

**School of Modern Languages
Department of East Asian Studies**

Code of Practice on Assessment

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Purpose of this Document

This document gives details for students, staff and External Examiners concerning the Department of East Asian Studies' procedures for the assessment of all (undergraduate and postgraduate) EAST modules. It supplements the general regulations and procedures for University Examinations published by the Central Student Administration (CSA) of the University.

2. Policy on Assessment

Assessment in the Department of East Asian Studies aims to help students achieve the overall learning and teaching objectives in the disciplines taught. These may be summarised as:

- developing a high level of linguistic competence in the languages taught in the Department, demonstrated by fluency and accuracy in the target language in the four skill areas (reading, writing, listening and speaking);
- developing familiarity with the society of one or more East Asian countries, and an understanding of their history, politics, economy, culture and geography;
- developing the ability to explain and analyse contemporary events in the region as a whole and to assess critically aspects of the literature, culture, history, politics, economy and society of one or more countries in the region.

A more detailed description of the Department's aims and objectives can be found in the *Undergraduate Student Handbook and the Taught MA Student Handbooks*.

In addition, assessment in the Department also aims to help students develop a range of key transferable skills, including communication skills, the ability to work independently and as a member of a group, critical and analytical skills, the ability to gather, extract and present information, the ability to present a

reasoned and complex argument, and IT skills. However, the relative weighting and prominence given to these skills and this knowledge vary from level to level. In modules where a variety of assessment models are in use, marking criteria are clearly set out for each type of task and feedback relates to the criteria given.

Current assessment models include the following, either individually or in combination: individual and team presentations; seminar papers; web projects; dissertations; essays; coursework and portfolios; written examinations; role play exercises; oral examinations and practical tasks (e.g. interpreting).

In view of the cumulative nature of language acquisition, and in line with SMLC practice, the Department requires that core language modules at each level of study have to be passed before a student can progress to the next level of that programme in the case of undergraduate students. In the case of Level 3 undergraduate study, a student must pass the final year core module(s) in order to graduate. Similarly in non-language undergraduate programmes, students must pass compulsory modules in order to progress to the next level, and to graduate.

As regards assessment procedures, the Department of East Asian Studies adheres to the regulations and guidelines contained in the *University Assessment Handbook* and the *Taught Students Handbook*. It also seeks to draw upon examples of good practice found in other academic units in the University, particularly with regard to the consideration of medical and other mitigating circumstances, penalties for late submission of work, the anonymisation, internal marking and external marking of assessments, as well as classification procedures. The Department's overall policy on assessment procedures is:

- to assess the attainment by students of module and programme objectives through a variety of assessment formats appropriate to the learning outcomes being tested;
- to provide clear information on assessments to students, staff and External Examiners;
- to give students appropriate guidance and support in meeting their learning objectives and in preparing for, and completing, their assessments;
- to have effective quality management and enhancement procedures to ensure accuracy, fairness and standards of assessments;
- to provide an effective appeals procedure in respect of assessment outcomes.

3. Providing Further Information to Students on Assessment Performance

The Department will provide opportunities for written and/or oral feedback on all assessed coursework within an appropriate timescale.

The Department will also provide the opportunity for students to receive oral feedback, online feedback, model answers or some other appropriate mechanism on their performance in examinations.

Feedback will focus on showing clearly where students have performed well and where and how they need to improve measured against the published criteria.

4. Information on Location of Other Relevant Information

The Department of East Asian Studies provides all students with a Student Handbook and Module Handbook at the start of each academic year, and other documents concerning assessment procedures and regulations at appropriate times throughout their programme. Information on the assessment of individual modules is given to students in the initial module information. The Student Handbooks are also available on the Department's website, along with our marking criteria and this code of practice. In cases of uncertainty concerning the assessment procedures for a specific module, students are referred to the relevant Module Convenor. For more general assessment questions, the student can contact the Director of Teaching and Learning or the Departmental Examinations Officer if necessary.

For the general University regulations relating to assessment, see the *University Assessment Handbook* available at:

<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/students/office/contents.htm>

and the *Taught Students Handbook* available at

<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/students/handbook/>

II. ASSESSMENT ADMINISTRATION & PROCESSES

1. Examinations Officer

The Examinations Officer is responsible for co-ordinating assessment procedures, subject to the overall responsibility of the Head of Department and Head of School. The Examinations Officer will also chair the Examinations Committee and the Examination Boards.

2. External Examiners

External Examiners are appointed by the University to the Department in order to provide external scrutiny of the assessment procedures and standards. Before the expiry of the term of office of an External Examiner, the Examinations Officer takes soundings among academic staff for a successor. The name and qualifications of the preferred candidate is then approved by the Departmental Learning and Teaching Committee (DLTC) and submitted in prescribed form to the University's Quality Management & Enhancement Unit (QMEU) via the SMLC LTC and Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee (FLTC). Formal approval by the University will be initially for one year, renewable for a further two years.

