

QA3 Annex J – Assessment design and approval

1 Summative assessment regime

- 1.1 The summative assessment regime for each course will be set at the point of course approval. A summary will be recorded in the course specification and the detail recorded in the individual unit descriptions (see [QA3](#)). A map of assessments across the course will be presented at the point of approval.
- 1.2 In approving a course's initial summative assessment regime, and for the purpose of approving any subsequent changes to it, the following factors should be considered where relevant, and as far as is practicable:
- a) The amount and timing of assessment enables effective and appropriate measurement of students' achievement of intended learning outcomes.
 - b) Assessment methods should be appropriate to the subject being studied, the mode of learning, and to the students taking the unit or course.
 - c) Students should experience a range of assessment methods, including methods that encourage them to reflect and synthesise learning from different parts of their course; this may include synoptic assessment which tests all or some of the learning outcomes of more than one unit.
 - d) Students should be given formative opportunities to practice different types of assessment.
 - e) The volume of assessment should be appropriate to the size of the unit but need not be directly proportionate (i.e., the assessment on a 10-credit unit need not be double the assessment for a five-credit unit).
 - f) Consideration should be given to the distribution of assessment tasks across the course with appropriate opportunities for formative assessment.
 - g) Consideration should be given to the impact on students of the assessment load at different points in the year.
 - h) The impact of failure, and the opportunities for reassessment, especially for units with a high credit value, should be taken into consideration.
 - i) Assessment methods should be efficient and excessive amounts of summative assessment or bottlenecks in the timing of assessments should be avoided.
 - j) The amount of summative assessment by means of group work should be proportionate to the aims and learning outcomes of the course (see section 2 below).

- 1.3 The volume and timing of assessment should support student learning and take the following elements into consideration:
- a) a balance of formative and summative assessment across the course
 - b) a spread of assignments and examinations across the course such that students are not overloaded.
- 1.4 Coursework submission dates and time deadlines should be set after considering, so far as is reasonably practicable, the following:
- a) submission dates should be at appropriate points, considering the organisation and delivery of the curriculum, and the desirability of providing students with an opportunity to reflect on their learning
 - b) avoiding clashes and excessive assessment burdens for students and staff
 - c) ensuring that those involved in marking student work have enough time to complete it satisfactorily considering the date at which the results are required, either by the student or the institution
 - d) in the case of work to be sent by distance learners in different time zones, the practicalities of access to the internet for such students.

2 Group work

- 2.1 The University is committed to the inclusion, where appropriate, of group work on its courses to support the development of team-working and other transferable skills. Group work and its assessment should be designed in accordance with the University's principles for assessment for learning and course design. Approaches should:
- a) Be proportionate and with consideration of the overall impact on students.
 - b) Be strategic with a clear rationale; a course-wide approach should ensure that there are appropriate opportunities to develop the skills for group working throughout the course.
 - c) Promote learning and application of knowledge and skills, assessing the process of group work and the final product (as appropriate).
 - d) Promote academic integrity (particularly the 'boundary between co-operation and collusion' should be made clear to students).
 - e) Be designed to accommodate assessment-related practices that relate to an individual student, e.g., IMCs, academic integrity, extensions, and supplementary assessment.
 - f) Be inclusive and ensure that all group members have an opportunity to contribute to the group work process and product.

g) Be in accordance with the University's Dignity and Respect Policy.

2.2 For all course approvals, or Curriculum Transformed course amendments, from 2023/24 onwards, course designers must take account of the approaches in 2.1 and provide:

- a) A narrative on their approach to the assessment of group work in their **course assessment strategy** that includes: a rationale for the approach; an indication of the overall impact of group assessment on the course, and how it relates to the ILOs; and assurances that students are able to meet unit and course ILOs and that individual performance is appropriately differentiated.
- b) Evidence of the timing and volume of group assessments in their **assessment map**.

2.3 For non-CT course amendments from 2023/24, points in 2.1 and 2.2 should be taken into consideration in the design, and approval, of group work assessment.

2.4 This policy applies to assessments where:

- a) A group of 2 or more students are assessed by a single, jointly produced assignment (whether this is a product or process); and
- b) Students are set individual assignments that evidence learning derived from group work and where the quality of the assignment is impacted by the effectiveness of the group work.