Union

UST Assessment Strategy Framework

Version 1 Approved by AB May 23rd 2023

This framework should be read in conjunction with our Academic misconduct policy, Extenuating Circumstances policy and Board of Examiners: Membership and Procedures.

The framework and the appendices have been developed referencing the UK Quality Code for Higher Education Advice and Guidance – Assessment,[1] Theology Subject Benchmark,[2] The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies[3] and OU regulations and Handbook[4] and also state-of-the-art research and thought on HE assessment.

Position Statement

UST recognises the critical importance of assessment in its educational provision. Assessment is embedded in our programme design, integral to the maintenance of our academic standards and central to our commitment to enhance student engagement and learning.

Governing Principles

(1) Our Assessment is aligned to our learning outcomes, and the pedagogical and learning activities associated with these.

(2) Our assessment is set at the appropriate level of difficulty, and aims to be valid, reliable and objective.

(3) Our assessment approach is influenced by multiple interests and perspectives (programme, student, lecturer, and administration). As such it is timely, manageable, inclusive and varied.

(4) Our assessment is designed so as not to disadvantage a particular type of student (for example, different student ethnicities or those particular learning difficulties or disabilities).

(5) Our assessment approach is clearly articulated to all staff and students.

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[1] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/advice-and-guidance-assessment.pdf?sfvrsn=ca29c181_4
[2] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements/theology-and-religious-studies
[3] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code/qualifications-frameworks
[4] https://www.open.ac.uk/about/validation-partnerships/sites/www.open.ac.uk.about.validation-partnerships/files/files/OU-Handbook-for-Validated-Awards-2022-23-(accessible).pdf and https://www.open.ac.uk/about/validation-partnerships/about-ou-validation/regulations-validated-awards-open-university

(6) Our assessment and feedback are fundamental to our thinking about the learning process.

(7) Our assessment is designed with a view to having authentic value in Church and Missional contexts.

(8) Our assessment is designed to enhance student assessment literacy, good academic practice and Christian intellectual virtue.

(9) Our assessment is designed to enable students to demonstrate their learning, knowledge, skills and abilities.

(10) Our assessment design, moderation, delivery and feedback are all managed digitally as default.

(11) Our students are oriented to and supported in their assessment experience.

(12) Our teaching staff are supported in keeping up to date with assessment and feedback best practice in various CPD activities.

(13) Our Quality Assurance mechanisms facilitate review of our assessment practices. We gather and analyse data from all relevant stakeholders. These data are analysed and are a stimulus to development and enhancement.

Key Objectives

Guided by our principles:

1. We map our assessment across modules and programmes, and develop varied and purposeful assessment. We are committed to reviewing the variety in our assessment and adapting it as needed. See **Appendices 1,2 and 3** which contain the Programme-Module mapping, the variety of assessments used and module learning outcomes–assessment mapping for the BA, GDip and MTh programmes.

2. We are committed to internal and external moderation of all our assessment, and standardisation activities, where necessary. Internal and external marking and moderation processes are documented in **Appendix 4**.

3. We are committed to providing formative assessment for all students entering a programme. This process is documented in **Appendix 5**.

4. We are committed to providing feedback on assessment that helps students learn. **Appendix 6** documents our approach to feedback, and the backwards and forwards-looking orientation of this. **Appendix 7** is a tool to be used in auditing lecturer feedback.

5. We are committed to providing alternative assessment as a necessary support to our commitment to student inclusivity. See **Appendix 8**.

6. We are committed to providing one-to-one supervisor support on dissertation modules. **Appendix 9** provides details on this, and **Appendix 10** the Supervisor Record Template. **Appendix 12** documents the process for assigning supervisors.

7. We are committed to listening to and understanding student difficulties (as documented in our Extenuating Circumstances policy) and helping navigate unexpected challenges surrounding assessment. Our compensation policy is provided in **Appendix 11**.

8. We are committed to training teaching staff in all areas of assessment: assessment and feedback training is embedded in our annual training plans.

9. We are committed to enhancing academic integrity through raising awareness of unacceptable academic practice, and helping students develop intellectual virtue through self-access study modules, library support, seminars and one-to-one feedback. Our assessments are designed to minimise the possibility of academic malpractice.

10. We are committed to clear and transparent communication to students on all aspects of our assessment (in Module descriptors, explaining criteria, marking practices, notification of deadlines, establishing appropriate expectations for feedback, and providing access to external examiner reports).

11. We are committed to assessment security, limited access to sensitive data, and state of the art online invigilation.

Version	Author	Review Date	Reason for change	Equality Impact Assessment check (and comment)	AB Approval date *
1.1	Iain McGee	March 2023	Document developed in response to Programme revalidation exercise Jan 2023	Checked	May 23rd 2023

Appendix 1: BA Programme Learning Outcomes Mapped to Module Learning Outcomes and Assessment of Module Learning Outcomes

BA - Level 4

Study module/unit	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	D1	D2
OT1: Pentateuch and Former Prophets	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hebrew 1: Grammar	✓		✓					
Greek 1: Grammar	✓		✓					
Systematic Theology 1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
From Pentecost to the Reformation	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
Preaching and Communication	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Biblical Foundations of Mission	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Independent Essays	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

The header "Programme Learning Outcomes Mapped to Modules" spans columns A1–D2.

BA – Level 5

Study module/unit	Programme Learning Outcomes Mapped to Modules							
	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	D1	D2
NT1: Gospels	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hebrew 2: Narrative (HB52)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Hebrew 2: Narrative (HB51)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Greek 2: Reading (GK52)	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Greek 2: Reading (GK62)	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Systematic Theology 2	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
From the Puritans to the Evangelical Revival	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
Pastoral Theology and Ministry	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Global Christianity and the Church's Mission	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ministry Research Project	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

BA – Level 6

Study module/unit	Programme Learning Outcomes Mapped to Modules							
	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	D1	D2
NT2: Paul and his Letters	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
OT2: Latter Prophets, Psalms and Wisdom	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Hebrew 3: Poetry	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Greek 3: Further Reading	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Systematic Theology 3	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Children's, Youth and Family Ministry	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Advanced Biblical Communication and Pastoral Ministry	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dissertation (BA)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

Assessment Mapping to Learning Outcomes – BA Programme (by level)

Level 4: **Assessments used**

- **Written theological Reflection**
- **Exam**
- **Essay**
- **Oral Exam**
- **Sermon**

Note – shaded cell = there is no module outcome to be tested.

		Module Learning Outcomes Mapped to Assessment							
Assessment	**Study module/unit**	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	D1	D2
Written Theological Reflection (50%) Exam 1 (12.5%) Exam 2 (37.5%	OT1: Pentateuch and Former Prophets	WTR Ex 1 Ex2	WTR Ex2	WTR Ex2	WTR Ex2	WTR	WTR	WTR	Ex2
Exam 1 (50%) Exam 2 (50%)	Hebrew 1: Grammar	Ex 1 Ex 2		Ex 1 Ex 2					
Exam 1 (40%) Exam 2 (60%)	Greek 1: Grammar	Ex 1 Ex 2		Ex 1 Ex 2					

Assessment	Module	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Exam (50%) Essay (50%)	Systematic Theology 1	Ex Essay	Ex Essay	Ex Essay	Ex Essay	Ex Essay		Essay	Essay
Essay 1 (50%) Essay 2 (50%)	From Pentecost to the Reformation	Essay 1 Essay 2	Essay 1 Essay 2	Essay 1 Essay 2	Essay 1 Essay 2			Essay 1 Essay 2	
Oral Exam (40%) Sermon 1 (30%) Sermon 2 (30%)	Preaching and Communication	Oral Ex Sermon 1 Sermon 2	Oral Ex Sermon 1 Sermon 2	Oral Ex Sermon 1 Sermon 2	Oral Ex Sermon 1 Sermon 2	Oral Ex Sermon 1 Sermon 2	Oral Ex Sermon 1 Sermon 2	Oral Ex Sermon 1 Sermon 2	
Essay 1 (50%) Essay 2 (50%)	Biblical Foundations of Mission	Essay 1 Essay 2	Essay 1 Essay 2	Essay 1 Essay 2	Essay 1 Essay 2	Essay 2	Essay 1	Essay 1 Essay 2	Essay 1 Essay 2
Essay 1 (40%) Essay 2 (60%)	Independent Essays	Essay 1 Essay 2	Essay 1 Essay 2	Essay 1 Essay 2	Essay 1 Essay 2		Essay 1 Essay 2	Essay 1 Essay 2	Essay 1 Essay 2

Level 5: **Assessments used**

- **Exegetical paper**
- **Exam**
- **Textual analysis**
- **Book review**
- **Research project**
- **Case Study**

Note – shaded cell = there is no module outcome to be tested.

