

# HE Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy

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## **HE Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

The College's mission statement is "Enriching lives through learning" with a key strategic goal to deliver good value, high quality learning for all students resulting in high achievement rates. The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework within which all aspects of higher education learning, teaching and assessment are planned through high quality teaching, learning and course design.

### **2. Key Principles**

Craven College recognises that learning occurs in many settings both formal and informal. The College is committed to continuous improvement of its programmes, its accommodation, its resources and its services in order to serve its students and its communities effectively. We aim for students studying at the College to gain excellent knowledge, understanding and skills in their chosen subject area and to prepare them for the workplace by providing a range of transferable employment skills.

This policy supports the standards and practices identified in the College Mission Statement and HE Strategic Plan. It is also written with reference to the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education Expectations and partner university / awarding body regulations.

### **3. Responsibility**

1. Overall responsibility for this policy lies with the Higher Education Business and Development Leader
2. Higher Education Business and Development Leader, Head of Quality, Heads of Department and Higher Education Tutors are responsible for ensuring compliance

### **4. Legislation**

- [The UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#)
- [UK Professional Standards Framework](#)

## **HE Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

Craven College is committed to providing a quality learning experience for students. This policy sets out how the College will deliver, monitor and improve the learning experience for higher education students, and the standard of teaching and assessment of staff.

The following procedures detail how the objectives of the HE Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy will be met and identifies:

1. Key Processes
2. Roles and Responsibilities
3. Objectives
4. Communication
5. Implementation
6. Monitoring
7. Reporting
8. Assessment of Impact
9. Continuous Improvement
10. Associated Documentation

### **2. Key Processes**

1. Setting and maintaining academic standards
2. Assuring and enhancing academic quality
3. Guidance for staff involved in the development of Higher Education
4. Guidance for all staff involved in the delivery of Higher Education

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

1. The Higher Education Business and Development Leader has overall responsibility for applying this policy fairly and accurately and for the consideration of all APL applications
2. The Admissions team have responsibility to ensure applicants receive clear and accurate information regarding APL applications
3. The Admissions team have responsibility to ensure all applications are submitted to the Higher Education Business and Development Leader for consideration and approval

### **4. Objectives**

1. To ensure the maintenance of academic standards
2. To assure and enhance academic quality
3. To provide guidance for staff involved in the development of Higher Education
4. To provide guidance for all staff involved in the delivery of Higher Education at Craven College

### **5. Communication**

The following principles are fundamental to the communication of the HE Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy

1. The HE Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy will be published on a standardised template

2. The HE Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy will be reviewed by the Higher Education Business and Development Leader (owner) before being escalated to the approval process
3. This policy will apply to all those involved in the development and delivery of Higher Education at Craven College.
4. This policy will be published on the College's intranet and website

## **6. Implementation**

### **6.1 Setting and maintaining academic standards**

- 6.1.1 The College ensures that qualifications delivered are designed in line with the requirements of Framework for Higher Education Qualifications by consulting with appropriate external examiners when undertaking course design or consulting with established partners, employers and awarding bodies. This safeguards the student experience and ensures that the course is at positioned at the appropriate level and is securely linked the Benchmark Statements.
- 6.1.2 All courses have clear aims; have a coherent programme of modules or units that are consistent with its aims.
- 6.1.3 The College is aware of the need to differentiate between levels so that students achieve and progress at each level and to ensure that these programmes are equivalent to those delivered elsewhere.
- 6.1.4 Courses will have clearly defined access and progression routes.

### **6.2 Assuring and enhancing academic quality**

- 6.2.1 Students benefit from high expectations, engagement, care, support and motivation from staff. Guidance will be provided from first enquiry to completion of studies and beyond.
- 6.2.2 Teachers of each module or unit will have appropriate up to date knowledge and skills.
- 6.2.3 All courses will be subjected to rigorous formal review and evaluation.
- 6.2.4 Staff will use their skills and expertise to plan and deliver teaching and learning opportunities using quality resources in order to support and meet each student's needs.
- 6.2.5 Teaching and learning sessions will be effectively managed to create an environment that is conducive to learning.
- 6.2.6 Students will be initially assessed to identify their starting point and monitored in their progress, set challenging targets to build on and extend learning.
- 6.2.7 Students will be facilitated to understand how to improve as a result of frequent, detailed, accurate and personalised feedback from staff following assessment of their learning.
- 6.2.8 Assessment activities will be aligned to the unit or module learning outcomes and adhere to partner university or awarding body requirements.
- 6.2.9 Summative assessment activities will be second considered / second marked in line with the partner university / awarding body policy and procedure.
- 6.2.10 Modules or units will be reviewed and evaluated informally and formally with the aim of continuous improvement of student learning.
- 6.2.11 Teaching and learning will develop transferable skills and support the achievement of learning goals and career aims. External bodies such as the partner institutions; Advance HE and the UK Quality Code for Higher Education may be useful sources of consultation.
- 6.2.12 Enhancements of teaching and learning will be supported through College delivered and personal CPD.
- 6.2.13 Appropriate and timely information, advice and guidance will support learning effectively.
- 6.2.14 Equality and diversity will be promoted through teaching and learning.

