University of Amsterdam



Assessment Policy Framework UvA 2022

uva.nl

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Foreword

A working group comprising various assessment experts from across the organisation (faculties, Executive Staff and service departments, experienced lecturers and assessment specialists, policy staff, lawyers and education management), started revising the 2018 Assessment Policy Framework in 2022.

Both the Report on Assessment and Workload (2020) and the Online Assessment and Proctoring recommendation (2021) reveal that the 2018 Assessment Policy Framework is no longer optimally aligned with current developments in the area of teaching and assessment. This primarily concerns two developments: the rise of digital and online testing and the focus on alternative assessment methods, such as formative or programme-based testing. Some of the information in the 2018 framework is also outdated and only partially consistent with the UvA's Vision on Teaching and Learning (*Onderwijsvisie*). Finally, some of the conditions outlined in the 2018 framework do not constitute legal requirements or binding obligations but are perceived as such and implemented in our assessment policies. As a result, these conditions are creating unnecessary workloads and limit programmes' flexibility in terms of assessment and test innovation.

We also have expertise on various aspects of the assessment process in different parts of the organisation. The new framework draws on this in-house expertise, referencing information from sources such as the UvA's Teaching and Learning Centre which aggregates and shares assessment expertise with the organisation.

In order to establish a future-proof framework, a set of guiding principles have been defined with respect to target audience, format and scope:

Target Audience

The Assessment Policy Framework describes our assessment policy at institutional level. The framework will have to be elaborated in more detail to ensure that policies reflect the actual practice in the workplace. This 2022 Assessment Policy Framework is thus primarily targeted at education management staff and policy officers. Course coordinators, examiners and lecturers will mainly rely on the more detailed policies for the relevant degree programme.

Format and scope

The scope of this framework has been significantly reduced as a result of the choices made, and can now be published as a digital document. This document does not contain direct quotes from any referenced documents, reducing the likelihood that the information will quickly become obsolete. Instead, the document contains links to the sources of the relevant information, ensuring that the framework remains as up-to-date and concise as possible. This also ensures that any interim decisions affecting the framework can be quickly incorporated into the document, avoiding the circulation of outdated, printed versions.



1. Introduction

Providing high-quality education is one of the University of Amsterdam's primary tasks and ambitions. Teaching and assessment are inextricably linked. When designing a curriculum, it is crucial that exit qualifications, assessment and teaching methods are closely aligned (Biggs, 2011). Students should be confident that their knowledge, understanding and skills are assessed in a valid and reliable way Education Inspectorate, 2016). Summative and formative assessments also constitute a crucial feedback tool and are beneficial to students' learning process (Education Inspectorate, 2016).

While our efforts to ensure the quality of teaching and assessment are obviously subject to certain statutory rules, guidelines and frameworks, these regulations also leave room to accommodate the university's autonomy (at faculty, programme and lecturer level). This allows us to respond more effectively to changing social trends or developments such as technical innovations and new insights arising from research or literature.

This framework was established to provide an indication of the available regulatory leeway, in line with UvA's Vision on Teaching and Learning. A few of the conditions in this framework apply across the UvA organisation, and are featured in the grey boxes throughout this document. Degree programmes (or faculties) can use this information as a basis to formulate programme-specific assessment policies in line with their own objectives, formats and content.

2. Assessment Policy Framework objective



The Assessment Policy Framework aims to set out clear but minimal guidelines for the development of assessment policies for specific degree programmes in order to help examinations boards, course coordinators, examiners and lecturers perform their duties and responsibilities. The UvA's assessment policies are not always defined at programme level and tend to be set at other levels, such as the faculty level[1]. The faculty's assessment policy will then apply to all programmes within the faculty that have not established a programme-level assessment policy. For the purposes of readability, we will be referring to programme-specific assessment policies throughout this framework.

This framework offers degree programmes optimal flexibility to adjust – within the applicable statutory regulations and established (UvA) guidelines (as recorded in documents such as the Model Teaching and Examination Regulations) – their assessment policies in order reflect their specific vision on teaching and learning as well as any specific didactic models that may require innovative assessment methods and formats. This approach promotes constructive alignment: an integrated set of learning objectives, learning activities and assessment activities.

The assessment process involves a large number of stakeholders and actors. As such, it is important to accurately describe tasks and responsibilities for each aspect of the assessment process.[2] This framework is primarily aimed at the education managers, policy officers, examinations boards and assessment specialists who develop assessment policies at programme or faculty level. It offers education managers and policy officers the practical tools they need to design policies at programme level.

1 Policies can also be formulated at the level of a domain (e.g. within the FMG), School or College.

2 See Appendix 2.

3. Legal context

The Assessment Policy Framework does not exist in a vacuum: it is part of a broader body of laws and regulations, guidelines and (policy) frameworks in the field of education and assessment. The Framework is rooted in the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act (*Wet op het Hoger Onderwijs en Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek*).[3] The following diagram illustrates the key documents and their interrelationships at various levels.

