QAA

UK Quality Code
for Higher Education

Part B: Assuring and enhancing
academic quality

Chapter B6: Assessment of students
and the recognition of prior learning

Contents

About the Quality Code

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code) is the definitive reference point for all UK higher education providers.[1] It makes clear what higher education providers are required to do, what they can expect of each other, and what the general public can expect of them. The Quality Code covers all four nations of the UK and all providers of UK higher education operating internationally. It protects the interests of all students, regardless of where they are studying or whether they are full-time, part-time, undergraduate or postgraduate students.

Each Chapter contains a single Expectation, which expresses the key principle that the higher education community has identified as essential for the assurance of academic standards and quality within the area covered by the Chapter. Higher education providers reviewed by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) are required to meet all the Expectations. The manner in which they do so is their own responsibility. QAA carries out reviews to check whether higher education providers are meeting the Expectations.[2]

Each Chapter has been developed by QAA through an extensive process of consultation with higher education providers; their representative bodies; the National Union of Students; professional, statutory and regulatory bodies; and other interested parties.

Higher education providers are also responsible for meeting the requirements of legislation and any other regulatory requirements placed upon them, for example by funding bodies. The Quality Code does not interpret legislation nor does it incorporate statutory or regulatory requirements. Sources of information about other requirements and examples of guidance and good practice are signposted within the Chapter where appropriate. Higher education providers are responsible for how they use these resources.

The Expectation in each Chapter is accompanied by a series of Indicators that reflect sound practice, and through which providers can demonstrate they are meeting the relevant Expectation. Indicators are not designed to be used as a checklist; they are intended to help providers reflect on and develop their regulations, procedures and practices to demonstrate that the Expectations in the Quality Code are being met. Each Indicator is numbered and printed in bold and is supported by an explanatory note that gives more information about it, together with examples of how the Indicator may be interpreted in practice.

The *UK Quality Code for Higher Education: General introduction*[3] should be considered in conjunction with this document. It provides a technical introduction for users, including guidance concerning the terminology used and a quick-reference glossary.

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[1]   www.qaa.ac.uk/qualitycode

[2]   www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review

[3]   www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/Quality-Code-introduction.aspx

About this Chapter

This publication supersedes the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code of practice*), *Section 6: Assessment of students* and the *Guidelines on the accreditation of prior learning* published by QAA, and forms a Chapter of the Quality Code.

This Chapter was subject to public consultation between June 2013 and August 2013 and was published in October 2013. It becomes a reference point for the purposes of reviews carried out by QAA from **August 2014**.

Assessment of students and the recognition of prior learning

This Chapter of the Quality Code deals with the assessment of student learning, both learning which is achieved as part of a defined programme offered by a higher education provider, and learning at the equivalent level achieved outside the defined programme of study. The Chapter covers all forms of assessment used in the context of taught provision, and for the recognition of prior learning. The extent to which processes for the assessment of taught provision are applicable to research degrees is determined by individual degree-awarding bodies. These are addressed in *Chapter B11: Research degrees*. All aspects of the role of external examiners in assessment are addressed in *Chapter B7: External examining*.

This Chapter is based on an understanding that assessment is not a linear process; it is an ongoing cycle through which staff design, set, mark, engage in dialogue about performance, review and develop assessments.

The purpose of assessment

Assessment is a complex topic since it involves two distinct aspects. First, it forms an essential element of the learning process. Students learn both from assessment activities and from their interaction with staff about their performance in those activities. This interaction has two elements: a focus on their learning and the extent to which that has been demonstrated in the assessment, and a focus on furthering their learning, which may itself subsequently be assessed. The latter element is often referred to as 'feedforward'.

Second, it is the means by which academic staff form judgements as to what extent students have achieved the intended learning outcomes of a programme, or of an element of a programme. These judgements form the basis for the grading of student performance through the allocation of marks, grades and (where applicable) classification, and (provided the learning outcomes have been met) for the award of the credit or qualification to which the programme leads.

While these two aspects are closely interrelated, matters related primarily to the first build on the guidance set out in *Chapter B3: Learning and teaching* (which addresses feedback as a part of the learning and teaching process). The present chapter addresses feedback on assessment in the context of students' engagement with assessment and their development of assessment literacy: the development of an understanding of the assessment process - in particular how professional judgements are made and on what they are based; and the ways in which this understanding can enable more effective use of assessment feedback to improve student learning.

This Chapter also focuses on matters related to the processes of assessment and to the academic frameworks within which those processes take place. It is through the assessment process that degree-awarding bodies ensure that academic standards are maintained at the appropriate level and that student performance is rigorously judged against them.

Throughout UK higher education, assessment processes are based on explicit intended learning outcomes, both for programmes and for the elements which make up those programmes (such as modules or similar units). Judgements of student performance are based on the extent to which the student is able to demonstrate achievement of the corresponding intended learning outcomes.

The means through which degree-awarding bodies report students' achievements in assessment tasks and the ways in which these are combined at module and then programme level is a matter for degree-awarding bodies to determine and to set out in their academic framework and regulations. This includes addressing the way in which marking scales are used and applied according to different subject-based traditions. It also includes determining which awards are classified, and making transparent the algorithms used to determine classification.

The interrelationship between assessment and other aspects of setting and maintaining academic standards is addressed in Part A of the Quality Code: 'Setting and maintaining academic standards'.

The recognition of prior learning

The recognition of prior learning is included within this Chapter in order to make explicit the link between assessment used as the basis for recognising learning gained outside a defined (or formal) higher education programme and that used for learning within such a programme; the key features of sound practice are common to both forms. The term 'recognition' - which reflects the terminology in many European countries - is used to describe accurately the process in relation to prior learning applicable to two widely recognised forms: prior experiential (or informal) learning and prior certificated learning.

The recognition of prior experiential learning involves an assessment process on the part of academic staff within the higher education provider that leads to recognition, normally through the award of credit. The essential feature of this process is that it is the learning gained through experience which is being assessed, not the experience itself.

Prior certificated learning in this Chapter relates to prior learning (such as professional development awards or employment-based awards) which is at higher education level but which has not led to the award of credits or qualifications positioned on the relevant higher education qualifications framework. A process of assessment enables a decision to be made about whether the learning is suitable for recognition.

Where the credits or qualification have been awarded by a UK higher education degree-awarding body in accordance with the relevant higher education qualifications framework, such an award is addressed through the process of credit transfer. The higher education provider to which the student is applying for credit transfer determines the status of that award (including consideration of its volume and level) as it relates to the higher education programme on which the student is studying. Such a process does not therefore require assessment within the terms of the current Chapter, although all forms of recognition and credit transfer take place within the degree-awarding body's academic framework and regulations, which are designed to ensure that decisions are made transparently, fairly and consistently for all programmes and subjects.

