THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

TAUGHT STUDENT EDUCATION BOARD

**FACULTY TAUGHT STUDENT EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**Policy on Inclusive Coursework Marking**

*Following feedback from the February 2016 meetings of the Faculty Taught Student Education Committees on the proposal to develop a policy on Inclusive Coursework Marking, the policy was presented to the Taught Student Education Board at its meeting held on 22 April 2016 for endorsement.*

*Implementation of the policy will be managed via the Inclusivity Strategy Group and Faculties will receive further information on the process for implementation in due course.*

**Summary**

The purpose of this paper is to set out the University’s policy on inclusive coursework marking practices, and make specific recommendations for taking disability into account. The intention is to assist colleagues in their approach to marking and provide advice and guidance.

Schools are not requested to review their marking criteria at this stage. The policy is intended to clarify the approach to interpreting and implementing existing criteria. However, if programmes are likely to include measures of competence around accuracy in written expression it is important to consider how this will be made explicit and communicated to students.

Processes for the operationalisation of the flagging of coursework submitted by disabled students are to be addressed and taken forward by the Assessment CIFMT.

**1. Principles**

* 1. The University has an overall expectation that all students should be able to communicate their ideas and demonstrate their knowledge effectively in writing. This includes appropriate levels of English language literacy as demonstrated in the correct use of grammar, punctuation and spelling. The expected level of proficiency will differ depending on the nature of the programme.
  2. The University is committed to inclusivity and it is important that this commitment is reflected in assessment practices which reflect the needs of its diverse student population, and that these are fair, transparent and consistently applied. Students for whom English is not their native language and students with Specific Learning Difficulties such as dyslexia could be put at a disadvantage if they are assessed on their skills of technical precision in English rather than their ability to communicate their ideas successfully.
  3. Technical accuracy in written expression should be stated as a learning outcome and linked to marking criteria only if it is deemed to be a competence standard[[1]](#footnote-1) for the discipline.
  4. Some disabled students, such as those with Specific Learning Difficulties, may have a particular need for feedback that acknowledges their difficulties with written expression and helps them to develop. For this reason, work from this group of students should be flagged to the marker. This is deemed to be a *reasonable adjustment* under the 2010 Equality Act.

1. **Marking Practices for all students**
   1. Coursework for all students should be marked primarily on the content of the ideas. Where spelling, grammar and punctuation do not form part of the assessment criteria, and the intended meaning of the coursework is clear and presented coherently, marks should not be deducted for inaccuracies in the use of English language.
   2. However, where the marker is unable to decipher the meaning of the text, or the meaning is ambiguous, marks cannot be allocated.
   3. Feedback on coursework should highlight issues relating to written expression if a student’s work would benefit from improvements in the use of English. Where technical accuracy in written expression is deemed to be a competence standard for that subject or discipline, this must be specified in the marking criteria and marks awarded accordingly for all students. It is expected that in cases where this forms an explicit part of the marking criteria information about this is made widely available to students and prospective students.
2. **Marking Practices for Disabled Students**
   1. Around 4% of University of Leeds students have a diagnosis of Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) (e.g. dyslexia, or another disability which affects their literacy).
   2. Coursework submitted by students for whom there is an evidenced need of support and consideration in this area should be flagged to the marker as common practice. This will enable the marker to take a different approach to reading and evaluating the work.
   3. Where a student’s disability is flagged to the marker, the marker should follow guidance from DSAS in relation to reading the work and providing feedback (see appendix 2).
   4. Where accuracy in written expression is a competence standard, and therefore forms an explicit element of the marking criteria, students should expect to receive marks which reflect this element and clear advice on how to develop any areas of weakness. This advice may include referral to other sources of support within the University.