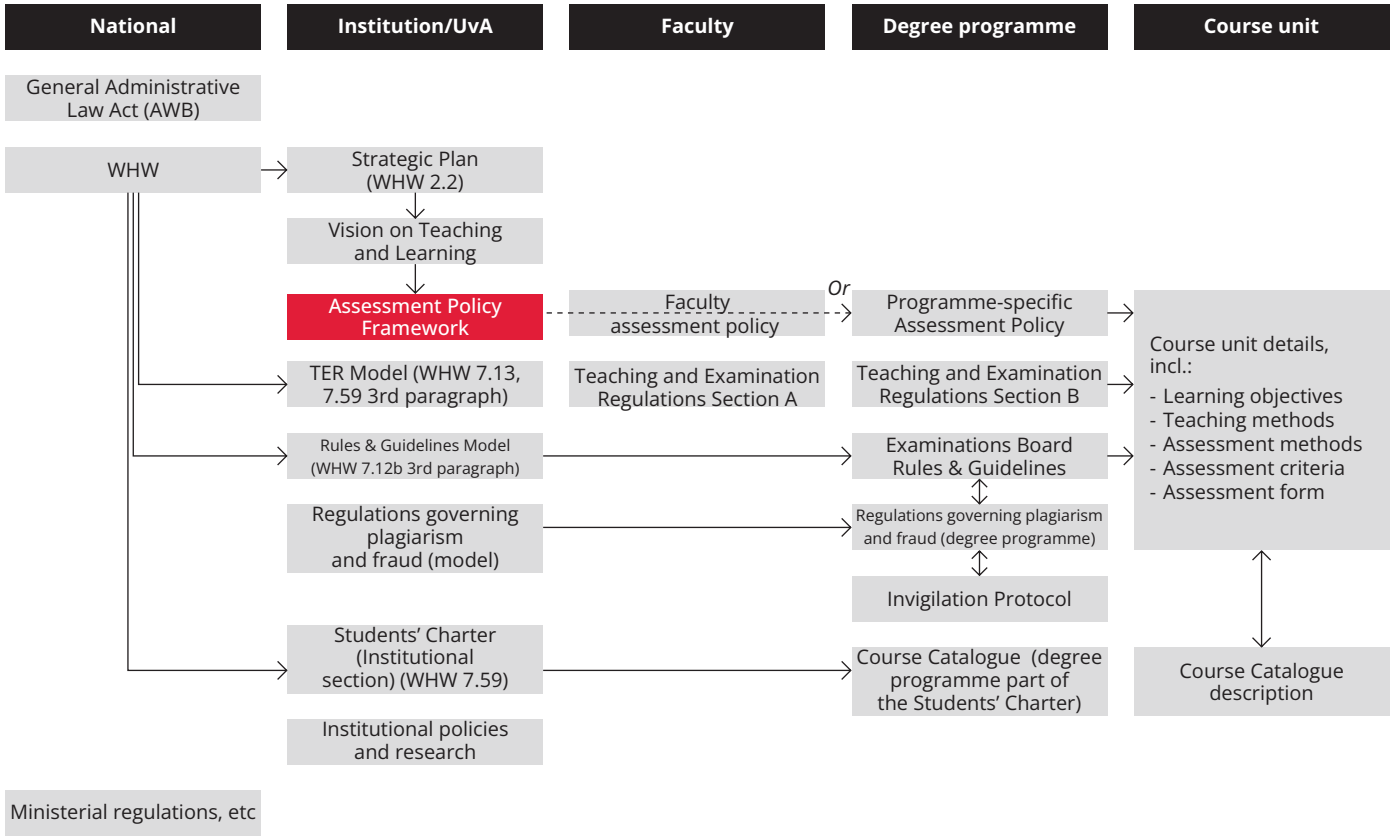
This also reflects the Assessment Policy Framework's relevance to the entire assessment quality assurance cycle at institutional and programme level.

3.1 Roles, tasks and responsibilities

In addition to a consistent set of documents, sound assessment policies require effective cooperation and coordination between all the parties involved. Regulations provide the responsible stakeholders with a framework for cooperation and coordination.

The roles, tasks and responsibilities (legal and otherwise) of all parties involved in the assessment process must be clearly defined in order to determine who should be involved in each step at each stage of the process.

Figure 1:
Legal context of the Assessment Policy Framework



3 The Dutch Higher Education and Research Act (Wet op het Hoger Onderwijs en wetenschappelijk Onderzoek, WHW).

Condition 1:
Model regulations and documents always form the starting point

The UvA's Executive Board provides models for various statutory regulations in line with the relevant legal frameworks and additional UvA policies (including the UvA's vision on teaching and learning). Adherence to the most up-to-date models will ensure the completeness of the TER, R&R and other relevant documents (see Figure 1) at each degree programme. This will allow degree programmes (more specifically programme directors) to ensure the quality of education and enable the examinations board to optimally safeguard the quality of assessments.

Appendix 2 provides an overview of the roles, tasks and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in the assessment process and links them to the documents in Figure 1.



4. Vision on education and assessment

This marks the first time the UvA has formulated a clear vision on assessment. The current vision on assessment reflects the UvA's vision on teaching and learning[4] and draws inspiration from developments in the field of teaching and assessment, as formulated in sources such as the Vision on Blended Education[5] and Outlook on the future of digital and other assessment formats (SURF, 2022)[6]. The latter document is based on current higher education trends and describes five key dimensions[7] that can serve as a strategic basis for institutional assessment policies.

The UvA's vision on teaching and learning outlines four key educational ambitions we aim to pursue across the organisation:

1. the UvA will focus on the development of motivated and ambitious students, by offering high-quality, innovative education;
2. the UvA is a broad, research-intensive university that helps its students to acquire the skills and knowledge which they will need to flourish in an increasingly complex world;
3. the UvA strives to be an open and diverse community in which all students feel at home and have access to the same opportunities.
4. the UvA assigns responsibility for its education to lecturers where possible, focusing intensively on support, knowledge sharing and the professionalism of its lecturers.

As a part of its efforts to pursue the first two ambitions from the vision on teaching and learning, the UvA applies constructive alignment and a more authentic approach to assessment. Examples of authentic assessment methods include case studies, actual or simulated patient interviews and presentations of research findings. Due to the wide range of programme-specific exit qualifications and course-specific learning objectives, an approach based on the principle of constructive alignment will require a wide variety of assessments and assessment formats. The concept of authentic assessment can be effectively applied when assessing the skills (academic and otherwise) needed to attain course learning objectives and programme exit qualifications.



4 Vision on Teaching and Learning - University of Amsterdam (uva.nl)
5 Onderwijsvernieuwing en blended onderwijs - Universiteit van Amsterdam (uva.nl) (Dutch)
6 Toekomstperspectief op (digitaal) toetsen en beoordelen (versnellingsplan.nl) (Dutch)
7 Dimension 1: A good balance between the formative and summative role of assessments, Dimension 2: Assessment and learning are integrated and coherent, modular where appropriate, Dimension 3: Assessments are authentic and varied, Dimension 4: Independent of location, time and format insofar as this facilitates learning and Dimension 5: Assessment process is digitised and organised in a consistent and collaborative manner

The UvA is also striving to integrate assessment and learning more closely to the point where examinations are considered an integral part of the learning process rather than its final stage. This will also make it easier for students to gain more insight into their academic progress. This approach also aligns with our Vision on Blended Learning, which strives to achieve the goals of 'More valuable on-campus education' and 'Facilitating and improving the structure of students' learning process', through the use of various digital tools (feedback and exercises).

In pursuing this vision, the UvA aims to strike an appropriate balance between the formative and summative functions of assessment, whereby formative assessment (also referred to as formative feedback or formative action) facilitates diagnosis, interim monitoring and reflection on the student's evolving learning process. This type of assessment is intended primarily as a self-evaluation tool to allow students to find out where they stand at a particular moment. Formative assessments are mainly intended to provide feedback and are thus not meant to produce a mark that counts towards the final assessment.