Prior learning relevant to this Chapter of the Quality Code is learning which is at the same level as the programme being undertaken, as defined within the relevant national higher education qualifications framework. Where a student has relevant prior learning which is at a level lower than the programme, that learning will be relevant in terms of whether it meets, or contributes to meeting, the entry requirements for the programme. Recognition in this case is part of the admissions process and is addressed in *Chapter B2: Recruitment, selection and admission to higher education* of the Quality Code.

Degree-awarding bodies

Chapter B10: Managing higher education provision with others makes explicit that degree-awarding bodies are ultimately responsible for the academic standards of their awards. As a result delivery organisations operate assessment processes within the academic framework and regulations of the degree-awarding body and in accordance with roles delegated to them and set out in the written agreement between the two bodies. The Expectation and Indicators of sound practice in this Chapter are set out within that context, and are designed to recognise that staff within delivery organisations are likely to be involved in assessment on a day to day basis: setting/contributing to assessment tasks, marking assessed work, moderating assessment outcomes, providing feedback to students, and contributing to the evaluation and development of assessment processes.

Equality, diversity and equal opportunity

In designing, operating and evaluating assessment processes, higher education providers take into account the entitlements of their students who reflect the diversity of protected characteristics and prior educational experience, and promote the development of inclusive practice. Promoting equality involves treating everyone with equal dignity and worth, irrespective of the group or groups to which they belong, while also raising aspirations and supporting achievement for people with diverse requirements, entitlements and backgrounds. An inclusive environment for learning anticipates the varied requirements of learners, for example because of a declared disability, specific cultural background, location, or age, and aims to ensure that all students have equal access to educational opportunities. Higher education providers, staff and students all have a role in, and responsibility for, promoting equality.

Equality of opportunity involves enabling access for people who have differing individual requirements as well as eliminating arbitrary and unnecessary barriers to learning. The nature of students' particular learning experiences may vary according to location of study, mode of study, or academic subject, as well as their protected characteristics, but every student experiences parity in the quality of learning opportunities. In addition, disabled students and non-disabled students are offered learning opportunities that are equally accessible to them, by means of inclusive design wherever possible and by means of individual reasonable adjustments wherever necessary. Offering an equal opportunity to learn is distinguished from offering an equal chance of success.

External links

Higher education providers are responsible for ascertaining which laws and regulations apply to them. To meet the Expectation of this Chapter of the Quality Code, higher education providers may wish to consider the indicative lists of reference points, guidance and examples of good practice given within the Chapter. QAA takes no responsibility for the content of external websites.

Further guidelines, references and resources

The Council of the European Union (2012) *Council Recommendation of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning*
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:398:0001:0005:EN:PDF

European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (2008) *Assessment matters: The quality assurance of student assessment in higher education - Report of an international working group*
www.enqa.eu/files/QA%20of%20Student%20Assessment%20Report.pdf

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (2009) *European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning*
www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/publications/5059.aspx

The Higher Education Academy: Assessment and feedback
www.heacademy.ac.uk/assessment

The Higher Education Academy (2012) *A Marked Improvement: Transforming assessment in higher education*
www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/assessment/a-marked-improvement

The Higher Education Academy (2013) *Review of credit accumulation and transfer policy and practice in UK higher education*
www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/flexible-learning/FL-review-of-CAT-policy-and-practice

QAA (2012) *Understanding assessment: its role in safeguarding academic standards and quality in higher education, Second edition*
www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/understanding-assessment.aspx

QAA (2011) *Outcomes from Institutional Audit: 2007-09, Assessment and feedback*
www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/outcomes-assessment-and-feedback.aspx

QAA (2012) *Outcomes from Institutional Audit: 2009-11, Assessment and feedback*
www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/Outcomes-audit-assessment.aspx

QAA Scotland Enhancement Themes: Integrative Assessment
www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/enhancement-themes/completed-enhancement-themes/integrative-assessment

QAA Scotland Enhancement Themes: Assessment
www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/enhancement-themes/completed-enhancement-themes/assessment

QAA Scotland: Recognition of prior learning
www.qaa.ac.uk/Scotland/DevelopmentAndEnhancement/Pages/Recognition-of-prior-learning.aspx

QAA Scotland (2012) *Streamlining and Enhancing Recognition of Prior Learning Support and Assessment*
www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Documents/Streamlining_RPL_Guidelines.pdf

Expectation

The Quality Code sets out the following Expectation about the assessment of students and the recognition of prior learning, which higher education providers are required to meet.

> **Higher education providers operate equitable, valid and reliable processes of assessment, including for the recognition of prior learning, which enable every student to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for the credit or qualification being sought.**

Indicators of sound practice

The basis for effective assessment

> **Indicator 1**
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> **Higher education providers operate effective policies, regulations and processes which ensure that the academic standard for each award of credit or a qualification is rigorously set and maintained at the appropriate level, and that student performance is equitably judged against this standard.**

The process of assessment is a key element in the setting and maintenance of academic standards. While degree-awarding bodies have ultimate responsibility for the academic standards of their awards, all higher education providers are involved in, and accountable for, the effective operation of different aspects of assessment in all its forms. The specific roles of those providers which do not have degree awarding powers are as set out in the written agreement with the degree-awarding body.

Assessment policies, regulations and processes underpin the setting and maintenance of academic standards with reference to the relevant higher education qualifications framework and subject benchmark statements, and where applicable take account of the requirements or guidelines of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs).

Degree-awarding bodies set out in their academic framework the forms of assessment permitted, including those for the recognition of prior learning, and the mechanisms through which individual assessment (and reassessment) tasks are approved.

The setting and maintaining of academic standards are addressed in Part A of the Quality Code: 'Setting and maintaining academic standards'.

Programme design, development, approval, monitoring and review are addressed in *Chapter B1: Programme design and approval* and *Chapter B8: Programme monitoring and review* of the Quality Code.

The delivery of provision involving more than one higher education provider or other delivery organisation or support provider, is addressed in *Chapter B10: Managing higher education provision with others* of the Quality Code. This Chapter also makes clear the responsibilities of degree-awarding bodies in such arrangements.

