**Undergraduate assessment principles**

* Assessment guidelines should be written from a student workload perspective and staff should tailor their assessment tasks to meet the learning outcomes within the assessment guidelines
* The work load must be commensurate with the credits
* The marking load resulting from the assessment must be scalable
* Level 4 course assessments should ideally include short pieces of work on which prompt feedback can be given rather than starting with a  ‘major’ piece of work
* The assessment guidelines should allow students to expand as they learn to write longer pieces than expected at School i.e. in the progression from level 4 to level 5
* Assessment guidelines should reflect the view that at level 6 an essential skill is that students should be more focused and concise in their writing and as such the word limit should be tighter than at level 5.
* At a course/year and module level the work load should be designed to ensure that there were no negative impacts caused by too much assessment impacting upon the time required for critical thinking and analysis.
* As a general guide level 4 should have a set of smaller in-course assignments. This would provide the underpinning for larger single in-course assignments at Level 5 which in turn would provide a foundation for level 6 where the emphasis is on synthesis and analysis rather than on length.

These guidelines range between explicit suggestion on suitable word length for group and solo work through to possible alternatives to exam, essay and presentations.

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| **Word length and duration of examination guidelines for 20 Credit Modules**  ***Where modules are 10, 30 or 40 credits, assessment length should be proportionate.*** | | | | | |
|  | Assessment Mode | Weighting | Level 4 | Level 5 | Level 6 |
| Written Course Work | *Group Work (4-5 in group – smaller groups may require downward adjustment)*  Written assignment   Written assignment  *Individual Work:*  Written assignment  Written assignment  Written assignment  Essay/ written assignment  Dissertation/Project  Research Elective  Case Studies | 20%-30%  50%  20%  30%  50%  100%  100%  100%  100% | 1,000 – 2,000 words  2,000 – 4,000 words  400 – 600  words  600 -900  words  750 – 1,000 words  1,500 - 3,000 words  N/A  N/A  1,500 - 3,000 words | 1,250 – 2,500 words  2,500 – 5,000 words  500 -750  words  750 – 1,000  words  1,000 – 1500 words  2000 to 4,000  words  N/A  N/A  2,000  - 4,000  words | 1,000 – 2,000 words  2,000 – 4,000 words  400 – 750  words  600 -1,000  words  750 – 1,250 words  3,500 – 6,000 words  3,500 - 6,000  words  3,500 - 6,000  words  3,500 – 6,000 words |
| Presentation | *Group Presentation (excluding question time)*  *Individual Presentation:* | 20%-30%  20%-50% | 5-10 minutes  5 minutes | 10-15 minutes  10 -15  minutes | 10 - 20  minutes  10 - 20 minutes |
| Exam/ Test | Exam/ In-class test  Unseen examination  Unseen examination | 20%-30%  50%- 80%     100% | 1 hour  2 hour  2 hour | 1 hour  2-3 hours\*  2-3 hours\* | 1 hour  2-3 hours\*  2-3 hours\* |

\* Longer exams normally only if required by professional bodies or 30 credit modules

**Suggested total number of words per year**

Level 4 total number of words across all modules not suggested to exceed:  6,000

Level 5 total number of words across all modules not suggested to exceed: 12,000

Level 6 total number of words across all modules not suggested to exceed: 10,000

**Presentations**

Both weightings and length can be variable. In particular, weightings might vary in accordance with the following considerations:

* Is it formative or summative, or a combination?
* Is there accompanying hand in requirements?
* Is there an element of peer review?
* Are other pieces of work represented by the presentation?

**Alternatives assessment methods**

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| --- | --- |
| Article critique  Article review  Article summary  Blogging  Book critique  Book review  Book summary  Case review  Case critique  Case studies and mini case studies  Collaborative Wikis  Company analysis  Industry analysis  Data collection analysis  Debate  Diagrams  Essay critique  Essay review  Evidence based assessment  Exam: multiple choice  Exam: open book  Exam: open note  Exam: seen paper  Experiment  Field Trips  Marketing plan  Mind Map | Moot  Multiple choice coursework  Business plan  Observation  Oral questions  Peer assessment  Podcast  Poem  Portfolio  ePortfolio  Poster  Presentation  Reflection  Report Writing  Role play  Scenario analysis  Self assessment  Seminar assessment  Simulation  Survey Analysis  Time constrained assessment  Video  Webinar  Websites  Work engagement  Community engagement  Précis |

**Group coursework principles**

**Minimum**

Every student should be required to complete at least one piece of group coursework as part of their degree programme, and it will generally be good practice that they are required to complete at least one piece of group coursework at each level of study.

**Maximum**

At levels 4 and 5, there should normally be no more than four pieces of group coursework per level, and group coursework should not amount to more than approximately 40 credits (i.e. 33%) of total assessment per level.

At level 6, there should be no more than two pieces of group coursework across compulsory modules, and group coursework across all the modules taken by a student should not normally exceed 20 credits (i.e. 17%) of total assessment (see the note on optional modules below).

It is however recognised that the actual amount of group coursework deployed across different degree courses (subject to the maxima above) may legitimately vary, as some of the particular learning outcomes assessed by group work may be more relevant and important to some degrees than others.

**Optional modules**

Group coursework should not be used to assess an optional module unless there is an exceptionally strong academic rationale, and where it is used, the group coursework task should have an “individual element” comprising at least 50% of the total mark awarded for the assessment task.

**Academic rationale and marking**

If group coursework assessment is used for a module, there should be a learning outcome related to this, and vice versa. When setting and marking group coursework normally the mark is awarded to all group members. However, for some modules it may be appropriate to award a lower mark to one or more group participants because they have not contributed fully. If this is the case, and in the interests of fairness and transparency, all group participants should be asked to provide a “sign off” sheet or similar appropriate documentary evidence giving details of their relative contributions.