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Disabled Students' Assessment and Support

May 2016

Appendix: Guidance on Marking the Work of Dyslexic Students

**Guidance on Marking the Work of Dyslexic Students**

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1. **Introduction**

Around 4% of University of Leeds’ students have a diagnosis of dyslexia which affects their literacy. As part of the University commitment to inclusivity, it is important that the needs of this group of students are considered at all levels of University activity.

Dyslexia is classified as a disability under the Equality Act 2010 which means the University has a legal duty to anticipate dyslexic students’ needs and ensure that its practices do not disadvantage them. Students with related impairments, categorized as Specific Learning Difficulties, should be considered in the same way.

These guidelines have been produced for use by University staff involved in the marking of written work for students who are known to have a diagnosis of dyslexia or other Specific Learning Difficulty which impacts on their writing.

Work produced by dyslexic learners can often seem clumsily written and lack fluency. It can contain errors which the student has been unable to identify or rectify through the use of technology. The [University's Proof-reading Policy](http://students.leeds.ac.uk/info/103552/taught_student_policies_and_procedures/945/proof-reading_taught_components) does not allow for students to have their work proof-read by a third party, unless in exceptional disability-related circumstances, which usually do not apply to students with specific learning difficulties.

Some dyslexic students may have access to software, equipment and support funded by Disabled Students’ Allowances. Assistive technology and specialist study skills support can certainly go some way towards helping a student to plan and produce coursework which is free from errors but it cannot be presumed that such support will all eliminate errors or that all students will have access to that support. It is important to recognise that in valuing the diversity of our student population, we must acknowledge that difficulties with literacy are an inherent feature of these disabilities.

It is important for all teaching staff to be aware of the features and manifestations of dyslexia so that they can provide effective and appropriate feedback on written work which can help students to develop.

Where attention to detail in spelling, grammar and punctuation are legitimate learning outcomes within a programme this must be made clear to students at the outset, with marks awarded accordingly but with feedback that takes account of the developmental needs of dyslexic learners. Where this is not the case, dyslexic learners should not be penalised for errors of this type.

1. **Definitions of Dyslexia and Specific Learning Difficulties**
   1. **Dyslexia**

The British Dyslexia Association provides the following definition which is helpful in understanding how dyslexia manifests within the context of Higher Education:

“Dyslexia is a combination of abilities and difficulties that affect the learning process in one or more of reading, spelling and writing. It is a persistent condition.

Accompanying weaknesses may be identified in areas of speed of processing, short-term memory, organisation, sequencing, spoken language and motor skills. There may be difficulties with auditory and /or visual perception. It is particularly related to mastering and using written language, which may include alphabetic, numeric and musical notation.

Dyslexia can occur despite normal intellectual ability and teaching. It is constitutional in origin, part of one’s make-up and independent of socio-economic or language background.

Some learners have very well developed creative skills and/or interpersonal skills, others have strong oral skills. Some have no outstanding talents. All have strengths.”

(Dr.Lindsay Peer, 2006) <http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyslexic/definitions>

**2.2 Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)**

Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs) is an umbrella term used to refer to conditions which affect the way in which information is learned and processed. Dyslexia is the most common SpLD. Others include dyspraxia (sometimes known as developmental coordination disorder/ DCD), dyscalculia and attention deficit disorder (ADHD). It is common for people to have overlapping or co-occurring SpLDs, and it is estimated that around 15% of the population may be affected to some extent.

1. **What difficulties might dyslexic students have?**

Having a good awareness of the manifestations and impact of dyslexia on individuals can help with understanding how to mark written coursework, and how to provide meaningful feedback.

* 1. **General issues:**

• Literacy standards fall below expectation

• Poor organisational skills

• Difficulty sequencing information in a linear format (tendency to think ‘holistically’)

• Difficulty with numbers

• Difficulty keeping information in the short-term memory – forgets easily'mignt'?