The Advisory Report on Assessment & Workload (2020) traces the rising workload among lecturers back to factors such as the growing use of summative assessments. This concerns assessments and interim assessments that count towards the final mark. A more suitable balance between formative and summative assessment could also help reduce workloads in the long run. In order to achieve this, lecturers should not be made solely responsible for providing feedback during formative assessments. Fellow students can also play a role in this process.

Location and time-independent assessment methods can be particularly useful in terms of formative assessment: students do not always have to be present at a certain time (and/or) location to take the test. This will result in a more flexible assessment process and make assessments more accessible to all UvA students in line with the UvA's third ambition.

Our assessment policy is based around choices that contribute to the open and diverse community we aspire to be. Education and assessment should be relatable to students from various backgrounds and reflect a diverse and international society. The UvA encourages, facilitates and supports the professionalisation of assessments in support of both novice and experienced lecturers, examiners and examinations board members. The faculty and central Teaching & Learning Centres (TLCs) play an important role in this regard. Innovations in the field of digital and other assessment are closely monitored, and our efforts towards the professionalisation of teaching are adjusted accordingly. We are also working to create an organisation in which the assessment process is supported and digitised as comprehensively as possible. The entire assessment process is supported by the service departments wherever possible, enabling us to optimally facilitate education and the associated assessments for all students. This integrated approach can also help to ensure that students with disabilities such as dyslexia (favourable fonts) and colour blindness (contrasting colours in images) are continuously supported.

4.1 Assessment and workload

Workload is a topical and critical issue in the higher education sector. Excessive workloads negatively impact both lecturers and students. The UvA Employee Monitor has consistently recorded high workloads among academic staff for several consecutive years (difference between actual and desired workload[8]). The workload specifically associated with assessment is described in the Advisory Report on Assessment & Workload (2020). Against this background, we should stress that all those involved in the assessment process must be aware how specific choices affect the workload of both staff and students. The legal frameworks and university rules and guidelines offer sufficient scope for choices that reduce workloads for both staff (lecturers, examinations boards and support staff) and students to more acceptable levels. The quality and effectiveness of assessment is obviously a top priority in this regard.

Besides emphasising the need to carefully weigh the effects of those choices on staff and student workloads when developing programme-specific assessment policies, the advisory report also yielded a number of concrete recommendations. A selection of recommendations relating to programme-specific assessment policies has been

8 Employee Monitor - Executive Staff and SSU - University of Amsterdam (uva.nl)

incorporated into this framework and included as Appendix 3 to this document. Where appropriate to the programme, we recommend elaborating these workload recommendations within the framework of the programme-specific policy.

4.1.1 Student workloads

In addition to workload among lecturers and support staff arising from the practical aspects of assessment, the curriculum and scheduling of assessments can greatly add to student workloads, thus rendering the programme less feasible. Full-time studies obviously require students' full-time availability and commitment. However, students (who have their principal enrolment at a full-time programme) are entitled to an academically feasible programme (UvA Students' Charter[9]). A sound assessment policy should help us to achieve this goal.

Condition 2:
A feasible programme

Students have the right to an academically feasible programme. We achieve this through measures such as:

- evenly distributing the assessments, both throughout the academic year and within individual course units. This may involve a combination of formative and summative assessments.
- scheduling the various assessment times to avoid any conflict between the programme's various course units. This also applies to the scheduling of resits.



9 https://www.uva.nl/binaries/content/assets/uva/en/about-the-uva/policy-and-regulations/teaching/isb/studentenstatuut-2021---en-opgemaakt.pdf

5. The Assessment Web – a practical model for assessment policy

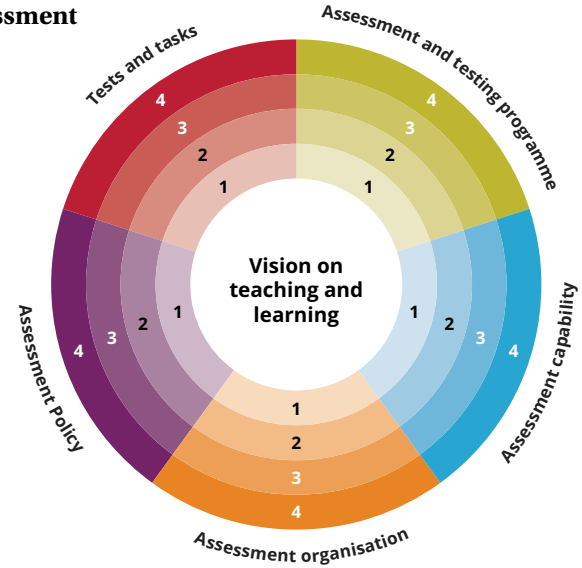
Assessment policy is a coherent quality assurance system containing measures and provisions for the monitoring and promotion of assessment and examination quality (Education Inspectorate, 2003). Assessment policies may be formulated at different institutional levels. Sound assessment policy is characterised by consistency: the policy must reflect the vision on teaching and learning and be consistent at all levels (Education Inspectorate, 2016).

The Education Inspectorate report (2016) mentions the assessment pyramid as a practical starting point for assessment policy development. The assessment web[10] builds on the assessment pyramid developed by HAN University of Applied Sciences and places the vision on teaching and learning at the heart of the model. As a result, the assessment web model is more consistent with UvA's Assessment Policy Framework than the assessment pyramid. Throughout this document, we will be applying the assessment web as a framework for assessment policy development.

Degree programmes can evolve in terms of assessment quality. The assessment web distinguishes four developmental stages, in line with the Auditing Instrument for Sustainability in Higher Education (AISHE)[11]. Programmes may be in different developmental stages with regard to the various key components.

This chapter discusses the various components of the assessment web (5.1 Assessment Capability, 5.2 Assessment Organisation, 5.3 Assessment Policy, 5.4 Assessment Programme and 5.5 Tests and tasks, describes the assessment web at an institutional level (in line with the UvA's Vision on Teaching and Learning), and explains how this model can help faculties and degree programmes develop a programme-specific assessment policy.

