



**Dumfries and  
Galloway College**

One step ahead

# ASSESSMENT POLICY

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**Responsibility: Director of Curriculum**

**Issue Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2021**

**Equality Impact Assessment: 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

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Version: 1



## Table of Contents

Assessment Policy.....	2
Revision Log.....	15

# Assessment Policy

## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 To provide a rigorous, fair and equitable operational framework for the assessment of learning and to ensure that assessment instruments are appropriate to the national standards defined within each qualification.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1 Dumfries and Galloway College will ensure that the arrangements for and conduct of assessment meet with the requirements of the appropriate awarding body.

## 3. References

### **This policy should be read in conjunction with the undernoted:**

- 👉 SQA Guide to Assessment (SQA August 2017–updated October 2019)
- 👉 Quality Assurance Policy
- 👉 External Verification Procedure
- 👉 Internal Moderation Procedure
- 👉 Assessment Appeals Procedure
- 👉 Malpractice and Maladministration of Assessment Procedure
- 👉 Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure
- 👉 Student Disciplinary Procedure
- 👉 Disciplinary Procedure (Staff)

- Assessment Arrangements for Students with Additional Support Needs Procedure
- Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy (Staff)

#### 4. *Definitions*

SQA – Scottish Qualifications Authority

#### 5. *Assessment*

- 5.1 Formative Assessment is used as a means of preparing students for undertaking summative assessment. This may be in the form of question and answer sheets or a written/practical exercise based on the requirements of the summative assessment.
- 5.2 Summative Assessment is the internally devised or the awarding body devised instrument of assessment e.g. Assessment Support Pack (ASP), administered by the college to measure students attainment of knowledge and skills against qualification standards. Where there is more than one approved assessment the team should agree which one is to be administered. All instruments of assessment should be stored under secure conditions. Prior to delivery, staff assessing should check the validity of the instrument of assessment. Where this requires updating they should contact Performance Staff who will access the appropriate awarding body secure site and upload to the relevant online core pack.
- 5.3 Where instruments of assessments have been developed internally, these should be moderated in accordance with Internal Moderation Procedure and approved by Moderation Groups. It is strongly recommended that college devised instruments of assessments be prior moderated by the awarding body prior to delivery. Monitoring visits from Awarding Bodies will check that assessment decisions meet national standards.

- 5.4 Prior to the start of the course or programme of study, the overall loading of assessments for the course should be considered and an assessment timetable should be agreed with the course team/moderation group. Any subsequent changes should be agreed with class members.
- 5.5 Staff require to be confident that students submissions are their own work. To ensure this meets the requirements of all awarding bodies, students will be required to complete a Learner Declaration either in paper format or online submission (Turn it in).

## 6. *Assessment Decisions and Feedback*

- 6.1 Where a student is judged competent they will receive a "pass". Where the awarding body sets additional criteria for grading (e.g. BTEC – Merit, Distinction) then the appropriate grade to be awarded to the student must be clearly stated on the assessment feedback sheet and subsequently recorded correctly on the student results document.
- 6.2 Where a student is judged not competent and there are no exceptional circumstances they will receive appropriate support to enable remediation to take place and if agreed allowed one further assessment opportunity.

Where units are integrated and assessed using 1 assessment, candidates will be allowed 1 re-assessment opportunity unless there are identified exceptional circumstances

- 6.3 Students should be advised that all assessment decisions are subject to internal and/or external moderation.
- 6.4 Each student will be given appropriate evaluative written feedback whether a pass or fail which will be supplemented by verbal feedback, where appropriate and within agreed timescale. This will be checked during internal moderation or verification. Marked assessments/re-

assessments should be returned to students within two weeks of submission.

- 6.5 It is the responsibility of staff involved in the assessment process to ensure that following successful planned moderation, results are entered electronically which will allow Student Records to process results to relevant awarding bodies for certification within agreed timescales.
- 6.6 Assessment arrangements may be made for students with additional support needs. Any arrangements put in place must be with the agreement of the Student Experience Manager. Please refer to Assessment Arrangements for Students with Additional Support Needs Procedure.

## 7. *Late Submission of Work*

- 7.1. Where work is submitted late and the circumstances are considered by the course team to be exceptional the work will be:
- a) accepted as first submission **and**
  - b) may be considered for merit or distinction (BTEC only) (agreed by course team)

A late submission form will be required from the student. The tutor will retain this with the assessment evidence.

- 7.2 Where work is submitted late and the circumstances are not considered to be exceptional the work will be:
- a) accepted as second submission
  - b) will not be considered for merit or distinction (BTEC only)

A late submission form will be required from the student. The personal tutor will retain this.

- 7.3 Late submission forms will act as a signal to the tutor that intervention is required – this should be supportive. Where several late submission forms

are received from a student and no exceptional circumstances have been agreed, the course team may recommend disciplinary action.

- 7.4 Where students fail to meet a second submission deadline and there are no exceptional circumstances agreed, this should be recorded as a fail. The student should then be advised of their right to appeal (Student Assessment Appeals Procedure).
- 7.5 Guidelines for the late submission of work will be issued as a separate instruction to students (see late submission form).