• Difficulty following instructions

• Difficulty relaying messages correctly

• Inability to make effective notes

• Difficulty with orientation – left/right, up/down, east/west

• Poor time management skills

• Short attention span

• Distracted easily - e.g. by background noise

• Low self-esteem

• Exhaustion

* 1. **Writing:**

• Untidy or slow handwriting

• Lack of coherence when presenting ideas in writing

• Difficulty presenting material in a sequential manner

• Poor use of punctuation

• Incorrect use of homophones (e.g. their/ there)

• Incorrect/inconsistent use of tenses

• May present long rambling sentences

• Limited use of vocabulary

• Restricts what is written to avoid spelling difficulties

• Difficulty getting ideas onto paper

• Difficulty identifying errors in own work

• Inaccuracies when copying

* 1. **Spelling:**

• Bizarre spelling – even in ‘common’ words

• Choosing the wrong words when spelling

• Omission or transposition of letters

• Tendency to spell phonetically

• Difficulty recognising misspelled words

* 1. **Reading:**

• Reading words incorrectly/mispronunciation

• Lack of fluency when reading aloud

• Inability to skim/scan text

• Slow reading speed

• Need to re-read many times to understand and absorb information

• Difficulty in decoding unfamiliar technical vocabulary

• Confuses visually similar words, e.g. computers/commuters

• May misread instructions and exam questions

• May choose to answer the shortest question

• Multiple-choice questions use three skills in which dyslexic students are weak - reading quickly, reading accurately and processing large amounts of text

Students with dyslexia are likely to exhibit some or possibly all of these traits, although each individual will be affected in different ways and may have developed compensatory strategies.

As the demands of higher education increase, as students progress through their programmes of study, dyslexic students often find their strategies to be inadequate and they may therefore need support to develop new ways of working. For example, if an individual’s strategy for reading and understanding written material is to devote a lot of time to the task, reading and re-reading, this can become unmanageable where the volume of required reading increases substantially. This can also explain why some students get to higher education without ever being diagnosed with dyslexia. Indeed some students do not encounter difficulties until their final year or in postgraduate study.

1. **Reading the work of students with dyslexia**

People with a SpLD often think in a holistic way, which is non-verbal in format. This way of thinking does not lend itself to the linear nature of words and a written format. The apparent lack of order in the work of dyslexic students can be the result of a mismatch between their holistic way of thinking and the linear nature of the written word. Through fast reading, it will be easier to find the holistic thought patterns the student was trying to convey.

Fast reading is best accomplished by:

• Ignoring any mistakes of grammar, punctuation or spelling.

• Not making corrections to or comments on the grammar, punctuation or   
 spelling.

• Focusing on what the student is trying to say/argue rather than on the errors.

• Concentrating on understanding the point even if there are mistakes in the   
 text.

**Where the content of the writing is unclear and the meaning is ambiguous, marks cannot be allocated and this should explained in the feedback.**

1. **Principles of good feedback for dyslexic students**

• Be positive – state what has been done well

• Be constructive – explain what is required.

• Write legibly (if handwriting) and in plain English.

• Be sensitive

• Annotate papers – with different colours, preferably not red.

• Consider using a coding system for errors with language skills e.g. SP – spelling, G – grammar, P – punctuation, T – tense and so on.

• If you have marked for ideas only – say so. Make clear that comments on spelling, punctuation and grammar are to support skills development and not to penalise in marks.

• Offer verbal feedback or a written summary.

• Offer verbal feedback in addition to written comments.

• Set comments against marking criteria and competence standards.

Feedback is best understood when clearly set against the learning outcomes identified in the marking criteria. In this way, dyslexic students are less likely to feel that they were wrongly judged because of their disability.

Model answers can be of limited value in helping students to understand the difference between that and their own answer, unless time is taken to explain them. Annotated papers are more useful, particularly if marked with different colours– one for ideas, knowledge and understanding and one for presentation. Red should be avoided as it has negative connotations, rather than implying helpful suggestions for improvement.

Academic tutors are well placed to assist dyslexic students in developing their academic writing and explaining any potential areas of miscommunication in the written work, from the reader’s perspective.

