

## Appendix E: Using the Decision Making Cards

The decision making cards are for all those involved in supporting assessment practices in higher education. There are cards for each of the dimensions and subdimensions of EAT (12 areas in total) to support colleagues in considering specific aspects of assessment practice.

In addition, there are specific questions for **Programme Leads** and their teams at the end of each core dimension:

Assessment Literacy	46
Assessment Feedback	52
Assessment Design	58

There is also a summary of quality assurance issues for each of the three core dimensions for all teams to consider

Assessment Literacy	47
Assessment Feedback	53
Assessment Design	60

# AL 1: Clarify What Constitutes Good

## Lecturer / Teacher Focused (LT)

- Key Foci**
- Involving students in the development of assessment criteria.**
  - Explaining the rationale underpinning the assessment criteria.**
  - Exploring the relevance and validity of the assessment criteria and tasks.**
  - 5 minute focused questions to students throughout a module on what they are finding difficult.**

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|-----|---|
| 1LT | Provide explicit guidance from the outset on the requirements of the assessment tasks.  |
| 2LT | Check students' understanding of requirements through small-focused tasks and opportunities for discussion and reflection about the assessment criteria(e.g. demystifying critical reflection; writing styles; referencing etc.). |
| 3LT | Model examples of good practice in taught sessions.   |
| 4LT | Provide students with examples of good practice and identify why they are good using explicit assessment marking criteria.  |
| 5LT | Select snippets of good practice to discuss in sessions on a regular basis.   |
| 6LT | Set formative tasks asking students to focus on key concepts.   |
| 7LT | Provide model answers to questions and FAQs that are also available online.   |
| 8LT | Develop rubrics so that students are directed to the requirements of the assessment task.   |

## Student Focused (S)

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| 1S | Get students to produce model answers individually and in groups to share with their peers.  |
| 2S | Ask students to mark work using the assessment criteria.   |
| 3S | Get students to personalise the assessment criteria in relation to the requirements of a specific task (i.e. write it in their own words).   |
| 4S | Get students to set the marking criteria for specific pieces of work using the guidelines for assessment ratified for your module/ programme.  |
| 5S | Get students to advise on developing the assessment criteria guidance for following cohorts of students; get students to map learning outcomes across modules.   |
| 6S | Get students to develop and personalise rubrics to support their own learning within and beyond the module of study.   |
| 7S | Get students to self-assess their own performance as part of the summative assessment (e.g. using the assessment criteria grid to annotate where they think they are according to the different criteria and justify why). |
| 8S | Give students an article to assess and then get students to moderate their decisions in groups and to summarise and justify conclusions to the group.  |
| 9S | Students review work of varied quality to support understanding of quality, and seeing that quality can be achieved in different ways (Sadler, 2010, 2013).  |

# AL 2: Clarify How Assessment Elements Fit Together

## Lecturer / Teacher Focused (LT)

- Key Foci** Making clear how all elements of a programme fit together and how the assessments were linked for staff and students
- Identifying and mapping high level skills required throughout a programme.**
- Getting students to 'walk' through the programme and to map their own journeys and potential crunch points.**
- Team development of programmes (AD2) to critically examine the placement and nature of different assessments and how these map to learning.**

- 1LT Provide a route map/diagram showing how all assessment elements (formative and summative) fit together for students and lecturers.
- 2LT To ensure buy in, clarify with students why the assessment design is relevant and valuable in supporting students to meet learning objectives within and beyond the module.
- 3LT Signpost key tasks and timelines.
- 4LT Demonstrate how assessment tasks and assessment guidance are organised on the virtual learning environment.
- 5LT If completing formative assignments is a condition for submitting summative assignments make this explicit from the start.
- 6LT Revisit the assessment route map with students at regular intervals throughout the module/programme.

## Student Focused (S)

- 1S Get students to produce their own picture of the assessment pattern and get them to outline their role(s) in the process. (Gantt charts can be useful for students to demonstrate how they are going to organise and manage the requirement of assessment).
- 2S Get the students to rewrite the learning outcomes in their own language. Map with them how you are intending to cover these within the module.
- 3S Get students to complete a self-assessment on what aspects of assessment they are clear about and what areas they need more guidance on. Produce a summary of key points for all students based on student feedback queries.
- 4S Involve students in contributing resources to the module/programme.
- 5S How can students in years 1, 2 and 3 and at PG level contribute towards supporting understanding of how the module/programme fits together; what resources can they share?
- 6S Ask students to review guidance in the course handbook and to work with you to make information more explicit where and if necessary.

