not). See useful links to find the University academic offence regulation.

Assessment Board

The assessment board is a group of senior members of staff who are responsible for:

- making decisions on progression and awards for students registered on the courses the board is responsible for.
- making sure that decisions are arrived at fairly and democratically and in line with University regulations and with the students best interest at heart.
- making sure that threshold academic standards of student performance are being maintained at award level.
- making sure that, when making decisions, all circumstances relating to individual students are fully taken into account, and
- receiving information on all proven examination and

assessment offences and confirming penalties.

Coursework

Assessment that are set within a module to be completed out of the classroom or exam hall. They include things such as; essays, reports, dissertation, portfolios etc.

Examination

An assessment carried out at a particular time & place, often under timed conditions.

Seen exams – Know the questions beforehand that you are expected to answer

Unseen exams – Questions are only revealed on the day and time of the exam

Open Book exam – Students are allowed to use and refer to material

Types of exam include; easy, short answer, problem or multiple choice.

Extenuating Circumstances

Circumstances outside the control of the student which affect the ability to attend or complete assessments.



External Examiner

Every course has one or several external examiners who look at the standards of the programme and modules. They look at assessment processes and the standard, content and development of modules.

Feedback

Comments you receive on the work you hand in which can be delivered in a variety of different ways and aim to aid your academic development.

Feedforward Information

This is given to student which can be used to make improvement to future or current assessments (if unassessed).

Formative Assessment

A task set to help with academic development. It is not graded or assessed. It is there to help give you feedback on performance and how it can be improved.

Modified Assessment Provision (MAP)

Aim to provide equality for assessment for all students. Students who needs MAPs must be assessed by Disability Assist Services (DAS) before provisions are put in place.

These include time extensions, scribes, a different room etc.

Plagiarism

When a student presents another person's work as their own without properly acknowledging the source or getting permission.

Provisional Marks

Marks provided to the student but not yet approved by the awards assessment board.

Resit

When a student who has failed a module or component of a module has to take further assessment as detailed by the assessment board.

Summative Assessment

Assessment which are assessed and awarded a mark which is achieved fitting to performance.

Transcript

A formal record of academic achievements of a student which identify modules passed, grades achieved, level and credit value.

USEFUL LINKS

Academic Offence Regulation

These regulations apply to everyone enrolled on a Plymouth University award at undergraduate or postgraduate level (including those attending ad hoc or CPD courses whether or not these attract credit and recognised professional CPD hours).

goo.gl/T82TC9

Assessment Policy

Information and advice about assessment for students, and for staff members at the University and at our partner schools and colleges.

goo.gl/vq4ayc



Turnitin

"Turnitin is the global leader in evaluating and improving student learning. The company's cloud-based service for originality checking, online grading and peer review saves instructors time and provides rich feedback to students."

goo.gl/Xd16Ms

The Writing Café

The Writing Café

The Writing Café can help with:

- Writing and presenting
- Developing thinking
- Using literature critically
- Managing projects
- Articulating knowledge
- Communicating your ideas
- Preparing for exams and assessment

goo.gl/Xzu8VK



WRASSE

An online resource to help students develop their writing.

goo.gl/4ObsIN

HINTS & TIPS

There are loads of useful hints and tips throughout this guide, however here is a quick summary!

- 1.** Get to know the key people who can support you, this could be your personal tutor, the module or programme lead or the learning development team. Remember their names and pop their contact details somewhere you will remember.
- 2.** Don't leave things to the last minute! As tempting as it is, there could be several things that could get in your way of completing it to the best of your ability if you leave it to the last minute.
- 3.** Write down and remember your deadline dates and seek help earlier rather than later from tutors otherwise they might be unable to help.

- 4.** Try not to worry about referencing and if you are find support early on so you master it straight way!
- 5.** Practise! Whatever form of assessment you are undergoing and even if you have done this kind of assessment before, practise will only help you – especially if you seek help as to what you do well and where you can improve.



WHAT DO I HAVE TO COMPLETE FOR THE ASSESSMENT?

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The key to success in assessment is to ensure you know exactly what is required of you.

Below are some key questions to ask yourself:

1. What is the assessment task?
2. Which learning outcomes does the assessment link to ?
3. Do I understand the assessment criteria?
4. Which referencing convention should I use ?
5. What is the word count that I must keep to?
6. What is the deadline for hand in / or exam date?

7. If the assessment is an exam have you access to the practice papers on the DLE? You can also access past papers from the library. Can you get feedback on the completed practice papers?

8. Have I got access to the marking criteria/scheme so I can self assess my work as I write or ensure my revision for an exam is focused?

9. Can I receive feedback from my tutor before I complete the work?

10. Will there be a seminar / tutorial where I you can discussed the assessment requirements?

If you are unclear on any of the above ensure you ask the module tutor for this information.

	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
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- ESSAY
- PRESENTATION
- POSTER
- REPORT
- OSCE
- GROUP PROJECT
- EXAM

Keep a note of your deadlines here, there's even space for you to colour code each type.