

Digital & Information Services  
Applications Management  
Learning Technologies

## Exam Feedback

### Standard Operating Procedure

4 July 2023

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0.1	19 Apr 2022	Initial draft	J. Goode
1.0	23 May 2022	First version	J. Goode
1.1	4 Jul 2023	Clarify: exam board, resetting of timer and OSCE percentages	J. Goode

## Document Sign Off

Reviewer Name	Position	Signed	Date
Laura Gates	Assessment Lead	✓	16 June 2022
Ching-Wa Chung	Assessment Deputy	✓	16 June 2022

## Glossary

Term	Meaning
Author	The person requesting the exam feedback.
Developer	The member of Learning Technologies generating the exam feedback.
Reviewer	The member of Learning Technologies internally reviewing the exam feedback.
Source spreadsheet	The original, unmodified copy of the results data sent by the person requesting the exam feedback.

Term	Meaning
Timer	A virtual countdown timer that tracks how long Learning Technologies have to generate exam feedback.

## Introduction and Scope

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This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) describes the process that must be followed to request exam feedback to be generated by Learning Technologies. This includes a comprehensive list of data required for this process to take place and discusses external factors that may delay how quickly feedback can be turned around.

Exam feedback is generally defined as a collection of personalised PDF documents that have been created from a results spreadsheet for a single exam. These documents are uploaded to the relevant virtual learning environment (VLE) for students to access. Students can only see their own feedback.

## Process of Generating Exam Feedback

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### Submitting a Request for Exam Feedback

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A request for exam feedback, along with the requisite information, must be sent as an email to [learning-technologies@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:learning-technologies@abdn.ac.uk). This is a shared support inbox that every member of Learning Technologies has access to, and it is monitored on a daily basis.

Learning Technologies require **five working days** to process exam feedback. A “**timer**” will start from the point of receipt of all required information and files (outlined below).

If exam feedback is for a course that is not listed in Appendix C, or changes are requested to the styling or output of a previous year’s feedback, this will incur additional development time and will take longer than five working days to process. It is recommended to approach Learning Technologies at least two working days in advance to discuss your requirements.

Please note that exam feedback will not be released to students on a Friday. This is to ensure students have access to a suitable level of support immediately following the receipt of their exam feedback. Feedback will therefore be released the following Monday.

Under rare circumstances, Learning Technologies may receive multiple separate requests for exam feedback. This means this batch of exam feedback will all be due on the same day. If the

number of requests is more than Learning Technologies can realistically support, the Assessment Team (see Appendix A) will be contacted and asked to produce a prioritisation order. A delay in processing some of the exam feedback may therefore occur.

## Year 5 OSCE

When this feedback is received, the student's CGS grades will likely have been input into Student Records. This entry starts an irrevocable process which will automatically cause these student accounts to be permanently disabled after 30 days. This includes forever preventing the students from being able to log into their VLE. There is therefore a finite amount of time to generate the feedback so that the students are given the opportunity to log in and collect it. Any delay could jeopardise this from happening. Due to the time constraint, it may be worth the Year 5 team contacting the students once the feedback is live to prompt a visit to the VLE.

## Submitting a Request for Expedited Exam Feedback

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Under exceptional circumstances, there may be a requirement to return feedback to students in a shorter time period than the stated five working days. Two working days is the **absolute minimum** time required to process exam feedback. A request to expedite exam feedback must be approved by the school's Assessment Team (see Appendix A) in advance of submission of the request to generate the exam feedback.

Please note that a request to expedite exam feedback must only be made if the circumstances are urgent or unavoidable. It must not be used regularly or due to poor planning.

## Information Required to Produce Exam Feedback

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Below is a list of the data required by Learning Technologies to begin the process of preparing to generate exam feedback.

If the exam is concluded via an exam board, the exam board needs to have met before sending the final result data to Learning Technologies.

The following requisite information must be provided:

- Course code.
- Subject name.
- Exam date.
- Exam type.
  - If applicable, this should indicate whether the exam is Formative or Summative.

e.g. ME1234 Anatomy Formative OSPE.

- Primary contact name and email address that can be used for enquiries by both students and Learning Technologies. This is usually the Exam Coordinator.
- Secondary contact name and email address that can be used for enquiries by Learning Technologies in case the primary contact is unavailable, e.g. due to sickness or annual leave. This could be the Year Lead.

e.g. Primary Contact: Dr Joe Bloggs ([j.bloggs@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:j.bloggs@abdn.ac.uk)), Secondary Contact: Dr Jane Biggs ([j.biggs@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:j.biggs@abdn.ac.uk)).

