Mark written work for content.

Mark written work for content. Where spelling, grammar and punctuation are not central to the assessment criteria, focus marking on how well the student has communicated their understanding of the subject. Where the meaning isn’t clear, however, marks cannot be awarded. See the University’s policy on inclusive assessment, making reasonable adjustments and providing for alternative assessment arrangements (https://www2.worc.ac.uk/student-services/documents/Inclusive_assessment_and_reasonable_adjustments_policy_and_procedures.pdf), and staff guidance for inclusive assessment and making reasonable adjustments (https://www2.worc.ac.uk/student-services/documents/staff-guidance-for-inclusive-assessments-and-making-reasonable-adjustments.pdf).

Assessment should focus on criteria that are genuinely linked to the subject being studied. Some students, such as those with SpLDs, students for whom English is not their first language, or those from diverse backgrounds, may be at a disadvantage from the outset, so assessing them on the quality of their ideas and knowledge in relation to the curriculum content is a fairer system.

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. This will also help those for whom English is not their first language, and students with less experience in academic writing.

Provide clarity for marking group work and apply inclusive marking principles.

Provide clear information from the outset about how marks will be allocated for group and individual contributions.
### What? Provide clarity for marking assessed presentations.

### How? Specify the skills that are being assessed and consider whether it is necessary for each student to present to the whole group, or whether they can submit a video recording.

### Why? A number of students with a disability may have difficulty with presentations for various reasons, and it is useful to understand from the outset whether they would still achieve the same learning outcomes by presenting to a smaller group, to the tutor on a one-to-one basis, or alone being filmed. Note that this may need to be considered in light of standardisation and moderation (https://www2.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/AssessmentPolicy.pdf).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessing oral examinations.</th>
<th>Create an environment where students don’t feel rushed and have adequate time to formulate a response. If candidates wear a veil over their face for religious reasons, it is preferable to provide a female examiner to enable the candidate to show her face to the examiner. Use video recording only if the student’s non-verbal communication is being assessed, and discuss this in advance with any students who wear a veil.</th>
<th>There is evidence to suggest that disabled students experience greater difficulties than non-disabled students in oral assessment. Seeing the speaker’s face aids comprehension, particularly for hearing impaired students. Muslim women who wear a veil over their face may decide not to remove this in the company of men to whom they are not related. Oral assessments should be recorded, but using video recording may increase students’ anxiety and may mean that women wearing veils do not wish to show their face.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be positive.</td>
<td>State what has been done well at the start of the feedback before talking about weaker areas of the work.</td>
<td>Many students will feel anxious about receiving feedback and will focus on negative comments. Stating positive comments from the outset will reassure the student and make it easier for them to take a balanced view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What?</strong></td>
<td><strong>How?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Why?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be constructive.</td>
<td>Explain what is required for the student to achieve higher marks and give examples if appropriate.</td>
<td>Students need tangible advice that they can practically apply to future work. It may be difficult for students with dyslexia to understand the limitations of their work from a reader’s perspective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use coloured annotation.</td>
<td>Annotate papers with different colours, preferably not red. One for ideas, knowledge and understanding and one for language skills if this is part of the assessment criteria.</td>
<td>Red should be avoided as it has negative connotations, rather than implying helpful suggestions for improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be systematic with feedback on language skills.</td>
<td>Where technical accuracy in language skills is a learning outcome and therefore part of the marking criteria, consider using a coding system for errors with language skills, e.g. SP – spelling, G – grammar, P – punctuation, T – tense.</td>
<td>This will make it easier for students to get the additional support they may need to improve in these areas – study skills (<a href="https://library.worc.ac.uk/guides/study-skills">https://library.worc.ac.uk/guides/study-skills</a>), Disability and Dyslexia Service (<a href="https://www2.worc.ac.uk/disabilityanddyslexia/">https://www2.worc.ac.uk/disabilityanddyslexia/</a>), Language Support (<a href="https://www.worcester.ac.uk/life/help-and-support/language-centre/language-support-services.aspx">https://www.worcester.ac.uk/life/help-and-support/language-centre/language-support-services.aspx</a>). With the right support and advice, many students such as those with dyslexia, or first generation students can develop strategies to help them overcome some of the difficulties associated with academic writing. Moreover, students for whom English is not their first language may benefit from having extra feedback, or additional support from the Language Centre (<a href="https://www.worcester.ac.uk/life/help-and-support/language-centre/home.aspx">https://www.worcester.ac.uk/life/help-and-support/language-centre/home.aspx</a>).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**What?**

State whether the work has been marked for content only.

**How?**

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.

**Why?**

Students with disabilities which affect their accuracy in written expression may assume that their difficulties in this area have lost them marks if this is not explicitly stated.

---

**What?**

Give feedback in different formats.

**How?**

Consider giving audio as well as written feedback and ensure you have systems set up to enable you to do this as a preference for a student. If giving verbal, face-to-face feedback, also provide clear written comments too.

**Why?**

Some students may find it more effective to access meaning from audio rather than written text. For example, it may be difficult for a dyslexic student or those with high levels of anxiety to hold verbal information in their memory and to therefore make constructive use of it in future work.

---

**What?**

Use electronic feedback.

**How?**

Use Grademark to provide written and spoken (recorded) feedback electronically.

**Why?**

Electronic text can be more accessible for some students, and verbally recorded comments can be easier for some students to learn from. The ability to set comments specifically against the work helps the student to assimilate and understand.


With thanks to Dr Jacqueline Houghton and Jenny Brady of the University of Leeds, and Dr Wendy Miller and Priska Schoenborn of Plymouth University, for allowing us to use and adapt their series of guides: http://www.sduonline.leeds.ac.uk/inclusiveteaching; https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/your-university/teaching-and-learning/inclusivity.

Attribution-Non-Commercial CC BY-SA.

This document 2018, University of Worcester. This work is made available for reuse under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial Share Alike Licence 4.0 http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/