

# TESTA

*Transforming the Experience  
of Students Through  
Assessment*

## A Guide for Staff

### What is TESTA?

Transforming the Experience of Students Through Assessment (TESTA) was established as part of a National Teaching Fellowship project, originally funded by the Higher Education Academy (HEA). The TESTA approach enables staff to identify and analyse assessment and feedback practices experienced by a student across an entire degree programme.

In this process, the information gathered is used to guide assessment and feedback review and development. Staff will engage in exchanges of assessment practices and share their ideas. Student views are also sought through focus groups and completion of a questionnaire. TESTA has been widely employed in UK HEIs already, including at the Universities of Edinburgh, Dundee, St Andrews, and Strathclyde.

### How does it work?

The TESTA process includes five key stages:

- 1 Conducting a programme audit of courses to gather information on current assessment and feedback practices.
- 2 Collecting data through surveys and focus groups from both staff and students.
- 3 Discussing and analysing gathered information to reflect on current assessment and feedback approaches across degree programmes.
- 4 Meeting as a degree programme team to agree any assessment and feedback enhancements.
- 5 Evaluating these enhancements to assess the impact of refinements from both staff and student perspectives.

## What are TESTA's aims?

By reviewing selected degree programmes using established TESTA methodologies, the University and its academic Schools are aiming to share effective practice, and enhance the student learning experience.

## What are the benefits of TESTA?

For staff these may include:

- Broadening approaches to their assessment and feedback practices through interdisciplinary exchanges and discussions.
- Enhancing understanding of academic integrity and assessment design in a digital age.
- Developing staff awareness of the variety of feedback approaches in supporting student learning.

For students these may include:

- Encouraging students' deep-learning and understanding of assessment literacy.
- Enhancing student knowledge and understanding of the value of feedback in learning.
- Increasing student engagement through more varied assessment and feedback approaches.

In addition, there may be opportunities to identify any areas of over-assessment that could reduce staff and student workloads.

Further TESTA information is available from Dr Mary Pryor, Senior Academic Skills Adviser and Dr Joy Perkins, Educational & Employability Development Adviser, Centre for Academic Development ([cad@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:cad@abdn.ac.uk)).