## OSCEs

Rather than the primary contact email address, [osce@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:osce@abdn.ac.uk) should be used in the PDF documents that students view. As access to this email's inbox is shared, this allows all members of the OSCE team to manage student enquiries.

This information must be unique for the current academic year. That is, there must be no request for exam feedback that has the same details over the course of the current academic year. If this is the case, please provide additional information to distinguish the current exam feedback from a future, similar exam. For example, the semester can be specified.

The primary contact named in the request must be available during business hours for the duration of the time it takes Learning Technologies to generate the exam feedback. Learning Technologies would expect a response to a query within 1 working day. If the primary or secondary contact are both unavailable, a delay in processing the exam feedback may occur. If no response is received during the request window, the query will be shared with the Assessment Team (Appendix A) who will assist with a resolution.

Note that the secondary contact's details are never included in the student's exam feedback.

The available contact will be sent a copy of all generated PDF documents for review before the exam feedback is released to students. This is in addition to the internal checking completed by Learning Technologies. It is at the discretion of the primary or secondary contact as to whether all PDFs should be reviewed prior to releasing the exam feedback to students. Exam feedback will only be released to students when the available contact has confirmed that the feedback can be released. Confirmation must be by email to Learning Technologies.

## Files Required to Produce Exam Feedback

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A Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet (.xlsx file type) of student exam results must be supplied for processing. This can be a single spreadsheet file containing multiple sheets or multiple spreadsheet files. These files are referred to as the “**source**” spreadsheets.

These files must:

- Be the final, approved, post-exam board (if applicable) versions.
- Not include more data than is needed to process the exam feedback.
- Not include data for any student who does not require feedback.

These measures will reduce the risk of incorrect data being used and unnecessary feedback being generated.

If a file is password protected and uses a password that Learning Technologies are not aware of, this must be emailed to us. However, password protection is not essential.

If amendments are required to **source** spreadsheets at any point during the process of generating exam feedback, new versions of these spreadsheets must be sent to Learning Technologies. This ensures that Learning Technologies have the most up-to-date copy of the results and that no member of Learning Technologies introduces an incorrect amendment.

## Contents of Source Spreadsheets

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The following list describes the minimum data required in a **source** spreadsheet.

- Student's first, middle, and last names
  - This can be a single column or split across multiple columns.
- Matriculation number and/or candidate number
  - This is the unique identifier for a student.
  - There must be no duplicate matriculation numbers or candidate numbers in the **source** spreadsheet.
- Common Grading Scale (CGS)
  - Required if the exam is summative; optional if the exam is formative.
- Mark out of X\* and/or percentage
  - This forms the basis of the mark to be communicated to the student.
  - \* Please note that OSCEs require a percentage and not a mark out of X.
- Passmark(s)
  - These should be included to communicate to the student whether their mark results in a pass or fail for a particular component of the exam; optional if the exam is formative.

Sometimes students are provided with a general summary of how well everyone performed across the exam. Although this summary is frequently emailed to students outwith the exam feedback process, it should be included alongside a student's personalised exam feedback, so they have a copy and a complete feedback results record. A Microsoft Word Document (.docx file type) should therefore be provided to Learning Technologies as part of the initial request.

To adhere to the university's policy, all numerical data will be unrounded at two decimal places unless otherwise stated.

## **OSCEs**

If the exam is a Year 1-4 OSCE, Learning Technologies must be sent a copy of the ratified examiner's comments. Comments should be run through a spellchecker and any inappropriate comments should be removed. Please note Learning Technologies do not review the content of the examiner comments.

If an OSCE has a CPR station that assesses unsafe practice, its marks will be displayed as 'Safe' or 'Unsafe'.

## **Pausing the Timer**

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The timer will be paused under specific circumstances, outlined below.

Learning Technologies are awaiting:

- Missing files and/or information.
- An updated **source** spreadsheet.
- A response by the author of the exam feedback to a query.

The timer will resume when an adequate response is received.

If significant changes are requested and the presentation of the feedback differs considerably from the last time it was generated, the timer may be reset. If this is the case, the author will be notified.

Please note that the timer may be paused if an unplanned event occurs. This may include but is not limited to, power cuts on campus, hardware failures, unavailability of the software required to process exam feedback, team members off sick, etc. Under these circumstances, Learning Technologies will communicate potential delays in producing exam feedback with the author.

## **Common Grading Scale**

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The links below outline useful information about the CGS.