# AL 3: Clarify Student Entitlement

## Lecturer / Teacher Focused (LT)

**Key Foci**     **Being explicit about what partnership means and what entitlement is—how much support and when?**

**Clarifying with students at point of entry what is expected from them in terms of their contribution to programme development, attendance, supporting other students.**

**Not to under-estimate the strengths students bring with them and using them to best effect and from point of entry.**

- 1LT Clarify expectations regarding the hours of study and the amount of preparation required for each session.
- 2LT Be explicit and precise about the hours of support available for feedback and make sure this is consistent in handbooks and all other sources.
- 3LT Be clear about what constitutes feedback and where and when feedback will take place.
- 4LT Be clear about what you want the students to do with feedback and set specific tasks related to this (e.g., developing an action plan; reflecting on the feedback about what is understood and what is not; how they are going to advance their work ...).
- 5LT In giving written feedback ensure consistency in the timing of feedback across the feedback team within a module so that students receive the feedback at approximately the same time.
- 6LT Use individual and group feedback judiciously—when is group feedback most appropriate?
- 7LT Tackle the emotional dimension of feedback directly with students (e.g., enable time between the receiving of feedback and asking students to act on feedback).

## Student Focused (S)

- 1S Clarify the role(s) of the student in the feedback process and formalise this (e.g., contract regarding expectations as part of the feedback process).
- 2S Support students in leading discussions with academics.
- 3S Get students to produce a summary of what they understand from the feedback they have received.
- 4S Support students to establish peer feedback mentoring roles.
- 5S Encourage students to audit where their own strengths and areas for development lie and where they can best support peers.
- 6S Ask students to take responsibility for auditing in-session feedback to feed into future delivery working with the lecturer.

# AL 4: Clarify the Requirements of the Discipline

## Lecturer / Teacher Focused (LT)

- Key Foci**
- Clarifying the core and threshold concepts and agreeing these as a team.**
  - Signposting at point of entry the key knowledge, understanding and skills students will need to be successful in their field of inquiry .**
  - Auditing/base line testing key knowledge and skills at point of entry to identify strengths and gaps.**
  - Agreeing a ‘common language’ for the discipline and making this accessible to students.**
  - Focusing on relational dimensions in building a discipline-specific community with students.**

- 1LT Clarify what constitutes good within the discipline and/or dimensions of it.
- 2LT Model what constitutes a deep approach within your discipline.
- 3LT Be clear about who are the leading researchers/sources within your discipline that student should be consulting.
- 4LT Less is more — highlight key concepts and focus attention on these in your teaching.
- 5LT Identify threshold concepts – those that are likely to present difficulties to students and provide resources on these.
- 6LT Provide links to where further information can be sought on difficult concepts.
- 7LT Do an academic needs analysis with students to identify gaps in knowledge; use this information to pair students to support one another and/or to set up mixed groups for peer support.
- 8LT Ensure a programme level approach to the covering of core concepts to agree where replication is warranted and to avoid unnecessary duplication.
- 9LT Consider progression of ideas at programme level and how modules are working together to support student learning, and specifically how the flow of ideas/concepts/ knowledge, and skills from one module feed into another.
- 10LT Consider how resources are best shared across modules.

## Student Focused (S)

- 1S Be clear about what information students can source and cover for themselves, and provide links to useful resources/sites.
- 2S Provide self-assessment tools for students to test their understandings of key ideas.
- 3S Get students to write mini- tests for each other to use .
- 4S Get students to produce key summaries of problematic concepts in an accessible language for their peers.
- 5S Encourage students to produce and offer resources for other cohorts.

# AF 1: Provide Accessible Feedback

## Lecturer / Teacher Focused (LT)

**Key Foci** Focusing feedback on what was good, what let you down and how to improve. Rationalising feedback on the most important points.

Staff and students working together to clarify what feedback is, how to seek, give and use it.

Situating feedback where it can have most impact (AD2).

Agreeing clear baselines for the quality of feedback, ensuring quality and moderating quality.

- 1LT Explain the principles underpinning how you give feedback and why your approach is good.
- 2LT Agree the most appropriate form(s) for feedback for specific tasks.
- 3LT Ensure there is time for feedback in each taught session and identify it as feedback.
- 4LT Ensure feedback is specific and focused on how to improve.
- 5LT Ensure feedback contains reference to what the student has done well prior to elaborating on what needs improvement (address “is anything I did okay?”).
- 6LT Ensure feedback relates directly to the assessment criteria but also gestures to beyond the module.
- 7LT Ensure feedback focuses on the most important areas to address and not the minutiae.
- 8LT Ensure feedback is realistic in expectations (student has sufficient knowledge to be able to use feedback effectively).
- 9T Provide links to where further information can be found to support development of ideas.
- 10LT Give detailed feedback on key sections of text so that students can learn to address this throughout their work without you doing the whole thing for them.
- 11LT Do not give feedback on full drafts and use comment boxes judiciously.
- 12LT If a student has failed an assignment summarise succinctly what the key things are that they must address in order to achieve a pass.

