university
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Higher Education Course Regulations 2019/20

Assessment Policy

The following regulations apply to all taught Higher Education courses at the University of the Arts London. Further Education regulations and guidance are provided by the University of the Arts London Awarding Body.

The University of the Arts London Assessment Policy covers all aspects of the assessment of HE courses. It includes 3 parts:

Assessment Policy A statement of the principles governing assessment for all Higher Education courses within the University of the Arts London and a summary of the main aspects to consider when putting together an assessment strategy as part of a course development.

Course Regulations From 2011/12, all courses at the University of the Arts London will use standardised Course Regulations, which are available to all staff and students on the University website. The Course Regulations highlight where there are associated procedures and guidance notes under each section.

Guidance Notes The Guidance Notes cover the key principles behind each section of the course regulations as well as providing more detailed reading to aid decision-making.

1. Key principles governing the assessment of students

1) Assessment is an integral part of the learning process.

2) Assessment is a matter of academic judgement not solely of computation.

3) Assessment schemes must be explicit, transparent, fit for purpose and ensure fairness of treatment for all students.

4) All assessment schemes must be approved by Academic Standards and Development Committee as part of course validation and their operation monitored and regularly reviewed.

5) In assessment, academic judgments will be made with reference to the Assessment Criteria specified for a unit or unit element.

6) The UAL Assessment Criteria have been developed to help tutors give students clear and helpful feedback on their work.

7) Students must be provided with full and accurate information on all aspects of their assessment.

8) Staff will be supported in the implementation of the assessment policy through the provision of information, staff development, and the sharing of good practice.

2.   Mandatory requirements for Higher Education

1)   The assessment strategy for a course must be devised in the context of good practice in learning and teaching as part of course development. Assessment strategy and submission requirements will be considered as part of course approval in validation and review (see Developing Assessment Strategies below).

2)   The methods and content of assessment for a course must cover all the learning outcomes for that course and this must be made clear in the course handbook at validation (see Developing Assessment Strategies below).

3)   All assignments and project briefs leading to a submission for assessments contributing to a final award or to the allocation of credit (i.e. summative assessments) must be given to students in written form. Assessment briefs should include the Assessment Criteria relevant to the assessment, clear details of the submission requirements, and the date when students can expect to receive written feedback on their work (see Guidance Notes on Assessment).

4)   Project briefs and assignments for submissions for summative assessment must be approved by the Exam Board or by a Sub-Board which has been agreed and established by the full Exam Board for this purpose. External Examiners must be involved in the approval of final examination papers and project briefs (see Guidance Notes on Assessment).

5)   Written feedback on summative assessment must be provided to students within the timeframes set out in the Assessment Feedback Turnaround Policy. Feedback should indicate the level of achievement against each of the relevant Assessment Criteria (see Guidance Notes on Assessment).

6)   A system of internal moderation which promotes fairness of treatment and parity in marking and meets the particular needs of the course must be in operation in each course (see Guidance Notes on Assessment).

7)   All course regulations shall conform to the University regulations for the level and type of taught course.

3.   Developing Assessment Strategies

A course assessment strategy is the means by which each course translates University policy into specific requirements to meet course needs. It includes the range and balance of assessment methods used, the load, timing and content of assessment and how, overall, the assessment requirements for the course enable the student to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes for the course.

The assessment strategy will be considered as part of course development. Strategies must conform to the requirements of the assessment policy and follow any common approaches to assessment built into their college credit framework. The strategy should take account of the nature of the course and the normal entry requirements. The course handbook should include a description of the types of assessment that a student can expect on the course, and a guide to the difference between Formative and Summative assessment methods.

Learning Outcomes

University policy requires the portfolio of assessment for a course to cover all the learning outcomes for that course. At validation the course handbook should therefore show the assessment requirements within each unit and show how the unit learning outcomes are assessed. Learning outcomes should:

- Articulate academic standards and what tutors want students to be able to do or know; they help tutors plan courses, course units, and learning and teaching activities including assessment.
- Help make clear to students what the purpose of their course/course unit/ learning activity is, by explaining what the course or activity is intended to help them do or know.
- Should be written in clear straightforward language so that course teams and students can discuss them with confidence.
- Vary in how demanding they are, according to the level of study. The higher the level of study, the more demanding the learning outcomes.

It is important that the learning outcomes are appropriate for the level and purpose of study, achievable for students and aligned with the teaching and assessment methods. It can be helpful to plan for not too many and not too few learning outcomes, but there is not a fixed desirable number.

Assessment Criteria

There are five UAL Assessment Criteria:

- **Enquiry**
- **Knowledge**
- **Process**
- **Communication**
- **Realisation**

These will be applied to students' work to help give an understanding of what has been accomplished, how any grade given was arrived at, and how the student can improve their work in future. Course handbooks should contain guidance on the relationship between the course learning outcomes and the Assessment Criteria by which they are being assessed. Not all the criteria will be relevant to every course unit or assignment. Guidance and templates for the mapping of learning outcomes against the Assessment Criteria can be found on the Assessment web pages: **http://www.arts.ac.uk/study-at-ual/academic-regulations/course-regulations/3-assessment/**

Course Handbook

The template for course handbooks includes the requirements for assessment and can be found on Academic Registry's Course Development web page. In summary, the handbook should include a section outlining the assessment strategy, explaining the basic features of the assessment scheme and the methods used. This section should also:

- Provide a diagram indicating where the summative assessment points occur in the course (that is, assessments which contribute to a final award or to the allocation of credit);
- Describe the assessment regulations for the course, including systems of internal moderation used
- Describe the role and responsibilities of the Exam Board.

Each unit description in the body of the handbook should include the assessment requirements for that unit.

Validation

During validation or revalidation it is helpful to receive feedback from external assessors and internal advisers on the general approach to assessment before the details of the assessment scheme are finalised. In order for the validation panel to get a sense of the practical details of the approach to assessment it is helpful to have a sample assessment brief for each stage of the course in the Validation Papers.

Checklist:

- Devise assessment strategy as part of course development.
- The portfolio of assessment to cover all learning outcomes for the course.
- Assessment Criteria to be mapped to the learning outcomes to demonstrate how students will be assessed.
- Course handbook should include: Assessment Strategy, including the difference between formative and summative assessment; Assessment Regulations, including internal moderation policy for the course; assessment diagram showing assessment points.
- Unit descriptions must include assessment requirements.
- Include sample briefs in validation papers at Stage 2.