

# QA26 Assessment Feedback

Classification – *Public*

FEBRUARY 2025



## Introduction

The policy establishes the standards and expectations to be applied to all summative assessment at Arden University.

## Who is covered by the policy?

This policy applies to all academic staff at Arden University, including those studying an Arden University programme through a collaboration or partnership provider, involved in providing feedback on summative assessments.

This policy will apply to all summative assessed work undertaken as part of a credit-bearing programme.

## Definitions

- Assessment feedback: information provided to students to explain the grade awarded for summative assessment
- Summative assessment: formal evaluation of a student's understanding of module learning outcomes
- Rubric: a guide to the specific criteria used to evaluate the summative assessment

## Policy responsibilities

- Our Academic Board has overall responsibility for ensuring this policy complies with internal and external regulatory requirements. The Academic Framework, Regulation and Policy Committee have delegated authority from the Academic Board for the approval and ongoing review of this policy.
- The *Head of Assessment* has primary and day-to-day responsibility for developing and implementing this policy, monitoring its use and effectiveness, and the ongoing review of procedures to ensure they are effective.
- Management at all levels are responsible for ensuring those reporting to them understand this policy and how it applies to them and/or students
- All academic colleagues are responsible for ensuring they understand this policy and how it applies to them and/or students.

## Principles

The principles that underpin this policy are that assessment feedback:

- is fundamental to the student experience and to developing their learning across their programme;

- is an indicator of the standards of academic practice and the quality of teaching and should be subject to external scrutiny;
- should be accessible to all students in both the format used to communicate the feedback and the content of that feedback;
- should ensure that students understand how their work has been evaluated in line with standardised and objective criteria;
- must be tailored to each student and allow them to reflect on what they have done well and where they can improve in future assessments;
- that does not meet these principles has a significant detrimental effect on students and their academic persistence;
- is not the sole form of feedback that students can receive during their programme but is distinctive in that it needs to meet expected standards and be consistent for all students.

### **ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK - CONTENT**

The content of any feedback provided to individual students who have submitted work as part of a summative assessment should achieve the following:

- refer students to pre-defined marking criteria and rubric in order to explain the grade awarded;
- link to module-level generic feedback that contextualises assessment performance across all students and includes information on additional support (see below);
- engage directly with the substance of the student's work and the level of understanding and insight that they have demonstrated;
- identify a minimum of two areas where there is merit in the student's work or, if this is not possible, should explain why the work has no merit;
- indicate a minimum of two actions that students can take to improve their future assignments;
- illustrate to the student what they have done well and what can be improved with direct reference to the student's submission and, where possible, make annotations on the student's submission to evidence the judgement;
- use terminology and language that is clear and set at the correct level for the student;
- be concise, focused and avoid lengthy paragraphs of abstract terminology by making use of bullet point formats;

- be consistent regardless of grade awarded – feedback for students with high grades should still meet the minimum threshold of two areas for what has been done well and two for improvement (see 2.3);
- offer students whose work does not meet the required standard encouragement including clear signposting to next steps and additional support for resit submissions;
- not give undue prominence to stylistic issues (e.g. spelling, grammar, referencing) when these are not substantially weighted in the marking criteria. One comment only should refer to stylistic concerns and this should explain the impact that this had on the overall quality of the work;
- use positive language that encourages the student, avoids praising perceived effort and referring to students in the third person (e.g. “You”, “Your Work” not “the student did...”);
- take word count into consideration when suggesting that students need to add additional material, meaning identify sections that could have been replaced;
- not use rhetorical questions or negative statements such as ‘why have you done this’ or ‘this does not make sense’;
- model high standards of written work avoiding misspelt words and grammatical lapses.

### **ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK - FORMAT**

The format in which assessment feedback is presented to students should allow the above minimum standards to be met. This also underpins the critical requirement for assessment feedback to be consistent within and across modules.

All assessments must use a template or rubric to provide feedback to individual students that is consistent across the specific assignment. This template should meet the following criteria:

- be designed by programme teams and be appropriate to the specific assessment task and any disciplinary requirement;
- be held in a central repository in order to support sharing of best practice across subject areas;

- allow for markers to fulfil the minimum thresholds identified above (e.g. two areas done well, two improvements for the next assignment, link to marking rubric);
- be accessible to students and should allow them to see how feedback comments relate directly to their submission;
- be directly available to markers and moderators within the same location as the student submission and similarity report;
- make use of appropriate software.

To support and add context to feedback on individual student submissions all module leaders should produce and share with students a generic summary of student performance for the assignment. This generic feedback should highlight the following:

- the main features of student submissions within each grade boundary. These should be framed positively in line with individual feedback to show what was done well across the cohort and where improvements were typically required;
- refer directly to agreed marking criteria and rubrics;
- signpost for all students how they can access additional support for their future assessments - this should include information (with links) to the Learning Success Hub;
- provide additional detail for students who have not met the required standard.

Students who have not met the required standard face additional challenges and need to understand in more detail what they need to change in their resit submission and when they need to do this.

To achieve this, markers should provide individual verbal feedback to these students where the technology allows. This verbal feedback should meet the following standards:

- should be time-limited (1-3 mins);
- summarise the main areas for improvement and anything done well;
- offer reassurance to the student that they will have a further attempt to improve their submission (subject to academic regulations around the permitted number of resits);

- encouragement to the student to review the feedback and their submission to ensure they understand the reasons for the mark awarded;
- direct the students to the generic module feedback in order to understand their next steps and the support available.

<b>Policy Name:</b>	Assessment Feedback
<b>Policy Reference:</b>	QA26
<b>Approval Authority:</b>	Academic Framework, Regulation and Policy Committee
<b>Last Approved:</b>	February 2025
<b>Version:</b>	1.1
<b>Implementation Date:</b>	February 2025
<b>Responsible SMT Lead:</b>	Provost
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Academic Affairs
<b>Policy Contact:</b>	Head of Assessment
<b>Review Frequency:</b>	3 years
<b>Policy Classification:</b>	Academic

<b>Record of Amendments</b>			
Date	Version Number	Details of Change	Approval
13 <sup>th</sup> May 2026	1.1	At the request of the Head of Assessment, the policy has been recategorised as 'Public' and published on the website.	Not required