> **Indicator 2**
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> **Assessment policies, regulations and processes, including those for the recognition of prior learning, are explicit, transparent and accessible to all intended audiences.**

A number of distinct audiences have an interest in assessment processes. These include students, academic and administrative staff, external examiners, representatives of PSRBs, and others outside the higher education provider who wish to be assured that assessment is being carried out equitably and securely. It is also in the interests of providers themselves to ensure that policies, regulations and processes are clear and

accessible to all those who need to make use of them. Public confidence in the value, standards and quality of higher education depends on the evident integrity of the assessment process.

Reporting student achievement

Higher education providers have a transparent approach to the way in which student achievement is reported at the level of the individual assessment task, and the way in which this is combined at module and programme levels. This approach is based on an understanding of the recognised benefits and limitations of different mechanisms, such as the use of numerical marks, grading bands and pass/fail. It takes account of combining achievement across different subjects or academic departments, as in joint degrees or modular programmes. It also addresses the way achievement is represented at award level, for example through the use of classifications (such as First, Upper Second, Merit, Distinction).

Where a higher education provider accommodates subject-related differences in the use of its marking scale, it operates agreed procedures which ensure that the results achieved are capable of being combined in a way which is clear and which enables comparable levels of student achievement to be recognised.

Recognition of prior learning

Assessment processes for the recognition of prior learning, whether set out separately from those applying to assessment within a programme or not, are designed to be equally informative and to reflect the interest of the higher education provider's intended audiences.

Any limit on the award of credit (where used) or exemption through the recognition of prior learning is clearly stated in the regulations, as is the way in which such credit will be used for the purposes of progression, the making of an intermediate or final award, and any grading or classification of that award. Limits are defined both in terms of the smallest amount of learning that will be recognised - for example a module or cluster of learning outcomes - and the maximum. Regulations also make explicit whether the prior learning will be graded.

Information

Policies, regulations and processes are made available in a way which makes them easy to find; for example for students by signposting them from student handbooks or equivalent sources. They are written in a way that is clear to students, take into account equality and diversity issues and minimise barriers to access.

The provision of information about assessment forms part of the wider responsibility of higher education providers to produce information for the public, for prospective, current and past students, and for those responsible for academic standards and quality. More detailed guidance on this topic is set out in Part C of the Quality Code: 'Information about higher education provision'.

Further guidelines, references and resources

QAA (2007) *Quality matters: The classification of degree awards*
www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/Quality-matters-The-classification-of-degree-awards.aspx

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Indicator 3

Those who might be eligible for the recognition of prior learning are made aware of the opportunities available, and are supported throughout the process of application and assessment for recognition.

Higher education providers consider how they make potential applicants for the recognition of prior learning aware that their prior learning might be eligible for recognition in relation to a specific higher education programme. The precise form of support offered to those seeking recognition of prior learning will vary according to the higher education provider's approach to prior learning and the nature and number of claims it receives. In general, applicants benefit from being engaged in discussion and negotiation about the form(s) of assessment to be used in their case, and from having a shared understanding of the learning that would need to be evidenced as well as the nature of the evidence to be provided.

For example, as the assessment of portfolios is widely used to assess experiential learning, guidance on portfolio preparation may address such factors as the nature and volume of the evidence to be included, requirements as to its currency, and any necessity for independent verification of evidence. Similarly applicants benefit from specific support about the nature and form of e-portfolio technology where this is used.

Support for those making a claim may be supported during the process in the form of a short course or a module that prepares applicants to reflect upon their experiences and describe and analyse their learning, or in the form of individual support and tools that help students to reflect upon their experiences and identify and evidence the learning gained from those experiences.

Higher education providers determine and publicise any charges and the periods of time during which they will consider applications: only prior to the start of the programme, within a designated period after the start of the programme, or at any time during the programme (bearing in mind that part-time students in particular may be engaged in employment or other activity in parallel with their studies and which may be generating relevant learning).

Indicator 4

Higher education providers assure themselves that everyone involved in the assessment of student work, including prior learning, and associated assessment processes is competent to undertake their roles and responsibilities.

Assessment processes are implemented effectively when all staff involved have the necessary knowledge and skills, have received the appropriate development or training to fulfil their specific role, and are clear about their remit and responsibilities. Higher education providers identify what is appropriate for each role and how competence will be demonstrated, recognising that assessment involves different roles, each of which may be carried out by a variety of staff.

Assessment involves the exercise of professional judgement by academic staff in evaluating claims for recognition based on prior learning, in marking and moderating student work within programmes of study, and in providing feedback (addressed

in Indicator 9). Such roles may be fulfilled by staff who are part-time and/or who are involved in assessment in addition to undertaking a postgraduate research qualification. Employers or other placement providers may also have designated roles in the assessment process.

Academic staff may also be engaged in roles which support the assessment process, such as inputting marks or invigilating examinations. They are assisted by a range of other staff who support the assessment process in a variety of ways (such as arranging examinations and arranging and administering boards of examiners meetings) and who therefore need to have up to date knowledge and skills.

Where students are involved in assessment through peer to peer activities they are provided with guidance which helps them to fulfil the role in question. (For student engagement in, and understanding of, assessment and assessment processes see Indicators 6-7.)

Providing development and training

Examples of the areas in which higher education providers may consider offering development or training in relation to the assessment of student work include:

- promoting understanding of the theory and practice of assessment and its implementation, including the different purposes of formative and summative assessment

- effective ways to evaluate the extent to which learning outcomes have been achieved

- effective ways to engage with students to enable and promote dialogue about, and reflective use of, feedback

- raising awareness of staff about the importance of designing assessments that minimise opportunities for plagiarism and other forms of unacceptable academic practice

- enabling staff to learn about new approaches to assessment and devise new methods, as well as the best ways to operate existing methods

- raising staff awareness of the assessment implications of the diversity of students, including cultural diversity, differences in learning methods and the need for inclusivity (see Indicator 10).

Development or training is also provided to meet the needs of those involved in assessment processes including interpretation of regulations, chairing of boards of examiner/assessment panel meetings, and record-keeping at such meetings.

Examples of the areas in which higher education providers may consider offering development or training in relation to recognition of prior learning include:

- ways to facilitate effective signposting of support from enquiry to assessment outcomes

- promoting an understanding of the theory and practice of prior learning assessment, including the nature of guidance and support required of assessors to facilitate such assessment.

Development or training may also be provided by bodies other than the higher education provider, such as cross-sector membership organisations or subject-based bodies.

For staff new to an assessment role, induction and mentoring may provide an effective means for introducing and/or developing the knowledge and skills required.

