Policy on the Assessment of Written English

# Summary

This policy[[1]](#footnote-1) was developed in response to the [Office for Students publication Assessment Practices in English higher education providers: Spelling, punctuation and grammar](https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/assessment-practices-in-english-higher-education-providers/) (published 7 October 2021), and sets out the University’s policy on the assessment of written work in English. It also makes specific recommendations for taking disability into account in the feedback provided to students on their written assessments.

# 1. Principles

1. All taught programmes are delivered and assessed in English (unless the discipline requires otherwise, e.g., language subjects).
2. The University is committed to inclusivity and it is important that this commitment is reflected in assessment practices meeting the needs of its diverse student population, and that these are fair, transparent and consistently applied.
3. The University requires all students to be able to communicate their ideas and demonstrate their knowledge effectively in written English. This includes appropriate levels of English language literacy as demonstrated in an appropriate use of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
4. Academic rigor will be maintained and the same marking criteria will be applied to all students undertaking the same assessment.
5. The approach to assessing technical accuracy in written expression will be clearly specified in marking criteria and referenced in assessment rubrics where appropriate.
6. 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.

# 2. Marking Practices for all students

1. Schools will publish to students approved marking criteria setting out the approach to the assessment of written English, appropriate to the discipline. Where appropriate, this will also be made clear in the rubric for a particular assessment task.
2. The approved approach to the assessment of written expression appropriate to the discipline will be specified in the marking criteria. Within each assessment marks will awarded accordingly for all students undertaking the assessment (including disabled students).
3. Feedback on written English should highlight issues relating to expression if a student’s work would benefit from improvements in the use of English.

# 3. Marking Practices for Disabled Students

1. A high proportion of students accessing support via Disability Services are recommended flagging consideration, due to an evidenced difficulty which manifests in their written work (e.g Specific Learning Difficulties).
2. Written work submitted by these students will be flagged to the marker to allow the marker to tailor their feedback appropriately.
3. Where a disability is flagged to the marker, the marker should follow the guidance in relation to reading the work and providing feedback. Guidance for providing inclusive feedback for disabled students can be found on the [Disability Services webpages](https://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/22255/teaching_disabled_students/1261/inclusive_feedback_for_disabled_students).
4. Students should be provided with an explanation within their feedback if their use of written expression has affected their marks and be provided with clear advice on how to develop any areas of weakness. This advice may include referral to other sources of support within the University.

1. This policy replaces the former ‘Inclusive Marking Policy’, and was approved by the Taught Student Education Board on 22 June 2022. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)