

Annex B: tutor survey

Access to HE grading implementation survey: tutors' views and experience

Tutors are key to the successful implementation of the graded Access to HE Diploma. The aim of this survey is to gather views and information from tutors about their experience of the first year of the implementation of grading, in order to assess how well the system is working. This information will be used to identify areas where action, clarification or additional guidance might be needed, and to allow other suggestions to be considered by Access Validating Agencies and QAA.

Your details

Name: _____ Position/role: _____

College/Centre: _____

Subject(s) taught at level 3 on the Access to HE Diploma: _____

If you are willing to be contacted about any of the questions raised in this survey, please provide your preferred contact details:

Email: _____ Phone no: _____

Section 1: the grade descriptors and their components, and their application to units

The grade descriptors were developed in consultation with Access to HE tutors and HE representatives to reflect the broad aspects of student performance most relevant for successful study in HE. Each descriptor contains a number of different components, and tutors select the most appropriate components for individual assignments. This allows the attributes of student performance that are relevant in different disciplines to be identified, while the generic descriptors provide a constant framework and common reference point to support consistency of grading across all subjects. We are interested to know how this has worked in practice.

Please tick (✓) to indicate your view about each of the following statements, in the context of your experience of grading.

In general:	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
a The broad areas that are relevant to identifying how well students have performed in my subject(s) are reflected within the grade descriptors.					
b The particular grade descriptors assigned to the units that I used were appropriate (ie they highlighted aspects of student performance that were relevant for those units).					
c There were enough grade descriptors assigned to the units I used (ie I could reward all the aspects of student work that are significant for differentiating performance).					
d The components of the grade descriptors allowed me to tailor the descriptors so that I could reflect the aspects of student work that are important in my subject.					
e The differences between the requirements for Pass, Merit and Distinction allowed me to make grading judgements that reflected broad differences in standards of students' performance in my subject.					
f The language in the grade descriptors and components provides a clear basis on which to provide feedback to students about their graded performance.					
g The language and choice within the grade descriptors and components allow me to create a framework for grading within which I can make appropriate grading decisions that reflect the important aspects of the standard of students' performance.					
<p>If you have disagreed with any of the statements above, please provide more detail (for example if you identified any gaps in the components of any grade descriptors that made it difficult for you to highlight important aspects of student work, please indicate the name of grade descriptor and suggestions for additional components).</p>					

Section 2: operating the grading system

The grading process was developed during the pilot stage to provide a common approach to the operation of the grading system which was sufficiently flexible to accommodate the range of course structures, unit sizes and approaches to assessment that exist on Access to HE courses. We are interested in how clear Access to HE tutors are about the operation of the grading system.

When I am planning the assessment of a unit, I am clear about	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
a how I should plan the use of grade descriptors across a unit assessment plan, particularly where there is more than one assignment					
b how best to select and apply grade descriptor components for particular assignments					
c the circumstances under which it is permissible to use numerical marking					
d how best to give guidance to students about what the chosen grade descriptors and components mean for their work for an assignment					
When I am assessing student work, I am clear about					
e how to use grade indicators to arrive at a final grade for a unit					
f how to provide feedback to students about their graded performance					
g how to record information about grading decisions					
h what I should do if student work does not satisfy all the related assessment criteria on first submission					
i the regulations that govern a resubmission and the range of options available to me to manage the nature and timing of a resubmission					
j the circumstances under which I can request a referral for a student					
k how to determine the final grade for a unit after a successful outcome of a referral (including where there is more than one assignment for a unit)					
<p>If you have disagreed with any of the statements above, it would be helpful if you could provide more detail (for example, if you are not clear about the regulations that govern resubmissions, please indicate the particular area(s)/circumstances in which you have been unclear).</p>					

Section 3: support and guidance

We are interested to know how helpful tutors have found the various different sources of support and guidance that have been made available to them (3a) and what more, if anything, might be needed (3b).

(3a) I found the following guidance helpful:	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not aware of/ did not use
a AVA guidance documents					
b AVA-provided training sessions					
c support from AVA staff to individual enquiries					
d support from the AVA external moderator/verifier					
e AVA regional Access forum/conference					
f internal moderation meetings					
g internal discussions with colleagues					
h QAA tutors' quick guide to grading					
i QAA full grading implementation handbook					
j other (please provide details)					
(3b) I would value more guidance/support in the areas identified below, provided in the way indicated (tick as preferred for all that apply):					
	Written guidance	Case studies/ exemplars	Training or coaching	Forums or workshops	Subject networks
a assessment planning to include grading					
b developing assignment briefs to include grading information					
c ensuring students understand how the grading system works					
d providing information to students on how specific assignments will be graded					
e making grading decisions					
f providing student feedback, including information about graded performance					
g recording assessment and grading decisions					
h managing the use of draft submissions					
i managing the process of resubmissions					
j other (please provide details)					

Section 4: student responses

Students are being surveyed separately, but we are interested in your perception of student responses in certain areas.

In general, the students that I teach appear to:	In all cases	In most cases	In some cases	In no cases	Don't know
a use the grading information provided with assignment briefs in their work					
b understand how grading decisions are arrived at					
c like to know what grades they have achieved					
d be interested in detailed feedback that explains why they have achieved particular grades					
e accept that the grades they achieve are valid					
f use the feedback provided about graded work to improve their performance					
g accept the regulations that apply to resubmissions					

Section 5: tutor responses

a) Changes were made in preparation for grading, and more changes are now being planned by some tutors in response to their experience of using the grading system. Informal feedback during the year indicates that some tutors and centres are considering some changes to the way that they plan and carry out assessment. We are interested to learn about any changes that are being considered.

I am considering making changes in the following areas, in response to my experience of grading (tick all that apply)	✓
a the assessment plans for the unit(s) I teach/use	
b the number of assignments within the unit assessment plan for at least one of the units I teach	
c the type of assessment used in at least one of the units I teach	
d the details of assessment tasks or assignments for at least one of the units I teach	
e the choice of components from the grade descriptors for particular assignments	
f information about grading provided to students on assignment briefs	
g other (please provide details)	

b) The introduction of a national system of grading has meant that most Access to HE tutors have given extra time and attention to a number of different aspects of course planning and delivery over the last year. We are interested to know which areas have received most time and attention.

Areas which have required more time and attention as a result of grading are:	no extra	a little extra	some extra	a lot extra
a attending external training events				
b attending internal meetings				
c reading and discussion about the requirements of the grading model				
d preparing new assignment briefs				
e preparing other new documentation				
f making changes to assessment plans				
g more detailed assessment of student work (ie making grading judgements)				
h providing more detailed feedback				
i internal moderation of grades				
j providing information to HE admissions staff				
k other (please specify)				
Which (if any) of the above do you anticipate will be long-term (that is, beyond the implementation stage) additional requirements for you?				

Any other comments or suggestions