- 6.2.15 Students may make college aware of any Mitigating Circumstances through the procedure as appropriate.
- 6.2.16 Partner institutions ensure a single point of contact for the College and regular update meetings allow for jointly agreed goals and strategies.
- 6.2.17 The College will provide and maintain resources and facilities to support teaching, learning and assessment

## **Processes and Guidance**

### **Formal Observation**

1. All staff involved in teaching, training and assessment of learners will have at least 3 local walkthroughs carried out by Department Heads and Managers per academic year. Outcomes of these will be recorded on the OTLA tracker and kept by the observee. The observee will update the OTLA tracker with all observation outcome information; including local walkthroughs, formal walkthrough, any formal observation, any re-observation and peer observation. Observees are expected to carry out a self-assessment using the OTLA tracker at the start and end of each academic year. The OTLA tracker will be used by the observee to record and reflect on their continuous improvement to teaching practice.
2. A formal walkthrough observation will be carried out for all eligible staff. Formal walkthroughs will normally take place during Deep Dives. This walkthrough should last no longer than 15 minutes. Where the observer is confident that good teaching is reliably embedded into practice, further formal observation will not be necessary. Where the observer is not confident that good teaching is reliably embedded into practice, a formal observation will be scheduled.
3. Where a formal observation demonstrates weak embedding of expected practice against OTLA indicators, an Action Plan will be agreed through Department Heads and Managers. Support will be arranged through Department Heads and Managers in conjunction with the Staff and Professional Development Manager. A re-observation must be planned within 15 working days.
4. Where a re-observation demonstrates weak embedding of expected practice against the OTLA indicators, Department Heads and Managers will refer to the Formal Capability Procedure as guided by Human Resources.
5. Formal observation must provide the maximum opportunity to demonstrate skills and so observation periods should last between 30 and 60 minutes.
6. All teaching, learning, assessment and instruction sessions come into scope for walkthrough and observation against the OTLA indicators, including: theory lessons, online lessons, workshops, tutorials, support sessions, assessment activity and other practical activities.

There are some exemptions where the observer should leave and choose another opportunity to observe:

- a) Mock examinations
  - b) Formal assessment or End-Point-Assessment
  - c) Less than 5 students in the session
  - d) Where a fire or other emergency arises which suspends the session
7. The observer is expected to take opportunities during the observation to question students on their experience of the lesson, using the OTLA indicators under the Student Domain. For remote learners, this can be carried out through the chat facility on Teams.
  8. The observer is authorised to stop any activity where unsafe practices are observed. If the observer feels very concerned about standards of teaching, learning and assessment; this will be discussed with the observee's line manager and Head of Quality for immediate action.
  9. Individual grades for formal walkthroughs, formal observation or re-observation will not be given but feedback and a detailed profile of strengths and weaknesses against OTLA indicators will be recorded on Promonitor

10. Overall OTLA grades will be given to a department as part of the Deep Dive process
11. Appeals regarding observation may be made in writing to the Head of Quality within 3 working days of an observation; appeals will be heard on the grounds that procedural irregularities have occurred during the observation but not on grounds relating to observer judgement.

### **Feedback**

1. The observer of formal walkthroughs and observations will provide the observee with verbal feedback within 3 working days from the observation, providing a platform of reflection and outlining strengths and areas for improvement. An overall grade will not be given.
2. The observer will record feedback from formal walkthroughs and observations using the ProObserve platform with a summary of strengths and areas for improvement and a decision against how well each of the OTLA Indicators is embedded in practice. This profile will be entered onto the OTLA tracker by the observee.
3. Where a further formal observation or re-observation is deemed necessary, the observee's line manager must be informed, along with the Head of Quality and the Staff and Professional Development Manager. Re-observation must be scheduled within 15 working days. Appropriate support must be identified and managed by the observee's line manager during this time.
5. The Department Head or Manager will receive a summary of all observation decisions within the full Deep Dive evaluative report as an overall grade for OTLA for that department.
6. The Department Head or Manager will liaise with the Vice Principal for Curriculum & Quality on any practice that is deemed unsafe or which seriously and negatively affects learning and progress.
7. The Department Head or Manager will use the profile in the OTLA tracker to hold individual reviews with all observees in their area following formal walkthrough or observation; arranging the sharing of best practice and the identification of any developmental needs through the Action Plan in the OTLA tracker.

