

Assessment Audit Tool

An Audit is a good way to initiate discussion and development.

This Assessment Audit can help you to do the following:

- encourage development of a strategic plan to clarify how assessment practices can be developed;
- identify how far and in what area development should take place; and
- give recognition to existing activity

However an Audit also serves broader purposes:

- raising awareness by staff of practice in general and of the institution's plans;
- revealing or clarifying links between the aspect being audited and plans and strategies in other areas;
- engaging a wider constituency within the academic community; and
- facilitating dialogue and development within and between teaching units.

The purpose of this audit is **developmental**, rather than prescriptive. It is designed to help teachers **consider** the content and design of a course with respect to the issue of **assessment** and to see where they could improve the course to better address this issue.

The full original assessment audit can be downloaded from the UK Centre for Bioscience website at <http://www.bioscience.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/audit.aspx>

How to use the Assessment Audit Tool

The audit should be carried out with respect to all aspects of assessment within a course. The numeric scoring system allows for the situation where an issue might be addressed but only superficially or at the wrong time. Only score 4 if you believe the course optimally deals with the audit point.

For the various aspects of assessments score (0-4) for **each** of the audit points depending on how closely you believe these audit points are fully achieved in the course being audited.

- Score 0 if the audit point has not been seriously considered at all.
- Score 1-4 if the audit point has been considered but reflection indicates it is
 - poorly (1);
 - partially (2);
 - adequately (3); or
 - fully (4) satisfied.

Make a subjective judgement and score accordingly. Think about it from the student's point of view as well as that of the course team.

Having completed the assessment audit you should analyse each of the audit points with a score of 2 or less:

- i) What possible options could be envisaged which would satisfy the audit point?
- ii) Do resource or other constraints make any of these options unrealistic?
- iii) At what point in the course could appropriate changes be made?
- iv) Which changes would most benefit assessment aspects of the course?
- v) Can a realistic action plan be formulated to introduce these changes into the course before the next intake of students?

Are there potential **quick wins**? There may be something that you or your colleagues could do very easily that would not cost a lot in terms of resources or time.

Are there changes that require **longer term planning**? Does the change require agreement of others/resource allocation/time to implement?

Collect all your action points into the **action plan** at the back of the audit.

Having instituted changes as a result of the audit the process should be repeated in 12-24 months.

1. Are the assessment methods appropriate to the learning objectives?

	Score
Are learning outcomes (i.e. the changes in the student's knowledge, skills and attitudes) clear and explicit for the module and for each constituent piece of work where appropriate?	
Are the different elements in the Learning Outcomes reflected in the assessment? (e.g. knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes etc)	
In setting the Learning Outcomes is consideration given to the learning outcomes in other concurrent or previous modules?	
Is the different achievement in each Learning Outcome separately identifiable by the student in the overall assessment?	
Are assessment methods/conditions adjusted appropriately for disabled students?	
Do students experience each method of assessment before it is used summatively (either in this module or in a previous module)?	
A single type of assessment may disadvantage some students. Are a variety of assessment methods used in different circumstances?	

2. The assessment methods used - are they known to provide a secure assessment appropriate to the teaching style?

	Score
To what extent are the methods subjective?	
Are assessments made from written and agreed marking schemes?	
If multiple markers are used is uniformity of marking tested and, if necessary, compensated for?	
If double marked is there a mechanism other than taking the average to resolve significant differences?	

2. The assessment methods used - are they known to provide a secure assessment appropriate to the teaching style? (cont.)

Are the assessment methods appropriate to the teaching style used?	

3. Is the assessment set up to reduce plagiarism?

	Score
Are students clear as to what would be deemed to constitute plagiarism?	
Are students aware of the penalties, if they are caught plagiarising work?	
Have assessments been designed to reduce plagiarism by:	-----
Changing the assessment from year to year?	
Requesting evidence of how students completed coursework (e.g. by collecting plans or drafts)?	
Setting work that could not easily be copied from the internet or books, because of the format requested (e.g. poster/oral presentation rather than essay) ?	

4. Are published marking criteria and grade descriptors available to students?

	Score
Are there grade descriptors available to the students?	
Are these known to and followed by the staff doing the marking?	
Are there exemplar answers?	
Are exemplar answers available at different grades?	
Are the grade descriptors congruent with those on other modules taken by the students?	

5. Is assessment timely and progressive throughout the course?

	Score
Does assessment provide a monitor of student performance throughout the module?	
Is there time to allow students to respond to a poor assessment before the end of the module?	
Is assessment timely:	-----
With regard to the speed with which results are available to students?	
In relation to other assessed work on the module? (So students know the results and have had feedback before the next piece of assessed work?)	
In relation to other assessment on other modules? (So the totality of the assessment as experienced by the students is reasonably distributed and does not all take place in an unreasonably short period.)	
In relation to other commitments staff may have? (So they are not overloaded with marking.)	

6. Feedback

	Score
Is feedback provided for all assessments mid-course?	
Is feedback provided for the end of module assessment?	
Is feedback provided to all students?	
Is feedback sufficiently detailed to enable students to identify particular weaknesses?	
Do you know that all students access the feedback provided?	
Are students performing poorly counselled on a one-one basis?	
Does counselling take into account performance on other modules?	

8. Are re-sit/second chance arrangements known to students?

	Score
Are these arrangements written, available to students and explicit with regard to format and material covered?	
Are the dates/times of any re-sit exams known to the students at least 3 months before it takes place?	
Are the Learning Outcomes the same?	
Are re-sit candidates given effective feedback on their first performance?	

9. What are students' views on the quality and usefulness of the assessment?

	Score
Are students' views on the assessment processes known and elicited each year?	
Is this data obtained from all students other than those absent due to illness?	
Are students treated as a homogeneous group (score 1) or are their views fragmented into those of the various sub-groups making up the student body? (score 4) (e.g. Levels 1 and 2 taking the same module? Students on different courses but taking the same module? If the students are a homogeneous group (i.e. all taking the same courses/modules) score 4.)	

Action Plan

Make a note of the resources you will need and whose help will be required.

1.

2.

3.

4.