The UK Professional Standards Framework

The UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education, published by the Higher Education Academy, is outlined in *Chapter B3: Learning and teaching* of the Quality Code. The purpose of this framework is to help individuals and higher education providers enhance the learning experience of their students by improving the quality of their teaching and learning support. As part of the framework, the dimensions of practice include statements relating to assessing and giving feedback to students, and engaging in continuing professional development in subjects/disciplines and their pedagogy, incorporating research, scholarship and the evaluation of professional practices.

The appointment, support and continuing development of staff who teach or support learning is addressed in *Chapter B3: Learning and teaching* of the Quality Code.

The induction of, and support for, external examiners is addressed in *Chapter B7: External examining* of the Quality Code.

Further guidelines, references and resources

Association for Learning Development in Higher Education
www.aldinhe.ac.uk

UK Professional Standards Framework
www.heacademy.ac.uk/ukpsf

Staff and Educational Development Association
www.seda.ac.uk

Indicator 5

Assessment and feedback practices are informed by reflection, consideration of professional practice, and subject-specific and educational scholarship.

In addition to engaging with development opportunities provided by the higher education provider (Indicator 4), staff who assess and enable feedback take responsibility for evaluating and further developing their practice drawing on scholarship, research and professional activity. For staff who are also involved in teaching or supporting learning, this evaluation complements and builds on their reflection on their practice in that context. (The role of reflection and how this is informed in relation to learning and teaching is addressed in *Chapter B3: Learning and teaching* of the Quality Code.)

Key areas may include:

- the role of assessment in the learning process - assessment as and for learning as well as assessment of learning

- the variety of modes of assessment, including the role of examinations, essays, multiple-choice tests, reflective journals, peer assessment, portfolios, and assessment of performance and creative work

- using technology both for supporting assessment and for enabling feedback to students

- the assessment of work-based learning and practice, including the involvement of employers and practitioners in the assessment process

- the development of assessment activities which are closely connected with real-world situations or tasks

- practices which promote and support consistency of marking by and between staff, including dialogues which enable a shared understanding of standards

- the recognition of prior learning, including guidance, support and assessment models that can enable more streamlined, enhanced approaches to recognition of prior learning in support of flexible, efficient learning pathways within higher education

- the direct involvement of students in assessment, for example through self-assessment, and by negotiating the form of assessment that might be used; this is of particular relevance to recognition of prior learning.

Higher education providers support and make available structured opportunities for reflection to take place and for sound practice to be recognised and disseminated.

Further guidelines, references and resources

Association for Learning Development in Higher Education
www.aldinhe.ac.uk

The Higher Education Academy: Becoming a reflective practitioner
www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/subjects/medev/Focus-_Becoming_a_reflective_practitioner

The Higher Education Academy: Resources Centre
www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources

The Higher Education Academy (2006) *Scholarly Activity in the context of HE in FE*
www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/universitiesandcolleges/heinfe/alldisplay?type=resources&newid=resource_database/web0462_scholarly_activity_in_the_context_of_he_in_fe_June_2006&site=York

The Higher Education Academy (2007) *Linking teaching and research in disciplines and departments*
www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/documents/teachingandresearch/LinkingTeachingAndResearch_April07.pdf

JISC: Learning Literacies in a Digital Age
www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/projects/elearningllida.aspx

UK Professional Standards Framework
www.heacademy.ac.uk/ukpsf

Staff and Educational Development Association
www.seda.ac.uk

QAA Scotland Enhancement Themes: Research-Teaching Linkages
www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/enhancement-themes/completed-enhancement-themes/research-teaching-linkages

Developing assessment literacy

> **Indicator 6**
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> **Staff and students engage in dialogue to promote a shared understanding of the basis on which academic judgements are made.**

Engaging students, and making use of examples and/or self and peer assessment activities where appropriate, helps students to understand the process of assessment and the expected standards, and to develop their assessment literacy. Facilitating students' assessment literacy includes illustrating the way in which standards are communicated and applied within the relevant subject to enable staff to make judgements about student performance in different types of assessment task. It also enables students to develop an awareness of the complex nature of professional judgement, and of the way in which standards are derived from the descriptors in the relevant qualifications framework and subject benchmark statements, and from the degree-awarding body's regulations, policies and processes for assessment. (See Indicators 1, 2 and 13, and Part A of the Quality Code: 'Setting and maintaining academic standards'.)

Communicating standards may involve different approaches. For example, the focus may be on explaining how criteria are interpreted and how they enable staff to recognise differential student achievement, or it may be on students analysing example assignments.

Dialogue with students can also help develop students' confidence that assessment is designed to be inclusive, allows for reasonable adjustments in individual cases where necessary, and is fair and consistent. (Inclusive design is addressed in Indicator 10.)

Recognition of prior learning

In the case of recognition of prior learning, students are provided with clear guidance on how their prior learning will be judged through the assessment process. This guidance is provided before the student submits the evidence to support the claim or before the assessment task is undertaken. The following questions help to inform the development of such guidance.

- Relevance - is there an appropriate match between the evidence presented and the learning claimed?

- Sufficiency - is there sufficient evidence to demonstrate the achievement of the learning claimed?

- Authenticity - is the evidence clearly related to the applicants' own efforts and achievements?

- Currency - does evidence relate to current learning? Where higher education providers have specific requirements or time limits relating to currency these are made clear.

Indicator 7

Students are provided with opportunities to develop an understanding of, and the necessary skills to demonstrate, good academic practice.

A specific aspect of developing students' assessment literacy (Indicator 6) is that of enabling students to become confident in recognising and applying good academic practice, and being clear about the types of activity which constitute unacceptable practice. This enables students to maximise their potential in assessment and in ensuring the maintenance of academic standards.

Key elements of good academic practice include:

• being able to acknowledge the ideas of others through consistent referencing and citation which is appropriate to the subject being studied

• recognising that this applies to all sources of information whether hard copy or electronic

• meeting expectations about ethical behaviour (especially in undertaking projects and dissertations)

• adhering to confidentiality requirements in particular subjects

• understanding the permitted boundaries between individual and group contributions.

Opportunities which not only provide information but actively engage students, such as peer assessment, help strengthen students' understanding and ability to apply their learning in different assessment situations which are specific to the subject and type of assessment methods used.