		Module Learning Outcomes Mapped to Assessment							
Assessment	**Study module/unit**	**A1**	**A2**	**B1**	**B2**	**C1**	**C2**	**D1**	**D2**
Exegetical Paper (50%) Exam (50%)	NT1: Gospels	Ex P Exam	Ex P Exam	Ex P Exam	Ex P Exam	Ex P Exam	Ex P	Ex P Exam	Ex P
Exam 1 (50%) Exam 2 (50%)	Hebrew 2: Narrative (HB52)	Exam 1 Exam 2	Exam 1 Exam 2	Exam 1 Exam 2	Exam 1 Exam 2		Exam 1 Exam 2	Exam 1 Exam 2	
Exam 1 (50%) Exam 2 (50%)	Hebrew 2: Narrative (HB51)	Exam 1 Exam 2	Exam 1 Exam 2	Exam 1 Exam 2	Exam 1 Exam 2		Exam 1 Exam 2	Exam 1 Exam 2	
Textual analysis (40%) Exam (20%) Exam (40%)	Greek 2: Reading (GK52)	Textual analysis Exam 1 Exam 2		Textual analysis Exam 1 Exam 2	Textual analysis Exam 1 Exam 2		Exam 1 Exam 2	Textual analysis	Textual analysis

Assessment	Module								
Exegetical Essay (40%) Exam (20%) Exam (40%)	Greek 2: Reading (GK62)	Essay Exam 1 Exam 2		Essay Exam 1 Exam 2	Textual analysis		Exam 1 Exam 2	Textual analysis	Textual analysis
Essay (50%) Exam (50%)	Systematic Theology 2	Essay Exam	Essay Exam	Essay Exam	Essay Exam			Essay	Essay
Essay (100%)	From the Puritans to the Evangelical Revival	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay			Essay	
Book review (50%) Case Study (50%)	Pastoral Theology and Ministry	Book review Essay	Book review Essay	Book review Essay	Book review Essay	Book review Essay	Book review Essay	Book review Essay	Book review Essay
Book review (40%) Essay (60%)	Global Christianity and the Church's Mission	Book review Essay	Book review Essay	Book review Essay	Book review Essay	Book review Essay	Book review Essay	Book review Essay	Book review Essay
Research project (100%)	Ministry Research Project	Research Project	Research Project	Research Project	Research Project	Research Project	Research Project	Research Project	Research Project

Level 6 **Assessments used:**

- **Essay**
- **Exam**
- **Textual Analysis**
- **Exegesis**
- **Sermon**
- **Oral Exam**
- **Assignment**
- **Case Study**

Note – shaded cell = there is no module outcome to be tested.

		Module Learning Outcomes mapped to Assessment							
Assessment	**Study module/unit**	**A1**	**A2**	**B1**	**B2**	**C1**	**C2**	**D1**	**D2**
Essay (50%) Exam (50%)	NT2: Paul and his Letters	Essay Exam	Essay Exam	Essay Exam	Essay Exam	Essay Exam	Essay Exam	Essay Exam	Essay
Exegesis (50%) Exam (50%)	OT2: Latter Prophets, Psalms and Wisdom	Exegesis Exam	Exegesis Exam	Exegesis Exam	Exegesis Exam		Exegesis	Exegesis	Exegesis
Essay (60%) Exam (40%)	Hebrew 3: Poetry	Essay Exam	Essay Exam	Essay Exam	Essay Exam		Essay Exam	Essay Exam	Essay
Textual Analysis (40%) Exam 1 (20%) Exam 2 (40%)	Greek 3: Further Reading	Textual Analysis Exam 1 Exam 2		Textual Analysis Exam 1 Exam 2	Textual Analysis		Exam 1 Exam 2	Textual Analysis	Textual Analysis

Exam (50%) Essay (50%)	Systematic Theology 3	Exam Essay	Exam Essay	Exam Essay	Exam Essay			Exam Essay	Essay
Assignment (100%)	Children's, Youth and Family Ministry	Assignment	Assignment	Assignment	Assignment	Assignment	Assignment	Assignment	Assignment
Sermon 1 (25%) Oral Exam (25%) Sermon 2 (20%) Case Study (30%)	Advanced Biblical Communication and Pastoral Ministry	Sermon 1 Oral Exam Sermon 2 Case Study	Sermon 1 Oral Exam Sermon 2 Case Study	Sermon 1 Oral Exam Sermon 2 Case Study	Sermon 1 Oral Exam Sermon 2 Case Study	Sermon 1 Oral Exam Sermon 2 Case Study	Sermon 1 Oral Exam Sermon 2 Case Study	Sermon 1 Oral Exam Sermon 2 Case Study	Sermon 1 Oral Sermon 2 Case Study
Assignment (100%)	Dissertation (BA)	Assignment	Assignment	Assignment	Assignment		Assignment	Assignment	Assignment

Appendix 2: GDip Programme Learning Outcomes mapped to Module Learning Outcomes and Assessment of Module Learning Outcomes

Study module/unit	Programme Learning Outcomes Mapped to Modules							
	A.1	A.2	B.1	B.2	C.1	C.2	D.1	D.2
BS65 Biblical Texts: English Exegesis	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
BS67 Studies in the Old and New Testaments	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CH65 Turning Points in Church History	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
GK61 Greek 1: Grammar	✓		✓					
HB61 Hebrew 1: Grammar	✓		✓				✓	
MM64 Church & Mission	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
MM65 Children's, Youth and Family Ministry	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
MM66 Studies in Preaching & Pastoral Theology	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ST65 Studies in Systematic Theology	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓

Assessment Mapping to Learning Outcomes – GDip Programme

Level 6

Assessment used:

- Essay
- Exam
- Sermon

Note – shaded cell = there is no module outcome to be tested.

		Module Learning Outcomes Mapped to Assessment							
Assessments	Study module/unit	A.1	A.2	B.1	B.2	C.1	C.2	D.1	D.2
Essay 1 (50%) Essay 2 (50%)	BS65 Biblical Texts: English Exegesis	Essay 1 Essay 2	Essay 1 Essay 2	Essay 1 Essay 2	Essay 1 Essay 2		Essay 1 Essay 2	Essay 1 Essay 2	Essay 1 Essay 2
Exam (50%) Essay (50%)	BS67 Studies in the Old and New Testaments	Exam Essay	Exam Essay	Exam Essay	Exam Essay	Exam Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay
Essay (50%) Exam (50%)	CH65 Turning Points in Church History	Essay Exam	Essay Exam	Essay Exam	Essay Exam	Essay Exam		Essay Exam	Essay
Exam 1 (40%) Exam 2 (60%)	GK61 Greek 1: Grammar	Exam 1 Exam 2		Exam 1 Exam 2					
Exam 1 (50%) Exam 2 (50%)	HB61 Hebrew 1: Grammar	Exam 1 Exam 2		Exam 1 Exam 2				Exam 1 Exam 1	

Assessment	Code	Title								
Essay (50%) Exam (50%)	MM64	Church & Mission	Essay Exam	Essay Exam	Essay Exam	Essay Exam	Essay Exam		Essay Exam	Essay
Essay (100%)	MM65	Children's, Youth and Family Ministry	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay
Sermon (25%) Essay 1 (25%) Essay 2 (50%)	MM66	Studies in Preaching & Pastoral Theology	Sermon Essay 1 Essay 2	Sermon Essay 1 Essay 2	Sermon Essay 1 Essay 2	Sermon Essay 1 Essay 2	Sermon Essay 1 Essay 2	Sermon Essay 1 Essay 2	Sermon Essay 1 Essay 2	Sermon Essay 2
Exam Essay	ST65	Studies in Systematic Theology	Exam Essay	Exam Essay	Exam Essay	Exam Essay			Exam Essay	Essay

Appendix 3: MTh Programme Learning Outcomes Mapped to Module Learning Outcomes and Assessment of Module Learning Outcomes

Study module/unit	Programme Learning Outcomes mapped to Module Learning Outcomes							
	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	D1	D2
Scripture and Hermeneutics	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hebrew Reading: Narrative and Poetry	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Advanced Hebrew Reading	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
OT Studies: Psalms	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
OT Studies: Ezekiel	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Greek Reading	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Advanced Greek Reading	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
NT Studies: Johannine Literature	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Union with Christ: A Biblical Theology Approach	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Theology of the Early Church Fathers	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
History and Theology of Evangelicalism	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Soteriology of the Reformation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Spiritual Formation of the Leader	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Contemporary Church Issues for Evangelicalism	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓

Preaching and Preachers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Biblical Counselling and Care in the Local Church	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Christian Theology of Religions and Global Mission	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dissertation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

MTh Assessment Mapping to Module Learning Outcomes

Level 7 – Assessment Used:

- Essay
- Exegetical Essay
- Exam
- Reflective research project
- Doctoral thesis critical review
- Exegetical research essay / paper
- Extra-canonical translation project
- Dissertation

Note – shaded cell = there is no module outcome to be tested.