Feedback can also make suggestions for students to use specialist study skills support and assistive technology to help them in the production and checking of their work. With the right support and advice, many dyslexic students can develop strategies to help them overcome some of the difficulties associated with academic writing.

Verbal feedback is best supported by clear written comments, as it may be difficult for a dyslexic student to hold verbal information in their memory and to therefore make constructive use of it in future work. In addition to this, where there are issues of confidence and self-esteem (common among students with SpLDs), students may need support to see the positive comments and to put the criticisms into perspective.

1. **Evidence of dyslexia**
   1. **Diagnostic (Psychological) Assessments**

In order to be eligible for support and provisions in Higher Education, dyslexic students need to provide evidence of a diagnosis of dyslexia or specific learning difficulties (SpLD). The diagnostic assessment needs to have taken place after the student’s 16th birthday and needs to provide details of the areas where their dyslexia is likely to impact on performance in Higher Education.

Disabled Student Assessment and Support (DSAS) is able to advise students on how to obtain an updated psychological assessment if they do not have one when they arrive at the University. We are happy to provide support and advice to students who bring out-of-date diagnostic evidence while they await re-assessment. Some students may be eligible for a financial contribution towards the cost of an SpLD assessment from the University. Staff in DSAS or Student Finance will be able to advise further about this.

**6.2 Screening**

Anyone who suspects they may have dyslexia or another SpLD can take a short computerised screening test which is available on all University cluster machines. The programme is called Quick Scan, and more information can be found here on the [Dyslexia pages on the SES website.](http://students.leeds.ac.uk/info/10710/disability_mental_health_learning_difficulties/716/dyslexia)

If the screening indicates a likelihood of SpLD, the student will then be advised of the next steps towards diagnosis. It must be remembered that results from the screening test do not constitute evidence of dyslexia/ SpLD but will indicate whether a further full assessment should be sought from an external organisation.

**6.3 How is information about SpLDs shared and disseminated?**

When diagnostic evidence of SpLD is received in DSAS, the [Disability Contacts in School and Faculties](http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/21810/disabled_students/838/disabled_students_assessment_and_support) are immediately notified about this, via email. The vast majority of diagnostic reports make specific recommendations about exam access arrangements, so these are added to Banner, following discussion with the student in some cases.

Staff within Schools who have access to Banner can view exam arrangements on a page called SWAMEDI. The presence of the code EJ within these exam arrangements indicates that a student is likely to present dyslexic and associated errors in their written work (see 4.2 and 4.3 above).

**6.4 Additional support and equipment**

Many students with SpLDs apply for ***Disabled Students Allowances (DSA)*** from a funding body such as Student Finance England so that they can access specialist one-to-one study skills support and assistive technology to help them develop strategies for coping with their disability while at university. Through the process of applying for DSA, the student will undergo a Needs Assessment in order to identify specific areas of difficulty and their potential impact on the course. With the student’s permission, the report is then shared with the school Disability Contact, who will then pass on any relevant information and advice to those involved in teaching and supporting the student.

It is important to note that disabled students are not obliged to apply for DSA and therefore a Needs Assessment report may not be available although other provisions such as exam access arrangements will be put in place on the receipt of appropriate evidence. If the University has received diagnostic evidence of a student’s dyslexia/ SpLD or other disability, we have a duty to consider reasonable adjustments for this student.

1. **Confidentiality**

When students provide evidence of dyslexia (or another disability) to the University this is primarily for the purpose of enabling that student’s support to be accommodated in learning and teaching practices. It is important to balance the student’s right to confidentiality of sensitive personal information with the need to provide appropriate levels of support.

A student’s central Banner record will indicate whether they have declared a disability on application or registration, and the type of disability. This information is widely available to Banner users across the institution, and will be indicated via a tick on class lists for module tutors. Any further detail that students provide to DSAS about a diagnosis or condition will be held on a secure database in DSAS, with specific details about support requirements being disseminated to Schools and Faculties via Needs Assessment report and other communication via the Disability Team.