Further guidelines, references and resources

The Higher Education Academy: Academic Integrity
www.heacademy.ac.uk/academic-integrity

The Higher Education Academy: Student Resources
www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/assessment/academic-integrity-student-resources

Plagiarism advice
www.plagiarismadvice.org/

Designing assessment

> **Indicator 8**
>
> **The volume, timing and nature of assessment enable students to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes.**

Staff engage in the design of assessment (including reassessment) as part of the overall process of design, development, review and enhancement of programmes and their constituent modules. Design is undertaken within the academic framework and regulations of the degree-awarding body and, in the case of staff at a delivery organisation, is subject to the delegation of roles by the degree-awarding body.

Effective assessment design involves consideration of the appropriate number and weighting of assessment tasks, their timing (relative to each other within and across modules) and the type of task to be used. It focuses on ensuring that programme level learning outcomes are addressed through the programme's constituent modules (or equivalent units). In the case of programmes involving more than one subject or a range of modules from different subjects, the totality of tasks across the whole programme is addressed.

Consideration is given to whether the assessment opportunities within the programme collectively give students the opportunity to reflect on and embed their learning, where appropriate practice vocational skills, and experience different methods of assessment. The design of assessment tasks addresses how plagiarism and other forms of unacceptable academic practice can be minimised, both in the specific choice of assessment tasks and in the combination of methods being used.

The timing of reassessment opportunities, where these are permitted, takes into account allowing sufficient time for students to engage in further learning following the initial (failed) assessment while not delaying unduly students' opportunities to progress within, or complete, their programme.

Higher education providers address the amount of time available between completion of an assessment task by students and the date at which the results are required either by the student or the provider to ensure that those involved in marking and/or moderating the work have enough time to complete each stage of the process.

Recognition of prior learning

Consideration is given to the appropriateness of assessment tools for the nature of the prior learning to be assessed. These tools might include, for example, a portfolio of evidence, a structured interview, completion of a piece of work accompanied by a reflective account of the learning achieved, artefacts, a performance-based assessment, or completion of the assessment used to demonstrate learning in the module/programme for which comparability is being claimed.

In designing the assessment to be used for recognition of prior learning account is taken of the way in which programme level outcomes and level descriptors will be used.

In determining the timing of assessment for recognition of prior learning, consideration is given to when the outcome of the recognition process needs to be known by the provider and the student.

The design of programmes is addressed in *Chapter B1: Programme design and approval* of the Quality Code.

Further guidelines, references and resources

QAA Scotland: Recognition of prior learning
www.qaa.ac.uk/Scotland/DevelopmentAndEnhancement/Pages/Recognition-of-prior-learning.aspx

QAA Scotland (2012) Streamlining and Enhancing Recognition of Prior Learning Support and Assessment
www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Documents/Streamlining_RPL_Guidelines.pdf

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Indicator 9

Feedback on assessment is timely, constructive and developmental.

While some assessment may be classed as entirely formative, most summative assessment also contains a formative element. Effective feedback combines information which enables students to understand the strengths and limitations of their past performance, and information which enables them to recognise how future performance can be improved (often referred to as 'feedforward'). This process includes a focus on helping students to understand what constitutes feedback as well as how to make effective use of it.

Higher education providers' approaches to feedback recognise that the timing of the provision of feedback, and of the return of assessed work when this is appropriate, contribute to making feedback effective. In particular they provide students with time to reflect on the feedback, and to consider how to make use of it (especially in forthcoming assessments). They also provide opportunities for students to engage in dialogue based on the feedback. Where a specific turnaround time for the provision of feedback is agreed (in consultation with student representatives where appropriate) this is communicated to staff and students. Turnaround times take into account staff workloads and their ability to meet these times while providing effective feedback.

Higher education providers make clear the nature of students' entitlements to feedback in different situations. For example, in relation to assessments taking place at the end of a programme it may be appropriate not to provide feedback in all cases; on the other hand there will be circumstances where feedback can inform further development or study, and may reduce the likelihood of an appeal based on a misunderstanding of how work was assessed.

Where appropriate, feedback reflects the applicable learning outcomes or marking criteria. This helps students to understand how these inform the process of judging student achievement (see Indicator 6).

Feedback on assessment builds on dialogue and opportunities for students to reflect on their learning. This is addressed in *Chapter B3: Learning and teaching* of the Quality Code.

Recognition of prior learning

Students' entitlement to feedback on assessment for the recognition of prior learning is clearly set out, including whether feedback will be provided where an application for recognition of prior learning has been accepted. Where an application has been rejected, feedback helps the student to understand the reasons for the rejection and to make an informed decision, for example in relation to any future study, right of resubmission or appeal.

Further guidelines, references and resources

The Higher Education Academy: Assessment and feedback
www.heacademy.ac.uk/assessment

NUS: Ten Feedback Principles
www.nus.org.uk/en/advice/course-reps/feedback/feedback-what-you-can-expect-/

Indicator 10

Through inclusive design wherever possible, and through individual reasonable adjustments wherever required, assessment tasks provide every student with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their achievement.

In designing assessments the needs of students studying at different locations or through online arrangements, and of those who possess different protected characteristics, are considered, while ensuring that the assessment measures the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Reflecting the needs of students with different protected characteristics in the design and approval of programmes reduces the likelihood of making one-off modifications to assessment in a reactive manner. Reliance on reactive modifications can place both students and staff under additional pressure and may lead to inequities.

Where individual modifications are required, they may prove beneficial if adopted for all students, within the limitations of practicality. In a similar way, consideration of a range of different means by which a particular learning outcome may be demonstrated may lead to overall enhancements of the assessment process.

Higher education providers monitor and evaluate inclusive assessment practices across modules, programmes and their academic departments, and incorporate the consequent learning into their policies and procedures. They facilitate staff having access to sources of advice, both from within the provider and externally, about inclusive assessment strategies and practices, as well as about the assessment implications for individual students, especially disabled students. (See Indicator 18 regarding evaluation and enhancement of assessment processes.)

The design and approval of programmes is addressed in *Chapter B1: Programme design and approval* of the Quality Code.

Ensuring that academic standards are not compromised when making reasonable adjustments is addressed in Chapter A3 of Part A of the Quality Code: 'Setting and maintaining academic standards.

> **Further guidelines, references and resources**
>
> University of Bradford (2012) Programme Assessment Strategies project
> (completed October 2012, and hosted by the University of Bradford on behalf
> of a number of partners
> www.pass.brad.ac.uk/index.php

Conducting assessment

> **Indicator 11**
>
> **Assessment is carried out securely.**

Staff carry out all aspects of assessment in a way which ensures the integrity of the assessment process and in turn the integrity of the academic standards of each award. Key areas of potential risk are:

- any circumstance where draft assessment questions/tasks are, or student work is, held or transported off-site (for example where marking takes place off-campus, and where scripts are sent to an external examiner)

- the invigilation of examinations

- confirming the identity of students undertaking assessments whether in an examination room or online, and when student work is submitted whether in person, online, or through other means.

