

LFA Procedure 5.4 Assessment

1. Introduction

Assessment is a fundamental aspect of the student learning experience. Engagement in assessment activities and interaction with staff and peers enables learning, both as part of the task and through review of their performance. It is a vehicle for obtaining feedback. Ultimately, it determines whether each student has achieved their course's learning outcomes and allows the awarding body to ensure that appropriate standards are being applied rigorously. Deliberate, systematic quality assurance ensures that assessment processes, standards and any other criteria are applied consistently and equitably, with reliability, validity and fairness.

This procedure applies to credit bearing courses. BA and MA courses also fall under the assessment policies and procedures of the University of Derby. Assessment strategies and methodologies may vary slightly across London Film Academy (LFA) courses.

2. General Principles and Responsibilities of Assessment

LFA is committed to the responsibilities and types of assessment set 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.

LFA recognises that while Course Teams and tutors 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 Teams and tutors have 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
 - to review assessment methods as part of annual and periodic quality assurance procedures
- Course Teams, in conjunction with the Head of Courses (HoC) and University of Derby (UoD), have responsibility for ensuring that relevant information about assessment is included in module or course 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 Academic Board has the responsibility of overseeing all aspects of assessment within LFA, including, where relevant, liaising with external professional or statutory bodies to seek clarification of competence standards for academic programmes.



3. Types of Assessment

LFA 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 five distinct functions: diagnostic, formative, summative, collaborative and synoptic. These are defined as follows:

Diagnostic assessment is used to show a student's preparedness for a module or course 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 involves 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. 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.

Peer Review is used as one way of evaluating teaching delivery rather than teaching content. Observation also allows, facilitates and encourages course level and departmental level reflection and discussion on a wider range of teaching practices and processes such as assessment.

4. Conduct of assessment

4.1 Appropriateness of assessment

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

- relevant QAA subject benchmark(s)
- 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.



4.2 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 hours on all activities associated with the module. When scheduling assessment, LFA 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 Teams will assist students through effective reminders.

5. Conduct of assessment for Diplomas

5.1 Marking criteria for Diplomas

The criteria for assessment are 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.)

Re-assessment, re-submission and resitting students are provided with clear information for each module about 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 and module handbooks.

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 LFA. Re-sits may incur a charge see [LFA Terms and Conditions](#). 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.

5.2 Disabled students

Through its [Equal Opportunities Policy](#) on the LFA website, LFA 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 so as 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 Inclusion Plan - see [LFA Procedure 3.3 – Inclusion](#).

5.3 Feedback to students on their performance

Course Teams will provide assessment feedback to students in appropriate and timely ways that promote learning and facilitate improvement.



5.4 Retention and disposal of assessed work

LFA securely retains all assessed work 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 this, Course Leaders should ensure that it is disposed of in an appropriate manner.

5.5 Marking and reporting assessment

LFA aims to provide students with the details of their assessments in a manner that is easy for them, and other interested parties, to understand. This ensures that 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 course) is considered in the normal module approval process and reviewed periodically as part of the course 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.

5.6 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.

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

5.7 Extenuating circumstances (including medical evidence)

Assessment Boards must take account of extenuating circumstances affecting a student's performance. Where circumstances beyond a student's control impact negatively on an assessment opportunity the student may submit a claim for exceptional extenuating circumstances. In the case of illness, a medical



certificate must be submitted to the Diploma Team either before an assessment or within seven days thereafter.

Exceptional extenuating circumstances may apply in one of the following circumstances:

- Where severe circumstances prevent a student from taking or completing a module.
- Where a student is unable to attend a formal examination.
- Where exceptional extenuating circumstances can be shown to have affected a student's performance in assessment.

In such circumstances one of the following solutions, as appropriate:

- The student is allowed to repeat the module.
- A deferred examination is allowed.
- An opportunity to undertake a fresh assessment at the next assessment point. In such circumstances, the assessment undertaken will be different to the original assessment.
- In exceptional cases for students completing their studies in that academic year it may be appropriate to discount the affected assessment in the student's overall profile.

If a student needs to apply for exceptional extenuating circumstances email Head of Courses hoc@londonfilmacademy.com with details of the extenuating circumstances and supporting evidence prior to the assessment taking place.

Students can appeal against the outcome of Exceptional Extenuating Circumstances outcome. The request for 'further evidence' to support an EEC application does not constitute an outcome.

Such appeals must be submitted via the [LFA Procedure 6.4 Academic appeals](#) within ten working days of the outcome of the EEC decision being communicated to the student.

5.8 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 the assessment clearly offer the opportunity to demonstrate that published learning outcomes have been satisfied?
- Does the 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 in the review of the learning module and assignment brief. Once internally verified the documents will be sent to the external examiner for external verification.



6. Conduct of assessment for the BA and MA

Please refer to University of Derby's [Academic Regulations](#) for full guidance on assessment policies and procedures.

6.1 Marking criteria for the BA (Hons) and MA Courses

All assignments on the BA and MA will be assessed against the University of Derby Undergraduate or Postgraduate Marking Scale. This is available in the [Assessment Regulations for Undergraduate Programmes](#) and [Assessment Regulations for Postgraduate Programmes](#). A copy of the marking scale will be included on assignment briefs, as well on UoD's Blackboard.

6.2 Marking and reporting assessment

LFA aims to provide 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 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.

6.3 Referrals

A referral is an opportunity to make good an element of the module that a student has failed. This may be a piece of coursework, an examination or both. It means a student doesn't have to re-take a module, just repeat the element (coursework, exam or both) that was failed. If passed, the grade for that element will be capped to 40%. If the referral opportunity is failed, the student 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. Only one referral opportunity is offered per element. If passed, the grade for that element will be capped to 40%. If the referral opportunity is failed, it will be necessary to retake the module in its entirety and this will be capped to 40%. Please note that if students do not submit a component of coursework, they will receive an NS (Non submission) grade.

Under normal circumstances a student will not be offered a referral where an NS grade has been recorded for the coursework component.

6.4 Exceptional extenuating circumstances (EEC)

Where circumstances beyond a student's control impact negatively on an assessment or mean that they are unable to submit an assessment on time, they can submit a claim for exceptional extenuating circumstances (EEC). If approved, the claim will normally mean that they 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 of the EEC process and the forms needed to request an extension are available [here](#).

6.5 External Review

All summative assessments, i.e. those which count towards a student's award, will be reviewed by module tutors at the University of Derby. Assessments undergo Internal Moderation and External



Moderation (UoD and EE) at the Assessment Preparation Moderation stage, and samples are moderated at the Assessment Marking Moderation stage.

7. Development, review and enhancement of assessment

7.1 Staff and tutor training and development

LFA undertakes training and development of Course Teams. Tutors are responsible for their own professional development which is monitored by LFA. Development support related to assessment includes:

- innovative approaches to assessment
- a variety of assessment approaches which allows for different purposes, situations and delivery e.g. online assessment; assessment for disabled students
- training for specific groups of staff, in particular recently-appointed staff or tutors with limited experience of assessment.

7.2 Monitoring and review

In order to maintain the effectiveness of assessment, LFA considers assessment within the context of external examining, continual monitoring and course review. The Academic Board will review the minutes of all Assessment Boards, and Course Teams should submit an annual summary report to the Academic Board, 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 equal opportunities and quality assurance issues.