Figure 2:
Assessment web





10 Het toetsweb: duurzame kwaliteit van toetsing (han.nl) (Dutch)
11 Auditing Instrument for Sustainability in Higher Education (AISHE)



In practice, the assessment web component 'Tests and tasks' will mainly be elaborated at programme and course unit level. The stages of the assessment cycle[12] provide a framework to help determine which aspects of this subject should be covered in the programme-specific assessment policy. The key topics associated with each stage are described on the UvA Teaching & Learning Centre (TLC) website and are adhered to throughout this assessment framework. See section 5.5 for details. While the TLC assessment cycle focuses on information provided by the lecturer, programme-level agreements on the highlighted subjects are also relevant and should be described in the programme-specific assessment policy.

Condition 3:
Assessment policy at programme level.

The assessment policies for each programme have been elaborated within the framework of statutory and internal UvA regulations and policies, resulting in a detailed set of policies for students, lecturers, course coordinators, examiners, examinations board and education managers. Any revision of these policies should preferably be based around the assessment web and assessment cycle. At a minimum, this assessment policy covers the topics outlined in Chapter 5 of the framework.

5.1 Assessment capability

Assessment expertise is required at all assessment policy levels. Lecturers' assessment capability obviously plays a key role in interpreting assessment information, applying it to determine students' progress and assessing how it could contribute to their learning process (Straetmans, 2006). However, the expertise of the examinations board and assessment committees is also key to safeguarding assessment quality and ensuring that programme management has the necessary expertise to develop a balanced and varied assessment programme / assessment plan.

Assessment capability is a prerequisite for sound assessments and assessment policies. This is why it is also important to provide all those involved in assessment policies the opportunities and time they need to develop their expertise. The use of digital and online assessment formats and tools is an increasingly important area for attention.

Knowledge sharing between all those involved in the assessment process (including assessment experts, examiners and examinations boards) and the provision of accurate and clear information helps to build the necessary expertise. The UvA Teaching & Learning Centre facilitates these efforts to develop expertise and share useful knowledge. Visit the TLC website for details.

12 Assessment - UvA Teaching and Learning Centres

Condition 4:
Professionalisation

In an effort to continuously secure and improve the quality of teaching and assessment, the UvA offers lecturers and examiners opportunities to improve their curriculum development skills and assessment expertise (BKO/SKO/ courses and workshops). The range of available training courses also incorporates the latest scientific findings in the field of digital and traditional assessment.

5.2 Assessment organisation

The assessment organisation within the assessment web defines the interactions between lecturers, examinations board, assessment committee, management and support staff working together to achieve the desired assessment quality across all assessment entities (Van Deursen & Van Zijl, 2015).

The assessment organisation plays an important role in ensuring assessment quality and – like assessment capability – is a prerequisite for high-quality assessments and sound assessment policies.

The various assessment formats (oral, written, paper, digital, online or physical) place different demands on the assessment organisation.

An oral test will require different organisational efforts than a digital or online test. Appendix 2 provides an overview of the roles, tasks and responsibilities associated with assessment in general and digital assessment in particular. This concerns summative assessment. Course coordinators and lecturers are mainly responsible for organising formative assessments. However, formative assessments can obviously draw on the available assessment organisation (e.g. quizzes in Canvas).

Condition 5:
Timely and adequate facilities

The programme must ensure that there are adequate facilities for administering the test by making timely agreements with the departments responsible.

Condition 6:
Adequate digital and other facilities

The institution will provide faculties and programmes with the digital and other facilities they need to responsibly administer assessments and register marks. Examiners exclusively use facilities provided by the UvA. Examiners are adequately supported in the use of assessment and mark registration applications.

A number of rules and various retention periods apply to the archiving of teaching and assessment documents, and these are specified in the 'Educational Retention Periods – Educational Documents Selection Matrix'.[13] To demonstrate the quality of the assessments to internal and external committees, it is advisable to also archive other assessment materials (e.g. peer consultation, quality analysis and possible ideas for improvement). There is no obligation to create extensive assessment records, as long as the relevant assessment materials are properly archived. This concerns the archival of summative assessments and midterm assessments.

The degree programme is responsible for managing the relevant assessment material. The relevant programme administration is responsible for management implementation.

5.3 Assessment Policy

The policy component of the assessment web refers to the set of established agreements, both substantive and procedural, on testing and assessment (Bruijns & Kok, 2015). This assessment web step defines assessment policies at several levels, including those at the institutional level and programme level.

The Assessment Policy Framework describes specific assessment policy provisions at the institutional level. This framework forms the starting point for further policy development at faculty or programme level. This aspect of the web has been elaborated in greater detail at degree

13 Archiving, registering and digitising documents - UvA Staff - University of Amsterdam

programme-level, offering students, course coordinators, lecturers, examiners, assessment experts, programme managers and education support staff a practical guideline to help them perform the aspects of the assessment cycle for which they are responsible.

A description of the relevant assessment policy will not suffice. Crucially, all stakeholders should be familiar with the assessment policy and know where to find the information they need.

Condition 7:
Clear communication and information about assessments

Each student, course coordinator, lecturer and examiner must clearly understand what is expected of them in terms of teaching and assessment. This will require clear communication and instructions by the programme. The institution and programme will actively inform stakeholders about the TER, Examinations Board rules and guidelines, testing policies, the Students' Charter, Course Catalogue and details on the relevant course unit.

5.4 Assessment and testing programme

The Dublin Descriptors were drawn up in 2004 by a group of European higher education specialists to determine the level of a Higher Education curriculum (applied/HBO and research university/WO, Bachelor's and Master's). This quality framework was designed to align the quality of degree programmes across the EU. While many European countries have since adopted various other quality frameworks (EQF/NLQF (europass.nl)), most Dutch institutions – including the UvA – still largely apply the Dublin descriptors. However, we will need to keep monitoring developments in this area.

Each programme interprets the five Dublin descriptors themes (Knowledge and understanding, Applying knowledge and understanding, Making judgements, Communication, Learning skills) differently, according to the scope and organisational culture of the programme and its overarching field. The programme-specific interpretation of the descriptors must be reflected in the exit qualifications for the programme.

An assessment programme constitutes a deliberate and reasoned combination of assessment and assessment formats, appropriate to the programme's exit qualifications (Baartman & Van der Vleuten, 2015). In other words, it is an overview demonstrating that the specified exit qualifications are being assessed and how this is being done. A degree programme is not the sum of multiple course units, but it is one unified whole: the curriculum. The programme director is primarily responsible for the degree programme's assessment programme. To this end, it is important that the programme's exit qualifications are translated into concrete and verifiable learning objectives for each course unit.