Students' marks and related information (such as extenuating/mitigating circumstances applications) are held securely and disclosed only to those who need access to the information and have a right to see it.

> **Further guidelines, references and resources**
>
> *Computer Misuse Act 1990*
> www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/18/contents
>
> *Data Protection Act 1998*
> www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/29/contents
>
> *Freedom of Information Act* 2000
> www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/contents
>
> *Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002*
> www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2002/13/pdfs/asp_20020013_en.pdf
>
> The Information Commissioner's Office
> www.ico.gov.uk
>
> The Information Commissioner's Office: Education
> www.ico.gov.uk/for_organisations/sector_guides/education.aspx
>
> JISClegal
> www.jisclegal.ac.uk/
>
> Scottish Information Commissioner: Scottish public authorities
> www.itspublicknowledge.info/ScottishPublicAuthorities/ScottishPublicAuthorities.asp

Indicator 12

Degree-awarding bodies assure themselves that the standards of their awards are not compromised as a result of conducting assessment in a language other than English.

Degree-awarding bodies have an explicit rationale for determining when they will permit assessment to be conducted in a language other than English (including allowing for those programmes which involve the learning and study of a language or languages other than English, and for the use of sign language for disabled students).

In Wales, where the Welsh language has equal status with that of English, higher education providers offer opportunities, wherever possible, for assessment to take place in Welsh, irrespective of the language in which teaching takes place.

Where assessment is conducted in a language other than English academic standards may be compromised: where staff, especially those marking or moderating student work, do not have sufficient competence in the language in question and/or where use of another language requires work to be translated into English at any stage in the assessment process.

Staff involved in teaching and assessing students have the necessary subject knowledge and expertise in the relevant language(s), and suitably qualified external examiners are appointed. The degree-awarding body's policy covers whether reference tools such as dictionaries are permitted in examinations.

Priority is given to ensuring that students are not disadvantaged or advantaged by the potential need to translate assessed work. For this reason, translation is avoided wherever possible. Where translation is necessary, degree-awarding bodies ensure that effective mechanisms are in place to assure the reliability and validity of the assessment outcomes.

The above issues also apply where a student wishes to submit evidence of prior learning which is not in English.

The appointment and role of external examiners is addressed in *Chapter B7: External examining* of the Quality Code.

Arrangements involving provision through a delivery organisation are addressed in *Chapter B10: Managing higher education provision with others* of the Quality Code.

Further guidelines, references and resources

QAA (2003) *Guidelines for higher education institutions in Wales for effective practice in examining and assessing in a language other than the language of tuition*
www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/guidelines-assessing-welsh.aspx

Marking and moderation

> **Indicator 13**
>
> **Processes for marking assessments and for moderating marks are clearly articulated and consistently operated by those involved in the assessment process.**

Staff involved in marking and moderating student work are guided by clear processes which address the degree-awarding body's requirements. In particular arrangements for, and the degree-awarding body's definitions of, first and second marking are clearly set out and applied, and include guidance on how agreement will be reached on the final marks to be awarded.

Expectations on the use of anonymous marking, including to which forms of assessment it applies or does not apply, are clear. Where anonymity is used, procedures specify the point at which anonymity is lifted (for example, before or after the examination board/assessment panel).

The need is addressed for clear guidance about how borderline marks or grades are defined and treated, both in individual assessments and in overall results for a module or a programme.

Internal moderation is a process separate from that of marking and provides assurance that assessment criteria have been applied appropriately, reflecting the shared understanding of the markers, and an approach which enables comparability across academic subjects (in particular recognising that students may be studying more than one subject).

Moderation focuses on the marks awarded to the full set of assessed work for a task, module or programme, in the context of the academic standards for the award. It is therefore separate from the question of how differences in marks between two or more markers are resolved, and is not about making changes to an individual student's marks. Staff are clear how moderation will be conducted, for example through sampling assessed work, reviewing all the marks awarded, and providing opportunities for discussion between moderators to develop shared understandings. They are also clear about what action might be taken where significant differences in marks awarded are identified.

Clear guidance sets out the degree-awarding body's requirements in relation to moderating assessment that does not involve the production of physical evidence. Assessments of this kind include various types of performance or presentation (typically in the creative and performing arts).

For programmes involving a delivery organisation the degree-awarding body makes clear its requirements for internal moderation (including the extent and timing of any involvement of degree-awarding body staff working with the delivery organisation), any quantitative information which will inform the moderation process and how this process relates to the role of the external examiner.

The role of the external examiner is set out in *Chapter B7: External examining* of the Quality Code.

Arrangements involving provision through a delivery organisation are addressed in *Chapter B10: Managing higher education provision with others* of the Quality Code.

> **Indicator 14**
>
> **Higher education providers operate processes for preventing, identifying, investigating and responding to unacceptable academic practice.**

Ensuring that students do not obtain awards through any form of unacceptable academic practice relating to assessment - including plagiarism, cheating, collusion and impersonation - is fundamental to securing academic standards. Higher education providers therefore implement effective measures which build on their efforts to encourage good academic practice across all forms of assessment (see Indicator 7).

Identification of potential plagiarism and other forms of cheating is achieved in a range of ways appropriate to the nature of the assessment task. In the case of plagiarism this may include the use of electronic submission and software that is able to help identify matches between the content of assessed work and existing material, thus assisting in the identification of plagiarism.

Higher education providers implement clear processes through which instances of unacceptable practice can be reported by anyone with relevant knowledge. These processes facilitate the gathering of evidence, and provide students who are believed to have engaged in unacceptable practice with the opportunity to put their case, test the evidence and offer any explanation or mitigation. The outcomes of such cases are evidence based and supported by clear reasons. Penalties for proven cases of unacceptable practice are clear, proportionate and consistently and equitably applied.

Students are made aware that in some subjects certain forms of unacceptable practice can have severe consequences for their career prospects, for example denial of entry into a particular profession because of the element of dishonesty and/or unethical behaviour attached to certain practices.

Higher education providers ensure that the requirements of PSRBs are taken into account, whether through reporting cases to them or, where relevant, by involving them in the determination of individual cases.

The handling of individual cases takes account of the needs of the student, including those arising from protected characteristics.

Clear information is provided to all concerned about the rights of anyone involved in a case where unacceptable practice may have occurred, including whether they are entitled to a face-to-face meeting (or equivalent where they are at a distance from those determining the matter), to be accompanied or represented, and to appeal against the decision and/or penalties.