- [University information provided to students.](#)
- [University information provided to staff.](#)

## **Summative Exam Feedback**

Unless prior permission is granted by the Assessment Team (see Appendix A), all summative exam feedback generated by Learning Technologies and provided to students must contain a CGS mark. Other data can supplement a CGS mark, but this forms the minimum required data.



## **Formative Exam Feedback**

It was agreed with the school on the 12<sup>th</sup> of January 2022 that providing a CGS mark for formative exams is considered optional.

## Appendix A – Assessment Team

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The list below details those members of staff who are in the Assessment Team. They are responsible for approving expedited exam feedback and deciding what action to take if no response is received from the primary or secondary contacts.

- Assessment Lead
  - Laura Gates ([l.gates@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:l.gates@abdn.ac.uk))
- Assessment Deputy Leads
  - Clinical: Ching-Wa Chung ([ching-wa.chung@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:ching-wa.chung@abdn.ac.uk))
  - Written: Smriti Bhatta ([smriti.bhatta@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:smriti.bhatta@abdn.ac.uk))

## Appendix B – Timeline of Steps Required to Process Exam Feedback

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The list below outlines the individual steps carried out by Learning Technologies to process exam feedback. Please note that this is a sequential process, and each step requires the successful completion of the previous step.

- 1. All requisites are received from the author**
  - An email arrives in the Learning Technologies inbox as a new support ticket.
  - The timer is started.
- 2. Exam feedback is in development**
  - A member of Learning Technologies – the **developer** – allocates the feedback to themselves.
  - If there are any issues with the data received, the developer will liaise with the author until this is resolved. The timer will be paused during this time.
- 3. Exam feedback is complete**
  - The exam feedback is complete, and the developer has reviewed their output for issues.
- 4. Internal review**
  - Another member of Learning Technologies allocates themselves as the **reviewer** of the feedback and independently checks it for issues.
  - If there are any issues, the developer will be notified and asked to fix them. *Return to step 2.*
- 5. Results are sent to the author**
  - The developer sends all generated PDF documents to the author.
- 6. External review**
  - The author checks the PDF documents received and highlights any issues to the developer.

- If there are any issues, the developer will be notified and asked to fix them. *Return to step 2.*
- This may necessitate further communication between the author and developer. Please note any delay from either party may delay the feedback being released to the students within the stated time.
- If additional data is provided by the author after the external review, this will incur additional development time and may require longer to process.
- If the developer does not receive a reply from the author within five working days, the Assessment Team will be notified, and it will be up to them to decide a course of action.
- If there are no issues, the author informs the developer of this and confirms the exam feedback is suitable for queuing to release to the students.

#### **7. Ready to go live**

- The exam feedback has been queued and is ready to be released to the students at an appropriate time.

#### **8. Put live and checked as a student by the developer**

- The developer uploads all feedback to the relevant VLE and individually checks a random selection of students (generally three) to ensure the correct feedback is appearing to them.
- The developer notifies the author that the feedback is live and resolves any associated support ticket.
- If there are any issues, the developer will remove the feedback for everyone and liaise with their line manager to discuss the next steps.

## Appendix C – List of Course Codes

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A verified list of the courses that will require exam feedback to be generated each academic year by Learning Technologies.

- Year 1 MBChB
  - ME2019 Foundations of Medicine formative
  - ME2019 Foundations of Medicine
  - Anatomy ICA 1 (No resit)
  - Anatomy ICA 2 (No resit)
  - ME2020 Anatomy 1 (OSPE)
  - ME2512 Medicine 1
  - ME2021 OSCE (Clinical Skills 1)
  - ME2511 SSC 1
  - Plus, second sitting/resits
- Year 2 MBChB

- ME3031 Systems 2A Paper 1
- ME3031 Systems 2A Paper 2
- ME3028 Systems 2B OSPE (1)
- ME3028 Systems 2B OSPE (2)
- ME3024 Systems 2B OSCE
- ME3013 SSC 2
- Plus, second sitting/resits
- Year 3 MBChB
  - ME3026 Systems 3C OSPE
  - ME3025 Systems 3C OSCE
  - ME33 Medical Humanities
  - ME3034 Systems 3B
  - Plus, second sitting/resits
- Year 4 MBChB
  - ME4805 SSC 4
  - ME4023 Specialist Clinical Practice 2 (Formative)
  - ME4903 Specialist Clinical Practice SBA
  - ME4904 Specialist Clinical Practice OSCE
  - Plus, second sitting/resits
- Year 5 MBChB
  - ME5018 Elective
  - ME5012 Year 5 Assessment (OSCE) Days 1-3