

COURSE ASSESSMENT POLICY

Assessment is an important part of the learning and teaching process. In addition to providing an indication of the final achievement of students on the BA Diploma Courses, it also provides information that guides students, Course Leader/Coordinators and Tutors in the on-going improvement of learning and teaching.

This policy applies to all elements of taught provision (programmes and modules), of the LFA Diploma courses. Relevant sections may also be applied in the assessment of the LFA Short Courses, although they officially fall outside the remit of this policy. Courses that lead to the award of a degree (or other qualification should they be introduced) under the validation/franchise of an external body/university may adopt a policy specific to that institution.

The BA (Hons) Filmmaking falls under the assessment policies and procedures of the University of Derby, which validates the award of the degree. LFA student grades will be ratified as part of the University of Derby Film Production Assessment Board.

Assessment strategies and methodologies may vary across LFA courses, however this policy statement aims to strike a balance between the broad issues of principle and the more common, detailed requirements and procedures that are generally applicable.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

LFA is committed to the responsibilities and types of assessment laid out below and will ensure at all times that assessment is fair, reliable, valid, transparent, and that it recognises and respects equality and diversity.

All assessment of modules or programmes leading to an academic award of LFA must be in the English language.

Key Responsibilities of Assessment

LFA recognises that while Course Leaders/Coordinators and tutors at the Academy have the primary responsibility for the implementation of assessment which reflects the nature of the subject that responsibility for effective assessment is shared with many others.

- Students have the responsibility to engage effectively with assessment, as a vital component of their learning.
- Course Leaders/Coordinators and Tutors have the responsibilities: to design and implement assessment in ways that encourage and promote effective learning, and that measure student achievement effectively with reference to stated intended learning outcomes; to make reasonable adjustments to the design and conduct of assessments to meet disabled students' needs; to provide constructive feedback on assessed work to students; and to review assessment methods as part of annual and periodic quality assurance procedures;
- Course Leaders/Coordinators in conjunction with the Head of Academic Governance have responsibility for ensuring that relevant information about assessment is included in module or programme handbooks and is available to all students;
- Assessment boards, internal moderators/verifiers and external examiners have the primary responsibility for assuring the academic standards of awards and the effectiveness of assessment in the subject
- The Course Committee and Executive Committee have the responsibility to oversee all aspects of assessment within the Academy including where relevant, liaising with external professional or statutory bodies to seek clarification of competence standards for academic programmes.



- The Executive Committee also has the responsibility to maintain and develop this policy, and to oversee its implementation across the Academy including consideration of the Equal Opportunities Policy.

Types of assessment

The Academy encourages all students to understand the ways in which they are assessed so that they may engage with the process in a meaningful way.

Whilst assessment tasks within higher education courses can vary, they are commonly understood to serve 5 distinct functions: diagnostic, formative, summative, collaborative and synoptic. These can be defined as follows:

Diagnostic assessment is used to show a student's preparedness for a module or programme and identifies, for the student and the tutor, any strengths and potential gaps in knowledge, understanding and skills expected at the start of the programme, or other possible problems. Particular strengths may lead to a formal consideration of accreditation of prior learning.

Formative assessment is designed to help students learn more effectively by giving them feedback on their performance and on how it can be improved and/or maintained. Reflective practice by students sometimes contributes to formative assessment and at LFA involve tutor and peer review of students practical media work, and the revision of work on the basis of feedback. This will take place during the delivery of a module and prior to a final submission. Self-assessment takes place as a natural process during the critiques and tutorials.

Summative assessment is used to indicate the extent of a learner's success in meeting the assessment criteria. At LFA this occurs on completion of each module and is based on the extent to which the students have met the learning outcomes. Students will be asked to submit work in a variety of formats which may include practical media work in film, photography, installation or some other form, written research plus a reflective critical statement, or a report/portfolio plus documentation.

Collaborative Assessment is where two or more students work collaboratively. The process of project management and assessment will be subject to a range of checks and balances to ensure marks are apportioned fairly. The principle focus will be to determine 'who did what' and 'when' in relation to the learning outcomes. This is achieved through a range of observations during the project. At the point of submission, students will also be asked to complete a written 'self' and 'peer' assessment. Within some courses, especially Filmmaking, collaborative assessment may be an important element.

Synoptic assessment encourages students to combine elements of their learning from different parts of a programme and to show their accumulated knowledge and understanding of a topic or subject area. A synoptic assessment normally enables students to show their ability to integrate and apply their skills, knowledge and understanding across the programme as a whole.

