



Document Administration

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Assessment & Internal Verification Policy for Externally Awarded Qualifications

Introduction

1. Bishop Grosseteste University is committed to providing learners with an assessment process that is fair and addresses the basic principles of authenticity, consistency, transparency, validity, reliability, currency and sufficiency. It aims to promote learning and achievement by providing access to assessment and accreditation services, ensuring equality of opportunity for all learners within a clear structure.

Scope

2. This policy applies to all teaching staff, Assessors, Internal Verifiers and apprentices/students at the University.

Definitions

3. The following definitions apply to all practices covered by this policy:
 - **Assessment** is the measurement or evaluation of apprentice's/students' knowledge and understanding, skills, attitudes and values, against explicitly stated criteria;
 - **Verification** is the process whereby internally set and marked assessment carried out by assessors is marked for consistency and quality by internal verifiers within the University. External verification is the same check carried out by professionals nominated by awarding authorities for vocational qualifications;
 - **Moderation** is the process whereby internal marking of externally set assessment carried out by assessors is checked for consistency and quality by other assessors or managers. External moderation is the same check carried out by professional nominated by awarding authorities;
 - **Standardisation** is the process whereby it is ensured that all assessment made by assessors and Internal Verifiers are marked to the same standards.

Aim

4. The aim of this policy is to give quality assurance in assessment processes by establishing quality control mechanisms for assessment through a system of internal verification, moderation and standardisation.

Principles

5. Key principles of assessment:
 - assessors will be appropriately qualified as per awarding body and National Occupational Standards requirements;
 - for NVQ and apprenticeship programmes, all assessment will be confirmed with the apprentice/student on an individual basis and will be in line with the individual learning plan;



- all assessment outcomes will be formally recorded prior to being released to the apprentice/student;
 - final confirmation of summative outcomes (marks/grades/competences) will be confirmed to the apprentice/student after the full internal and/or external verification process whichever is appropriate;
 - apprentices/students will be made aware of how to appeal against any assessment outcomes via the Appeals Policy for Externally Awarded Qualifications. A copy/summary will be available on Bishop Grosseteste University's website;
 - awarding body documentation will be completed in a timely fashion (normally within 5 working days of assessment board decisions or Internal Verification/External Verification meeting) and returned to Schools Administration to be forwarded to awarding bodies;
 - all externally awarded qualifications will undertake an annual review of assessment, delivery and resources.
6. Assessment procedures will ensure that:
- apprentices/students are informed of their progress and maximise their chance of success in their learning;
 - assessment feedback to apprentices/students is explicit in relation to the assessment content and criteria and how apprentices/students may improve their performance;
 - assessed work of all types is returned to apprentices/students within a reasonable, effective and pre-determined timescale;
 - assessors are informed of the effectiveness of their teaching and apprentices/students learning;
 - apprentice's/students' ethnic and cultural differences are taken into account and those with learning difficulties are supported, in accordance with the regulations of the awarding bodies;
 - the assessment process is valid, reliable, current, sufficient, authentic, safe and fair;
 - records are sufficient to allow audit of assessment;
 - communication within assessment team and awarding bodies is effective;
 - communication to apprentices/students about assessment content, assessment criteria, mark schemes and grade boundaries is clear, explicit, and where helpful, uses standard formats;
 - grading criteria regarding marking and submission conforms to University and awarding body guidelines;
 - equipment and accommodation for assessment comply with health and safety regulations;
 - apprentices/students are aware of their rights and responsibilities;
 - apprentices/students can gain unit accreditation/certification where appropriate;
 - there is adequate monitoring and reviewing of procedures;
 - all programmes offered have enough sufficiently qualified assessors and verifiers and the awarding body is notified of any team changes where this is necessary;
 - assessors, internal verifiers and moderators undertake continuous professional development activities;
 - apprentices/students receive adequate assessment plans or individual learning plans, which are regularly reviewed;