		Module Learning Outcomes Mapped to Assessment							
Assessment	**Study module/unit**	**A1**	**A2**	**B1**	**B2**	**C1**	**C2**	**D1**	**D2**
Essay (100%)	Scripture and Hermeneutics	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay
Ex Essay (50%) Exam (50%)	Hebrew Reading: Narrative and Poetry	Ex Essay Exam		Ex Essay Exam	Ex Essay Exam	Ex Essay Exam		Ex Essay Exam	Ex Essay

Assessment	Module								
Ex Essay (50%) Exam (50%)	Advanced Hebrew Reading	Ex Essay Exam		Ex Essay Exam	Ex Essay Exam	Ex Essay Exam		Ex Essay Exam	Ex Essay Exam
Reflective research project (50%) Exegetical research project (50%)	OT Studies: Psalms	Reflective research project Exegetical research project	Reflective research project Exegetical research project	Reflective research project Exegetical research project	Reflective research project Exegetical research project	Reflective research project Exegetical research project	Reflective research project Exegetical research project	Reflective research project Exegetical research project	Reflective research project Exegetical research project
Doctoral thesis critical review (30%) Exegetical Essay (70%)	OT Studies: Ezekiel	Doctoral thesis critical review Exegetical Essay	Doctoral thesis critical review Exegetical Essay	Doctoral thesis critical review Exegetical Essay	Doctoral thesis critical review Exegetical Essay	Doctoral thesis critical review Exegetical Essay	Doctoral thesis critical review Exegetical Essay	Doctoral thesis critical review Exegetical Essay	Doctoral thesis critical review Exegetical Essay
Exegetical research essay (40%) Exam (60%)	Greek Reading	Exegetical research essay Exam		Exegetical research essay Exam	Exegetical research essay Exam	Exegetical research essay	Exam	Exegetical research essay	Exegetical research essay
EX research paper (50%) Extra-canonical translation project (50%)	Advanced Greek Reading	EX research paper Extra-canonical translation project		EX research paper Extra-canonical translation project	EX research paper	EX research paper		EX research paper Extra-canonical translation project	EX research paper

Essay (75%) Exegetical paper (25%)	NT Studies: Johannine Literature	Essay Exegetical paper	Essay Exegetical paper	Essay Exegetical paper	Essay Exegetical paper	Essay Exegetical paper	Essay Exegetical paper	Essay Exegetical paper	Essay Exegetical paper
Essay (100%)	Union with Christ: A Biblical Theology Approach	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay
Essay (100%)	Theology of the Early Church Fathers	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay		Essay	Essay	Essay
Essay (100%)	History and Theology of Evangelicalism	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay
Essay (100%)	Soteriology of the Reformation	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay
Essay (100%)	Spiritual Formation of the Leader	Essay		Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay
Essay (100%)	Contemporary Church Issues for Evangelicalism	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay		Essay	Essay
Essay (100%)	Preaching and Preachers	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay		Essay	Essay	Essay
Essay (100%)	Biblical Counselling and Care in the Local Church	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay
Essay (100%)	Christian Theology of Religions and Global Mission	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay
Dissertation (100%)	Dissertation	Dissertation	Dissertation	Dissertation	Dissertation	Dissertation	Dissertation	Dissertation	Dissertation

Union

UNION SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY MARKING & MODERATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Approved by Union School of Theology Academic Board 17-01-2018

Revised July 2018 for OU Programme Validation

Policy reviewed by Academic Board 20-02-19.

Review 29th November 2022 at Academic Board.

Reviewed May 2023 at Academic Board, and incorporated into Assessment Strategy

CONTENTS OF POLICY

1. Introduction

Marking

In assessing students' work, Union School of Theology (UST) is committed to ensuring that the assessment criteria have been applied and feedback given according to our guidelines.

Moderation

In assessing students' work, Union School of Theology (UST) is committed to a process of moderation and second marking as required, to ensure that the assessment criteria have been applied correctly and consistently and that there is parity of assessment across the cohort.

2. Policy Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with the following regulations, policies and procedures. This list is not exhaustive:

- Union School of Theology Programme Handbooks
- Union School of Theology Learning Support Policy
- Union School of Theology Equal Opportunities Policy
- Union School of Theology Extenuating Circumstances Policy and Procedure
- Union School of Theology Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure
- Union School of Theology Data Protection Policy
- QAA 'UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- Open University Handbook for Validated Awards
- Assessment Strategy Framework (with appendices)
- The Board of Examiners: Membership and Procedures

3. Second Marking

3.1 Second marking applies to;
→   All failed Level 4, 5, 6 and 7 summative assessments,
→   All independent essays, projects & Level 6 Dissertations
→   All summative assessments from BA, GDip and MTh modules taught by a lecturer in their first year of teaching at UST.
→   All other summative assessments are subject to an internal moderation process (see Section 5).

3.2 If there is a difference in marks on scripts that have been second marked, the first marker and second marker should agree on a mark. If any differential between the internal markers involves a change in the classification banding of a student, then no matter the size of the differential, the two markers concerned must discuss the situation to seek a mutually agreed mark. If they are unable to do so, a third independent marker who holds a senior academic position in the School should be asked to re-mark the work, review the first and second markers mark sheets, and award a final mark.

4. Blind Double Marking.

4.1 Blind Double Marking applies to MTh Level 7 Dissertations only.

5. Internal Moderation

5.1 By the term 'moderation,' we mean carrying out a competent, impartial scrutiny of selected scripts by a member of the School academic staff other than the person originally designated to mark the work. Moderation will be carried out using the same assessment criteria as the first markers.

5.2 When internally moderating the work, we seek to ensure that the students are assessed with accuracy, consistency, transparency, and fairness.

5.3 The Moderator's work involves but is not limited to:

5.3.1 Acting in an advisory capacity, providing feedback to first markers.

5.3.2 Monitoring assessed work and the way it has been undertaken.

5.3.3 Ensuring the validity of internal assessments, checking that they conform to the School and Open University requirements.

5.3.4 Suggesting amendments to the outcome of grades or marks awarded, as necessary, with rationale.

5.3.5 Cascading information to relevant parties.

5.3.6 Ensuring records are accurate and authentic.

5.4 All other work submitted as part of a summative assessment, apart from that in sections 3.1 in 4.1 above, is subject to an internal moderation process. Generally, the moderator considers a representative sample of scripts from the lower, middle, and upper end of the marking scale. This constitutes a minimum of 6 papers or 20% of papers for a larger cohort. Borderline cases are also scrutinised carefully by the moderator.

5.5 All moderators complete a Moderation Record Sheet (see Appendix 1) for the samples of works they have moderated, recording any comments made, to encourage best practice.

5.6 If the moderator is of the opinion that the marks for the whole batch of papers should be adjusted, both the marker and the moderator, in consultation with the Programmes Officer, will assess the appropriateness of this and the way that the marks for the complete set of papers for the cohort should be amended.

5.7 If necessary, referral may be made to the Programme Officer, who may also consult the External Examiners, who advise on the moderation process, but do not mark students' work themselves.

5.8 No mark except the mark agreed after the moderation process should be put on the material which will be returned to the candidate.

6. External Examiners

6.1 The External Examiners are responsible to the Academic Board for ensuring that marking and moderation is adequately conducted for the work they receive. The Board of Examiners: Membership and Procedures document outlines the roles of the Board.

6.2 External examiners' work involves but is not limited to:

6.2.1 Acting in an advisory capacity, providing feedback to first and second markers & moderators.

6.2.2 Monitoring assessed work and the way it has been undertaken.

6.2.3 Ensuring the validity of internal assessments, checking that they conform to the School and Open University requirements.

6.2.4 Considering Samples of assessed work in accordance with the School requirements to ensure the quality of feedback and consistency of grading decisions.

6.2.5 Recommending an adjustment for the whole cohort's results when they feel this is justified.

6.2.6 Communicating information to all relevant parties.

6.2.7 Confirming records are accurate and authentic.

6.2.8 Ensuring that quality assurance and associated procedures are in place.

6.2.9 Facilitating the process of successfully meeting external moderation requirements.

6.2.10 Approving assessment and examination questions prior to use.

6.3 The School, through the remit of the External Examiners, confirms that it meets the quality of process through:

6.3.1 The fitness for purpose of the assessment and moderation processes.

6.3.2 The quality and consistency of assessment decisions and practices.

6.3.3 An audit of records.

6.3.4 Agreed actions.

6.3.5 Assessment decisions, including grades or marks awarded by the internal assessors.

6.4 The Programme and Registry Coordinators are responsible for checking that the marking process has been completed and will ensure the external examiners are provided with the relevant marking documents and links to enable them to consider the marking sent for scrutiny. The moderator decides on the sample to be moderated based on the requirements set out in section 5.

There is no maximum or minimum size. The External Examiner should see examples of assessments across all levels. The moderation sample will include a representative sample of scripts from the lower, middle, and upper end of the marking scale and any borderline cases. Any fails are second marked, and these will also be included in the marking that is sent to the external examiners.

6.5 The External Examiners are not normally allowed to change marks. However, they can recommend in the feedback to the Programme Officer an adjustment to the marks for the whole cohort when they feel this is justified. This would be discussed and approved at the Examination Board.

7. Other Regulations

7.1 Moderation should be on academic merit alone. The School makes every effort, in accordance with its 'Equal Opportunities Policy' to ensure that students are treated solely on the basis of their merit, abilities and potential and do not suffer from unlawful discrimination. We believe that diversity is a positive contribution to the learning experience at Union School of Theology.
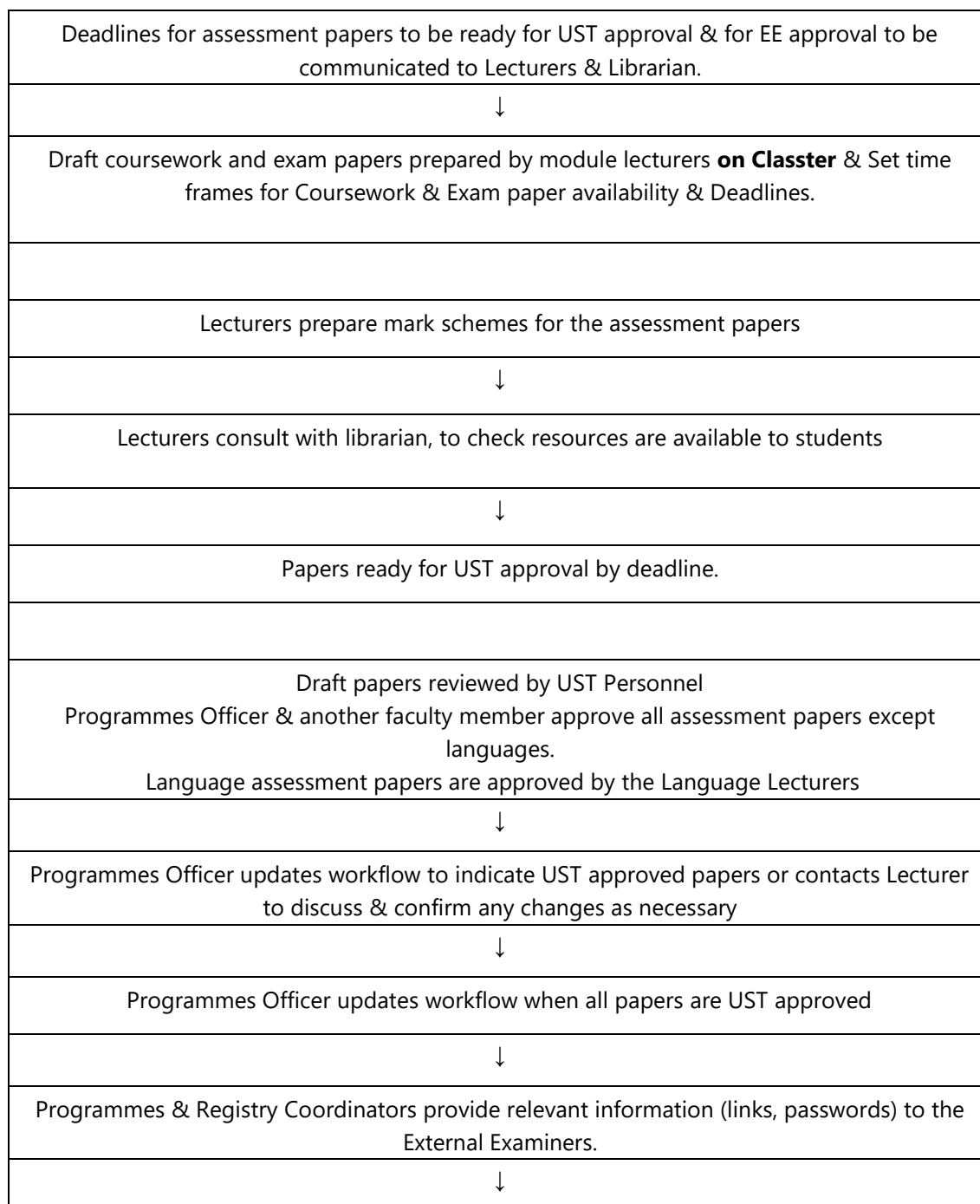
7.2 Extenuating circumstances affecting the assessment, should be dealt with according to the School's Extenuating Circumstances Policy.
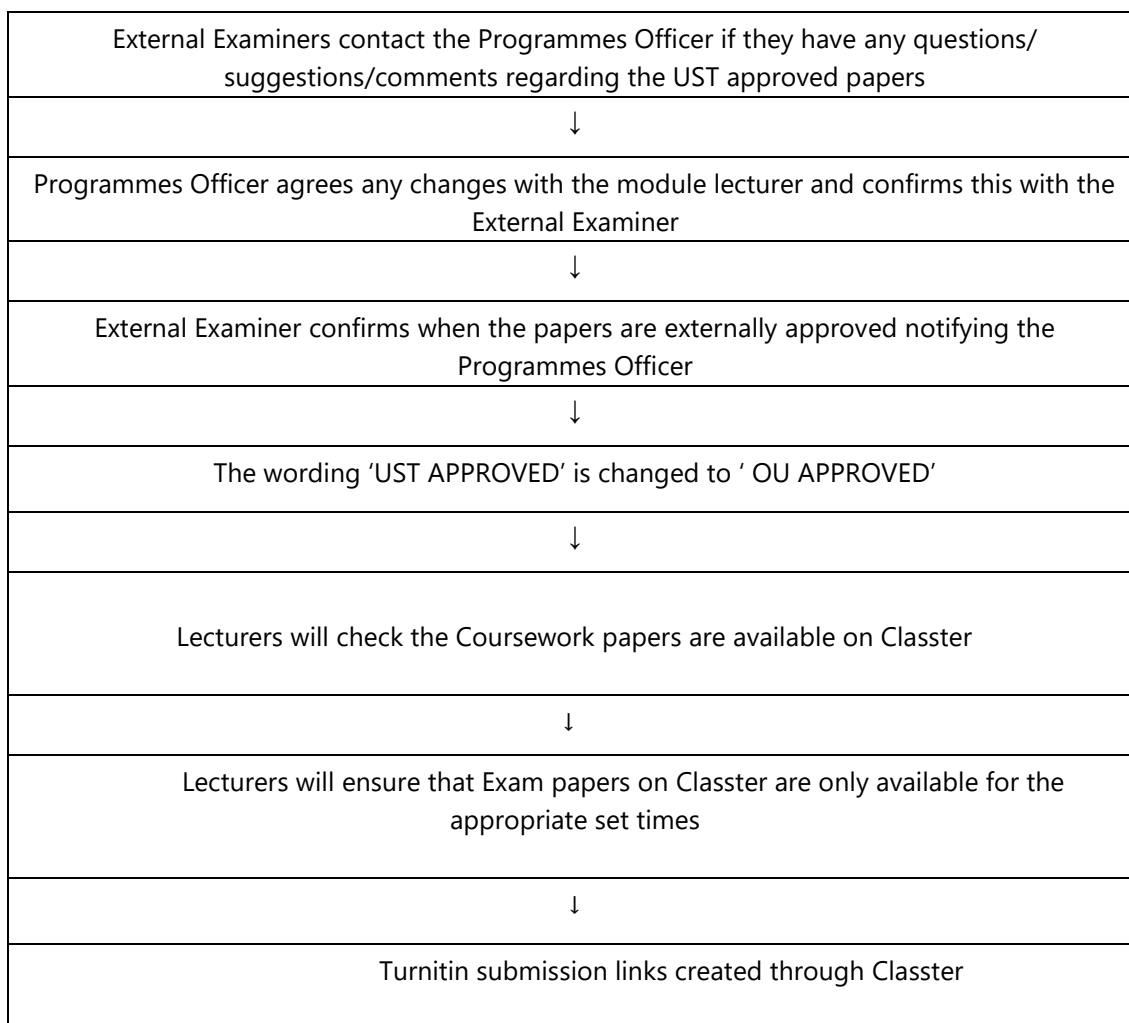
7.3 Where a second marker becomes aware of academic misconduct, the matter should be dealt with according to the School's Academic Misconduct Policy.

7.4 All student academic records are kept in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation. See the Union School of Theology Data Protection Policy for details. In line with the terms of the General Data Protection Regulation, students are entitled to a copy of all their personal data held by us. All requests should be made to the Academic Registrar.

8. Assessment Approval Process

Assessments go through a 2-step approval process. Firstly, by UST & secondly by our Validating Partner the Open University.

Deadlines for assessment papers to be ready for UST approval & for EE approval to be communicated to Lecturers & Librarian.
↓
Draft coursework and exam papers prepared by module lecturers **on Classter** & Set time frames for Coursework & Exam paper availability & Deadlines.
Lecturers prepare mark schemes for the assessment papers
↓
Lecturers consult with librarian, to check resources are available to students
↓
Papers ready for UST approval by deadline.
Draft papers reviewed by UST Personnel Programmes Officer & another faculty member approve all assessment papers except languages. Language assessment papers are approved by the Language Lecturers
↓
Programmes Officer updates workflow to indicate UST approved papers or contacts Lecturer to discuss & confirm any changes as necessary
↓
Programmes Officer updates workflow when all papers are UST approved
↓
Programmes & Registry Coordinators provide relevant information (links, passwords) to the External Examiners.
↓

External Examiners contact the Programmes Officer if they have any questions/ suggestions/comments regarding the UST approved papers
↓
Programmes Officer agrees any changes with the module lecturer and confirms this with the External Examiner
↓
External Examiner confirms when the papers are externally approved notifying the Programmes Officer
↓
The wording 'UST APPROVED' is changed to ' OU APPROVED'
↓
Lecturers will check the Coursework papers are available on Classter
↓
Lecturers will ensure that Exam papers on Classter are only available for the appropriate set times
↓
Turnitin submission links created through Classter

9. Alternative Assessments

In some cases, UST recognises that there will be a need to consider providing alternative assessments. UST has procedures in place for approving any special arrangements in advance of a student's first assessment.

As per our alternative assessment guidelines (Appendix 8 of the Assessment Strategy), a student should make a request for alternative assessment ideally before the module begins or at the very latest within 1 month before an assignment deadline / exam is scheduled. Alongside the request, supporting documentation must be provided. This might include a statement from a medical practitioner, document from an educational psychologist, or an approved DSA needs assessment.

Alternative assessment requests are considered by the Pastoral Dean in conjunction with the Programmes Officer and lecturer and will take into account the supporting evidence and documentation submitted in order to provide a suitable alternative assessment. When the assessment tool changes or rubrics / weighting change, external examiners will also be consulted when approving alternative assessments.
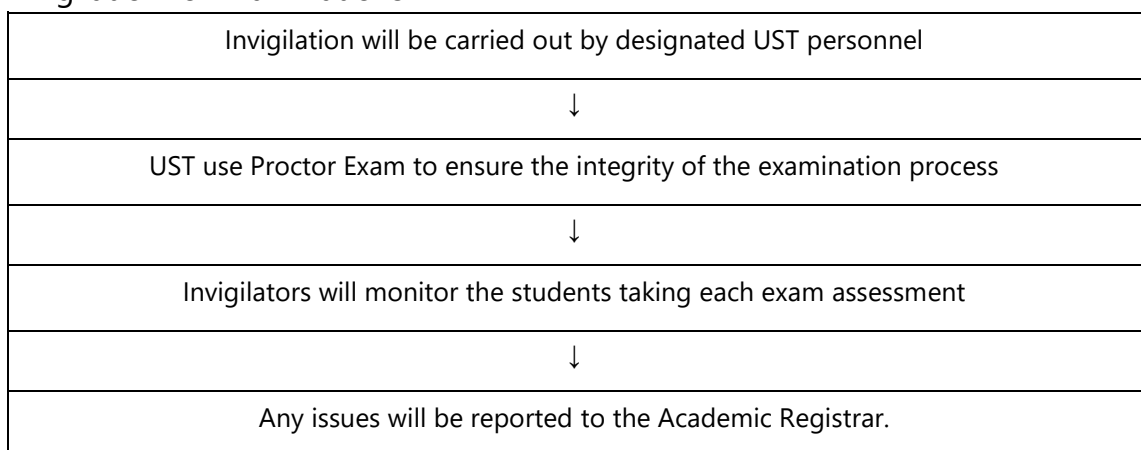
10. Marking Process

MODERATION (Coursework & Exams)
Students submit coursework via Turnitin
↓
Marker 1 (Lecturer) will mark the submissions- adding grades, feedback and sliding scales on rubrics.
↓
Marker 1 updates workflow and moderation form for Moderator indicating that 1st Marking is complete
↓
Moderator chooses a sample of Top, middle, bottom marks to moderate and also looks at any on the grade boundary. Moderator checks all fails. The Moderator may adds feedback comments to the submissions they have moderated or second marked.
↓
Moderator fills in the moderation form and updates the workflow to indicate to the First Marker that Moderation/Second marking is complete.
↓
Markers liaise to ensure all processes are complete or where necessary refers to Programme Officer if there is disagreement or a change in marks (according to the moderation guidelines).
↓
Marker 1 & Moderator ensures that the process is complete, that any amendments have been made & signs the declarations on the Moderation Form
↓
Marker 1 ✓ release the marks and feedback. ✓ contact any students who have failed the assessment components ✓ notify students that provisional marks and feedback are available & that marks will not be confirmed util the OU has ratified the marks at the Exam Board. ✓ notify the students that it is their responsibility to download a copy of their marked feedback for their own records.

2 MARKERS
Students submit coursework via Turnitin
↓

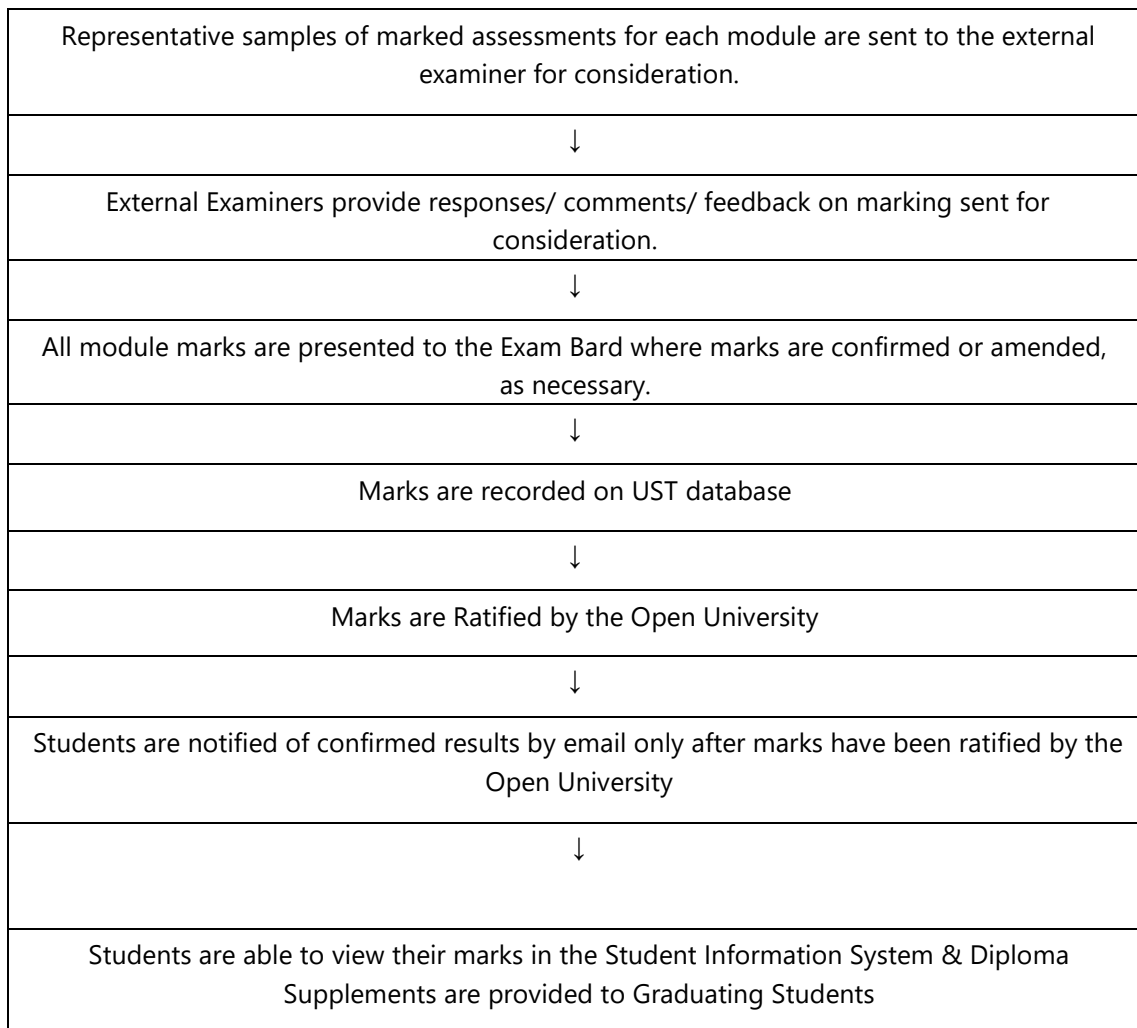| Marker 1 (Lecturer) will mark the submissions- adding grades, feedback and sliding scales on rubrics. |
|---|
| ↓ |
| Marker 1 updates workflow and adds their mark to the mark sheet form for 2nd Marker indicating that 1st Marking is complete |
| ↓ |
| Marker 2 has access to the 1st Markers mark, feedback & mark scheme and adds their own marking feedback underneath the 1st Markers feedback. 2nd Marker adds mark to mark sheet. |
| ↓ |
| 2nd Marker updates the workflow to indicate to the First Marker that 2nd marking is complete. |
| ↓ |
| Markers liaise to agree marks and ensure all processes are complete or where necessary refers to Programme Officer if the markers cannot agree marks. |
| ↓ |
| Marker 1 & 2 ensures that the process is complete, that any amendments have been made & signs the declarations on the Mark Sheet |
| ↓ |
| Marker 1
✓ release the marks and feedback.
✓ contact any students who have failed the assessment components
✓ notify students that provisional marks and feedback are available & that marks will not be confirmed until the OU has ratified the marks at the Exam Board.
✓ notify the students that it is their responsibility to download a copy of their marked feedback for their own records. |