The External Examiners have the following duties:

- to read, comment on as necessary, and approve draft examination papers for all modules above Level 1.
- to read exam scripts and course work as appropriate.
- to approve summary mark sheets for modules.
- to approve progression and classification for students in all programmes.
- to arbitrate when internal examiners cannot reach agreement.
- to attend and participate in the Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Examinations Board meetings
- to provide appropriate feedback and advice on course structure, teaching methods and quality, assessment procedures and standards;
- to submit formal External Examiner's reports to QMEU in the format and at times specified by the University.

Following receipt of the External Examiner's report, the Department makes a formal response outlining any actions to be taken. This is then forwarded to the SMLC LTC, FLTC and QMEU.

3. Examinations Duties of Members of Academic Staff

Module Convenors have the following assessment-related duties:

- setting assessments in accordance with the module specifications, University regulations, and any requirements of the CSA or Examinations Committee and submitting these by the set deadlines. Module Convenors are also responsible for ensuring examination papers are properly proofread;
- arranging any tests not administered by the CSA and ensuring that, as far as practical, they be carried out in accordance with CSA guidelines; in any case the integrity of these tests must not be compromised;
- making arrangements for the submission of assessed essays and dissertations in accordance with the module specifications;
- compiling an accurate mark sheet containing the marks for all assessed elements for the module;
- returning agreed marks as instructed by the deadlines announced by the Examinations Committee.

Academic staff are also responsible for:

- second-marking assessments for other modules as assigned by the Examinations Committee. Second markers are also responsible for checking the content of examination papers (as far as their knowledge of the subject allows) and the clarity of the questions before they are submitted to the Examinations Committee and external examiners. Any disagreements between the Convenor and the second marker

regarding the content or clarity of examination papers which cannot be resolved between them should be referred to the coordinator of the relevant section. If agreement still cannot be reached, the matter should be referred to the external examiner for that module.

4. Examinations Committee

The Examinations Committee is responsible for the overall co-ordination of the Department's examinations. The Examinations Committee is chaired by the Examinations Officer, and will normally be supported by an Examinations Secretary drawn from the Department's administrative staff. The duties of the Examinations Committee are:

- to check the CSA's table of module examination details and inform the CSA of any special examination timetabling or other requirements;
- to check proposed examinations timetables for errors and liaise with the CSA to correct these;
- to allocate second marking/moderating and invigilation duties;
- to coordinate the submission of examination papers to the CSA, including checking that the format of examination papers is clear and consistent, conforms to University regulations and requirements, and that allocations of marks are add up correctly and are clear;
- to coordinate liaison with the external examiners, including submission of upper-level examinations papers, completed examination scripts and mark sheets to them for approval;
- to oversee the submission of marks to the Examinations Secretary and preparations for meetings of the Examinations Boards;
- to ensure that the Department is represented on relevant Joint Honours Examinations Boards;
- to oversee recommendations for prizes.

The Examinations Committee is not responsible for the academic content of examinations papers or the assessment methods used, except where these appear to be in breach of University regulations.

5. Examinations Boards

The Undergraduate Examinations Boards for East Asian Studies consist of all full time members of staff of the Department of East Asian Studies and the Undergraduate level External Examiner. The Taught Postgraduate Examinations Board consists of all members of staff teaching on the Taught Postgraduate programmes (including the Director of Taught Postgraduate Programmes), the Department's Learning and Teaching Director, the Head of Department, the Department's Examination Officer, and the Taught Postgraduate External Examiner. Their remit is to confirm all module marks, and to consider borderline cases and special circumstances and to award degree classifications.

6. Records of Meetings

All meetings of the Examinations Boards are formally minuted, but medical and personal problems of named students remain strictly confidential. Minutes are sent to the SMLC LTC and then to QMEU.

III. MODULE ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATION

1. Management of Modules and Variety of Assessments Used

Each module has an assigned Module Convenor, who is responsible for the module's content, modes of assessment and the collation of marks.

Assessed tasks can take a variety of forms, and the LTC monitors new and existing modules to ensure a broad equality of assessment burden in line with School and Faculty guidelines.

