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**Good practice for assessment of oral presentations at LSE**

[Part of the LSE Assessment Toolkit](https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/Teaching-and-Learning-Centre/Assessment-Toolkit/LSE-Assessment-Toolkit)

[Main Assessment Toolkit page on assessing presentations](https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/Teaching-and-Learning-Centre/Assessment-Toolkit/Assessment-methods/Oral-presentations)

There are currently few restrictions on how presentations are assessed at LSE.   
Two that do apply are marking and moderation, and inclusivity.

**Marking**

Presentations need to be marked by one of the methods recognised by LSE: double-blind marking, sighted double marking, or moderated single marking with a second examiner.

For presentations, therefore, more than one marker needs to be involved. As noted in the toolkit, the ephemeral nature of presentations poses challenges. Perhaps the simplest way to moderate is for the moderator to sit in on a proportion of the presentations. This may be difficult if the presentations take place in several seminar groups which are scheduled at the same time, and it may cause additional stress for the moderated few. Recording presentations might be a way to solve scheduling problems and avoid unfairness.

The terms ‘blind’ and ‘sighted’ marking refer to the ability of markers to see each other’s’ marks and comments, not to anonymity. Marking presentations cannot be anonymised (which is the default for other methods, to reduce the possibility of bias). Therefore, the marking process for presentations needs to be visibly rigorous.

You should consider how to evidence your marking process to external examiners. You should decide whether to record presentations for the sake of rigour, and if so, whether recordings will be made available for the external examiner to view.

**Inclusivity**

Presentations can avoid some of the problems posed by written assessment for dyslexic students, but there is a danger that criteria can disadvantage other students. As the toolkit notes, you should scrutinise criteria to focus on essentials and to avoid penalising students for non-compliance in other areas. For instance:

* Do not include eye contact in criteria; this is disproportionately difficult for students with Asperger’s.
* Terms relating to confidence, conviction, persuasiveness etc. can be vague
* Diction can be an issue for deaf students and those with less proficiency in spoken English.
* Rewarding vocabulary and fluency may disadvantage students who speak English as a second language

**Recording**

As noted above, recording presentations may assist with scheduling, and offer support for rigorous marking. However, recording may be hard for the academic to carry out while also marking; may cause additional stress; may

If you record students, then you need to gain explicit permission, and store and delete recordings in compliance with data protection laws. Consider whether to make them available to the recorded student so they can reflect on their performance in light of feedback (see Murphy and Barry).

**Scheduling**

Presentations are normally conducted during class, and present to other students. They could also be scheduled outside normal contact hours (e.g. all students presenting to the marker on a specific day).

Scheduling this would increase the administrative workload, as the LSE Exams Office does not arrange the scheduling of non-exam assessments.

Solo in-class presentations can be time consuming (an ordinary seminar class would need at least one person to present each week for everyone to be assessed during one term). Students can also object to the predominance of presentations during their contact hours, particularly if the standard is not high. Pair or group assessments take less class time, and have the associated benefits and complications of assessing group-work – see the Toolkit for more information.

**Weighting**

Weighting should reflect the preparation effort required by the student. Presentations are often given a low weighting in the overall course assessment, such as 10%. Confusion may arise if students are used to presenting when there is no summative mark, and may fail to present; students should be made aware that failing to present will cause them to fail the entire module. Opportunities to present on other days may be useful and reduce the number of students needing to submit extenuating circumstances.

**Criteria and feedback forms**

[Further guidance on feedback on oral presentations is available in this resource.](https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/Teaching-and-Learning-Centre/Assets/Documents/Notes-of-guidance/Giving-feedback-on-oral-presentations-A4-May-2011.doc)

[Feedback pro forma and criteria/rubrics are available here.](https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/Teaching-and-Learning-Centre/Assets/Documents/Notes-of-guidance/Sample-pro-forma-for-presentation-feedback-Word.doc)

**Peer assessment**

Including an element of peer assessment can encourage students to engage with the presentations more thoroughly, raise the sense of responsibility to give a strong presentation, and encourage students to self-evaluate while preparing their own presentation. Summative peer assessment can be challenging; some studies have found peer assessment prone to bias (Aryadoust found students over-rated opposite sex peers), and students would need development to enable them to fairly assess. Formative peer assessment avoids this complication.

**Varieties of presentation**

Students often present using PowerPoint or equivalent tools. You could consider alternative methods, which both add variety and have different benefits for the student and the assessor: requiring students to also [create a poster](https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/Teaching-and-Learning-Centre/Assessment-Toolkit/Assessment-methods/Posters); using a more constrained method such as a modified [PechaKucha](https://www.pechakucha.org/faq) technique.

You could also consider having students record themselves, outside class, and submit the video. This may reduce student stress, remove scheduling problems, and make marking and feedback less logistically complex (but also less immediate). It would require some technical guidance for students, use slightly different skills, and risks students working on their film-making skills. The videos could be shared with other students and brought into teaching through other routes.

**Works cited**

Aryadoust, V. (2016) Gender and Academic Major Bias in Peer Assessment of Oral Presentations Language Assessment Quarterly, v13 n1 p1-24.

Murphy, K. & S. Barry (2016) 'Feed-forward: Students gaining more from assessment via deeper engagement in video-recorded presentations', Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education, v41 n2 p213-227 2016