Effective processes for identifying potential cases and (where appropriate) for applying penalties may also have a deterrent effect, especially if the potential consequences of unacceptable practice are well publicised.

Appeals relating to unacceptable academic practice are addressed in *Chapter B9: Academic appeals and student complaints* of the Quality Code.

Further guidelines, references and resources

The Higher Education Academy: Academic Integrity
www.heacademy.ac.uk/academic-integrity

Plagiarism advice
www.plagiarismadvice.org/

Examination boards and assessment panels

Indicator 15

Degree-awarding bodies specify clearly the membership, procedures, powers and accountability of examination boards and assessment panels, including those dealing with the recognition of prior learning; this information is available to all members of such boards.

Degree-awarding bodies operate, or oversee the operation of, examination boards and/or assessment panels (however titled) for making judgements and decisions on which the award of credit and qualifications is ultimately based. These boards/panels therefore have a particularly important responsibility for the maintenance of academic standards. For this reason all members of such bodies, particularly chairs, are clear about the extent of the powers and authority of the board/panel, including to whom it is accountable, and the regulations governing progression and award.

There are often different tiers of examination boards or assessment panels; for example, where one tier is responsible for deciding on the mark or grade a student should receive for an individual module, and the other tier is responsible for deciding on the student's progression to the next stage of the programme, or on the final result based on the full set of marks. Where there is more than one such board or panel, the relative powers and responsibilities of each are clearly stated and understood by those involved.

Regulations, policies or processes make explicit the degree-awarding body's requirements relating to:

- membership of internal and external examiners and other staff, and attendance at meetings of each board/panel

- how the views of those unable to attend might be recorded

- the quorum for meetings and how inquoracy will be dealt with

- provision for chair's action, its limitations and the recording and reporting of such decisions

- the exercise of discretion in a consistent manner by individual boards/panels, for example in relation to extenuating/mitigating circumstances, and borderline cases.

Clear provision is made to enable potential conflicts of interest - such as personal interests or involvements with students - to be identified and addressed. This might involve the making of a declaration at the beginning of a meeting, or a board/panel member not participating in part or all of the decision-making. Particular attention is paid to potential conflicts of interest where members of staff of the provider are also students on one of its programmes. Conflicts of interest can be mitigated where those with line management responsibility for the member of staff, or other close working relationships, are not involved in those assessment decisions.

Recognition of prior learning

Degree-awarding bodies make explicit their arrangements for making decisions to recognise prior learning, including specifying where the authority lies to make such decisions, and the procedures to be followed centrally and/or at departmental or equivalent level. In deciding these matters they balance the need to ensure decisions are valid, reliable and consistent across students and programmes, with operating processes which are proportionate and flexible and which may operate on a different cycle compared with decisions about assessments within their programmes.

The role of the senior academic body and the delegation of its authority is addressed in *Chapter A2: Degree-awarding bodies' reference points for academic standards and Chapter A3: Securing academic standards and an outcomes-based approach to academic awards* of Part A of the Quality Code: 'Setting and maintaining academic standards'.

The role and responsibilities of external examiners are addressed in *Chapter B7: External examining* of the Quality Code.

Responsibilities of the degree-awarding body and delivery organisation where one is involved are addressed in *Chapter B10: Managing higher education with others*.

> **Indicator 16**
>
> **Boards of examiners/assessment panels apply fairly and consistently regulations for progression within, and transfer between, programmes and for the award of credits and qualifications.**

Degree-awarding bodies state clearly the level of achievement required in order for students to progress from one stage to another within their programme of study or between programmes. This includes making clear how assessment results will be used in terms of progression, whether or not it is possible for a student to progress to the next stage of the award with one or more failed units or modules outstanding, and making clear any pre-requisite or co-requisite requirements. Such statements include the number of reassessments permitted, and whether any limit is placed on the maximum marks which can be achieved in a reassessment.

Where appropriate the requirements of specific subjects, which may reflect professional accreditation or practice needs, are addressed through variations approved by the degree-awarding body which ensure equity and that academic standards are not jeopardised. Differences are made clear to applicants and students from the outset of their programme, in particular where certain modules must be passed in order to obtain professional accreditation.

Regulations make explicit how applications from students with extenuating/mitigating circumstances will be dealt with. This may include applications from those who for good reason wish to defer assessment or temporarily withdraw from a programme. Any time limits for completion of the programme are clear, and take account of the need to make adjustments for disabled students and to promote equality of opportunity. The regulations also make clear the limits of the range of decisions which may be made by the examination board/assessment panel, for example whether marks may be changed, new assessment attempts allowed or fails disregarded.

Indicator 17

The decisions of examination boards and assessment panels are recorded accurately, and communicated to students promptly and in accordance with stated timescales.

Examination boards/assessment panels are responsible for ensuring that assessment decisions are recorded accurately, supported by taking adequate minutes of any discussions which, in particular, demonstrate the factors taken into account when discretion is exercised or extenuating/mitigating circumstances considered. Such an approach provides assurance and transparency.

Clear statements of the responsibilities of all those involved in the computation and checking of results and recording of assessment decisions are provided.
Where assessment data are stored, processed and transmitted electronically, systems for back-up in case of a failure of equipment are in place. Policies on access to information regarding assessment judgements about individuals are also clearly stated.

Students and staff are clear about when and how results - including those for recognition of prior learning - will be provided, and about whom students can contact should they require clarification of their results or advice on decisions affecting their future study. Particular attention is paid to ensuring support for students where the release of results takes place during vacations or for students who are away from the location of delivery.

When results are provided, they include clear information about whether each result is provisional or final. If provisional, the information makes clear what the further stages are (such as approval by the board of examiners or by the senior academic authority of the degree-awarding body) and the timescale for results to be finalised. Clarification of the status of the results also ensures that students are clear about when time limits for lodging an academic appeal or complaint start.

Recognition of prior learning

It may not be possible for decisions relating to recognition of prior learning to follow a set timescale in the same way as other assessment decisions. Providers therefore ensure that students who apply for recognition of prior learning are clear about the timescales involved, the means by which they will be informed of the outcome, and whether credit awarded through recognition of prior learning will be recorded on the official transcript. Each decision is explicit about the level and volume of credit being awarded (where that is the case). Timescales also recognise that a student whose application for recognition of prior learning is rejected may want the opportunity to obtain credit by undertaking the relevant module(s) within the applicable programme.