Advice and guidance contained in Needs Assessment reports and received directly from the Disability Team should be disseminated by school Disability Contacts to all staff involved in teaching and supporting that student, thus maximising opportunities for staff to be made aware of a student’s learning needs and differences.

Students can choose not to share any of the details of the disability with the wider University, including course tutors, and this choice is respected where requested on the understanding that this may limit the support that can be provided. Similarly, students may choose to disclose only to named individuals within a School or Faculty. Information on Banner usually results from a students’ self-disclosure at application, and students have an opportunity to review and amend this information at registration each year. This information can also be removed by the Disability Team on request of the student.

Staff must not share sensitive personal information, such as the fact that a student has dyslexia, with other students or other members of staff who are not involved in teaching and supporting that student. This means that care and sensitivity must be exercised to ensure that students are not unintentionally identified as being disabled if they have not consented to this information being shared, for example during in-class tests or group-work.

1. **Legislative duties**
   1. **Equality Act (2010)**

People with dyslexia (and other SpLDs) are covered by the 2010 Equality Act. Under the Act, The University has a duty to provide “reasonable adjustments” for disabled students in relation to provisions, criterion and practices where these would put students at a substantial disadvantage. Examples of these would include teaching and assessment methods. This therefore means that students whose disability affects their literacy skills would be at a substantial disadvantage if the method of assessment and criteria required them to demonstrate high levels of accuracy in written expression so adjustments may need to be considered.

* 1. **Competence Standards**

Equality legislation specifies that [**competence standards**](http://www.ecu.ac.uk/guidance-resources/student-recruitment-retention-attainment/student-retention/inclusive-learning-teaching/competence-standards-reasonable-adjustments/) are not expected to be compromised when considering appropriate and fair adjustments for disabled students. These must apply equally to all students and must be shown to be relevant to the course being studied. Accuracy in written expression may be deemed a competence standard in some contexts, such as when studying languages. The Quality Assurance Agency provides [Subject Benchmark Statements](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements) which are a good starting point for considering this matter in relation to individual programmes of study.

The assessment of competence standards does not include the process via which a person demonstrates that standard, unless the method used to carry out a certain activity is a skill which is being assessed. Where learning outcomes for a particular module make explicit reference to demonstrating capability in a particular skill which may be needed for a certain professional discipline, this would be deemed a competence standard. Further information in relation to requirements for professional bodies can be found at [HEOPS](http://www.heops.org.uk/guide.php)

**8.3 Anticipatory Duty**

The University has an anticipatory duty to ensure that wherever possible, the needs of disabled students are considered in policy and practice, as well as making individual adjustments as and when the need arises. This means that we need to have a clear understanding of how a particular method of assessment might disadvantage dyslexic students, and therefore what approach should be taken to marking their work or whether in fact an alternative form of assessment may be more appropriate in some cases.

1. **Student awareness of marking criteria and practices**
   1. **Students need to know whether the marker will be aware that they are dyslexic.**

The process of writing, for all students, involves an awareness of the audience alongside the purpose of the piece. Many dyslexic students have an acute awareness that they are likely to make mistakes and that their writing may lack finesse and fluency. All aspects of academic work tends to take longer for dyslexic students, and it is therefore a source of great anxiety to think that their work may be perceived as lazy, sloppy or rushed if the marker does not know that they are dyslexic.

* 1. **Students need to know whether accuracy in written expression is part of the marking criteria (i.e. a “core competence”).**

As described in section 8, there may be some disciplines or individual modules where it is important for students to demonstrate high levels of accuracy and attention to detail in written communication. In these cases, this should be an explicit part of the assessment and marking criteria and should apply across the board to all students. In these cases, accuracy in written expression is deemed to be a competence standard and therefore is not subject to reasonable adjustments. Information about this needs to be clear to all students from the outset and best practice would be for this information to be made available prior to students applying for courses or choosing discovery modules, as this may impact on the amount of support a student may need to achieve the learning outcomes.