The Department has applies a rigorous system of second marking to ensure fairness and consistency in assigning marks to students' work. The terms used to describe different forms of marking after first marking are:

- second marking: a generic term to describe any of the methods used to check the assessment carried out by the first marker;
- anonymous marking: the student's identity is not known to the examiner;
- moderation: a representative sample of all the work submitted for a particular assessment task (exam, essay etc.) is scrutinised by the second marker. The University Learning and Teaching Board Policy on Double Marking / Moderation of Assessed Work suggests that good practice would be a sample of more than 20%. A representative sample would must include all Firsts and fails, and would normally also include any borderline marks, as well as some work which represents the middle of each grade or about which the first marker has particular queries or concerns. Taking this into account, in a large module the sample would probably represent about 25%; in a small module a larger percentage would need to be looked at.
- Double marking: all work is marked a second time in the presence of the comments and marks of the first marker.
- Blind marking: the second marker marks the work without access to the comments or marks of the first marker. The Department does not usually employ blind marking, but in certain specific cases it may be applied.

Department policy regarding the process of marking of assessed work is:

- all first and second marking of exam scripts must be anonymous.
- All exam papers are marked by the first marker. A representative sample is then monitored by the second marker.

- All essays are marked by the first marker. A representative sample is then monitored by the second marker.
- All dissertations are double marked. This is to ensure consistency across the several first markers for dissertation modules.
- Second markers return their comments and marks to the first marker. Where there are differences the two markers should meet to discuss these and try to reach agreement. If an agreement cannot be reached, a provisional mark should be entered but the discrepancy *must be highlighted on the mark sheet with an accompanying note for the attention of the External Examiner, and a copy of the note should also be forwarded to the Examinations Officer.*
- All undergraduate Level 2 and 3 and all taught postgraduate assessed work which counts for more than 20% or more of the total mark for the module must be scrutinised by the External Examiner.

2. Coursework and Examination Procedure and Guidance

Module Convenors will provide students with clear information as to how assessed coursework is to be carried out and what the criteria are in the form of a module handout distributed at the beginning of the module. Convenors must ensure that the information contained in these handouts is consistent with that in the Module Handbooks.

3. Submission of Work and Penalties for Late Submission

The Department expects all assessed written work to be submitted by the due date in hard copy and word-processed in the form prescribed by the Department, unless otherwise directed. All undergraduate Level 2 and 3, and taught postgraduate students must hand in two copies of any assessment with two copies of the Declaration of Academic Integrity. Tutors must provide two copies of essay feedback forms where the essay is specified as for being for feedback or monitoring purposes. Owing to the requirement for all assessed work to be accompanied by a signed Declaration of Academic Integrity, and in view of the high risk of transmitting virus infections via attachments, it is not normally acceptable to submit work to tutors by e-mail. All assessed work is submitted to the Departmental Office, which keeps a central record of the time and date the work is submitted before distributing it to the relevant tutor.

Regarding the late submission of work, in compliance with University guidelines, a deduction of 5 marks is made for each calendar day that passes after the prescribed deadline for submission. If the work is not submitted by the end of 14 days following the prescribed deadline, it is given a mark of zero.

It is University policy that no deadlines are set on a Friday.

Extensions to deadlines may be granted only in exceptional circumstances (such as medically certificated illness, bereavement). Should such circumstances arise, undergraduate students must apply to the Examinations

Officer via the Module Convenor in writing not less than one week before the deadline to seek permission for an extension. Taught postgraduate students must apply to the Director of Taught Postgraduate Programmes via the Module Convenor in writing not less than one week before the deadline to seek permission for an extension. The Module Convenor cannot grant extensions for assessed work.

4. Guidelines for Marking

Students enrolled on and tutors involved in the marking or moderation of assessed work for all modules are entitled to the following: a written statement of the overall aims and objectives of the module, and written instructions for each assessment task. The Department's marking criteria, with descriptors for each level of performance, can be found in the appendices at the back of the Student Handbooks.

In all cases marking and feedback, where applicable, must refer to clearly-defined criteria which make it transparent to students, moderators and External Examiners how the final mark was arrived at. Consequently, markers must write their comments down in a manner which makes this possible. In all modules, students must be informed in advance of each piece of assessed work how it is going to be marked and what is required of them.

For assessed work done during the semester which is formative or for moderating progress, as a general guideline, the Module Convenor will aim to return the work to the students no later than two weeks after the work was submitted. However it is recognised that this is sometimes difficult to achieve.

5. Approval of Module Marks

Once the process of second marking has been completed, the Module Convenor submits the module mark sheet with the agreed marks to the Examinations Secretary for central record. A selection of papers is then sent to the External Examiner for scrutiny. These marks are then presented by the Examinations Officer to the Examinations Boards for approval. Any adjustment of marks considered to be necessary are agreed by the Boards in consultation with the External Examiners, who see a run of marks across the modules and are thus able to compare student performance.

