

School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition

Assessment and Feedback Strategy

Introduction

In the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition we work in partnership with our staff, students and wider teaching and research networks to develop and deliver an excellent student experience.

Our teaching and associated activities aim to support the Aberdeen 2040 Strategic Plan in its four key strategic areas of inclusivity, interdisciplinarity, internationalisation and sustainability.

Specifically, within our teaching across the School we aim to:

- Create an outstanding and inclusive educational environment.
- Offer a first-class flexible, demand-driven, research-led, and personalised educational experience.
- Ensure every student has the opportunity to reach their potential.
- Equip our students with the skills needed to maximise their opportunities and develop as responsible global citizens.

We are committed, through ongoing evaluation and an active programme of educational research, to deliver an evidence-based, innovative and relevant programme of assessment and feedback, providing a world class experience for our students.

The challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic required us to find innovative ways to meet our commitment to high quality education. The enhancements that have already implemented and those that we plan to develop for assessment and feedback are outlined in the workplan section (see page 3).

Our **students** will experience a coherent assessment and feedback pathway that has a positive educational impact. They will have access to timely, accurate and transparent information about this pathway including the various assessment and feedback formats, the length and range of course content, as well as the criteria and standard that is expected. The contribution of assessments to student overall progress should be clear.

Students will:

- Be assessed both formatively and summatively, in a range of ways that appropriately supports their learning across their courses and programmes.
- Receive timely (within three weeks) and objective feedback for all assessments that can be used to feed forward into their ongoing development and demonstration of excellence.
- Be provided with reasonable adjustments to their assessments wherever practicable and appropriate, in partnership with the University Student Support Services.

Our **staff** will understand contemporary best practice in feedback and assessment, tailored to the curricula they deliver and calibrated to the students they assess or teach.

Staff will:

- Be provided with appropriate, verifiable training opportunities to enhance their skills in assessment and feedback.
- Be encouraged to reflect on their assessment and feedback practice both informally and during their Annual Review or Joint Appraisal (clinical staff).

Underpinning principles for assessment and feedback

The key underpinning principles for our assessment and feedback practice are:

1. Assessment and high-quality feedback are integral to supporting and demonstrating effective student learning and progress.
 - a. These processes will facilitate the development of lifelong reflective adult learners who can engage positively in self-assessment, utilising deep rather than surface learning.
 - b. Assessments will be designed to have a positive impact on learning and to promote positive self-esteem, and will allow students to fully demonstrate their learning, competence, and excellence.
2. Summative assessments will be valid, reliable, and consistent. They will be benchmarked to their curriculum, and appropriate to the learning outcomes being assessed, in accordance with best practice.
3. Where appropriate, we will design authentic assessments, enabling students to demonstrate the applicability of their learning.
4. Assessment and progression criteria will be non-discriminatory, meeting the requirements of the Equality Act (2010).
5. Assessment and feedback will be via a strategic, coordinated, and systematic approach that is regularly reviewed and informed by wide stakeholder consultation.
6. Assessment and feedback strategy and practice should be consistent with institutional requirements, the Quality Assurance Agency and other relevant regulatory bodies (for example, the General Dental Council, the General Medical Council and the Faculty of Physician Associates based within the Royal College of Physicians and other accreditation bodies, where applicable) and will be monitored and evaluated through appropriate methods.
7. Students, as key stakeholders, will be involved in the decision-making processes on assessment policy and practice.
8. Feedback will be timely, specific, honest and fair, with opportunities for students to reflect and act on feedback.
9. Assessment and feedback will provide information to faculty that will be used to help shape teaching and assessment practices.
10. Regular evaluation and appropriate sustained pedagogic research will support high quality assessment and feedback.
11. Disseminating good practice and innovation in assessment and feedback will drive further enhancements, as can learning from innovative practice elsewhere in the University or externally.

Work plan during academic year 2022-23

Item	Stage	Completion date
Faculty training priorities Annual basic assessment principles and practice	Continued rolling programme of workshops. Planned for 2022-23 are question writing and standard setting (healthcare specific) workshops. Staff are provided with training opportunities delivered by CAD.	Ongoing
Sharing best practice in practical and written assessment across the school	IEHMS leads meetings with assessment coordinators to share practice through the operational groups and feed into the Feedback and Assessment Committee.	Ongoing
Use of electronic formats for both feedback and assessment for students	Assessments and feedback are delivered using the MSCAA Exam Write platform for the MBChB and PA programmes, ExamSoft for BDS, and MyAberdeen in UG and PG Taught programmes. Advantages include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased accessibility e.g., screen magnification, background colour change and the ability to use digital images • Building in integrity by design e.g., <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ randomisation of MCQ type items ○ use of anti-plagiarism software 	Completed 2020-21
“You said, we did”	First iteration disseminated in 2017 and maintained on a yearly basis until the covid pandemic and disruption of summative exams. This demonstrates where the student voice has influenced teaching and assessment in the School.	Ongoing
Preparing clinical assessments for expanded MBChB cohort starting 2022/23	Healthcare Programmes Assessment Team, Year Teams and Clinical Skills team developing.	Ongoing
MBChB students graduating in 2024/25 sitting the MLA applied knowledge test in 2023/24.	Participation in small scale pilot 2021-22. Participation in full scale pilot (majority of schools) 2022-23.	Ongoing
Decolonisation of assessment	Learners should understand the language and process of assessment and feedback e.g.,	Ongoing

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment expectations should be made visible to learners. • Sharing assessment criteria / assessment rubrics <p>Language, imagery and structure matter.</p>	
Improve standing in the undergraduate National Student Survey (NSS)	School Education Lead has met with UG, Healthcare and Dentistry programme leads to identify specific areas to work on, responding to student feedback in the NSS.	Ongoing
Feedback on assessments	<p>Encourage automated feedback for formative assessments where available.</p> <p>Publish dates of exams, exam boards and date students should receive their feedback.</p> <p>Continue to monitor dates feedback released, reasons for any delay and action taken.</p> <p>Continue to monitor student comments on feedback – work to standardise methods and quality of feedback to assist students on subsequent assessments.</p>	Ongoing

Assessment and feedback performance indicators:

Top 20 in the UK for student satisfaction	Overall performance in National Student Survey Target: ≥ 90% overall satisfaction and ≤ 5% dissatisfaction across all programmes
Deliver and promote teaching of the highest standard	Percentage of staff with additional teaching qualifications (for example, in Medicine: GMC Recognition of trainers, Membership/Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy / Academy of Medical Educators / PG Cert in Medical Education / PG Cert in Higher Education Teaching and Learning (target 100% of teaching intensive staff) Percentage of Healthcare Education faculty with lead assessment roles/responsibilities who have undergone Foundations of Assessment training (target >90%)
Provide programmes and services that meet relevant accreditation and quality standards	Remain in good standing with QAA, accreditation bodies, and all appropriate regulatory bodies, demonstrating continual improvement and recognised examples of good practice Consider and act upon recommendations of Internal Teaching Reviews (ITR) (UG/PGT science/Healthcare programmes)
Deliver a fully rounded, enjoyable and formative student experience	Monitor and respond to national student survey/Postgraduate survey/student barometer /course feedback returns/staff student liaison committees/Annual programme reviews/ITR
Degree awards	Monitor the proportion of 1 st class and upper 2 nd degree UG awards Monitor the proportion of Distinction and Commendation PGT awards