* 1. **Where feedback identifies errors, students need to know whether these have affected marks.**

Where accuracy in written expression is not central to the assessment, a marker may still feel it is appropriate to provide feedback on some aspects of written expression, for the purposes of helping the student to develop. It is important to state that marks have not been lost in such cases.

1. **Specialist Study Skills Support**

Students with SpLDs need to apply for funding to access support. This could be from Student Finance England in the form of DSAs or from the NHS, RCUK, an international sponsor or the University’s Disabled Students Fund. With this funding they can access a range of support including equipment, software and non-medical helper support.[[2]](#footnote-2)

For example DSAS employs a team of specialist tutors, known as Disability Strategy Tutors (DSTs) to work with students with an identified disability related need to develop the requisite skills for success in Higher Education. The support is provided on a 1-1 basis and is highly individualised, as informed by the student’s DSA Needs Assessment and psychological diagnostic report. DSTs are required to have specialist qualifications in the area of Specific Learning Difficulties and the impact of these on study in HE.

Strategy support is related to academic strategies only, it is for the development of sustainable, long-term strategies which enable students to cope with academic work independently. **It is not intended to help students improve on specific pieces of coursework and is not subject specific.**

The support is student led, and areas for development will be prioritised by both DST and student at the outset of support, and this is likely to be influenced by the student’s level of study and the type of work they are likely to undertake in a particular period of time. For example, many final year students may wish to develop skills required for undertaking longer projects, such as dissertations, whereas first year students may prioritise skills around time management and exam technique.

DST support can help students to understand their own cognitive strengths and weaknesses and therefore develop skills and techniques which work alongside these. Many students find that their previous ways of working are time-consuming and inefficient, and given the additional time they require for reading, researching, planning and producing written work, they need specialist support to enable them to keep up with the demands of the course.

1. **Handling suspected dyslexia**

The guidance contained within this document should go some way towards helping staff to understand the manifestations of dyslexia. However, when marking the written work of a student who is not known to be dyslexic, there is no way of knowing whether the apparent difficulties are due to dyslexia or some other cause.

If a student’s work has not been “flagged” as dyslexic/ SpLD, then it may be necessary to address any concerns directly with the student if you think they may be displaying signs of dyslexia. During a discussion with them, it may transpire that they have chosen not to disclose a previous diagnosis of SpLD to the University. Alternatively, they may never have considered that they may be dyslexic, but agree that they do experience a number of the features associated with the condition, as described in section 3 of this guidance. It may be reassuring for the student to know that it is not unusual for people to get a diagnosis of dyslexia whist in Higher Education and they should look into it as this may give them access to further support avenues.

Students should be encouraged to disclose any pre-existing dyslexia to DSAS so that they can be appropriately supported through their course. Some students may have previously chosen not to disclose either because they thought (incorrectly) that it might go against them in the selection process or because they wanted to see how they would get on without support. They should be advised to speak to a Disability Coordinator in DSAS for further advice about the support available to dyslexic students at the University.

Where students identify with the manifestations of dyslexia but have never been tested, they should firstly be advised to take the Quick Scan screening test before considering a full diagnostic assessment (see section 6.2 of this guidance). They may also wish to speak to a Disability Coordinator on DSAS at any point during this process. Acceptance of a diagnosis of dyslexia can be difficult for many people, and they may need support around this.

1. **Marking group work**

Engaging in group work is often a source of anxiety for dyslexic students as they may be reluctant to reveal areas of weakness in literacy to other group members and they may be concerned that difficulties in these areas may affect the overall outcome of the assessment for the whole group. There are a number of things that module tutors can do to mitigate against these fears and ensure that all participants are assessed fairly.