- for all types of courses an appropriate range of assessment methods are used, supported by a well-planned and comprehensive sampling process as well as appropriate standardisation activities;
 - assessors, verifiers as well as moderators and staff undertaking standardisation, have sufficient time, resources and authority to perform their role;
 - there are no conflicts of interest which would impact on the ability of assessors and verifiers to make assessment decisions;
 - qualified assessors and verifiers countersign decisions of unqualified assessors and verifiers;
 - rigorous efforts are made to prevent plagiarism or other forms of deception by apprentices/students;
 - internal verification plans must ensure coverage and consideration of every assessor, apprentice/student, unit, assessment method, centre/employer and assessor experience levels. Samples must also include interim levels and final assessment decisions.
 - no individual can act as assessor and internal verifier for the same candidates.
7. Key principles of internal verification:
- each course or group of courses has a named Lead Internal Verifier/Moderator and an appropriate number of internal verifiers/moderators;
 - a sampling plan will be produced either at course, assessor, programme or centre level on a risk based approach in line with Awarding Body guidelines;
 - a representative sample (minimum 10%) including a selection of assessments/assignments from all assessors across all units/modules/levels and across all assessment sites is internally verified or moderated;
 - evidence requirements are met, appropriate standards maintained and assessment is valid, authentic, practicable, equitable and fair;
 - internal verification/moderation provides appropriate feedback to assessors;
 - records are kept of the internal verification/moderation process and made available for audit;
 - the outcomes and any actions resulting from internal verification/moderation are followed up, acted upon, reported and signed off in course committee or in internal verification meetings;
 - appeals are documented and where appropriate, forwarded on to the external verifier in line with the awarding bodies requirements;
 - standardisation should take place when a unit or assignment is delivered and assessed by more than one person, standardisation must be carried out before any formal assessment and internal verifications have taken place. Standardisation is the process to discuss and mutually assess a sample of learner work to reach a consensus. This will be done with reference to the assessment criteria and assessment guidance provided in the qualification specification;
 - an audit of internal verification and standardisation processes will take place at least once each year with formal reports presented to the relevant Committee.



8. The University will negotiate special arrangements with the awarding bodies for apprentices/students with special needs in securing adequate arrangements for access to and support in the assessment process.
9. All assessments are supported by a transparent assessment appeals procedure (Appeals Procedure for Externally Awarded Qualifications).
10. In accordance with awarding body requirements, the University's Assessment Malpractice and Maladministration Policy for Externally Awarded Qualifications, complies with guidance issued by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). The policy and associated documents, to which it relates, together outline the rights and responsibilities of awarding bodies, University staff and apprentices/students, and the procedures to be followed in the event of breaches of policy, regulation or procedure.

Associated documentation

11. The following documentation provides guidelines for University assessment practice:
 - a) Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments (JCQ Guidelines 15-16). This document can be found at: <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/suspected-malpractice-in-examinations-and-assessments-2015-16>;
 - b) Awarding body and examination board guidelines (available via awarding body websites);
 - c) University and examination board regulations.

Responsibility for implementation

12. The Centre for Enhancement in Learning and Teaching (CELT) is responsible for the audit and monitoring of assessment practices across the University.
13. The Lead Verifier is responsible for implementing and ensuring the quality of assessment practices in all areas and for ensuring there are enough sufficiently trained staff to carry out requisite assessment, verification, standardisation and moderation activities.
14. It is the responsibility of all staff involved in assessment, internal standardisation, moderation and verification activities to:
 - provide assessment processes that are fair and meet the requirements of the qualifications;
 - provide apprentices/students with a schedule of assessment as part of induction;
 - provide accurate, timely and informative assessment feedback to inform apprentices/students of their individual progress and tell them what they need to do to improve;
 - record assessment decisions regularly, accurately and systematically;



- comply with the University and awarding body guidelines regarding work that submitted after submission date and work that is re-submitted following referral/resubmission decision;
 - familiarise themselves and apprentices/students with the Appeals Policy for Externally Awarded Qualifications;
 - be aware and keep up-to-date with awarding body guidance in respect of assessment, standardisation, moderation and verification;
 - ensure that the quality of assessment is assured by carrying out internal standardisation, moderation and verification as required by the University, awarding body and examination boards;
 - respond promptly to feedback from internal and external moderators and verifiers;
 - record internal standardisation, moderation and verification decisions accurately and systematically using agreed documentation.
15. All unqualified assessors and internal quality assurance persons must have their decisions overseen and countersigned by a qualified member of staff.
16. An internal quality assurance (IQA) must risk band all assessors according to the following model:
- **Green** assessors who are qualified and experienced and consistently compliant – minimal sampling required;
 - **Amber** those who are qualified and experienced but new to the University – increase the sample until compliance is achieved;
 - **Red** newly trained assessors or assessors with no formal qualifications and who are new to the college – 100% sampling until full compliance is achieved.
17. Records must be maintained and kept in accordance with the University's Retention Schedule. Records that are kept will include:
- validated assessment material;
 - reports of any meetings, including standardisation exercises;
 - records of observations of assessment;
 - checklists/marketing schemes;
 - records of all sampling exercises;
 - feedback to assessors.

Monitoring and review of the policy

18. The implementation of the Assessment and Internal Verification Policy for Externally Awarded Qualifications is monitored by Quality Assurance audit, Annual Monitoring process and External Verifier and Moderation reports.
19. The Assessment and Internal Verifications Policy for Externally Awarded Qualifications will be reviewed annually.



Breach of the policy

20. The University will take seriously any instances of non-adherence to the Assessment and Internal Verification Policy for Externally Awarded Qualifications by its staff or management.
21. Any instance of breach of the Assessment and Verification Policy for Externally Awarded Qualifications will be investigated in line with Bishop Grosseteste University's policies and procedures.

Access to the policy

22. The Assessment and Internal Verifications Policy for Externally Awarded Qualifications will be published on the University website.