One or more course coordinators/examiners[14] are responsible for the content, design and implementation of each course unit and will work to ensure their quality within the framework of the curriculum. Course coordinators/examiners are also responsible for implementing assessments in accordance with the assessment programme and learning objectives of the relevant course unit. This involves determining the optimal number of assessment times and striking an optimal balance between formative and summative assessment.

As well as evaluating and safeguarding the quality of individual assessments (summative and otherwise), the Examinations Board also monitors the quality of the assessment and testing programme as a whole. In such cases, it focuses on the coherence and comprehensiveness of the entire package of assessments and whether they sufficiently assess the established exit qualifications. Also see section 5.5.7.1.

Effective cooperation and coordination between the programme, examinations board and examiners are key to creating a sound assessment programme. The programme director will describe – in consultation with all programme stakeholders – the degree programme's assessment programme in the programme-specific framework.

While assessment programmes may initially take a lot of time and energy to develop, they ultimately provide all stakeholders in the assessment process with clarity and guidance and help the examinations board carry out its statutory duties. They also serve as a sound basis for self-reflection during programme accreditation processes and facilitate programme revisions.

Condition 8:
Quality frameworks

The programme must ensure that explicit and consistent links are made between the applicable quality frameworks[15], exit qualifications, the educational objectives of curriculum components and educational/assessment methods.

5.5 Tests and tasks – TLC assessment cycle

According to the Higher Education and Research Act (WHW), an examination represents an investigation by the examiner into students' knowledge, insight and skills, as well as an assessment of the results of that investigation. Examinations are defined as (learning) activities and/or measuring instruments used to determine whether the intended learning outcomes have been achieved (Joosten-ten Brinke & Draaier, 2015). The number of examinations/assessment times needed to assess the learning outcomes for a specific course unit has not been specified: no (statutory) minimum or maximum number of examinations per course

14 In cases where the course coordinator has not been designated as the examiner, an examiner will always have final responsibility.
15 Currently we use the Dublin descriptors. However, other quality frameworks such as the EQF / NLQF may become the standard in the near future.



unit has been established. The number of examinations may vary depending on students' metacognitive and self-regulation skills (multiple minor examinations may be more helpful for first-year students than would be the case for senior students). This will motivate and help students to keep studying throughout the academic term. It is important to strike a good balance between the educational principles of study success[16] (active learning, the integration of teaching and learning) and student and lecturer workloads. This could involve the use of both formative and summative assessments.

Like teaching, assessment is a cyclical process: completing a PDCA cycle will contribute to the continuous improvement of assessment (and teaching). There are also various useful models to help describe all steps of the improvement cycle for assessments. The UvA's TLC uses the assessment cycle for this purpose (see figure 3).

The various stages of the assessment cycle and underlying subjects serve as a framework for the design of programme-specific assessment policies. For more details on the subjects associated with each step, please refer to the TLC website. Although the information on the TLC website is aimed at lecturers, it can be readily translated to programme level. Certain aspects of the assessment cycle are subject to additional UvA-wide guidelines or areas of concern. These are briefly described in the section on the relevant subject.

Figure 3:
Assessment cycle



- Learning objectives, quality requirements and assessment methods
- Test blueprint, standardisation, test question design and assessment tools.
- Invigilation, proctoring and fraud
- Assessment tools
- Exam and item analysis
- Publication of marks, discussion of marks and feedback
- Evaluation of test

16 Studiesucces - Universiteit van Amsterdam (uva.nl)

Assessments (3 NVAO standard) and attained learning outcomes (4 NVAO standard) are especially crucial during accreditation and re-accreditation processes[17]. Given the weight of final projects in determining the student's academic achievements, it is important to devote specific attention to this aspect in the framework and programme-specific assessment policies.

5.5.1 Design

As a minimum, the programme-specific assessment policy will cover the following aspects of assessment design:

- **Exit qualifications and learning outcomes**
- **Constructive alignment**
- **Quality requirements: Validity, reliability and transparency**
- **Formative and summative assessment**
- **Choosing an assessment format**

For more information on these subjects, visit the TLC website:
1. Design - UvA Teaching and Learning Centres

5.5.1.1 Additional UvA agreements – Design

Choosing an assessment format

The TLC overview covers many different assessment formats in detail. While this provides a source of inspiration, the legal frameworks also offer scope for innovations in assessment. The use of online teaching methods and digital examinations has surged, partly as a result of the COVID pandemic. Like other assessment formats, digital and online exams must be consistent with the relevant academic objectives.

Exam quality and constructive alignment are key building blocks for this new framework. These principles may have implications for programme-specific assessment policies and the selection of assessment formats, and by extension the assessment of exams and associated time investments. It is important to bear this in mind when making any adjustments.

Group assignments

Group assignments that reflect a course's learning objectives may be used to complement the existing range of assessment formats. However, when using group assignments, it must still be possible to determine whether each individual student has adequately attained the learning objectives for the relevant course.

5.5.2 Development

As a minimum, the programme-specific assessment policy will cover the following aspects of assessment development:

- **Test matrices**
- **Standards/cut-off marks**
- **Designing test questions**
- **Designing an assessment tool**
- **Peer review**

For more information on these subjects, visit the TLC website:
2. Development - UvA Teaching and Learning Centres



17 Beoordelingskader instellingsreview (nvao.net)

5.5.2.1 Additional UvA agreements – Development

Cut-off mark method

The UvA's TER (and model TER) specify which final marks students have to obtain in order to pass a course. The course examiner (generally also the course coordinator) is responsible for determining exactly how this mark is determined. Additional guidelines on this subject may also be established in the programme-specific assessment policy, e.g. by agreeing on a certain method of calculation.

5.5.3 Administration

As a minimum, the programme-specific assessment policy will cover the following aspects of assessment administration:

- **Rules and Regulations**
- **Invigilation and student identification**
- **Digital testing security**
- **Additional time or special provisions**
- **Practical organisation**

For more information on these subjects, visit the TLC website:
3. Administration - UvA Teaching and Learning Centres

5.5.3.1 Additional UvA agreements – Administration

Invigilation

Invigilation, both online and on-site, is needed during exams to ensure an orderly process. Although examiners and lecturers are often present during examinations in practice, this is not compulsory. In-house or contracted invigilators can also be deployed for this purpose. However, an examiner must be available on-site or by phone to answer any questions from the invigilators.