## Student Focused (S)

- 1S Get students to ask three focused feedback questions when submitting formative work and address these specifically.
- 2S Ask Masters and PhD students to commit to what they want feedback on.
- 3S Get students to do something with the feedback to check their understanding of it, and their ability to use it within and beyond a module.
- 4S Get students to diagnose where their problem lies (e.g. lack of knowledge; lack of understanding of feedback; effort; lack of awareness of resources; misunderstanding of requirements etc.).

## AF 2: Provide Early Opportunities for Students to Act on Feedback

### Lecturer / Teacher Focused (LT)

**Key foci** Making sure students have multiple opportunities to test their understanding from point of entry into university – with students also leading on providing such opportunities.

Ensuring that formative feedback directly supports summative work.

Supporting student reflection on feedback but with an emphasis on goal setting – on how feedback is used to move forward.

Repeated practice and application of such skills in real life / approximations of practice conditions.

- 1LT Ensure that there is sufficient time for formative feedback to feed into summative.
- 2LT Ensure formative tasks lead directly into summative and that students can see the link.
- 3LT Be selective with assessment tasks.
- 4LT Aim to reduce the emphasis on summative assessment; distribute tasks across a module.
- 5LT Use formative assessment but make tasks compulsory to ensure engagement.
- 6LT Use pre- and post-session tasks to ensure students make the most of the opportunities presented.

### Student Focused (S)

- 1S Get students to do 1 - 3 minute videos on key points covered in a lecture/seminar.
- 2S Use a series of assignment tasks of different types that can be brought together. Allow students to select which ones will comprise their final submission and also ask them to justify their reasons for the inclusion of the specific final submission.
- 3S Integrate self and peer engagement opportunities into the module / programme so that students learn to self-assess as they progress through the module. Aim to include an aspect of self-assessment in each taught session.
- 4S Use online self-checking tests that students can use to test their knowledge.
- 5S Use technology to support learning (e.g. lecture capture; audio on powerpoints) so students can go back and check understanding.
- 7S Get students to map how they can best support each other as part of peer engagement agendas within and beyond the taught programme.

# AF 3: Prepare Students for Meaningful Dialogue / Peer Engagement

## Lecturer / Teacher Focused (LT)

**Key Foci** Providing training for students in how to give, use and seek feedback with others.

**Making requirements for peer support explicit.**

**Ensuring team activities are authentic and support students to use the individual strengths of team members to maximise outputs.**

**Reward is based on getting all team members over the line.**

**Addressing potential tensions involved in team-work explicit from the outset.**

**Providing the mechanisms to support the building of team networks.**

**Flexibility in team membership and individual ownership of team efforts.**

1T	Make expectations regarding student participation clear from the outset.
2T	Justify if and why collaborative learning is important in relation to learning outcomes / preparation for professions.
3T	Ensure opportunities for students to work with both the same and different groups; support lone working and collaborative activity.
4T	Be clear about the remit of groups (contribution to teaching sessions; peer feedback; summative assessment; study group; roles within groups).
5T	Ensure that group activities (wiki; blog; etc) are purposeful and relevant to learning outcomes and beyond.
6T	Be clear about exactly what type of feedback you want students to give to each other.
7T	Provide students with training in how to give and use feedback.
8T	Ensure assessment encourages cooperation rather than competition (e.g. individual students' marks and group activity comprise the collective score for all in the group to ensure each student supports others in the group or a nominated person).
9LT	Use pre-tasks to ensure students have prepared in order to be ready to have meaningful discussions with peers.
10LT	Build collaborative requirements into formative assessment (e.g. each student needs to give feedback to three peers).
11LT	If using peer assessment, be very specific about what criteria is being assessed and keep this very narrow; ensure multiple markers; ensure training in the allocation of marks; and that the mark allocated by peers is a small component of the student's overall mark.

## Student Focused (S)

1S	Encourage student groups to set up their own informal meetings / ways of working.
2S	Encourage student groups to manage session feedback to feed into following lectures
3S	Ask students to prepare resources and questions for each other.
4S	Get students to use materials pre-lecture to develop reciprocal questioning on key themes.
5S	Ask students to generate assessment criteria for group projects.



