ASSESSMENT POLICY

1.   Purpose

1.1   Assessment is a generic term for a set of processes and procedures that gauge learning outcomes in terms of knowledge acquired, understanding developed and skills gained, and is central to the learning processes. It also provides a context within which learning experiences can be explored, attitudes expressed and critical insight demonstrated.

1.2   This Policy sets out the principles, processes and procedures that guide assessment across all programmes and short courses offered by the University.

1.3   The Policy aligns with assessment practices, which are published separately, in the section of the Student Regulations Framework   ᐧ ᐧ   ʰh

1.4   The aim is to ensure that all students are able to engage in the assessment process develop an understanding of the standards required for their programme of study and an understanding of what is required to achieve these.

2.   Principles

2.1   The University recognises that assessment can serve many purposes:

        It plays a significant role in the learning experience of students. It determines their progression through programmes and enables them to identify, monitor and improve their learning.

        It enables students to obtain appropriate feedback on their learning which helps them improve their performance and optimise their learning experience.

@ learning.

It provides a measure of student achievement and forms the basis of decisions on whether a student is ready to proceed, to qualify for an award, or to demonstrate competence to practise.

It provides the main basis for recognition of student achievement leading to the recommendation of an appropriate award of qualification and / or credit.

2.2   These principles are closely informed by   j   y Mj   #
      Higher Education Advice and Guidance chapter   (2018) and the OfS Quality and
      Standards condition B4 Assessment and Awards.

2.3

      Assessment processes and procedures need to be clear, consistent and accessible. To this end
      the University publishes generic level and grade descriptors to aid this process and requires
      programmes to use these to inform their own assessment guidelines. All assessment must be
      appropriate to the level of study (FHEQ level) and informed by reference to relevant external
      publications (e.g. subject benchmarks or PSRB requirements). The assessment processes and
      procedures used by a programme must be made avail

2.5

Assignments should be marked to defined standards with assessors being able to consistently apply these standards. This requires clear, consistent processes for the setting, marking and moderation of assignments which encourage effective learning. External confirmation of the standards comes through external examination and periodic review / validation. The standards are made clear through the University generic marking frameworks and level and grade descriptors.

Whilst generic marking frameworks and level and grade descriptors have been developed, in order to promote comparability across all University programmes, each programme needs to adapt these to ensure that they closely reflect the nature of the programme / subject (i.e. they are relevant to the programme of study and written in a style which reflects the programme aimseJEq0.27l88723008 sion 1.

transferable learning outcomes student proficiency in English language should progress through the levels of the programme.

Assessment processes and procedures must ensure that the tasks set do not discriminate between students or disadvantage any group or individual. Within any programme there

of assessment is determined by programme teams, and every effort will be made to spread the load of summative assessments across the module.

Students should be given clear instructions for assessment which include target word counts or equivalents for all assignments, and the consequences of not adhering to these in accordance with prevailing University regulations.

3.3

Forms of assessment used in the University include summative, formative and diagnostic. Summative assessment provides a measure of achievement, including failure, in relation to the intended learning outcomes of a module within a programme of study. Formative assessment provides learners with feedback on progress and informs their development. Reflective practice by students may also contribute to formative assessment. Diagnostic

The modes of assessment selected should enable authenticity to be evidenced (enhancing the academic integrity of the assessment). The precise choice and balance of assessment methods is closely aligned with module and level learning outcomes and is determined by programme tutors. Programme specifications provide a summary of the modes of assessment offered and include a glossary of terms for these.

3.5

The elements of the assessment process provide a basis for designing, marking and grading assignments using level descriptors, grade descriptors, learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

The positive aspects of assessment involve supporting learning, which may include peer / self-assessment activities, and access to Student Support and Wellbeing, and the services they provide.

3.6

The University maintains generic level descriptors for all undergraduate and postgraduate degrees These indicate the generic characteristics of learning at each level of an award and are used to define whether a student has achieved a qualification at a particular level. To achieve the qualification, students must normally demonstrate that they have reached the in all of the stated abilities and skills. Level descriptors are crucial in defining grade descriptors and in developing learning outcomes and assessment criteria. They provide an indication of what is required to successfully progress from one level [of study or stage of learning] to the next.

3.7

u y rade descriptors provide a measure of student performance within a set task. They are designed to provide a guide as to what is expected of students in order for them to gain a specific mark, or grade, for a piece of work. Students should be encouraged to use grade descriptors to assist their own learning journey, by evaluating their own work against the descriptors to gain an understanding of how marks are awarded (both pre- and post-submission of their assignments).

3.8

Learning outcomes describe the knowledge, understanding and skills that a student studying a particular module is expected to achieve. They are derived from level descriptors but set out expectations more precisely. Learning outcomes are used to define the threshold level (the pass/fail boundary) for a module or assignment. In designing assignments, tutors select modes of assessment that relate well to the learning outcomes.

It is not always possible to make a mechanical link between all learning outcomes and assessment as there are likely to be additional, and sometimes unexpected, learning outcomes of a module. These may or may not be assessed. It is important that assessment is designed to enable the student to learn, rather than simply test outcomes.

3.9

The assessment criteria should be linked to the module / level learning outcomes. They should provide a description of what the student is required to do to demonstrate that the learning outcomes have been achieved. Programmes take responsibility for deriving their own criteria for marking assignments (using level descriptors, grade descriptors, marking frameworks and learning outcomes). These are published in programme / module information, or in a module

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