Further details can be found in the College Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy.

## **Assessment to promote learning and achievement**

### **Formative assessment**

Every HE student should have the opportunity to improve their skills through formative assessment. This might take the form of in-class exercises, group presentations, practice reports or draft work. Feedback on formative work should show how improvements can be made to summative work.

It is important for students to fully understand the learning objectives and how these are aligned with the assessment criteria and students should be given training on the process. Exemplar work may be used where appropriate to demonstrate the standard and layout of assessments. Peer feedback on first drafts and marking exercises are also beneficial to develop skills.

### **Summative work**

A range of assessment types should be available on each programme as appropriate. Assessment types may include presentations, reports, examinations, practical exercises, role plays, creative work, live briefs and essays.

The assessment approval system ensures that all assessments are internally and externally approved. The process is that:

- Assessment briefs are brought to the Assessment Approvals Committee for approval
- Assessment briefs are reviewed by external examiners (The Open University foundation degrees and degrees)
- Assessment Briefs are reviewed by the partner university (University of Hull foundation degrees and degrees)
- Assessment briefs for all other level 4 and above courses will be brought to the Assessment Approvals Committee for approval prior to approval by the Awarding Organisation

### **Assessment Submission Procedure**

- Details regarding assessment submission are found in each Module Handbook, and in the Student Handbook for each course
- Student work must be submitted anonymously (University of Hull)
- Deadlines are non-negotiable, students experiencing problems outside their control must apply for an extension or mitigation
- The submission deadline time must be agreed by the team, taking partner university regulations into consideration, and clearly indicated on the assessment briefs and on the electronic upload. All written work and other work that can be submitted electronically will be submitted via Turn-it-in, which enables proof of submission
- Other coursework must be submitted during College opening hours, at a time set by the module tutor and must include a cover sheet signed by the student and tutor upon receipt
- Cover sheets are available on the College HE VLE, and have a tear-off slip which will act as a receipt for each assessment for students to retain
- The relevant regulations for each programme (available on the HE VLE or website) explain the consequences of missing a deadline

### **Attendance at Presentations** (new: for students commencing courses 2019-20)

Students are expected to upload presentation slides to Turnitin by the submission deadline, failure to do so will result in non-submission being recorded.

Late arrival for delivery of a presentation will result in the following penalties:

- Up to 5 minutes: No penalty, but the student may have to wait to deliver the presentation later that day at a time agreed with the Tutor. Failure to do so, will result in the recording of non-submission
- 5 to 20 minutes late: A deduction of 5 marks and the presentation will be delivered at a time agreed with the Tutor. Failure to do so will be recorded as a non-submission
- More than 20 minutes late: Recorded as a non-submission.

Students may apply for mitigation; however, this will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

### **Word Count** (University of Hull)

There is no additional penalty for work that is below the word count, although a student may be unable to achieve the requirements of the assessment using fewer words than those allocated.

The following penalties **must** be adhered to:

- (i) Overlength assessment penalties apply only to word counts and exclude charts, graphs, tables etc
- (ii) Unless otherwise specified the published word limit excludes references in footnotes, appendices, references lists and bibliographies but includes other footnotes, quotations and in text references and citations.
- (iii) Coursework assessment rubrics **must** instruct students to declare a word count on the coversheet where a word limit is specified
- (iv) An erroneous word count declaration **must** be dealt with as suspected use of academic misconduct. The case **must** then be followed up according to the Regulations governing Academic Misconduct

### **Word Count** (The Open University / Pearson)

There is no additional penalty for work that is below the word count, although a student may be unable to achieve the requirements of the assessment using fewer words than those allocated.