BLIND DOUBLE MARKING
Students submit coursework via Turnitin: 2 links are created (2 copies are submitted in separate links for each marker if necessary)
↓
Marker 1 (Supervisor) will mark the submission- adding grades, feedback and sliding scales on rubrics.
↓
Marker 1 (Supervisor) updates workflow to indicate that 1st Marking is complete

↓
Marker 2 has access to the Supervisors report but **does not** have access to the 1st Markers mark & feedback and adds their own marking feedback, mark and completes the sliding scale on the Rubrics Marker 2 updates the workflow indicating that the 2nd Marking is complete.
↓
2nd Marker updates the workflow to indicate to the First Marker that 2nd marking is complete.
↓
Markers liaise to agree marks and add their individual marks to the mark sheet and complete the information on the mark sheet adding a rationale. Each marker then adds the agreed mark to the marked submission. Or where necessary refers to Programme Officer if they cannot agree marks.
↓
Marker 1 & 2 ensures that the process is complete, that any amendments have been made & Marker 1 signs the declarations on the Mark Sheet
↓
Marker 1 ✓ release the marks and feedback. ✓ contact any students who have failed the assessment components ✓ notify students that provisional marks and feedback are available & that marks will not be confirmed until the OU has ratified the marks at the Exam Board. ✓ notify the students that it is their responsibility to download a copy of their marked feedback for their own records.

Invigilation for Examinations

Invigilation will be carried out by designated UST personnel
↓
UST use Proctor Exam to ensure the integrity of the examination process
↓
Invigilators will monitor the students taking each exam assessment
↓
Any issues will be reported to the Academic Registrar.

External Examiner CONSIDERATION on ALL ASSESSMENTS

Representative samples of marked assessments for each module are sent to the external examiner for consideration.
↓
External Examiners provide responses/ comments/ feedback on marking sent for consideration.
↓
All module marks are presented to the Exam Bard where marks are confirmed or amended, as necessary.
↓
Marks are recorded on UST database
↓
Marks are Ratified by the Open University
↓
Students are notified of confirmed results by email only after marks have been ratified by the Open University
↓
Students are able to view their marks in the Student Information System & Diploma Supplements are provided to Graduating Students

ENSURING THE INTEGRITY OF ASSESSMENT PROCESSES ACROSS TAUGHT PROGRAMMES

10.1 Students register onto the programme individually, and sign a student contract with UST which includes a commitment to refrain from academic malpractice. [UST Student Contract, Section 3.3]

10.2 Students must make a declaration that they have understood the definition of academic misconduct and that all work which they will submit for assessment will be their own unaided work, observing the established expectations in submitting work for assessment. [UST Academic Malpractice Policy, Section 6.5)

10.3 A range of assessment means are used across all programmes including essays, exams (now online with Proctor Exam providing the means to Invigilate) and oral presentation – some modules are assessed in a combination of exam and essay formats. All these measures are designed to support the integrity of the assessment process.

10.4 Analysis of trends in student performance across assessments is made (and reported in the Student Progress reports to the ATRACC).

10.5 External examiners have the right to request oral examination of any candidate.

10.6 Feedback will be taken from lecturers and Lead Mentors in Learning Communities as to the level of engagement with the course materials by students.

11. Responsibilities, Policy Approval and Review

11.1 The Provost and Programmes Officer have overall responsibility for the marking & moderation policy, including its approval and annual review.

11.2 The Programmes Officer has responsibility for overseeing the monitoring of marking & moderation and ensuring that it complies with Open University regulations.

12. Policy Communication

12.1 This document can be found on the School VLE [the Union Cloud] and on the School website: www.ust.ac.uk .

12.2 Every effort will be made to respond to any request to provide this policy in a different format.

12.3 This policy will be included in the staff and student induction.

Version	Author	Review Date	Reason for change	Equality Impact Assessment check (and comment)	AB Approval date *
1.1	Iain McGee	May 2023	Updates in response to OU regulations compliance	Checked	May 23 2023 embedded in assessment strategy

Appendix 1. Moderation Form

**Union
School of
Theology**

MODERATION FORM

Module:		1st Marker:	
Coursework/Exam		Moderator:	

Total number of assignments passed to moderate:

1st Marker's comments on performance of the students and any issues for Moderator's attention:

 Signed *(1st Marker):* ....

Moderator's comments *(based on sample moderated)***:**
If there are a limited number of cases in the sample (<20%) with a differential of >5%, 1st and 2nd Markers to discuss whether these marks need to be reconsidered.

Moderator's recommendations for scripts other than those first marked at pass mark and below *(circle number)*

1. Sufficient consensus and marks should go forward as agreed.

2. Possible problems in overall consistency and complete batch should be re-marked.

3. The marks appear low and all work should be adjusted in the following way ____

4. The marks appear high and all work should be adjusted in the following way ____

    NB. If there are a limited number of cases in the sample (<20%) with a differential of >5%, 1st Marker and Moderator to discuss whether these marks need to be reconsidered.

The verification of the total cohort is based on the sample, as recorded on the marksheet below.

Signed *(Moderator)*: ……………………………………………………

1st Marker's response to Moderator *(including details of agreed adjustments, if any):*

OUTCOME OF MODERATION OF SAMPLE OF SCRIPTS
*(**Only** the sample scrutinised should be listed here)*

Moderator may suggest an alternative mark for a limited number of cases but should tick all others to indicate that they have been read.

Please do not record second marks and fails in the table directly below. You will need to do this in the next section underneath this table.

Candidate Number	1st Marker's mark	Moderator's Mark – (if pass) *(Where applicable)*	Agreed mark *(where applicable)* with comments

OUTCOME OF MODERATION OF SAMPLE OF SCRIPTS- SECOND MARKING DUE TO FAILS
(Only fails to be listed here)

Candidate Number	1st Marker's mark	2nd Marker's mark -	Agreed mark with comments

Confirmation of final marks

I confirm that the marking processes have been completed and that the table above reflects the final agreed marks.

Updating marks in Grademark
I confirm that **where necessary,** marks and comments have been updated in Grademark to reflect the outcome of the moderation process.

Marking Process Complete
I confirm that the marking process is complete.

Please sign below to confirm the above statements.
Signed: Date:

Union
School of
Theology

INDEPENDENT STUDY/ DISSERTATION MARKING FORM

The independent studies are marked by the supervisor and then by a second marker.

Supervisor:		2nd Marker	
Academic Year:		Student Assessment Number	

Supervisor's Mark	2nd Marker's Mark	Agreed mark	Rationale for the agreed mark

Please comment below if there are any penalties to be applied or if there are any academic misconduct issues. If there are none, please put N/A.

Penalties (late / footnote misuse)	Academic misconduct issues

Confirmation of final marks

I confirm that the marking processes have been completed and that the table above reflects the final agreed marks.

Updating marks in Grademark

I confirm that **where necessary,** marks and comments have been updated in Grademark to reflect the outcome of the marking process.

Marking Process Complete

I confirm that the marking process is complete.

Supervisor: Please sign below to confirm the above statements.

Signed: Date:

Appendix 3. Dissertation (MTh Only) 2 Mark Sheet

Union School of Theology

Dissertation Mark sheet

MODULE: TH7818 DISSERTATION	PARTNER: UNION SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY	ACADEMIC YEAR:
LEVEL:7	CREDITS: 60	ASSESSMENT TYPE: *15,000-word Dissertation (100% of mark)*
STUDENTS ASSESSMENT NUMBER:	SUPERVISOR:	OTHER MARKER:

SUPERVISOR's MARK	OTHER MARKER's MARK:	AGREED MARK:

Markers, please record the mark **AFTER** the deduction of penalties

Penalties: (Please record late penalties / footnote penalties etc. below)

Rationale: (This is needed if there is a differential of 5 or more marks or the marks cross a grade boundary).

Updating marks in Grademark

First Marker confirms that marking processes have been completed and where necessary, marks and comments have been updated in Grademark to reflect the outcome of the marking process.

Signed: Date:

Appendix 5 Formative Assessment

Principles

- Formative assessment and feedback are particularly important as a student begins their journey at UST: they enable early reflection on progress, and provide early checks on learning outcome attainments.
- Early formative assessment and feedback within a module can provide significant opportunities for learning, and trigger additional support as needed.
- It is UST's conviction that additional support mechanisms (if needed) should be activated as soon as possible if there are concerns about a student's academic progress. Such intervention is established to help students meet the module's learning outcomes.

Process

Formative assessment is provided in 1 module for new part-time students, and 2 modules for full-time students (these opportunities are appropriately staggered).