Online invigilation

Although forms of online proctoring were also used on a small scale before COVID, the pandemic highlighted their usefulness. Proctorio proved especially vital in ensuring the continuity of teaching and assessment and minimising study delays.

In 2020, the Executive Board made a decision on the use of online proctoring with Proctorio (Decision on Online invigilation with Proctorio, May 2020). Under this decision, online proctoring may be added to the range of remote online invigilation tools if no suitable alternative can be found due to the COVID pandemic. For now, the UvA's position on online proctoring remains 'no, unless' and is dependent on the current COVID situation. The use of selection tests may be subject to other considerations.

5.5.4 Marking and assessment

As a minimum, the programme-specific assessment policy will cover the following aspects of exam marking and assessment:

- **Assessment tools**
- **Answer module for closed and open questions**
- **Assessment tools for skill tests**
- **Rubric for essays, papers and case-based questions**
- **Fraud and plagiarism**

For more information on these subjects, visit the TLC website:
4. Marking and assessment - UvA Teaching and Learning Centres

5.5.4.1 Additional UvA agreements – Marking and assessment

Assessment tools

While the use of (standard) assessment tools for summative assessment requires an initial time investment, it can – besides improving assessment quality – also save time in the longer term.

The use of assessment tools offers benefits when marking tests that require a lot of revision time. For example, junior lecturers or even student assistants can be deployed, provided they are supervised by an examiner.

Fraud and plagiarism rules

The UvA expects all students to be familiar with our standards and values for academic integrity and act accordingly. A set of Regulations governing Fraud and Plagiarism[18] is established for each programme to ensure that appropriate action is taken in the event of suspected fraud or plagiarism. These regulations describe how those involved in the assessment process should act in case of fraud and/or plagiarism. The UvA provides a set of model Regulations governing Fraud and Plagiarism, which can be supplemented and – where possible – adapted by the Examinations Board and must be adopted and incorporated into the Rules and Guidelines of the Examination Board

18 fraude-en-plagiaat-regeling-2019-eng-opgemaakt-c.pdf

5.5.5 Analysis

As a minimum, the programme-specific assessment policy will cover the following aspects of examination analysis:

- **Examination analysis**
- **Item analysis**
- **Adjustments in the case of examinations that are too difficult or too easy**

For more information on these subjects, visit the TLC website:
5. Analysis - UvA Teaching and Learning Centres

5.5.5.1 Additional UvA agreements – Analysis

The analysis of items and exams requires additional knowledge and skills. Access to specialist support can be beneficial to assessment quality and quality improvement, e.g. when conducting psychometric analysis. However, this expertise must then be readily available to examiners, or examiners must be given the time and space to further professionalise themselves in this area.

5.5.6 Reporting

As a minimum, the programme-specific assessment policy will cover the following aspects of examination reporting:

- **Publication of the examination results**
- **Feedback**
- **Right of inspection**
- **Resits**

For more information on these subjects, visit the TLC website:
6. Reporting - UvA Teaching and Learning Centres

5.5.6.1 Additional UvA agreements – Reporting

Right of inspection

Students have the right to inspect any exams (summative or otherwise). They are also entitled to review the answer model or assessment tool. There are no fixed inspection procedures (see the TLC website for the various options). However, we do recommend that degree programmes review the inspection process. Streamlining the inspection window can help reduce workload. We recommend using an inspection procedure that safeguards the students' right of inspection, but requires little time investment on the part of the lecturer and allows for the exam to be reused.

5.5.7 Evaluation

The evaluation of exams or entire assessment and testing programmes is a crucial step in the assessment and testing quality assurance cycle, allowing for continuous monitoring and quality improvement in the run-up to new PDCA cycles at individual exam or assessment programme level.

Visit the TLC website for more practical information:
7. Evaluation - UvA Teaching and Learning Centres

5.5.7.1 Additional UvA agreements – Evaluation

Evaluating examinations

The evaluation of examinations forms part of the overall course evaluation, and is generally the responsibility of the course coordinator. The course coordinator has access to important information in this regard (documentation, process flow, performance, analyses), but may also obtain additional information and (student) feedback in order to form a complete picture of the quality of teaching and assessment. Student feedback on the perceived quality of





assessments is routinely incorporated into the UvA's standard student feedback tool (UvA Q)[19].

In addition to the course coordinator, the programme director is also responsible for educational quality. The programme director will monitor the quality of the programme as a whole and is responsible for making adjustments when necessary. The programme committee is an important counterpart for the programme director. The programme committee monitors quality assurance efforts for both the overall degree programme and its individual courses. These quality assurance activities are also based on student perceptions of assessment quality. In the event of any feedback on the quality of assessments, the programme committee can approach the programme director who can then discuss this with the course coordinator.

Evaluating examinations – the role of the Examinations Boards

The Examinations Board plays an important role in evaluating assessments, both summative and otherwise. Besides evaluating and safeguarding the quality of individual assessments, the Examinations Board also monitors the quality of the assessment and testing programme as a whole (Condition 8).

It is advisable to create an evaluation timetable that ensures all individual assessments and the entire assessment and testing programme is periodically evaluated at least once every six years. However, it would also be advisable to take an annual sample of any new examinations or examinations that stood out (very high or low pass rates, notable examination analysis, high number of student objections or complaints).

The Examinations Board guarantees the level and quality of the examinations. Checking whether examinations meet the specified learning objectives is an important step in this regard. The Examinations Board can fulfil this responsibility in a number of ways, such as assessing the quality themselves (based on random samples or otherwise) or having such assessment prepared by an assessment committee[20] or an assessment specialist. The Examinations Board may also mandate an assessment committee for this purpose. As a part of its quality assurance duties, the Examinations Board will then submit a report to the programme director, who is primarily responsible for improving assessment quality[21].

Final projects

External assessments often emphasise the involvement of Examinations Boards in the assessment of final projects (such as Bachelor's or Master's theses). Examinations Boards are requesting checks of final projects more and more often, as individually supervised theses increase the risk of subjectivity with regard to their assessment. While the Examinations Board should not take on the role of assessor, it must form an opinion on the quality of the final project assessment. The quality and focus of the final projects are

19 UvA Q student feedback - UvA Staff - University of Amsterdam

20 Also see Appendix 2.

21 Van de Veen, Pol en Moerkerke (2018). De toetscommissie: borgen of zorgen? De rol en positie van de toetscommissie in het bekostigd hoger onderwijs. ('Assessment Committees: The role and position of assessment committees in publicly funded higher education') *Hoger Onderwijs Management*, 2, 11-14.

particularly important: does it genuinely meet the standards for Bachelor's or Master's programmes and is it sufficiently research-intensive? The Examinations Board will also determine whether final projects have been deservedly awarded a pass mark. The Examinations Board does not award marks, but verifies (through random sampling) that the final projects have been properly marked, that the assessment procedure has been properly observed, that all forms have been completed and that the assessment has been substantiated.