Work that is over the word limit will be penalised using the following penalties:

<b>Amount over the limit</b>	<b>Penalty</b>
Up to 10%	Deduct no marks but note in feedback
Over 10% up to 25%	Deduct 5 marks
Above 25%	Deduct 10 marks



**Note that no grade can be reduced below 40%.**

- Students must provide an accurate word count on the cover sheet of their work. If it is suspected that a student has declared the word count dishonestly, it may be treated as a case of Academic Misconduct
- The word count specified for written assessments excludes tables (unless they contain large amounts of text), graphs, appendices and the reference list

**Timed presentations**

- There is no additional penalty for a presentation that is shorter than the allocated time.
- Presentations that run over the allocated time allowed will be penalised using the following penalties:

<b>Amount over the limit</b>	<b>Penalty</b>
Up to 10% For a 10 minute presentation this would be 11 minutes	Deduct no marks
Over 10% and up to 25%	Deduct 5 marks
Above 25% For a 10 minute presentation this would be over 12.5 minutes	Deduct 10 marks

Assessment briefs should clearly indicate timings for the spoken part of the assessment excluding additional questions.

**Marking and feedback guidance**

Feedback, following moderation / second consideration, should be given to the students inside a four-week period excluding College holidays. Students are made aware that all grades are subject to approval by the Board of Examiners and ratification by partner university / awarding body as appropriate.

Feedback should:

- Align to learning outcomes and should indicate specifically whether each outcome has been achieved, and if not the reasons for this judgement
- Be suitable to level and encourage a scholarly approach
- Identify academic skills and transferable skills in addition to specific learning outcomes
- Identify strengths to build on
- Identify areas for future development
- Clearly express professional judgements

**Marking electronic submissions**

Whilst electronic submission programmes are a useful guide as to the originality of student work, tutors should not see them in isolation. These programmes are not infallible and small alterations in the use of a referencing system, for example, may suggest a higher similarity rating than expected. Occasionally texts are used which the programme does not recognise and can be wrongly identified as the student's own work.

Where the tutor believes that it has an impact on the originality of the work the HE Student Academic Misconduct Policy should be consulted.

## Referencing

It is key that students understand the need for referencing sources properly and can demonstrate the range of resources they have used and the way in which this research is supporting the development of their work. Referencing guides are available, which tutors must use as a baseline of practice for students. However, the College recognises that developing technologies, the range of electronic devices and software programmes in use, means that students may choose to use an alternative system. Discussion with the student and a consistent approach is recommended.

## Second Consideration and Second Marking

Second consideration / second marking of assessments enables marked work and feedback to be critically appraised to ensure that the marking criteria have been correctly applied and that feedback to students is constructive. Second consideration / second marking is applied to higher education assessments except where the Awarding Organisation has other requirements. All members of the Course Team are expected to take part in the second consideration / second marking process. New tutors will have more support with their first marking from a more experienced member of staff

Responsibilities of second consideration / second marking are:

- to ensure that assessments carried out are accurately assessed
- to ensure that feedback to students supports their learning and development
- sample size will be determined by university partner / awarding body guidelines. In addition, all fails should be second considered / second marked
- sample size should also ensure that a range of marks and students are considered
- clear records must be taken of second consideration / second marking process

If during second consideration / second marking it is felt that marks should be adjusted, this should be discussed with the original marker and an agreement reached. In such cases, all pieces of work for that assessment must then be second considered / second marked. If agreement cannot be reached, the HE Business & Development Leader or a member of the HE Quality Team will also second consider the work.

## Student Attendance

Whilst attendance is not mandatory, the College does recommend that students should attend at least 80% of the programme. It is clear that good attendance is linked to success. Course tutors should alert the HE Office where students have poor attendance. These students are contacted by the HE Office via letter and email to encourage good attendance and signpost students to support if needed. Course tutors liaise with students to establish whether there is a need for additional support (either academic or pastoral) and to remind students of the guidelines for the mitigation and extension procedures.

## 7. Monitoring

The policy objectives will be monitored through

1. External Examiner and Awarding Body Reports
2. Lesson Observation Records
3. Course Progress Reviews
4. Annual monitoring at course and College level

## **8. Reporting**

1. This policy will be reviewed by the College's HE Business & Development Leader, discussed with the partner universities through the partnership meetings and reported to the College's Scheme Management Board for approval

## **9. Assessment of Impact**

1. The impact of this policy has been assessed and reviewed in line with QAA guidance and aligned to validating partner(s) and awarding bodies
2. The policy is considered to have no impact on current College policy

## **10. Continuous Improvement**

1. This policy will be evaluated and reviewed annually
2. Should the policy be amended, this will be approved by the partner university and reported to the College's HE Scheme Management Board for approval before being forwarded to the College's SMT

## **11. Associated Documentation**

[Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy](#)