# AF 4: Promote Development of Students' Self-Evaluation Skills

## Lecturer / Teacher Focused (LT)

**Key Foci**     **Student self-assessment and opportunities to feedback to others built into all activities.**  
**Students engaged in summative marking and moderation.**  
**Repeated practice and application of such skills in real life/approximations of practice conditions.**

- 1LT     Ensure students have full access to resources and course information so that they can self-regulate their own learning.
- 2LT     Provide a range of resources so that students can check their own understanding.
- 3LT     Use ipsative\* approaches to get students to gauge where they currently are, and to help them to develop strategies to enhance their performance, and to measure self-development rather than development in relation to others.
- 4LT     Unpack key concepts like critical reflection through modelling and the provision of a range of tools to assist with this process.

\*Ipsative – comparing performance against one previous performance

## Student Focused (S)

- 1S     Support students to identify useful networks of support (e.g. individuals; resources; memberships of organisations etc.) that can support their own learning journeys.
- 2S     Support learners to self-regulate their own learning through an understanding of how they learn, what their current strengths and limitations are, and what strategies would be most useful to support their development.
- 3S     Support learners to see connections across modules to support their learning.
- 4S     Ask students to specify specific areas they would like feedback on.
- 5S     Get students to reflect on their responses to feedback. Train students in how to seek out and act on feedback.
- 6S     Create opportunities for students to assess their peer's work.
- 7S     As part of summative assessment, ask students to reflect on their giving of feedback to others; and their own seeking and acting on feedback abilities.
- 8S     Get students to grade their own mark and to defend the grades allocated.
- 9S     Ask students to reflect on how they can apply learning acquired beyond the module of study.

# AD1: Ensure robust and transparent processes and procedures: QA literacy

## Lecturer / Teacher Focused (LT)

**Key Foci**

- Training staff and students in assessment regulations.**
- Making marking and moderation procedures explicit.**
- Allocating time in workload models to ensure teams are able to come together to discuss assessment processes and to calibrate judgements.**

- 1LT Make the marking and moderation processes explicit to students and staff to ensure confidence in the process.
- 2LT Ensure 'guest lecturers' are aware of the nature of the specific assessment demands on the students.
- 3LT Keep marking teams small where possible to make it easier to ensure consistency.
- 4LT Ensure programme meetings have a training element to allow time to consider marking and moderation and review best practice.
- 5LT Ensure assessment timelines enable students to demonstrate lessons learnt from formative assessment and to allow students to use material covered in the whole module.
- 6LT Ensure that you clarify with students how marks have been awarded at the individual task level and how marks are combined at the module / programme levels.
- 7LT Ensure all staff new to a programme are given comprehensive induction into the QA associated with it.

## Student Focused (S)

- 1S Involve students directly in quality assurance and enrichment processes.
- 2S Consult and work with students in the development of University QA assessment and feedback documentation.
- 3S Ensure documentation is written in an accessible style for all stakeholders.
- 4S Make explicit how module marks result in grades and what algorithm is used to award final grades.
- 5S Engage students directly in the development of policy and procedures.
- 6S Ensure the language of policy and process is written in an accessible style with students.

# AD 2: Promote Meaningful and Focused Assessment

## Lecturer / Teacher Focused (LT)

**Key Foci** Ensuring the mode of assessment is the most appropriate to test understanding required by the learning outcome and being explicit on the range of ways in which meeting the requirements of the learning outcome can be achieved.

**Working as co-producers with the wider community on real problems.**

**Emphasis on inquiry based, project/product based learning requiring depth of understanding.**

**Training for staff and students in the development of self-regulatory skills.**

**Students as mentors to other, and trained in mentoring.**

**Designing assessments that require engagement.**

- 1LT Work with students to develop aspects of assessment (timing of formative; selection of products for assessment, engaging with each other and the wider community etc.).
- 2LT Encourage students to demonstrate how can they apply their learning both within & beyond the module (e.g. working in the community; real world issues; new designs; research).
- 3LT Manage choice in assessment by negotiating with students exactly where the choices are and the limits of such choices (e.g. being clear on what students can lead on).
- 4LT Involve students in developing and mapping learning outcomes within modules, and across the programme.
- 5LT Work with students to demonstrate the linkages and progression from one module to the next so they are able to gain a holistic sense of how the programme fits together, and so they can understand the assessment requirements at each level.
- 6LT Work with students to ensure 'buy in' to the assessment (creative engagement).
- 7LT Modelling approaches to support students' developing key skills.

