



GCU Digital Assessment Policy

Prepared By	Academic Quality and Development
Approved By	APPC, 10 th May 2017 Senate, 2 nd June 2017
Source Location	
Published Location	
Other Documents Referenced	GCU Online Similarity Checking Policy and Guides GCU Assessment Regulations GCU Code of Student Conduct
Related Documents	GCU 2020 Student Experience Action Plan GCU Strategy for Learning 2015-2020 GCU Digital Strategy 2016-2020

Version Number	Date Issued	Author	Update Information
V1.0	04.07.2017	Academic Quality & Development	First Published version
V1.1	23.09.2021	Quality Assurance & Enhancement	Minor revision to Section 5, to confirm applicability at all SCQF Levels.

GCU Digital Assessment Policy

1. Aim

- 1.1 This policy aims to encourage consistent and efficient approaches to digital assessment practices across the University to enhance the student learning experience.
- 1.2 The policy should be read in conjunction with the University's Online Similarity Checking Policy and Guides, the current University Assessment Regulations and Code of Student Conduct¹.

2. Definition

- 2.1 Digital assessment is defined here as the use of technology to support a range of assessment practices including the online submission of assignments, marking, and providing feedback to students in digital form.

3. Context

- 3.1 Digital approaches are central to learning, teaching and assessment practices across GCU in line with the priorities of the 2020 Student Experience Action Plan, the Strategy for Learning, and the Digital Strategy.
- 3.2 The well-managed use of technology for submission, marking and feedback provides advantages to students, staff and the University, including²:

For Students:	submitting work online and receiving timely feedback on their performance; convenience of not having to travel to submit assignments; automatic proof of receipt.
For Staff:	improving student learning by providing feedback in efficient and timely ways; the convenience of not having to collect and carry large quantities of paper; being able to reuse common feedback comments; allows easy access to external examiners
For Schools, central departments and the University:	ease of access to accurate, up-to-date assessment data which can inform quality enhancement and assurance, marketing, course information for prospective students and long-term curriculum planning

¹ <http://www.gcu.ac.uk/gaq/regulationsandpolicies/>

² <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/guides/electronic-assessment-management>

4. Policy statement

- 4.1 All suitable coursework assignments, both formative and summative, will normally be submitted online. Where student work is submitted online, digital forms of marking and feedback are also the expected norms.

5. Online submission

- 5.1 The University's Online Similarity Checking Policy states that all standard academic summative submissions of written assessment, i.e. those that are primarily text-based, will be submitted through similarity-checking software, such as Turnitin. This is applicable to written assessment submissions at all SCQF levels.
- 5.2 In exceptional circumstances, for example, due to the assignment format or file size, coursework can alternatively be submitted through the GCULearn Assignment tool or in another agreed format. The Assignment tool also accommodates group assignments.
- 5.3 Assignments in digital format will be retained in line with the University's requirements for the retention and archiving of student work and where relevant, that of professional bodies.

6. Digital marking

- 6.1 Student coursework submitted online will normally be marked digitally with marks made available to students within three weeks through the GCULearn Grade Centre. Students will be informed that marks are provisional, subject to moderation and ratification processes.
- 6.2 Approaches to digital marking are likely to involve using GCULearn to -
- create rubrics or grading templates to make marking criteria clear to students
 - download submissions, enter marks and feedback
 - view multiple choice tests and quiz results
 - monitor marking progress where there are teams of markers
 - hide or reveal student marks at an appropriate time
 - create customisable reports for modules, groups of students, defined categories or marking periods.

7. Digital feedback

- 7.1 Digital forms of feedback, including text, audio and video, will be provided wherever possible on both formative and summative coursework. This will include tutor feedback to individual students, tutor feedback to groups and cohorts, and peer feedback.

- 7.2 All forms of digital feedback will reflect the GCU Feedback Principles³.

- 7.3 Examples may include:

- adding feedback comments to Word documents or annotating other file types
- constructing sets of re-usable feedback comments
- providing feedback to a cohort of students through a GCULearn announcement, discussion board or blog post
- creating short videos or podcasts explaining key feedback points to a class or group

³ <http://www.gcu.ac.uk/futurelearning/feedbackprinciplesgcu/>

- providing short audio feedback comments via Grademark
- supporting peer assessment through specialist applications

8. Digital assessment

8.1. As technology enhanced learning becomes more central to the student experience at GCU, digital forms of assessed coursework, assignments and exams are also encouraged. Where this is the case, the necessary preparation should be undertaken and contingency plans put in place for the unlikely event of technology or internet failure.

8.2. Examples of digital assessments may include:

- online quizzes and tests
- assessed discussion boards, blogs, wikis, and e-portfolios
- individual or group presentations and reports using presentation software, videos and podcasts
- development of multimedia artefacts, simulations and models.

9. Exceptions

9.1. It is recognised that health, safety, and equality issues related to online marking and feedback must be taken into account. Exceptions to online submission, marking and feedback can be made in cases where academic staff have reasonable grounds for opting for hard-copy submission and marking, as approved by their immediate line manager.

9.2. Accessibility issues should also be taken into consideration to ensure that students with additional support needs are not disadvantaged. Appropriate alternatives should be available for students with a disability if required.

10. Support and guidance

10.1. Further guidance is available under the **Staff Help Tab** in GCULearn, and through the Blackboard videos for instructors at <https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor>

10.2. School Learning Technologists and the Academic Development team in Academic Quality and Development provide advice and support in the use of GCULearn, Turnitin, Grademark and other applications for digital assessment and feedback.