* Ensure students are clear about how marks will be allocated, breaking down the mark scheme for collective and individual contributions. Many dyslexic students may have strengths in collaboration and lateral thinking, so having a good understanding of where marks are allocated will help them to see where their strengths may be rewarded.
* Ensure that the task design does not unnecessarily put any minority groups or individuals at a disadvantage, for example in allocating marks to components which are not directly linked to the subject, discipline or learning outcomes. Given the proliferation of students with SpLDs within the University population, it would be easier to assume that a group will contain a student with dyslexia or other disability and therefore their needs should be accommodated from the outset without adjustments needing to be made and without students having to disclose a disability to peers.
* Where accuracy in written expression is not central to the marking criteria for the task, focus the allocation of marks for all students onto the effectiveness of the communication of ideas within the final product.
* Where accuracy *is* a required learning outcome, make it clear that this applies across the board. Tutors may wish to discuss this with dyslexic students at the start of the module, and agree on a suitable way of approaching this within the group task. The Faculty Disability Coordinator in DSAS may also be able to advise.

1. **Further advice and guidance**

Staff wanting further advice and guidance can first contact the [Disability Contact](http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/21810/disabled_students/838/disabled_students_assessment_and_support) in the school or faculty. They may also contact the [Disability Coordinator](http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/21810/disabled_students/838/disabled_students_assessment_and_support) in DSAS who supports students and staff in that faculty.

Alternatively staff can contact the DSAS reception to be put through to the right member of staff.

DSAS Email: [disability@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:disability@leeds.ac.uk)

DSAS Reception telephone: 0113 343 3927

1. **Checklist for marking the work of dyslexic students**

**Preparation:**

1. Is the work “flagged” as work of a dyslexic/ SpLD student? □

2. Are you aware of the potential manifestations of dyslexia/ SpLD □

(refer to guidance if required)

3. Identify the key learning outcomes of the module or assignment □

4. Are spelling and punctuation and grammar central to learning outcomes? □

If no ‘Mark for content, with feedback’ □

If yes ‘Mark with feedback’ □

**Mark for content with feedback:**

5. Skim read to gain overview of knowledge, ideas and understanding □

6. Mark against content – knowledge, ideas and understanding □

7. Ignore weaknesses in writing skill – spelling, grammar and punctuation □

8. Consider and provide appropriate feedback (see ‘giving feedback’) □

**Mark with feedback:**

9. Mark as standard □

10. Consider and provide appropriate feedback (see ‘giving feedback’) □

**Giving feedback:**

1. Be positive – state what has been done well. □
2. Be constructive – explain what is required. □
3. Write legibly and in plain English. □
4. Be sensitive – if possible agree with the student what would be

Helpful in advance of marking assessed work. □

1. Annotate papers – use different coloured pens (not red). □
2. Consider use of coding system for errors with language skills. □
3. Make clear that any comments on spelling, punctuation and

grammar are to support skills development and indicate where / if this

has affected marks. □

1. Offer verbal feedback in addition to written comments. □
2. Support verbal feedback with a written summary if required. □
3. Set comments against marking criteria and learning outcomes. □

1. The Equality Challenge Unit provides the following definition of a *competence standard* and its application: “A competence standard is a particular level of competence or ability that a student must demonstrate to be accepted on to, progress within and successfully complete a course or programme of study.

   Higher education institutions (HEIs) have responsibility for developing non-discriminatory competence standards, and designing a study programme to address these competence standards.

   HEIs also have the responsibility to ensure that assessment methods address the competence standards”

   Equality Challenge Unit. 2016. [Online}. [Accessed11/04/16]. Available from: <http://www.ecu.ac.uk/guidance-resources/student-recruitment-retention-attainment/student-retention/inclusive-learning-teaching/competence-standards-reasonable-adjustments/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Student Finance England funding arrangements for support are under review prior to the 2016/2017 academic year. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)