Record keeping

Higher education providers implement an explicit policy detailing the length of time for which records of decisions and student results will be retained (including those relating to recognition of prior learning). This policy recognises that reliable records of examination board deliberations help demonstrate that assessment processes have been properly applied, especially in the event of an academic appeal or student complaint.

Academic appeals and student complaints are addressed in *B9: Academic appeals and student complaints* of the Quality Code.

Part C of the Quality Code: 'Information about higher education provision' addresses the provision of information for students on their academic achievements.

Enhancement of assessment processes

> **Indicator 18**
>
> **Degree-awarding bodies systematically evaluate and enhance their assessment policies, regulations and processes.**

As part of their strategic approach to enhancing the quality of their provision and their management of academic standards, degree-awarding bodies, working with students and with delivery organisations where applicable, evaluate their arrangements and identify opportunities for development, making use of management information as appropriate.

Approaches may include consideration at subject as well as organisational level, taking account of external developments, including those of relevant PSRBs. Management information may enable student achievement and academic standards to be monitored and compared over time. This may include: noting key features of mark, grade or honours distributions; identifying any relationship between student entry qualifications and assessment outcomes; comparing the performance of students studying for the same qualification with other providers with whom they offer learning opportunities; and considering feedback from sources such as external surveys on student perceptions.

In the case of recognition of prior learning, higher education providers consider feedback on the process from successful and unsuccessful applicants where this is available and, where practicable, track the progress and performance of students who have made successful claims for recognition of prior learning.

Degree-awarding bodies review their progression regulations periodically to assure themselves that the regulations continue to be fit for purpose. In considering when to introduce changes to the regulations, degree-awarding bodies consider the impact of changes on current students and whether changes should only be introduced for new students. Changes that are likely to have a negative impact on current students are introduced only in exceptional circumstances.

Student engagement in the management of quality and standards is addressed in *Chapter B5: Student engagement.*

Appendix 1 - The Expectation and Indicators

The Expectation

The Quality Code sets out the following Expectation about recruitment, selection and admission which higher education providers are required to meet.

Higher education providers operate equitable, valid and reliable processes of assessment, including for the recognition of prior learning, which enable every student to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for the credit or qualification being sought.

The Indicators of sound practice

Indicator 1

Higher education providers operate effective policies, regulations and processes which ensure that the academic standard for each award of credit or a qualification is rigorously set and maintained at the appropriate level, and that student performance is equitably judged against this standard.

Indicator 2

Assessment policies, regulations and processes, including those for the recognition of prior learning, are explicit, transparent and accessible to all intended audiences.

Indicator 3

Those who might be eligible for the recognition of prior learning are made aware of the opportunities available, and are supported throughout the process of application and assessment for recognition.

Indicator 4

Higher education providers assure themselves that everyone involved in the assessment of student work, including prior learning, and associated assessment processes is competent to undertake their roles and responsibilities.

Indicator 5

Assessment and feedback practices are informed by reflection, consideration of professional practice, and subject-specific and educational scholarship.

Indicator 6

Staff and students engage in dialogue to promote a shared understanding of the basis on which academic judgements are made.

Indicator 7

Students are provided with opportunities to develop an understanding of, and the necessary skills to demonstrate, good academic practice.

Indicator 8

The volume, timing and nature of assessment enable students to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes.

Indicator 9

Feedback on assessment is timely, constructive and developmental.

Indicator 10

Through inclusive design wherever possible, and through individual reasonable adjustments wherever required, assessment tasks provide every student with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their achievement.

Indicator 11

Assessment is carried out securely.

Indicator 12

Degree-awarding bodies assure themselves that the standards of their awards are not compromised as a result of conducting assessment in a language other than English.

Indicator 13

Processes for marking assessments and for moderating marks are clearly articulated and consistently operated by those involved in the assessment process.

Indicator 14

Higher education providers operate processes for preventing, identifying, investigating and responding to unacceptable academic practice.

Indicator 15

Degree-awarding bodies specify clearly the membership, procedures, powers and accountability of examination boards and assessment panels, including those dealing with the recognition of prior learning; this information is available to all members of such boards.

Indicator 16

Boards of examiners/assessment panels apply fairly and consistently regulations for progression within, and transfer between, programmes and for the award of credits and qualifications.

Indicator 17

The decisions of examination boards and assessment panels are recorded accurately, and communicated to students promptly and in accordance with stated timescales.

Indicator 18

Degree-awarding bodies systematically evaluate and enhance their assessment policies, regulations and processes.

Appendix 2 - Membership of the advisory group for this Chapter

Name	Position	Affiliation
Dr Rachel Banfield	Dean of Professional Higher Education	Ifs University College
Professor Sue Bloxham	Professor of Academic Practice	University of Cumbria
Professor Sally Brown	Independent Consultant	
Dr Tim Burton	Assistant Director	QAA (Chair)
Dr Judith Foreman	Dean of Higher Education	Wakefield College
Heather Gibson	Development Officer	QAA Scotland
Professor Paddy Gray	Professor of Housing	University of Ulster
Dr Pam Harris	Dean of Quality and Standards	Cardiff Metropolitan University
Mineke Lamean	Inspector of Higher Education	Netherlands Inspectorate of Education, Department of Higher Education
Dr Anett Loescher	Development Officer	QAA (Secretariat)
Dr Carolyn Mackintosh-Franklin	Associate Dean, Learning, Teaching and Quality, Faculty of Health and Social Care	University of Hull (formerly Head, School of Health Sciences Liverpool University)
Professor Liz McDowell	Independent Consultant	formerly Professor in Academic Practice, Northumbria University
Dr Erica Morris	Academic Lead	Higher Education Academy
Professor Clare Morris	Independent Consultant and QAA Specialist Author	
Dominic Passfield	Development Officer	QAA (Secretariat)
Steve Partridge	Accreditation Officer	University of Hertfordshire

| Helen Pokorny | Principal Lecturer, Learning and Teaching in Higher Education | University of Westminster |
| Raul Ranne | Coordinator of recognition of prior learning | Archimedes Foundation, Tartu, Estonia (and formerly Chair, European RPL Network) |

Recognition of prior learning

Professor Ruth Whittaker	Director of GCU LEAD (Learning Enhancement and Academic Development)	Glasgow Caledonian University
Kate Wicklow	Head of Quality and Student Engagement	National Union of Students
Harvey Woolf	Associate	Centre for Academic Practice, University of Wolverhampton; Student Assessment and Classification Working Group
Mike Wray	Learning Support Manager	York St John University