6. Consideration of Penalties, Medical Conditions, Special Circumstances and Mitigating Circumstances

A sub-committee of the LTC, with additional co-opted members where appropriate, convenes in advance of the Examinations Boards to consider all cases of medical or other evidence. This sub-committee will determine the validity and relative seriousness of each case and make a recommendation to the Examinations Boards. The Examinations Boards have a number of options open to it, and exam regulations are consulted in order to achieve the fairest result for each student while ensuring equitable treatment of the whole cohort.

Alternative assessment tasks may be set for students who miss examinations owing to illness, or whose on-going medical problems make the existing assessment methods inappropriate. In such cases, the alternative method must be agreed with the Examinations Officer and must represent an assessment burden equivalent to the existing methods.

7. Pass Mark and Award of Credits

Students will be deemed to have passed a module and gain the entire credits for that module if they obtain a mark of 40 or higher for undergraduate modules, and 50 or higher for taught postgraduate modules. A mark of less than 40 (undergraduate) or 50 (postgraduate) signifies that the module has been failed and no credits are awarded. There are also a number of letter codes which are applied to incomplete results; these can be found under Sections 3.1.2 and 3.1.3 of the *University Assessment Handbook*.

8. Dissemination of Marks

If marks are announced to students before they have been approved by the Examination Boards, it must be made clear that these marks are provisional and subject to change.

Once marks have been approved by the Departmental Examinations Boards, they are made available to other Departments via SPARCS.

The Department will announce to students in advance when results or classifications will be displayed on the Departmental notice boards.

9. Transcripts

Transcripts of results can only be provided by the Events Section of the CSA. More information is available through the CSA web site: <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/students/office/transcpt.htm>

IV. CONDUCT OF STUDENTS IN ASSESSMENT

1. Completion of Written Coursework

Where a module requires an essay or a dissertation as part, or all, of the assessment, students must follow the guidelines given in the Student Handbook, and any further instructions issued by the Module Convenor. These specify how work is to be laid out, including the presentation of footnotes and references to cited material as well as bibliographies.

2. Attendance and Submission

The Department follows University policies and regulations regarding absence from examinations or failure to submit assessed work.

3. Mitigating Circumstances

Where there are circumstances that the student considers may have affected performance in assessments but which did not result in absence from classes, the student is advised to inform their Personal Tutor or Module Convenor, who will then inform the Examinations Officer in the case of undergraduate students, and the Director of Taught Postgraduate Programmes in the case of postgraduate students so the matter can be raised for consideration at the relevant Examinations Board. Students must provide appropriate documentation to support their case.

4. Documentary Evidence

No account can be taken of circumstances that may have affected assessment performance unless supported by documentary evidence (such as a medical note or confirmation from an independent source).

This must be provided at the time the circumstances arise, or as soon as possible thereafter, and in any case before the Examinations Board approves the module marks.

5. Plagiarism and Cheating

Plagiarism and cheating are serious offences with severe penalties imposed by the University. The Department uses the University's definition: "Plagiarism is defined as presenting someone else's work as your own. Work means any intellectual output, and typically includes text, data, images, sound or performance." Students must always indicate clearly any parts of their work that are cited from or extensively based upon some outside source, and must ensure that such sources are properly acknowledged. These rules also apply to material taken from the internet. The Department's *Guide to Essay Writing* (available in the *Undergraduate Student Handbook*) shows clearly how to make such acknowledgements. If in doubt, students are advised to consult their Module Tutor or Convenor before the submission of work. Cheating involves anything that might deceive or mislead the assessors or gain a student an unfair advantage in assessments. The *Taught Students' Handbook* gives examples of what constitutes cheating in University examinations. In coursework it would include submitting part or all of another person's material as one's own.

The University provides a detailed web site about plagiarism at:

<http://www.ldu.leeds.ac.uk/plagiarism/>

This site is aimed at both staff and students. It provides definitions, advice on how to avoid plagiarism, examples, and information on detection and penalties.

V. APPEALS

1. Appeals Procedures

The University's procedures for appeals concerning assessments can be found in Section C7 of the University's *Taught Students' Handbook* or may be obtained from the Students' Union. Since most problems concerning assessments can be resolved informally by discussion with staff, students who are dissatisfied with any aspect of their assessment are advised to first talk to the Module Convenor for the relevant module. If they do not feel able to do this, they may approach their Personal Tutor and then, if necessary, the Head of Department. Otherwise an appeal should be launched through the Office of Academic Appeals and Regulation.

Students have a right to impartial advice and representation from a third party. Students may consult the Leeds University Union (LUU) Student Advice Service on the 1st floor of the LUU Building (tel: 0113 380 1300, email advice@luu.leeds.ac.uk) for further advice regarding appeals.

Signed:

Date: