

Consistency of Assessment

As much as possible our assessments will use Computerised Automated Testing or Multiple Choice tests, which give high equality of assessing. In addition assessments by practical work and writing tasks are allowed.

In order to ensure consistency of assessments we set clear procedures. Best practice relates to the continued consistent understanding of the criteria amongst the assessment team. As a consequence it is important that the criteria are periodically revisited and debated by tutors.

Procedures do not only relate to administrative issues such as the involvement of subject specialists and who third (or second) marks, but also to the actual time spent assessing each piece of work by an individual. Our experience suggests that spending a longer time period assessing a student's work is likely to result in a lower the grade than if a shorter amount of time had been spent. This is not to say that assessment is not already thorough; rather that a lecturer should not revisit a piece of work she or he has already rigorously assessed against the criteria. Criteria need not be viewed as a "strait-jacket" that restricts student creativity and individuality. This is particularly so where analytic and global quality assessment methods are integrated. In such approaches the criteria can help ensure consistency of assessment; providing the same procedure is followed by all those assessing. We ensure that those who assess the work understand the criteria in the same way and take an equal time of assessing each student. We also suggest to use candidates ID number to eliminate influence of personal evaluations.

Trial of assessment methods and tools

- The tools and assessment method are trialled with a sample from the target group
- Allowable adjustments to the assessment method and tools are drafted
- Assessors (if required) are trained to administer the assessment tools in a consistent manner
- The assessments tools and methods are administered to the target sample
- Responses from the target sample and the assessors are compiled and analysed
- The appropriateness of the assessment method and the ease of use and language level of the assessment tools are determined
- Improvements and changes to the assessment tools are made where necessary

Assessment requires evidence of the following processes to be provided:

- Why particular assessment methods and tools were selected

- How assessment methods and tools were trialled
- How other persons were involved in the development of the assessment procedure including:
 - the panels of specialists that reviewed the materials - their roles and responsibilities
 - the characteristics of the candidates that piloted the tasks and provided feedback in detail
 - the characteristics of the trial sample

Assessment procedure includes:

- recording procedure
- appeal/review mechanism
- assessment methods to be used
- number of assessors
- assessment tools
- location of assessment
- timing of assessment
- assessment group size
- allowable adjustments to assessment methods and tools

The assessment system specifies the following:

- the purpose of assessment
- competencies required of assessors
- record keeping procedures and policies
- any allowable adjustments to the assessment method
- the appeal/review mechanisms and procedures

- the review and evaluation of the assessment process
- the linkages between assessment and training qualifications/awards, employee classification, remuneration, progression
- relevant policies

Assessment methods include combinations of:

- direct observation of performance or product
- practical tasks
- projects written/oral/computer-based questioning
- simulation exercise(s)