SWC

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Higher Education Assessment Policy

Policy Owner: Head of Higher Education

Date Approved: 11 April 2024

Version: V3.0

Equality Screening Date: 23 February 2024

Date of First Issue: 2019

Date of Next Review: March 2027

Location: Gateway

CONTENTS

1.   Introduction

1.1.   This policy has been aligned to and meets the requirements of the UK Quality Code under Expectations for Standards and Expectations for Quality. For further information visit https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code or refer to the Quality Assurance Agency's advice and guidance on assessment via https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/advice-and-guidance-assessment.pdf?sfvrsn=ca29c181_4

1.2.   The College operates an Assessment Policy which:

- Aims to provide fair and informed assessment for its students.
- Ensures the standard for Higher Education awards is set and maintained at the appropriate level and that student performance is judged against this.
- Ensures there is appropriate assessment tasks and assessment criteria in place to measure student achievement and learning outcomes of modules and programmes.
- Ensures teaching, learning and assessment strategies are at the appropriate level and aligned to the QAA Framework for Higher Education qualifications (FHEQ).
- Complies with the assessment regulations of accredited Awarding Bodies.
- Provides an assessment schedule for the course within six weeks of commencement, specifying hand out and hand in dates.
- Includes a procedure for appeals against assessment.

2.   Principles of Assessment

2.1.   To ensure fulfilment of learning outcomes.

2.2.   Assessment may be formative and/or summative. Formative is designed to support and guide students in their learning, using inclusive methods, whilst summative is designed to enable students to demonstrate fulfilment of the objectives of the course of study and achievement of the required standard. This Policy relates to both types of assessment but especially to summative due to its role in certification. Course Teams are encouraged to integrate formative assessment within their programmes.

Assessment strategies (internal assessment and examinations) are designed to fulfil requirements of the curriculum as specified by the relevant Awarding Body. Course Tutors must ensure teaching, learning and assessment strategies are at the appropriate level and aligned to the QAA Framework for Higher Education qualifications (FHEQ) and there is appropriate assessment tasks and assessment criteria in place to measure student achievement and learning outcomes of modules and programmes.

2.3. Support is offered to students as appropriate and on a case-by-case basis. This may include HE Academic Mentors and/or the College Learning Mentors to enable them to reach the required standard, providing equality of access to opportunity for assessment.

2.4. Examinations - It is the responsibility of the College to ensure special arrangements for assessment are in place, e.g. environmental, extra time for students with learning difficulties and disabilities. Such arrangements are in accordance with Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) procedures. For further clarification on examinations processes please see the Higher Education Standard Operating Procedures for Exams.

3. __Confirmation of Standard__

3.1. The College requires all programmes of study to operate within the relevant Course Regulations, which specify any assessment requirements of the course. (In some cases, these assessment requirements are determined and published by external assessment/examination authorities such as professional bodies and Awarding Bodies). For example, all Pearson assessment briefs must have clear pass, merit and distinction criterion for learning objectives and must be contextualised. Open University programmes must reflect the assessment requirements as outlined under Section D of the Regulations for validated awards of The Open University.

3.2. Support during assessment for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, will be given, where appropriate, in accordance with the regulations of the Awarding Body.

Evidence of special arrangements required should be, where appropriate, obtained through Learning Support section of Student Services.

3.3. All assessment opportunities will be conducted in accordance with the College's Equal Opportunities Policy.

4. <u>Assessor's Judgement</u>

4.1. Assessment must be carried out competently and impartially. The College ensures that an external assessor, examiner, moderator, or verifier (who may be appointed by the Awarding Body) verifies the assessment of each internally assessed course. The role of the external member is to ensure that standards are maintained, and that work is justly assessed.

4.2. Assessment entails both computation and exercise of the assessor's judgement in evaluating the standard of work and the interpretation of assessment regulations. Assessors operate under the College's quality assurance mechanisms relating to good practice; the academic judgement of the assessors cannot be contradicted.

4.3. Grades awarded by the College, such as Pearson HND/C may be subsequently altered as a result of external moderation by the Awarding Body's examiner/verifier (not applicable to the Open University validated awards).

5. <u>Assessment Regulations</u>

5.1. <u>Information for students:</u>
The College requires that course regulations, which include assessment requirements, are made known to students by the Programme Administrator/Course Director at an early stage in the delivery of the course. A unit/module booklet handbook must be provided to students, detailing the programme specification, assignments, marking criteria, and reading schedule. The assessment requirements should include reference to the calendar for assessment, assessment criteria, deadlines for individual

assessment activities, and cut-off points for submission of portfolios for assessment. It is the responsibility of the Course Team Leader to ensure that this information is made available in an appropriate way. During the programme, Module tutors will monitor student progress in completing assessments and provide feedback as necessary. The student tutorial programme will also provide students with academic support. Assessment feedback will be provided in verbal and written form, via a range of methods e.g. generic class feedback and/or one to one feedback sessions during tutorials. The timeframe for all feedback is 10 working days. The programme regulations will include information on assessment appeals and late submission.

