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|  | GUIDANCE ON MARKING FOR UNDERGRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT COURSES |
| |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Version No.** | **Description** | **Author** | **Approval** | **Effective Date** | | 2.0 | Guidance on Marking for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Courses | Assessment and Feedback Working Group | Senate |  | | |
|  | Version |
|  | **the place of useful learning**  The University of Strathclyde is a charitable body, registered in Scotland, number SC015263 |

Accuracy in marking and fairness in the way all students are assessed is crucial to ensuring a high quality degree in which students, employers and postgraduate selectors can have confidence. The marking of all summative assessments should be in alignment with published assessment criteria and appropriate standards. This approach to marking is commonly referred to as ‘criteria-referenced’, where students’ work is assessed against explicit criteria. The University does not endorse a ‘norm-referenced’ approach to marking, where a fixed proportion (or narrow range of proportions) of students are awarded grades within each grade band. This minimal guidance aims to support staff when developing marking criteria to align with individual undergraduate and post-graduate taught assessments. Marks should be returned using one of the two scales below, Type A or Type B, dependent on the type of assessment. Marks should take account of the performance descriptor (underlined) at each band, and the wording of feedback should align with the descriptor for the selected performance level.

**Staff will need to supplement this guidance, or provide alternative detailed assessment criteria that align to the learning outcomes being assessed at the level of study, so that students understand the criteria by which their work is assessed. This must be done in ways that clearly demonstrate equivalence and an approach to marking that is consistent with this University Guide.**

**Type A**: Numerically based assessments, assessments with short answers

Where assessments are numerical in nature, or where there are short answer questions with each answer attracting a small number of marks, the full 0-100 percentage point marking scale should be used. This type of assessment is common where there is a clear right and wrong answer (e.g. some examinations in Science and Languages, and multiple choice examinations).

**Type B:** Other assessments

Where an assessment cannot be categorised as a Type A assessment, such that it has no clear right and wrong answer, and instead the quality of analysis and argument are important (e.g. such as in essays and dissertations), assessments should be marked using the Type B scale, which is a restricted percentage scale. Where rubrics are used for assessing students’ work, staff should apply the Type B scale at the level of assessing attainment against individual criteria included in the rubric. This may result in an overall mark for an assessment that is not included within the Type B restricted 100 point scale, which is fine, since the scale is used at the level of assessing attainment against each assessment criterion.

Exceptionally, where Type A or Type B marks cannot be provided (e.g. for professional competence assessments of student teachers), marks may be returned on a satisfactory/ unsatisfactory basis subject to approval by the relevant Faculty’s Vice Dean Academic.

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| **Class** | **Type A** | **Type B** | **Descriptor** | |
| **UG:First**  **PG: Dist** | **90 - 100** | **92, 100** | **Exceptional demonstration of the learning outcomes**  Exceptional in most or every respect, the work is well beyond the level expected of a highly competent student at their level of study, and could not be bettered for the level of study.  In addition to the characteristics noted for First class in the Outstanding range below, the work has also:   * Been carried out with high or almost complete autonomy | |
| **80 - 89** | **84** | **Outstanding demonstration of the learning outcomes**  Outstanding in most respects, the work is what might be expected of a highly competent student at their level of study. The work demonstrates:   * A breadth of appropriate and focussed knowledge, and a deep and critical understanding of the subject matter * An excellent standard of synthesis and evaluation and a critical and insightful analysis * Complexity of thought, creativity, insight and/or originality * Evidence of comprehensive reading and thought beyond course/assignment materials * Appropriate use of references and exemplars * An outstanding standard of writing and communication and/or presentation, that is clearly and logically structured | |
| **70 - 79** | **72, 75, 78** | **Excellent demonstration of the learning outcomes**  Excellent in most respects, the work is what might be expected of a very competent student at their level of study. The work demonstrates   * Wide, appropriate and focussed knowledge and critical understanding of the subject matter * An excellent standard of synthesis and evaluation and/or shows critical and insightful analysis * Some complexity of thought, insight and/or originality * Evidence of comprehensive reading and thought beyond course/assignment materials * Appropriate use of references and exemplars * An excellent standard of writing and communication and/or presentation, that is clearly and logically structured | |
| **UG: Upper second**  **PG: Merit** | **60 - 69** | **Low 2.1: 62**  **Mid 2.1: 65**  **High 2.1: 68** | **Comprehensive demonstration of the learning outcomes**  Very good or good in most respects for the level of study in displaying attainment of the learning outcomes, with marks at the higher end of this scale reflecting stronger and more consistent attainment of the learning outcomes. This work demonstrates:   * A very good or good level of appropriate knowledge and critical understanding of the subject matter, with only occasional lapses in detail * Very good or good synthesis, analysis, reflection, understanding and/or critical evaluation * Evidence of reading and thought beyond course/assignment materials * Appropriate use of references and exemplars * A good standard of writing and communication and/or presentation, that is clearly and logically structured | |
| **UG: Lower second**  **PG: Pass** | **50 - 59** | **Low 2.2: 52**  **Mid 2.2: 55**  **High 2.2: 58** | **Satisfactory demonstration of the learning outcomes:**  The work is satisfactory for the level of study and clearly meets the requirements for demonstrating the relevant learning outcomes. Marks at the higher end of this scale reflect stronger and more consistent attainment of the learning outcomes for this standard of work. This work demonstrates:   * Satisfactory knowledge and a reasonable understanding of the essential material * Weaknesses in the synthesis and/or analysis, reflection, understanding and critical evaluation of material, resulting in parts of the work being overly descriptive in nature * General accuracy with occasional mistakes and/or reduced focus on the main issue or lapses in detail * Limited evidence of reading and thought beyond course/assignment materials * A satisfactory standard of writing and communication and/or presentation, where there may be weaknesses in the clarity and/or structure of the work * Appropriate use of references and exemplars, though there may be minor flaws in the referencing technique | |
| **UG: Third**  **PG: Fail** | **40 – 49** | **Low 3rd: 42,**  **Mid 3rd: 45,**  **High 3rd: 48** | **ASSESSMENTS AT YEARS 1-4**  **Limited demonstration of the learning outcomes.**  The work meets the minimum requirements for demonstrating the relevant learning outcomes for the level of study. Marks at the higher end of this scale reflect stronger and more consistent attainment of the learning outcomes for this standard of work. This work demonstrates:   * Basic knowledge and understanding * A weak argument which is not logically structured or which lacks clarity or is based on unsubstantiated statements * No relevant critical analysis * Insufficient evidence of reading and thought beyond course/assignment materials * Poor organisation and/or presentation * A lack of references and exemplars | **ASSESSMENTS AT YEAR 5 & PGT LEVEL**  **Unsatisfactory demonstration of the learning outcomes.**  The work fails to meet the minimum requirements for demonstrating the relevant learning outcomes for the level of study. Marks at the higher end of this scale reflect stronger and more consistent attainment of the learning outcomes for this standard of work. This work demonstrates:   * Basic knowledge and understanding * A weak argument which is not logically structured or which lacks clarity or is based on unsubstantiated statements * No relevant critical analysis * Insufficient evidence of reading and thought beyond course/assignment materials * Poor organisation and/or presentation   A lack of references and exemplars A mark in this range is not a pass for Year 5 or PGT assessments |
| **UG: Fail PG: Fail** | **30 - 39** | **32, 35, 38** | **Marginal fail: Inadequate demonstration of the learning outcomes**  The work fails to meet the minimum requirements for demonstrating the relevant learning outcomes for the level of study. Marks at the higher end of this scale reflect stronger and more consistent attainment of the learning outcomes within this range of marks. This work demonstrates:   * An insufficient level of knowledge and understanding * A poorly structured, poorly developed, or incoherent argument, or no argument at all * An awkward writing style or poor expression of concepts * A lack of familiarity with the subject and/or assessment method * Insufficient evidence of reading and thought beyond course/assignment materials * A lack of references and exemplars | |
| **20 - 29** | **20** | **Clear fail: Weak demonstration of the learning outcomes**  The work is very weak or shows a decided lack of effort. The work demonstrates   * Very poor or confused knowledge and understanding, with reference to only a few key words, phrases or key ideas * No argument or one based on irrelevant and erroneous content * Irrelevant content and extensive omissions * Weaknesses of presentation and/or logic and/or evidence * Inadequate evidence of learning * Incomplete or inadequately presented references, if any | |
| **1 - 19** | **10** | **Minimal demonstration of the learning outcomes**   * The work is extremely weak. The work demonstrates: No knowledge or understanding of the area in question * Incomplete, muddled, and/or irrelevant material * Irrelevant or little content, extensive omissions * Weaknesses of presentation and/or logic and/or evidence * Deficient evidence of learning * Incomplete or inadequately presented references, if any | |
| **0** | **0** | **No relevant work submitted for assessment** | |