Every student will have the opportunity to complete a piece of formative assessment and receive feedback on it before the first summative assessment is due in their programme of study

The assessment is designed to check that the student demonstrates satisfactory understanding of an aspect of the subject matter of the module and also satisfies the threshold academic norms expected to be present in a short piece of writing requiring engagement with two texts (either chapters or articles).

The lecturer may take the opportunity to align the subject matter of the formative assessment to the summative assessment, thereby encouraging student engagement with it.

The assessment is typically a writing task, designed with a view to testing student understanding and the ability to construct a short piece of writing (500 – 1000 words). Typically. this will require the student to adopt a position and to demonstrate skills including synthesis, comparison, summarisation, paraphrasing and the use of acceptable citation practices.

Feedback (which can take a variety of forms: oral recording, face-to-face or written) will be given to the student within 2 weeks of the submission. The feedback comments note both strengths and opportunities for improvement, focusing on where the student needs to invest more attention and effort to achieve threshold levels of attainment, if these are not being met.

Where the standard of the student performance falls below expectations in understanding the subject a follow up meeting with the lecturer will be held, and ongoing engagement provided as necessary. Where issues are identified relating to academic reading and writing skills, the student will be referred to academic skills material on the Cloud, and also encouraged to attend Academic Skills Support seminars. Relevant lecturers / mentors will be kept updated on developments arising from these engagements.

Appendix 6 - Our Commitment to Quality Feedback

'Feedback is a process whereby learners obtain information about their work in order to appreciate the similarities and differences between the appropriate standards for any given work, and the qualities of the work itself, in order to generate improved work.'[5]

UST recognises the importance of formative and summative feedback for student learning. The following principles govern our approach.

1. UST recognises the importance of all 5 of the following elements of feedback, and seeks to employ them as a matter of course:

- praise
- comments on progress (if possible)[6]
- critique
- advice
- questioning'[7]

2. As far as possible, feedback should be motivational and not discouraging. It aims to reduce rather than heighten student anxiety. To that end, no more than 3 major critiques should be documented: if more the exercise may be counterproductive. The choice of these 3 issues should be governed by the significance of improvement that can result from a development in any one of them.

3. Feedback is geared to encouraging student reflection and evaluation about what is going right and also closing the gaps between current attainment and the learning outcomes, as needed. Feedback should encourage student engagement in the learning process.

4. Feedback can take a variety of formats: it can be whole class, oral (recorded), written, or face-to-face. Where possible individual dialogic feedback is our preferred choice. Through all the forms of feedback, our goal is to encourage students to follow up on it, and request clarification and discussion about the responses as needed.

5. Feedback is framed in language which is accessible and connects with the module learning outcomes and rubrics clearly and accurately.

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[5] Molloy, Elizabeth and David Boud. 'Changing Conceptions of Feedback'. In Feedback in Higher and Professional Education: Understanding It and Doing It Well, edited by David Boud and Elizabeth Molloy, 11–33. London: Routledge, 2013, page 6.

[6] It is recognised that this will not be possible when marking is anonymous, or when a lecturer does not have ongoing engagement with a student. However, when possible, for example through informal engagement during a module's progress, this is desirable.

[7] These five points are taken from Hughes, Gwyneth, Holly Smith and Brian Creese. 'Not Seeing the Wood for the Trees: Developing a Feedback Analysis Tool to Explore Feed Forward in Modularised Programmes', Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education 40, no. 8 (2015), p.1080.

6. Feedback is timely. Expectations are established in our documentation and communication, and deadlines should be met. Where they are not, we communicate this accordingly, and are critically reflective of how our own practices need to develop to avoid such shortcomings.

7. UST encourages its lecturers to reflect on the feedback that they give, and how this may affect the content they focus on in class, or the ways in which they seek to engage students with the module material

REVIEW

UST is committed to the following to ensure that the above practices are actioned:

1. Training and orientation (one session per year)

2. Receiving feedback from students on the feedback they obtain (in module feedback forms and student satisfaction surveys) and using this to enhance our practice.

3. Conducting peer evaluation on feedback to encourage reflection on the 5 elements of feedback given.[8]

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[8] See Appendix 7

APPENDIX 7

Assessment Careers JISC funded www.ioe.ac.uk/assessmentcareers

Assessment Careers Feedback Analysis Tool

Programme.. Module ....

Student Name...(to be anonymised)   Grade if known..................................

Assessor(s)...(to be anonymised)   Formative or summative assessment..

Category of feedback	Code	Sub-category	Examples	Score	Rank order
Giving praise	P1		'A well constructed argument...'.		
Recognising progress (ipsative)	P2		'This represents a significant improvement...' 'You have taken on board critique...'		
Critical feedback	C1	Correction of errors	Spelling, grammar, referencing etc.		
	C2	Factual critiques (of content)	'I do not think you can say X.' ' this is not in enough depth'		
	C3	Critique of approach (structure and argument)	'It would have been better to conclude with Y...'		
Giving advice	A1	Specific (to current assignment)	'You might want to consider X...'		

	A2	General points (specific to current assignment)	e.g. on depth, argument and structure: 'There is scope to tease out further detail on X...'		
	A3	For future assignments	'In your next essay you should consider Y...'		
Clarification requests	Q		'What do you mean by Z?'		
Unclassified statements	O		Statements which do not make a judgement e.g. descriptions of the work.		

Orsmond, P. & Merry, S. 2011. Feedback alignment: effective and ineffective links between tutors' and students' understanding of coursework feedback. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education.* 36(2): 125-126.

Hughes, G. 2011. Aiming for Personal Best: a Case for Introducing Ipsative Assessment in Higher Education. *Studies in Higher Education.* 36 (3): 353 – 367.

Appendix 8 - Alternative Assessment Guidelines

This document should be read alongside the Disability Support Policy and the Extenuating Circumstance Policy. This document focuses on the provision of alternative assessment.

1. Background

1.1. Module specifications are available to students before applying to study on a programme. These include information about assessment for the module. This being so, students are expected to be aware of the type of assessment that is used in their programme of study before studying and once accepted on a programme.

1.2. UST recognises that it may not be possible for some students to complete certain assessments or to complete them within the same time constraints as other students. Because we are 'committed to providing a learning and teaching environment in which disabled students and staff members are welcomed and supported' (Disability Support Policy, Section 1.3) we have in place measures to ensure that students with disabilities are provided with either additional time (whether for an exam or for an assignment), or an alternative form of assessment if this is deemed the most appropriate course of action to take. Such adjustments are always considered exceptions, and should be treated as such.

1.3. Following the principle documented in the QAA Code of Practice for disabled students (Precept 13)[9] and the relevant part of the OU regulations,[10] and DSA guidance,[11] UST has a system in place to manage the situations documented in

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[9] 'Assessment and examination policies, practises and procedures should provide disabled students with the same opportunity as their peers to demonstrate the achievement of learning outcomes.'

[10] OU regulations

F1.10 Assessment arrangements for students with impairments If a student is unable to be assessed by the methods specified in the assessment regulations, the OU expects institutions to try to accommodate that student by making special arrangements for examination or assessment. The External Examiner may agree a variation in the methods as appropriate bearing in mind the learning outcomes of the programme and the need to assess the student on equal terms with other students. The institution must have procedures in place for approving any special arrangements in advance of a student's first assessment. Institutions are expected to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate students' needs, while having regard to any applicable legislation. Failure to implement any special arrangements which have been formally agreed may be grounds for an appeal (section H of the Regulations for Validated Awards of the Open University).

[11] 2016/2017 Disabled Student's Allowance states that 'The learning environment should be as inclusive as possible, so that the need for individual interventions is the exception, not the rule. Institutions should engage in a continual improvement cycle that develops inclusive practice, with the aim of reducing the number of individual interventions required.' 'We expect institutions to strive to provide the best possible support for all their students, including their body of disabled students, to continue to remove or reduce the need for individual support through DSAs.' (DSA Guidance, 2016/17)

Sections 5.1[12] and 7.2[13] of its Disability Support Policy. Section 5.1. covers the need for reasonable adjustments to be made to assessment, so that a 'substantial disadvantage' is not faced by a student with some kind of disability. Section 7.2. covers adjustments to the forms of assessment that may be needed.

1.4. Concerning its implementation of Sections 5.1 and 7.2 of the above policy, UST is committed to ensuring that the specific arrangements arrived at neither disadvantage nor advantage a particular student, and that the alternative arrangements are arrived at on a careful case-by-case basis.

1.5. UST recognises that the testing of a particular learning outcome, or outcomes, can often be achieved through a variety of testing tools. If unable to test a particular learning outcome via the means provided in the module specifications, it is committed to finding a suitable alternative assessment. The alternative tool/s used should test the learning outcomes at the same level of difficulty as the documented tool.

2. Process

2.1. On receipt of the request for alternative assessment from a student, the Pastoral Dean, in conjunction with Programmes Officer and module lecturer will discuss the type of adjustment required. Where the alternative assessment only involves the addition of time, or is minor (e.g. use of large font in an exam paper) this does not need to be approved by the external examiners. Where a different testing tool, weighting or rubric are introduced, such assessment will go through the same internal and external review processes as other assessments. The final decision on the alternative assessment will be communicated to the student, alongside informing the lecturer, and the Programmes and Registry team.

