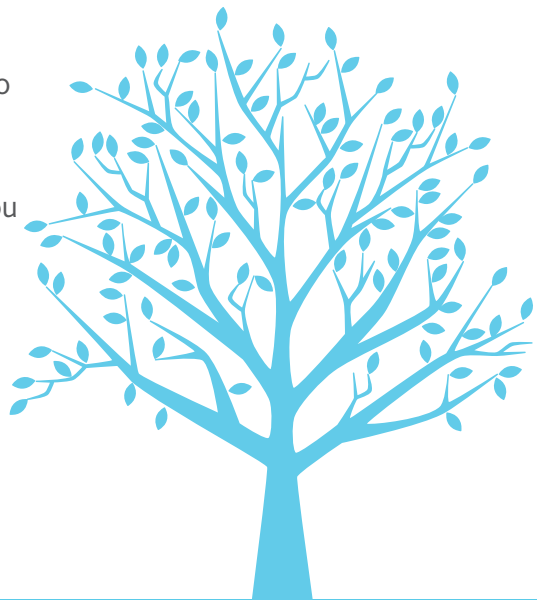


UNDERSTANDING ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

■ UNDERSTANDING ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

As well as guidance on [referencing](#) and [study skills](#), it is also useful to understand the various terms used at the University around assessments and feedback. Assessments are a core method for your tutors to understand how you are getting on, and for you to share your understanding of, and progress in, your chosen subject.

This short guide is designed to give you information on the key terms relating to assessments and feedback. These are not formal definitions, but rather supporting guidance. Formal definitions can be found in the University [Assessment Policy](#).





□ ASSESSMENT

An assessment or an assignment is a piece of work which assesses your performance against specific learning outcomes. Assessments can be either formative or summative and may include:

- In-class tests
- Short written assignments or reports
- Drafts, plans and proposals
- Presentations
- Essays
- Reports
- Individual or group presentations
- Posters
- Exams
- Project portfolios

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

A piece of work designed to help you develop your understanding of a subject/module. Feedback is provided to identify where you need to do more work, where you are confident or on the right track, and how you could improve. A grade may or may not be provided to indicate how you are doing, but the grade does not count towards your results for the module. It is up to you to use the feedback to develop.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

A piece of work that counts towards the final grade for a module. Feedback is provided to help you understand the strengths and areas for improvement of the work, and to identify areas for development in the future.

□ REASSESSMENT

If you fail a module, then you will be asked to complete a reassessment for any failed assessment; this may be the resubmission of a new piece of work to make good a failed assignment or re-taking an examination that was failed at the first attempt.

□ LEARNING OUTCOMES

The things that you learn and show you can do in order to pass a module and achieve the award (e.g. Foundation Degree or Honours Degree) associated with your course. Assessments are specifically designed to test the learning outcomes, and if your assessment work fulfils the required learning outcomes, at the appropriate level, then it will pass.

Example: [*On successful completion of the module you will be able to:*] Analyse British Romantic literary texts in relation to relevant historical contexts.

□ ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The qualities that your tutor will look for and expect to see when assessing your work. Such criteria may be general in nature or they may reflect the specific assessment item that is set. Assessment criteria will reflect the learning outcomes of the module and course.

Example (general assessment item): Use of a range of sources which are correctly referenced using the appropriate scheme, e.g. Harvard, APA or OSCOLA.



□ GRADE DESCRIPTORS

These describe the qualities expected of an assignment that demonstrates work at a specific grade within a given level. Grade descriptors are linked to assessment criteria, and are usually provided for several aspects of your work.

These may include:

- Subject knowledge and understanding
- Conceptual awareness
- Analytical and evaluative skills
- Structure and argument
- Style
- Presentation
- Referencing

Your overall grade might be a combination of different levels of achievement in these aspects (e.g. a mixture of A's and B's, etc.).

Example [Grade A]: Structure: Meticulously structured argument and exceptional command of critical discussion.

□ FEEDBACK

Feedback on your work can take many different forms, but it is all intended to help you improve your learning.

Feedback may take the form of:

- Written comments and marks on a completed piece of work
- Verbal feedback, particularly on presentations and performance/exhibition pieces
- Comments on a draft (or part of a draft) piece of work, for example an independent study

Feedback can perform several functions. For example it can be used to:

- Correct errors which you should seek not to repeat
- Develop your understanding of the topic through explanations
- Direct you to more detailed information on a topic
- Encourage you to think about how you might develop future pieces of work

Feedback will be:

- Provided within an agreed period of time to support your assessment process
- Relevant to the assessment and topic
- Sufficiently detailed to allow you to make positive changes to your work where required



□ MODERATION

In order to ensure that assessment grades are awarded fairly and consistently across your module/course, staff and external examiners will carry out a range of moderation activities against submitted work. These may include the following:

- **Standardisation:** where a group of markers independently mark and grade sample assignments and then discuss the outcomes to agree how marks should be awarded
- **Blind double marking:** two markers will independently mark and grade work and then come together to agree final grade and comments
- **Non-blind double marking:** normally carried out on a sample of submitted assessments; a second marker will look at the grades awarded and review them and any comments for consistency

□ MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES

There may be occasions where you are unable to submit a piece of assessed work on time, or attend an examination or presentation due to exceptional and unforeseen reasons that are outside your control, for example as a result of acute illness. If this occurs, you may be able to submit a claim for mitigating circumstances. This means that if your claim, which must be supported by independent evidence, is accepted, your work will be accepted and marked, or you will be allowed to resubmit the assessment or retake the examination.

For full details of the procedures see <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/720.htm>

□ ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Academic Misconduct is defined by the University as any attempt to gain an unfair advantage in an assessment or helping another student to gain an unfair advantage in an assessment.

Examples of academic misconduct or cheating include (but are not limited to):

- **Plagiarism** - the presentation of the work of another as if it was your own independent work, or failing to provide proper references and sources for your work
- **Collusion** - allowing another student to copy your work. If this is discovered, both you and the student you allowed to copy will be held responsible
- **Fabrication or falsification of data** – for example, claiming to have carried out experiments, observations, surveys, interviews which you have not, in fact, carried out
- **Failure to engage with appropriate ethical approval processes** – where you do not gain ethical approval through the University's ethical approval process, or where you change your research approach substantially and do not get additional ethical approval

For full detail see: <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/documents/Proceduresforinvestigationofallegedacademicmisconduct.pdf>

□ PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work or ideas as your own, with or without their consent, by incorporating it into your work without fully acknowledging or referencing the source/s.

Plagiarism does not just include copy and pasting and failing to provide a reference for a piece of work, or copying someone else's work and pretending it is your own; it also includes paraphrasing and not identifying the source and self-plagiarism or duplication. The University Library Services provides advice on how to avoid plagiarism in your work. This is available at <https://studyskills.wp.worc.ac.uk/index.php/writing-your-assignments/>

□ TURNITIN[®]

Turnitin, sometimes referred to as a plagiarism checking service, is text matching software that is integrated into Blackboard and allows you to both check that your referencing is being identified and perform originality checks on your assessments.

You can submit drafts of your work up until an agreed time before an assessment is due, and can use the reports generated by the software to check the originality and referencing quality of your work.

Turnitin is also used by teaching staff to detect plagiarism.