CONDUCT OF ASSESSMENT

Appropriateness of assessment

The Academy strives to ensure that assessment is designed to reflect the intended learning outcomes of the module and the programme. This should take account of:

- Relevant QAA subject benchmark(s)
- The relevant level descriptors of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
- Any relevant professional / statutory / regulatory body (PSRB) requirements
- The principles of inclusive assessment practice.



Scheduling and amount of assessment

The student workload associated with assessment, both completion of coursework assignments and preparation for examinations, is directly related to the credit rating of the module. For example, a 20 credit module relates to 200 hours of notional student effort on all activities associated with the module.

When scheduling assessment the Academy will take into account students' overall work load in the context of the termly structure. Students will be provided with information regarding submission deadlines to enable them to plan and prepare effectively. Course Leaders and Coordinators assist students through effective reminders.

CONDUCT OF ASSESSMENT FOR DIPLOMAS

Marking criteria for Diplomas

Students will find the criteria for assessment explicitly laid out within the assignment briefs. The criteria will include the following:

- Explanation of the LFA's Graded Assessment Criteria (e.g. Pass, Merit, Distinction, Fail) in the context of the subject (if applicable);
- Explanation of the assessment weighting and criteria to be applied for each module and/or component of assessment (if applicable)

All students will be assessed against equally against these criteria

Re-Assessment, Re-Submission and Re-Sitting

Students are provided with clear information for each module regarding what is required in order to achieve a pass in that module as a whole. This information may be found in the: Programme Specification; Module Descriptors and the module specific Assignment Briefs.

Where a student fails to pass an assignment/practical/examination (i.e. they are 'Referred' in an assessment) on the first attempt they will be permitted two further attempts, the timing of which will be at the discretion of the LFA. Re-sits may incur a charge of £90 at the discretion of LFA. Re-sit attempts will have grades capped at the maximum PASS level. However, for the purposes of Compensation and/or Condonement it will be at the discretion of the Assessment Board to determine whether the actual grade achieved in a re-sit attempt may be used to compensate/condone underachievement in other subjects.

Disabled Students

Through its [Equal Opportunities Policy](#), the Academy will ensure that disabled students, and those with special educational needs are not discriminated against during the assessment process.

LFA designs assignment briefs to allow for reasonable adjustments to provide students with special needs the same opportunity as their peers to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes. This may involve making adjustments to the type, scheduling, delivery or marking of the assessment in the context of maintenance of academic standards

Students should note that as LFA is a private institution, students needing to access additional and/or external services to aid the provision of the above may be required to self-finance. Adjustments and/or alternative assessment and examination arrangements reflecting the needs of disabled students should be implemented when necessary. Such arrangements are dependent upon registration with the Course Leader, who will organise a formal agreement and the development of an agreed learning support plan.



Feedback to Students on their Performance

Course Leaders and Coordinators will endeavour to provide feedback to students regarding assessments in appropriate and timely ways that promote learning and facilitate improvement.

Retention and Disposal of Assessed Work

The LFA securely retains all assessed work within the Academy to allow for internal verification, moderation by external examiners and so that it is available as evidence in case of a student appeal.

It is expected that assessed work will be retained for at least one calendar year following the date of the Assessment Board at which grades were awarded after which time the Course Leaders should ensure that it is disposed of in an appropriate manner.

MARKING & REPORTING ASSESSMENT

The LFA provides students with the details of their assessments in a manner that is easy for students and other interested parties to understand. This will ensure that the students receive assessment reports that are fair, consistent and broadly comparable across different subject areas.

The nature of the assessment process for any particular module (or programme) is considered in the normal module approval process and reviewed periodically as part of the programme review process.

Students should be aware that all assessments go through a process of internal verification and external examination to ensure that the principles of fairness and accuracy have been applied equally to all students.

Reporting Results Of Re-Sits Or Re-Submissions

If a module is not passed at first attempt, the student transcript will show the number of attempts at the module. Re-sit or re-submissions will be marked and the grade reported as normal.

Compensation And Condonement

This is the process by which an Assessment Board may decide that a strong performance by a student in one part of the curriculum may be used as the basis for the award of credit in respect of a failed performance elsewhere (Compensation). Or, an Assessment Board, in consideration of the overall performance of a student, decides that without incurring a penalty, a part of the programme that has been failed need not be redeemed (Condonement).