3. Example cases of alternative assessment

Note that these are examples, and should not be considered to cover all cases.

3.1. Adjustments to an exam this may include the following:

1. More time
2. Extra breaks
3. Provision of a scribe or assistant
4. The use of large font papers

---

[12] 5.1 UST is committed to ensuring that not only are reasonable adjustments made to ensure that disabled people have equality of opportunity but also that measures are taken to ensure that people who are disabled are not put at a "substantial disadvantage" in comparison with non-disabled people. The areas this covers include teaching, learning and assessment, student facilities and support, accommodation, and working environment.

[13] MAKING REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS UST will make reasonable adjustments to facilitate the study and work of people with disabilities. These include – .... Adjusting the locations of student assessments or the forms they take.

3.2. Adjustments to the administration, delivery or marking of an assessment this may include:

1. A later deadline for submission
2. No penalties for grammatical and spelling mistakes
3. Use of a revised rubric, details of which are agreed upon and discussed and made clear to the student beforehand
4. Adjustment to audience (e.g. 2 lecturers to hear a presentation, rather than a student class)

3.3. Adjustments to the assessment tool used, this may include the following:

1. A different mode of assessment (e.g. a presentation rather than an essay, or vice-versa)
2. The use of various testing tools to replace a particular tool (e.g. an oral presentation and an interview instead of an exam).
3. Use of only part of an assessment, possibly with an additional component (e.g. 2 parts of an exam are used along with a video submission)
4. Adjusting the weighting of an assessment within a module (e.g. increasing the weight of an essay from 50% to 80% with a reduction in an oral presentation from 50% to 20%).

4. Timing and Appeal Process

4.1. A student should make a request for alternative assessment ideally before the module begins or at the very latest within 1 month before an assignment / exam is scheduled. Alongside the request, supporting documentation must be provided. This might include a statement from a medical practitioner, document from an educational psychologist, or an approved DSA needs assessment.

4.2. If a student is not satisfied with how their request for an alternative assessment has been handled, the rejection of the request, or is dissatisfied with the proposed alternative assessment, they can appeal to the Provost. The appeal will be considered, alongside any supporting information and feedback from the external examiner, as necessary. The decision on the appeal will be communicated to the student not more than two weeks from the appeal being made.

Appendix 9 - Dissertation Guidelines for Supervisors and Students

BA Dissertation and MTh dissertation Supervision Practices

The guidelines below are the same for both BA and MTh dissertations.

1. General Guidelines for the Supervisor

The following are the key roles of supervisor:

- Helping with the initial dissertation project concept and also the overall approach and design. It is recognised that there will be more focus on the concept prior to student submission of the title to the dissertation committee, and once approved by the committee, greater involvement in the approach and design.
- Advising on appropriate resources and methods
- Commenting on drafts of the student's work, according to UST's feedback guidelines
- Providing ongoing guidance with the structuring and presentation of the dissertation
- Generally supporting, encouraging and motivating the student's research.

Note: It is the student's responsibility to contact you regarding their supervision needs.

2. Expectations for Time Allocation, Drafts, Records and Assessment

- **Time Allocation**

Lecturers are expected to provide up to 4 hours supervision for the BA dissertation and 10 hours for the MTh dissertation (whether the student is studying part-time or full time). These hours include the time given to preliminary discussions before the committee approves provisional titles, assistance with the plan to be approved (as stipulated in the module specifications) or any desk-based work, personal contact by e.g. email, telephone, Zoom and in marking drafts.

- **Drafts**

For the BA, supervisors are expected to provide feedback on parts of the dissertation, and one draft of the complete dissertation.

For the MTh dissertation, supervisors are expected to read one draft of each chapter and one draft of the complete dissertation, providing feedback as required.

Supervisors should normally return work to students within two weeks of receipt.

- **Maintaining records**

Supervisors will keep a record of supervisory activity of an individual student by using the Dissertation Supervision Record.

- **Assessment**

Once the student has submitted the dissertation the supervisor completes a report on a standard proforma to help those involved in the marking process, including the external examiner. This report does not indicate what mark or level of quality the work is considered to be. The dissertation is blind double-marked. The supervisor will be one marker. Another member of staff will be the other marker.

3. Additional Information for Students

3.1. General

It is your responsibility to:

- Ensure that you work consistently on the dissertation project, and arrange meetings as necessary with your supervisor
- Engage with the feedback that your supervisor provides
- Submit your final work in the appropriate format by the required deadline.

3.2. Supervision Details

Supervision time includes preliminary discussions before your title is approved by the Dissertation Approval Committee. For MTh students note that in addition to submission of the provisional title, you will also need to submit and pass the proposal plan, outlining not only the topic and title, but also methodology and overall approach before proceeding with the dissertation.

The supervisor is not responsible for making comments about your language (lexis or grammar), although they may wish to do so. Should you require language support, please contact the library in the first instance.

Should you have problems with the supervision process, then in the first instance you should raise this with your supervisor. If this cannot be resolved then you should refer to the Programme Officer.

Please see the Module Specifications of the dissertations for information about the learning outcomes to be tested.

APPENDIX 10

BA AND MTH

DISSERTATION SUPERVISION RECORD

Student's Name:		**Supervisor's Name:**	
Dissertation Title:			

Date	Event/Activity (e.g. supervision meeting, receipt of draft, reading student work, return of work to student.)	Time Spent	Outcomes (if applicable) (e.g. action points; return of work to student)

Appendix 11 – Compensation Policy

Internal Module Compensation

If a student fails **one** of the assessments (in a multi-assessment module), but when the overall mark for the module is a pass mark i.e., above 40% in the BA or GDip (or 50% for MTh) and the student scored no less than 35% (45% for MTh) in the failed component, the Academic Teaching Research and Curricula committee will recommend to the Exam Board that the failure be compensated. If there are two failures (for a module containing 3 or more assessments), internal compensation is not permitted. Internal module compensation is limited to 1 module per level of study. Internal module compensation can only be applied if the overall average of previous modules completed is 40% or above. On the student's transcript the original mark is retained, with a note that compensation has been applied. If no other modules have been successfully completed, compensation cannot be applied. Compensation is applied at the Exam Board. Students should automatically be considered for module compensation. After this, consideration is given to a student taking a failed component via resit, and then retaking the module as necessary.

Cross-Programme Compensation Credits

If there is a case when the overall mark for a module is less than 40% in the BA or GDip (or 50% for MTh) but more than 35% (45% in the MTh) and when all of the assessments have been attempted, the Academic Teaching Research and Curricula Committee will recommend that the module be compensated, subject to the conditions noted here. Compensation is not available for MTh dissertations (but is available for the BA dissertation – 20 credits). Only one module can be so compensated across a level of study. In the case of compensation, the mark assigned is the actual mark, where compensation is documented in the transcript. Compensation credit can only be applied if the overall average of other modules previously completed is 40% or above (or 50% in the MTh). If no other modules have been successfully completed, compensation cannot be applied. Compensation is applied at the Exam Board. Students should automatically be considered for cross-programme compensation.

Appendix 12 Dissertation Approvals Committee

The Dissertation Approvals Committee is a subset of ATRACC, comprising a minimum of three members, including the Programmes Officer. There is a quoracy requirement of 2 members. The Committee meets (whether online or in person) at least once per semester, and more frequently as required, to fulfil its roles and responsibilities (documented below). Members of the committee are approved by ATRACC in the first meeting of the academic year, for a period of one year.

The Committee is responsible for (a) approving dissertation 'area of study' or titles for the BA and MTh programmes, and (b) assigning supervisors to students on the basis of the student's indicated area of study. When matching a student with a supervisor the committee bears in mind not only the subject area and expertise of a potential supervisor, but also the supervisor's current supervising load.

When a student's area of study is not considered suitable by the committee, this will be communicated to the student, with a request for a re-focus and resubmission of a title or area of study. However, it is recognised that a vague area of focus (e.g. Augustine and his doctrine of the Church) is acceptable as the first stage in the student's research journey, recognising that significant sharpening of focus may be required, in discussion with the supervisor, after initial approval.

Once a lecturer is assigned as a supervisor, the lecturer will work with the student, as required, to ensure that a suitable research focus and plan is developed. Once this is formally signed off (an important pre-requisite to giving the green light to work on the dissertation), the supervisor will document the approval as per the requirements noted in the module specifications. The committee oversees this documentation, which is available on sharepoint. If, in discussion with the assigned supervisor, there is a radical change in focus, the student will need to submit a new title for approval by the committee, with the possibility that a new supervisor will be assigned to supervise the project once the new area or title is approved.

If there is a requirement for an ethics approval sign off, the requisite form will be completed and signed off by the supervisor and checked by a member of the committee as needed.

There are no minutes resulting from the committee meetings, but there is a live sharepoint page which documents the approvals and decisions made, including the ethical sign offs. The chair of the committee will provide reports and analyses as needed.