## 8. *Re-scheduling of Assessments*

- 8.1 In exceptional circumstances (the course team must agree what these exceptions are) assessments and re-assessments may be re-scheduled without being counted as a first attempt, where for example
- A student is absent due to sickness, bereavement or family commitments. Proof of absence may be required e.g. sick note, self-certification
  - Student becoming unwell during an assessment
  - Equipment failure
  - Fire Alarm
  - Loss of Utility Power
  - Hazardous Events
- 8.2 For block 1 and 2 units, the majority of assessment and re-assessment activity must be completed by the last 2 weeks of the teaching and moderated as per the sampling schedule. For block 3, assessment and re-assessment activity must be completed and moderated by 31<sup>st</sup> May. Exceptions to this deadline may include Graded Units or Integrated Project Based units. Where assessment evidence is not available until the last two weeks of the teaching in block 3, the Moderation Group Leader may apply retrospective moderation, where appropriate. It is not considered good practice to continually apply retrospective moderation, moderation

groups should seek to discuss a different delivery pattern where appropriate.

## 9. *Re-Assessment*

9.1 Where a student is judged not competent and there are no exceptional circumstances they will receive appropriate support to enable remediation to take place and if agreed allowed one further assessment opportunity.

Where units are integrated and assessed using 1 assessment, candidates will be allowed 1 re-assessment opportunity unless there are identified exceptional circumstances

9.2 In all cases of re-assessment, the assessment must be of equal demand to the original assessment.

9.3 Where alternative assessments have been developed and approved by the team it is strongly recommended that prior moderation by the awarding body is requested through Performance Manager.

9.4 Staff must consider whether students need to re-take the whole assessment or only in part. This will depend on:

- 👉 *The assessment instrument that has been used*
- 👉 *The purpose of the assessment*

*For example, for practical skills and practical assignments, it might not be possible to remediate or re-assess only those parts of the performance in which the student has failed to demonstrate competence. For written tests designed to identify the student's knowledge or understanding at a given point in time or as a whole, it might also be necessary to re-assess the whole test.*

*Where it is possible to isolate a discrete outcome which has not been achieved, it should be possible to remediate or re-assess just that single outcome. However, where parts of several outcomes are involved, it would be simpler and more sensible to present the student with a complete new assessment.*

*Where the evidence is generated over a period of time such as in a project, it might be valid to simply re-do or remediate parts of an assessment. It is good practice in the case of such long-term exercises, however, to aim to assess in stages rather than to 'end-load' the process.*

*In assessments that test knowledge and understanding and other cognitive skills, students should not be given the same assessments repeatedly, or be asked identical questions. In these situations, you will need to have alternative assessments available and ensure that other students have also not undertaken the assessment already.*

- 9.5 Where a student is judged not competent after re-assessment they will receive a "fail".

## **10. *Assessment Appeals***

- 10.1 Students may appeal against assessment and re-assessment decisions: see separate Assessment Appeals Procedure.

## **11. *Recognition of Prior Learning***

- 11.1 The recognition of prior learning may be used to assess complete or partial Units. Where evidence of prior learning only partially meets the evidence requirements of a Unit, other methods of assessment should be used to complete the outstanding requirements. The minimum level of awarding and certification will be a complete Unit. See separate Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure.

## **12. *Malpractice in Assessment***

- 12.1 Assessment malpractice issues can be minimised by ensuring students and staff are aware of the issues. All students and staff must be made aware of the issues constituting assessment malpractice.

12.2 The term 'malpractice' covers any deliberate actions, neglect, default or other practice that compromises the assessment process or the integrity of qualifications, the validity of certificates and credibility of the College.

12.3 Some instances may occur because of lack of knowledge of awarding body criteria and procedures or carelessness or forgetfulness in applying them. As this may in itself constitute malpractice, this Policy covers both misconduct and maladministration.

12.4 Consequences of proven malpractice may result in a student failing to complete their course and may also result in disciplinary action being taken for a student and or a staff member. Where serious malpractice is identified in the registration, assessment or certification process, it may also be appropriate to advise the awarding body of the situation and the action the centre has taken to address the issue.

12.5 **Student malpractice:** Malpractice by a student in internal assessment can occur in:

- the preparation and authentication of coursework
- the presentation of practical work
- the compilation of portfolios of internal assessment evidence
- conduct during an internal assessment

Consequences of proven malpractice may result in a student failing to complete their course and may also result in disciplinary action being taken under the Student Disciplinary Procedure.

The following are examples of student malpractice but there may be other instances of malpractice that may undermine the integrity of qualifications. Examples could include:

- Students using unauthorised aids e.g. reference materials, calculators, notes, mobile telephones etc
- Collusion with another person when an assessment must be completed by individual students

- 👉 Plagiarism – failure to acknowledge sources properly and/or submission of another person’s work
- 👉 Copying from another student including using ICT to do so
- 👉 Referencing skills – students should clearly reference any materials that have been taken from another source and is not their own
- 👉 Personation – pretending to be someone else including using another students *user id* and *password*
- 👉 Inclusion of inappropriate, offensive, discriminatory or obscene material in assessment evidence
- 👉 Inappropriate behaviour during an assessment that causes disruption to others. This includes shouting and/or aggressive behaviour or language.