Decisions by the Assessment Board regarding compensation or condonement are informed by professional judgment and specific information relating to each case. To ensure transparency the following will be applied:

- Each case must be considered on an individual basis
- The external examiner(s) must agree with each proposal
- Individual decisions, and the basis of justification, must be recorded in the minutes of the Assessment Board.
- Both the "original" grade allocated to the module and the suffix applied after compensation or condonement will be reported by Course Leader or Coordinator
- The student's transcript will also show the 'original' grade plus suffix 'flag', and the award of credit for the relevant module, with a footnote explaining that credit was awarded by compensation/condonement.

Some restriction in compensation or condonement may apply due to accreditation requirements of relevant professional, statutory or regulatory bodies (PSRBs) the Assessment Board may wish to consider.



Extenuating Circumstances (Including Medical Evidence)

Assessment Boards must take account of extenuating circumstances affecting a Student's performance. In the case of illness, a medical certificate must be submitted to the relevant Course Leader/Coordinator either before an assessment or within seven days thereafter.

Internal and External Verification

Internal verification will take place for all assessments which count towards a student's award. The internal verifier will be someone other than the module leader/first marker and who holds a reasonable knowledge of the subject at the level in question.

The process will consider the following points:

- Does assessment reflect the intended learning outcomes of the module?
- Does assessment promote and encourage learning?
- Is the marking fair, rigorous and does it reflect the intended learning outcomes of the module and standards?
- Comments on general performance by students. What did they do well? What did they do not so well?
- Extent of work considered, ranging from all work for all students, through to sampling.

Feedback provided by the Internal Verifier may be included the review of the learning module and assignment brief.

Once internally verified the documents are sent to LFA external examiner for external verification.

CONDUCT OF ASSESSMENT FOR THE BA

Please refer to [Section F](#) of the University of Derby's Undergraduate Assessment Regulations for full guidelines on assessment policies and procedures.

Marking Criteria for the BA (Hons) Filmmaking

All assignments on the BA will be assessed against the University of Derby Undergraduate Marking Scale. This is available on p.5 of the [Assessment Regulations for Undergraduate Programmes](#).

A copy of the marking scale will be included on assignment briefs, as well on the Course Resources portal.

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The nature of the assessment process for any particular module (or programme) is considered in the normal module approval process and reviewed periodically as part of the programme review process.

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Referrals

A referral is an opportunity to make good an element of the module that you've failed. This may be a piece of coursework, an exam or both. It means you don't have to re-take a module, just repeat the element (coursework, exam or both) that you've failed. If passed, your grade for that element



will be capped to 40%. If you fail the referral opportunity you will need to retake the module in its entirety and this will be capped to 40%.

If required, referrals will be offered to students individually via the Student Centre section of [University of Derby Online](#). Only one referral opportunity is offered per element. If passed your grade for that element will be capped to 40%. If you fail the referral opportunity you will need to retake the module in its entirety and this will be capped to 40%.

Please note that if you do not submit a component of coursework you will receive an NS (Non-Submission) grade. Under normal circumstances you will not be offered a referral where an NS grade has been recorded for the coursework component.

Exceptional Extenuating Circumstances (EEC)

Where circumstances beyond your control impact negatively on an assessment or mean that you are unable to submit an assessment on time, you can submit a claim for exceptional extenuating circumstances (EEC). If approved your claim will normally mean that you can take the assessment again without any penalties. Successful exceptional extenuating circumstances claims, however, cannot be used as an alternative to complete the assessment and achieving the required learning outcomes.

Full details on the EEC process and the forms you will need to request an extension are available on [University of Derby Online](#).

External Verification

All summative assessments, i.e. those which count towards a student's award, will be second marked by module tutors at the University of Derby.

DEVELOPMENT, REVIEW & ENHANCEMENT OF ASSESSMENT

Staff and Tutor Training & Development

Students should be aware that the Academy undertakes a training and development of Course Leaders and Coordinators. Tutors are responsible for their own professional development which is monitored by the Academy

The Academy provides development support related to assessment which includes:

- Innovative approaches to assessment
- A variety of assessment approaches which allows for different purposes, situations and delivery e.g. on-line assessment; assessment for disabled students;
- Training for specific groups of staff, in particular recently-appointed Staff or Tutors with limited experience of assessment.

Monitoring and Review

Students should be aware that to maintain the effectiveness of assessment the academy will consider assessment within the following routine procedures: external examining; annual monitoring; course review.

In order to achieve this the Executive Committee should scrutinise minutes of all Assessment Boards, and Course Leaders/Coordinators should submit an annual summary report to the Executive Committee highlighting significant issues, suggestions for improvement, and examples of any effective practice highlighted in the minutes.

Any changes to the structure or process of assessment will be undertaken only after due consideration, with full notification of students and with consideration of the Equal Opportunities policy and Quality Assurance.