6. Assessment Policy Framework update

The permanent review cycle does not include reviews or updates of the Framework Assessment Policy, even though this is relevant given its relationship with our vision on teaching and learning. This chapter describes a number of guiding principles to help keep the framework up to date.

6.1 Ownership

Ownership of the framework rests with Academic Affairs. This department of the Executive Staff monitors whether the framework requires any adjustments in line with the agreements described below (6.2 Management).

Any changes to the framework will be coordinated with UvA experts on the relevant topic in order to ensure the quality of the revised assessment framework and build support for its implementation.

6.2 Management

This framework is consistent with the UvA's vision on teaching and learning and the legal frameworks for assessment. If the vision on teaching and learning or legal frameworks (e.g. the TER and R&R models) are amended, the framework should be reviewed against these changes and adjusted if necessary. The document must also be checked once a year to ensure the accuracy of all references.

Any adjustments to the Assessment Policy Framework must be incorporated into faculty- or programme-level assessment policies. This will require clear communication on adjustments to the framework and their potential implications for programme-level assessment policies.

The UvA's vision on teaching and learning dates from 2017. No vision on assessment was formulated while drafting the vision on teaching and learning. Given that assessment forms an integral part of the education process, a vision on assessment should be incorporated into our vision on teaching and learning any during future updates.

Assessment Policy Framework revision:

- Full review of the Assessment Policy Framework upon revision of the Vision on Teaching and Learning, whereby the Assessment Policy Framework is amended and re-adopted via formal channels.
- Any supplements and minor adjustments to the framework in response to newly enacted decisions relevant to the review framework (such as new decisions on proctoring) will be implemented as soon as they come into force.
- All references and links will be reviewed every year under the responsibility of Academic Affairs.



Appendix 1

Key documents

National

- **General Administrative Law Act (Algemene Wet Bestuursrecht)**
  wetten.nl - Regeling - Algemene wet bestuursrecht - BWBR0005537 (overheid.nl)
- **The Dutch Higher Education and Research Act (Wet op het Hoger Onderwijs en wetenschappelijk Onderzoek, WHW).**
  wetten.nl - Regeling - Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek - BWBR0005682 (overheid.nl)

Institution/UvA

- **Strategic Plan**
  2021 – 2026 Strategic Plan Inspiring Generations - University of Amsterdam (uva.nl)
- **Vision on Teaching and Learning**
  Vision on teaching and learning – University of Amsterdam (uva.nl)
- **Vision on Blended Learning**
  Educational reform and blended learning - University of Amsterdam (uva.nl)
- **Assessment Policy Framework**
  Assessment Policy Framework - University of Amsterdam (uva.nl)
- **TER model, incl. guidelines in accordance with section 9.5 of the WHW, see box:**

Appendix II
Overview of guidelines in accordance with Section 9.5 of the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act (WHW) at the UvA:

*The structure is a **model** that has been established as a guideline:*		Date of decision: 20 November 2012 Effective date: 1 September 2013
Section 4.5, paragraph 3	*Most recent mark applies:*	Date of decision: 14 February 2008 Effective date: 14 March 2008
Section 4.6	*Marks (pass mark = 5.5)*	Date of decision: 14 February 2008 Effective date: 14 March 2008
Section 1.2a	*Flexible learning [only for programmes that take part in the flexible learning pilot programme]*	Date of decision: 5 April 2017 Effective date: 1 May 2017

- **Model Rules and Regulations**
- **Regulations governing plagiarism and fraud (model)**
- **Students' Charter (institutional section)**
  Education – University of Amsterdam (uva.nl)

Appendix 2

Tasks and responsibilities

The tasks and responsibilities with respect to the assessment process, as assigned within the UvA, are outlined below.

Document	Owner	Execution	Timing	Involved	Consent, advice or approval
General Administrative Law Act (AWB)		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
(Dutch) Higher Education and Research Act (WHW)		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Strategic Plan (WHW Section 2.2)	Executive Board (CvB)	Academic Affairs	6-yearly	Broad working group of experts and stakeholders	Right of consent Joint Meeting (GV) & approval Supervisory Board (TvT)
Vision on Teaching and Learning	Executive Board (CvB)	Academic Affairs	6-yearly	Broad working group of experts and stakeholders	Advice Joint Meeting (GV)
Assessment Policy Framework	Executive Board (CvB)	Academic Affairs and Legal Affairs	6-yearly	Broad working group of experts and stakeholders	Advice University Committee on Education (UCO)
TER Model (WHW 7.13, 7.59 3rd paragraph)	Executive Board (CvB)	Legal Affairs and Academic Affairs	In case of relevant legal changes	Broad working group of experts and stakeholders	Right of consent Central Student Council (CSR)
Rules & Guidelines Model (WHW 7.12b 3rd paragraph)	Executive Board (CvB)	Legal Affairs and Academic Affairs	In case of relevant legal changes	Broad working group of experts and stakeholders	n/a
Regulations governing Fraud and Plagiarism (model)	Executive Board (CvB)	Legal Affairs and Academic Affairs	In case of relevant legal changes	Broad working group of experts and stakeholders	n/a
Students' Charter (Institutional section) (WHW 7.59)	Executive Board (CvB)	Legal Affairs and Academic Affairs	In case of relevant legal changes	Broad working group of experts and stakeholders	Right of consent Central Student Council (CSR)
University policy en research	Executive Board (CvB)	Depending on subject	Depending on subject	Depending on subject	Depending on subject