5.2. Responsibility of Students / Late Submissions:

Every assignment must have a clear written indication of assessment submission dates when it is issued to students. It is the responsibility of the student to negotiate with the Module Tutor if a situation arises whereby, they are unable to meet the submission deadline (an Extenuating Circumstances Procedure is available on the College website). The module tutor must keep the Course Director informed of any situations whereby a student or students are unable to meet the stipulated deadline. If, at any point, a student is not on target to complete their assessment on time, an extension/deferment period may be negotiated, agreed, and recorded with the module tutor, subject to the Extenuating Circumstances Procedure. This must be agreed in advance of the deadline. Where submission deadlines fall under the auspices of Awarding Bodies, these should be adhered to, for example Open University students are advised to consult the Regulations for validated awards of The Open University for further guidance on late submissions and extenuating circumstances. Extensions will not normally be granted beyond the date when the assessed work is due to be returned to the student group, except for extenuating circumstances.

6. <u>Appeals Procedure</u>

Refer to the College's Academic Appeals Procedure

7. Academic Offences

7.1. Responsibility of Students / Late Submissions:

Refer to the College's Plagiarism Policy. The following are the main types of academic offences:

- **Cheating** - whereby a student either copies from the scripts of other candidates or allows their work to be copied or, in a manner not explicably permitted by the regulations for the examinations, brings into the examination any unauthorised materials, or impersonates in any form.

- **Plagiarism** - whereby a student copies work from another source, published or unpublished (including the work of another person), in a manner not authorised by the regulations of the assessment, and presents the copied work as if it was the student's own. Work that is not the student's own must not be excessive and must be clearly identified with the source fully acknowledged (this includes the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in a student's work).

- **Fabrication** - whereby a student presents false or fabricated information, results, or conclusions in any form of assessment, including practical work, field work, oral presentations, interviews, and reports on work placements.

- **Ghosting exists where**:
  - A student submits work as their own work, which has been produced in whole or part by another person on their behalf e.g. the use of a ghost-writing service i.e. purchasing assignments from the internet.
  - A student seeks to make financial gain or other material gain by using work, which they have written or produced, available to another student.

7.2. If a student is believed to have committed an academic offence, investigations will be initiated and overseen by the Quality & Performance Manager/Head of Higher Education. The resultant findings will be communicated to the student within 15 working days.

8. Monitoring and Review

8.1. The College will establish appropriate information and monitoring systems to assist the effective implementation of this Policy. The College will ensure that adequate resources are made available to promote this Policy effectively and is committed to reviewing this Policy every three years, in consultation with the recognised trade unions, statutory organisations such as the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and in line with models of good practice.

Signed Principal and Chief Executive: _Celine McCartan_

Date: 15.04.24

Signed Chair of the Governing Body: _Nicholas_

Date: 11/04/2024

Related Documentation

Title	Location	Owner
Feedback on Assessment Policy	Gateway	Head of Higher Education
Plagiarism Policy	Gateway	Head of Higher Education
Higher Education Academic Assessment Appeals Policy and Procedure	Gateway	Head of Higher Education
Higher Education Internal Moderation Policy	Gateway	Head of Higher Education
Equal Opportunities, Good Relations & Cultural Diversity Policy	Gateway	Head of People and Culture

Change Log

Location	Change from deletion/addition	Change to
Section 1	This policy has been aligned to and meets the requirements of the reviewed UK Quality Code under Expectations for Standards and Quality. For further information please click on the link: https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code	This policy has been aligned to and meets the requirements of the UK Quality Code under Expectations for Standards and Expectations for Quality. For further information visit https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code or refer to the Quality Assurance Agency's advice and guidance on assessment via https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/advice-and-guidance-assessment.pdf?sfvrsn=ca29c181_4
Section 3	Edexcel	Pearson
Section 7.1	Reference added in respect to use of AI in assessment	"this includes the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in a student's work"

Communication

Communication requirements	
Who needs to know (for action)	Course Directors Students Senior Management Team Heads of Department Deputy Heads of Department Quality Manager HLA Manager Higher Education Development Coordinator
Who needs to be aware	All HE staff and students

Communication Plan

Action	By Whom	By When
Upload to Gateway	J Lucas	On approval
Circulation to all staff	L Curran / J Kelly	On approval

Document Development

Details of staff who were involved in the development of this policy:

Name	Role
L Curran	Head of Higher Education
J Kelly	Higher Education Development Coordinator

Details of staff, external groups or external organisations who were consulted in the development of this policy:

Name	Organisation	Date
N/A		

Approval Dates

Approved by	Date

Document History

Issue no. under review	Date of review:	Persons involved in review	Changes made after review? Yes/No If Yes refer to change log	New Issue No.	If changes made was consultation required?	If changes made was Equality Screening required?
V2.0	February 2024	L Curran J Kelly	Yes	V3.0	No	Yes