## Student Focused (S)

- 1S Work with students to develop aspects of assessment (timing of formative; selection of products for assessment, engaging with each other and the wider community etc.).
- 2S Encourage students to demonstrate how can they apply their learning both within & beyond the module (e.g. working in the community; real world issues; new designs; research).
- 3S Manage choice in assessment by negotiating with students exactly where the choices are and the limits of such choices (e.g. being clear on what students can lead on).
- 4S Involve students in developing and mapping learning outcomes within modules, and across the programme.
- 5S Work with students to demonstrate the linkages and progression from one module to the next so they are able to gain a holistic sense of how the programme fits together, and so they can understand the assessment requirements at each level.
- 6S Work with students to ensure 'buy in' to the assessment (creative engagement).

## AD 3: Ensure Equal Access and Equal Opportunities

### Lecturer / Teacher Focused (LT)

**Key Foci** Ensuring access to key resources and making how to use them to best effect explicit.

- 1LT Ensure assessment is appropriate and manageable in relation to student level.
- 2LT Support student transitions by providing an in-depth session or series of sessions that explore the students' previous experiences of assessment and feedback and initial concerns that can be targeted in subsequent teaching sessions.
- 3LT Ensure provision of all resources prior to students starting the module / programme (e.g. handbooks; virtual learning environment; assessment guidelines, and submission deadlines).
- 4LT Ensure resources are clearly organised to promote access (provide a routemap / explanation of how resources are organised) and ensure students receive training in how to access and use resources.
- 5LT Introduce early assessment opportunities to enable appropriate support to be put in place.
- 6LT Ensure learning environments are adaptive rather than adapted and enable flexibility (opportunities for learner to proceed at appropriate pace; alternative pathways; opportunities to specialise and/or generalise etc.).
- 7LT Ensure appropriate variety in the nature and forms of assessment matched to the learning outcome requirements to enable all students to fully demonstrate their understanding.
- 8LT Support learners to make informed choices (e.g. opportunities for individual and group working; self-selection of focus for assessment with guidance; choice over formative deadlines; modes of feedback; nature of groups and ways of working within and beyond sessions; ensure sufficient time to enable choices to be realised over a programme of study).

### Student Focused (S)

- 1S Encourage students to take responsibility to address their specific learning needs as to what they can do and what we can reasonably do in partnership to support each other.
- 2S Ensure that assessment design including feedback is accessible to all students.
- 3S Undertake early assessment to ascertain student needs and to engage students in undertaking their own audits of their needs.
- 4S Provide students with managed choices as to how they navigate their learning environments and encourage students to take responsibility for their assessment choices.
- 5S Support students' development of networks of support so to ensure their integration into communities of practice to support their work at the University.
- 6S Ensure students are aware of support mechanisms available to them across the University.

# AD 4: Ensure Ongoing Evaluation to Support Development of Sustainable Assessment and Feedback Practice

## Lecturer / Teacher Focused (LT)

**Key Foci** Ensuring students in resource development including design of assessment.

Using data to interrogate whether any students are disadvantaged by assessment

Using data with students to support their approaches to learning.

Academic mentoring and partnerships between students and academics in research.

- 1LT Supporting students to manage the learning environment for themselves; evaluate how effectively your assessment design is enabling this.
- 2LT Elicit short, sharp feedback from students on your teaching within taught sessions (e.g., through use of clickers; post-its; what went well; what could be better questions).
- 3LT Demonstrate how student feedback is being taken on board (where appropriate) within teaching sessions.
- 4LT Provide opportunities for frequent low stakes assessment tasks to support student engagement and to enable you to measure progress and/or stumbling blocks.
- 5LT Set pre-tasks where students need to prepare focused questions for discussion in the taught session; enable student groups to take turns in producing model answers.
- 6LT Demonstrate to students how mid-semester feedback is being used to inform learning and teaching and gain feedback from the students about the enhancements you have made.
- 7LT Clarify with students where it is not appropriate to make requested changes to assessment and why?
- 8LT Supporting students to manage the learning environment for themselves; evaluate how effectively your assessment design is enabling this.

## Student Focused (S)

- 1S Get students to write a 5 minute essay and share with peers for feedback and further discussion.
- 2S Use the three minute elevator pitch idea (time it takes to get into and out of lift!) to get students to summarise key ideas and to gain feedback from peers.
- 3S Collate student snapshots of feedback during and at end of programme to feed into developments.
- 4S Get students to write guidance for students on key lessons that they learnt that would be useful to have known at the start.
- 5S Get students to evaluate their own feedback seeking, giving, and using performance.
- 6S Get students to map their key crunch points during the module and collate their feedback on how to address this.
- 7S Work with students to evaluate the effectiveness of the module in meeting aims.
- 8S Encourage students to act as mentors to the next cohort.