12.6 **Centre malpractice:** The College Management will discuss issues of malpractice in each individual circumstance. Anyone member of staff found to be guilty of malpractice may be dealt with through the Staff Disciplinary Procedure. The following list of assessment malpractice examples is not exhaustive:

- 👉 Misuse of assessment, including inappropriate adjustments to assessment decisions
- 👉 Insecure storage of assessment instruments and marking guidance
- 👉 Failure to comply with requirements for accurate and safe retention of student evidence, assessment and internal verification records.
- 👉 Failure to comply with awarding body procedures for managing and transferring accurate student data
- 👉 Excessive direction from assessors to students on how to meet national standards
- 👉 Deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates

12.7 When investigating malpractice and a criminal act is suspected, it may be appropriate to report the matter to the Awarding Organisation and the police. Documentation relating to malpractice must be retained by the Vice Principal, Learning, Skills and Student Experience, for the specified awarding body timescale. For clarification on this timescale please see the Performance Team.

### 13. *Plagiarism*

13.1 Plagiarism is the use of another person's work for personal advantage without the proper acknowledgement of the original work, with the intention of passing it off as your own. Plagiarism may occur deliberately (with the intention to deceive) or accidentally (due to poor referencing). Plagiarism is dishonest and a form of cheating. The following are examples of plagiarism:

- ▶ Including parts of someone else's work in your own without identifying the source. This includes cutting and pasting information from the Internet.
- ▶ Using work done by another person and submitting it as your own.
- ▶ Giving someone your work to copy from.

13.2 Ultimately, plagiarism is attempting to pass off other people's work and ideas as your own. Plagiarism is serious as it may result in a student receiving a higher grade than s/he would have received without the inclusion of the plagiarised material. Anyone involved in plagiarism will be dealt with through the Student Disciplinary Procedure and may result in the student's failure to complete the course.

### 14. *Retention of Assessment Evidence*

14.1 For all awards, with the exception of National Qualifications, providing Internal Moderation has taken place, no notice of Retrospective Moderation has been received and no student assessment appeals are pending, assessed candidate work with completion dates up to the end of February, should be retained until **1<sup>st</sup> April**. Assessed candidate work, with completion dates up to the end of July, should be retained until **1<sup>st</sup> November**. For further information on the retention of results records please refer to the specific requirements of relevant awarding bodies.

14.2 For National Qualifications, centres must retain candidate assessment evidence until the end of each academic session (**31<sup>st</sup> July**).

## 15. *Retention of Assessment and Moderation Evidence*

The Assessor should retain Candidate Assessment Records electronically or in paper format for at least 2 years following the date of certification or in line with the appropriate awarding body guidelines.

All other candidate evidence can be disposed of in line with the disposal dates for specific awards advised in the Assessment Policy. (*reference: Assessment Policy*)

## 16. *Conflict of Interest*

16.1 It is important that all individuals and organisations with which the College has dealing are confident that all of its assessment-related operations are free from improper influence. Any possible conflicts of interest that may arise as a result of their roles as assessors, invigilators, internal verifiers or assessment-related administrators must be reported and recorded appropriately. This includes but is not limited to, all staff involved in the registration, assessment, academic support and certification of students, regardless of whether the staff member is in a face to face or back office support role. Please refer to the Conflict of Interest Policy for guidance.

## 17. *Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs)*

17.1 In the case of SVQs and NVQs the assessed work may need to be retained until the appropriate disposal date following the finish date for the assessment of the whole VQ. Centres should keep all evidence until 4 weeks after the completion date. This is the date you gave when entering the students for the qualification. If a centre is contacted by an external verifier, the centre must retain the evidence until verification takes place, ideally the evidence must be kept until you receive a successful

verification report. In case of any doubt, assessment evidence must be retained rather than disposed of. For further information please refer to the individual subject specific assessment strategy.

## 18. *Communication of Policy to Students*

18.1 Students will be informed of the Assessment Policy during induction and by staff as part of preparation for assessment.

## 19. *Distribution*

Repository

All Staff

LearnNet

Revision Log		
Date	Section	Description
11.01.21	Responsibility	Change of Responsibility from VP Learning and Skills to Director of Curriculum
11.01.21	Throughout the Policy	Replacement of learner with student
11.01.21	Throughout the Policy	Quality replaced with Performance
11.01.21	6.6	Student Support and Guidance Manager title replaced with Student Experience Manager
11.01.21	12.7	Wording amended to reflect Awarding Body requirements
26.05.21	Distribution List	Changed Quality Manual to Repository

**THIS FORM TO BE UPDATED WHENEVER THERE IS A CHANGE IN ANY SYSTEM DOCUMENT**

Document Name	Document Owner	Revision number	Date of Issue	Date of Withdraw
Assessment Policy	Director of Curriculum	1	02.06.21	