

RESPONSE TO STUDENT CONSULTATION ON [TOPIC NAME]

SUMMARY

This is a response to the consultation on Assessment which took place between 20th January and 3rd of February on the Languages and Applied Linguistics Board of Studies Student Consultative Forum.

[This section should contain a short summary of action taken in response to feedback that might include:

The LAL BoS Consultative Forum on Assessment provided us with essential student insight into our assessment processes, frequency and timing, our assessment types, feedback, marking schemes and submission processes. The feedback was considered by Sam Austen, AHoS Curriculum & Quality and Qian Kan, AHoS Teaching and Learning. It was great to see that for the most part students were happy with assessment, processes, frequency and timing and that they also feel well supported. The forum contributions from students revealed some very interesting ideas for alternative forms of assessment, some of which we are already piloting. It is great to see enthusiasm for these potential changes. We have taken some messages away in relation to the timing of TMAs, new forms of assessment and tutor consistency in relation to referencing. Thank you to all who participated!

Please complete the section above in a way that can stand alone and essentially act as the 'highlights' of the consultation response that can be published as part of student consultation 'news'. Please be as specific as you can in highlighting your response to key messages in terms of actions taken or not taken.

FULL RESPONSE

[In this section, please respond to the specific themes/points made in the summary, in the first column you can include the common themes or some student comments, your response in the second and, if appropriate, next steps with the estimated date of completion in the third. Please try and be as specific as possible.

If you had asked students a number of different questions, you may wish to create a separate table for each question.

Please do adapt the table as you see fit but make sure that you:

- *Include a response to any key messages that came through even if these have not been acted on, please explain why not.*

- demonstrate how you have either acted on **specific** student feedback or explain why it would not be possible or desirable to act on this feedback.
- write in Plain English for a student audience avoiding OU jargon and acronyms.]

This document should be no more than 7 pages, ideally 3-4 pages. It is not necessary to address every student post. Please view the [Student Consultation Archive](#) to see previous responses to help guide in writing your response.

You said	OU response	Next steps, if appropriate
<p>Around half of the respondents said that they were happy with the timing and spacing of assignments. Those studying on more than one module mentioned the fact that module deadlines can coincide.</p>	<p>We are pleased that for the most part students find the timing and spacing of assignments enable them to plan and prepare effectively. Coinciding deadlines when studying more than one module on a given presentation is a recognised issue. Each module has a given number of TMAs which need to be effectively spaced over the presentation and to allow for the correct timing of the EMA. It is not always possible to take account of the TMAs on other modules, especially at different levels.</p>	<p>We can consider the issue of coinciding TMAs on qualifications where students may conceivably be studying those modules contemporaneously. Thank you for raising this issue.</p>
<p>You mentioned that oral assignments at the start of a level 1 module can be daunting</p>	<p>We are piloting ways of making the first oral assignment on level 1 modules less daunting; in particular, we are considering changing the first assignment to a reflective piece including a learning plan with the opportunity to practice some of the target language in a non-pressurised way.</p>	

You said that iCMAs were very useful and you would appreciate more of them. You also suggested increasing the number of iCMAs at level 1 and decreasing their weight.

It is good that you find iCMAs useful. However, our current approach is actually to look at decreasing the number of assessment points on a module in order to reduce stress and combat overassessment.

You said that the timing of a first iCMA can disadvantage students whose registration process is delayed and who are unable to work on the iCMA due to delayed access to the module materials. You asked for the possibility of an extension in this case.

Extensions are not permitted for iCMAs for technical reasons and because model answers or other information about the iCMA may have already been sent to other students. If you are unable to submit an iCMA you should submit special circumstances to the MRP via your student support team.

You suggested alternative types of oral assessment, these include a conversation with a tutor, a recorded video and recorded presentation supported by slides. You also suggested assessing the work produced by students during the residential school.

We are piloting the possibility of a conversation with the tutor as a form of assessment (see above). We already have assessment taking the form of a recorded presentation supported by slides on LB170, for example. We are in the process of considering new ways of assessing students and we will take these suggestions into consideration as we move forward.

The aim of the residential school is for students to develop their competence in a stimulating environment without the stress of assessment.

An L101 student suggested moving the assessed forum interaction to later in the module to avoid stress and anxiety. This student would prefer to have an essay assessed by a tutor before moving on to an assignment shared in a forum.

I passed this to the L101 Module Team Chair who provided the following response:
Thanks very much for your feedback which is really helpful. The module team understand that this assignment makes some students feel anxious, and in response we have now made this only half of the assessment (Part 2 is a more traditional written

assessment). Students are made aware in the Assignment instructions that if there is a valid reason why they cannot post on the TGF they should contact their tutor to make alternative arrangements. When the module is thoroughly reviewed half- way through its life next year, we will look at moving the assessed forum posting activity to a later Block and disconnect forum activity in Block 1 from formal assessment.

<p>Regarding the accessibility and inclusivity of assessment, one deaf student they find recordings difficult and that the feedback cannot always be acted upon by a deaf person. The same student stated that the oral exam is not 'deaf-friendly' and causes anxiety, a problem the university has not dealt with to date.</p>	<p>Thank you for this comment. The OU is committed to providing alternative assessment formats for students who need them. These can be accessed through the SST and also by alerting your tutor.</p>	<p>This is an issue that we will explore further, however, with the relevant teams. Thank you for raising it.</p>
<p>You asked for more uniformity in terms of referencing expectations. You stated that tutors' expectations can vary within the same module as well as between modules. You also noted that there are differences in terms of referencing between the Applied Linguistics and the Foreign Modern Language modules. Two students, one of whom studies L161, said that the referencing conventions should be taught from the beginning of the module so that students</p>	<p>Thank you for raising the issue of inconsistency among tutors in relation to referencing. Please bear in mind that tutor will have different expectations with regard to referencing depending on the level at which you are studying. In relation to L161, which is being remade for launch in 24J, referencing will be taught at the start of the module; however, there will also be a focus on effective communication in wider professional contexts.</p>	<p>We will take your comments about consistency in relation to referencing to the team responsible for communicating this to our Associate Lecturers.</p>

have time to learn how to follow them.

The majority of you felt that the use of marking bands was fair and easy to understand. Two of you said that on language modules, too many marks are awarded for the reflection. You felt that only language ability should be assessed.

Reflective tasks are used widely in Higher Education as they help students to develop the important critical thinking skills which underpin academic performance. With the emergence of AI, we will rely more and more on our ability to critically evaluate and assess text and think critically about its message.

Date: 13th July 2023