Document	Owner	Execution	Timing	Involved	Consent, advice or approval
Faculty assessment policy	Dean	Faculty file holder	In the event of changes to the Assessment Policy Framework or changes to the assessment policy of the faculty	Examinations Board, programme directors, assessment experts	n/a
Teaching and Examination Regulations Section A	Dean	Faculty file holder	Annually or otherwise with the consent of the representative advisory bodies	Programme directors, Faculty Student Council	Right of consent and right to be consulted Programme Committee (PC) en Right of consent Faculty Student Council (FSR, as stipulated in the WHW
Programme-specific Assessment Policy	Dean	Faculty file holder	In the event of changes to the Assessment Policy Framework or own substantive changes to a curriculum	Examinations Board, programme directors, assessment experts	n/a
Teaching and Examination Regulations Section B	Dean	Faculty file holder	Annually or otherwise with the consent of the representative advisory bodies	Programme directors, Faculty Student Council Programme Committee	"Right of consent and right to be consulted Programme Committee (PC) en Right of consent Faculty Student Council (FSR, as stipulated in the WHW
Rules and Guidelines of the Examinations Board	Examinations Board	n/a	Annually	n/a	n/a
Regulations governing plagiarism and fraud (degree programme)	Examinations Board	n/a	Annually	n/a	n/a
Invigilation Protocol	Examinations Board	n/a	Annually	n/a	n/a
Course Catalogue (degree programme part of the Students' Charter)	Programme director	File holder degree programme	Annually	n/a	n/a
Course unit information and details, incl:	Course coordinator/Examiner	n/a	Annually	n/a	n/a
- Learning objectives	Course coordinator/Examiner	n/a	Annually	n/a	n/a
- Teaching methods	Course coordinator/Examiner	n/a	Annually	n/a	n/a
- Assessment methods	Examinor/Course coordinator	n/a	Annually	n/a	n/a
- Assessment criteria	Examinor/Course coordinator	n/a	Annually	n/a	n/a
- Assessment form	Examinor/Course coordinator	n/a	Annually	n/a	n/a
Course Catalogue description	Course coordinator/Examiner	File holder degree programme	Annually	n/a	n/a

Appendix 3

Suggestions and tips for workload reduction

The boxes below contain some tips to help reduce any assessment-related workload arising from the Assessment & Workload Advisory Report (2020). They have also been included in the assessment framework where applicable.

These suggestions serve as a source of inspiration for the framework's intended audience, and can be useful when formulating programme-specific assessment policies.

Improving administrative support for assessment tasks
Efforts to improve administrative and logistical support for assessment tasks can help reduce the workloads for lecturers and examiners. This concerns subjects such as: test administration, recording/publishing test results, organising inspection, archiving examination documents.

An alternative for assessment records
Identifying a simple alternative to labour-intensive assessment records: Although assessment materials must be archived, examiners do not need to create a separate assessment file for each examination they administer as was required under the former Assessment Policy Framework (2018). Support staff can help to ensure that materials are archived in such a way that assessment records can be created upon request.

Use of an assessment programme
The use of an assessment programme has proven to help reduce assessment workloads to a more acceptable level. A clearly defined assessment programme offers lecturers, examiners and support staff clarity on their assessment duties and responsibilities and can help to prevent any overlap within the assessment programme (for example: content-related overlap in the case of two poorly aligned courses on a similar subject, or excessive use of specific labour-intensive assessment methods, too many assessments of certain skills, etc.). It can also contribute to a more academically feasible and teachable programme by improving the distribution of assignments and exams.

Streamlining the assessment process
While efforts to streamline the overall assessment process and thesis process in particular can save time, this may come at the expense of customisation. Carefully consider whether potential efforts to streamline a programme are both feasible and desirable.

Expert support during assessment development
Offer examiners individual support from an educational scientist or assessment expert during the assessment design phase. This will contribute to a well thought-out assessment design that can improve efficiency and quality in subsequent steps.

Test question database
Building up a database of test questions (item bank) can help to streamline the assessment design process.

To peer review or not to peer review
While the quality of assessments will benefit if they have been reviewed by more people (peer review), this procedure is not strictly required for all tests, especially if their content and format remain unchanged for several years. However, we do urgently recommend applying the four-eyes principle when developing new course units and assessment formats.

Examiners doubling as invigilators, or not
Examiners are not legally required to physically attend examinations. While examiners are responsible for administering the examination, their duties only require them to be available to invigilators while it is taking place.

Assessment tools
While the use of rubrics/standard assessment forms requires an initial time investment, it can save time in the longer term, while contributing to assessment quality.

Marking method – marking assistant
The chosen examination format will also determine the marking method and required amount of time. A marking assistant may be appointed to assist on exams requiring a lot of marking time. For example, junior lecturers or student assistants (under the supervision of the examiner) or automated marking in the case of digital (MC) examinations.

Expert assessment analysis support
Access to specialised assessment analysis support (e.g. psychometric analysis) may be helpful in certain cases.

Streamlining inspection opportunities
Streamlining the inspection window can help reduce workloads. Make sure to choose an inspection method that requires little time investment by the lecturer and allows for the examination to be reused where necessary.

Ensuring the quality of final projects – alternative to second assessor
Assessment panels generally expect final projects to be evaluated by two assessors and require examinations boards to carry out periodic sampling. However, we recommend that programmes carefully consider how best to ensure the quality of final projects in an effective and efficient way, in line with their own individual characteristics. There is no legal requirement to deploy a second assessor.

Appendix 4

Dublin Descriptors

	Bachelor's qualifications	**Kwalificaties Master**
Knowledge and understanding	Has demonstrable knowledge and understanding of a field, building on and exceeding the level achieved in secondary education; typically functions at a level that occasionally requires knowledge (gained by consulting specialised textbooks) of the latest developments in the field.	Has demonstrated a knowledge and understanding that is founded upon, but which surpasses and/or deepens, that typically associated with Bachelor's level, and provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context
Applying knowledge and insight	Can apply their knowledge and understanding in a manner that indicates a professional approach to their work or vocation, and have competences typically demonstrated through devising and sustaining arguments and solving problems within their field of study.	Can apply his or her knowledge and understanding, and problem-solving abilities, in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study; has the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity.
Forming an opinion	Have the ability to gather and interpret relevant data (usually within their field of study) to inform judgements that include reflection on relevant social, scientific or ethical issues.	Can form opinions on the basis of incomplete or limited information, while taking account of the social and ethical responsibilities that come with this application of their own knowledge and assessments.
Communication	Can convey information, ideas and solutions to audiences consisting of specialists or non-specialists.	Can communicate his or her conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously.
Learning skills	Have developed those learning skills that are necessary for them to continue to undertake further study with a high degree of autonomy.	Has the learning skills to allow him or her to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous.

Appendix 5

Literature

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