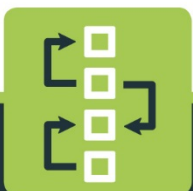


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For the future you want

Assessment and Appeals Procedure



Curriculum Planning & Performance

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1. SCOPE

This procedure sets out the roles and responsibilities of those involved in planning and conducting assessments and making assessment decisions, and provides guidance on how to conduct these activities effectively, to meet awarding body requirements. It also sets out the procedure to be followed when a student wants to appeal an assessment decision.

Assessment is the process of evaluating an individual's learning. The College is committed to providing students with the best possible opportunity to succeed in assessment within the academic standards set (see Edinburgh College Assessment Policy).

2. OBJECTIVES

The Assessment and Appeals Procedure is designed to provide support and guidance on:

- How to plan and conduct assessment to meet awarding body standards
- The process to follow if a student wishes to appeal an assessment decision

This procedure is an important element of the College quality management system and complements the College Internal Verification Procedure which is designed to ensure that all students entered for the same qualification are assessed consistently to the specified standard by ensuring that assessment decisions are valid, reliable, equitable and fair.

3. OVERVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Assessment and Appeals Procedure is designed to cover the assessment of **all** qualifications (Higher National, New National Qualifications, National Certificate, Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs), National Progression Awards and Professional Development Awards). Where there are additional requirements for SVQs, these are included. Enquiries for clarification should be directed to the Quality Assurance inbox.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

Non SVQ Only

- Attend scheduled assessment (including prelims, where used)
- Attend for one scheduled re-assessment attempt
- Submit open book assessments by the deadline set
- Undertake the assessment prescribed in the unit specification, or equivalent
- Submit requests for adapted exam papers before the end of January
- Submit additional assessment support needs requests by the end of March for exams in May/June
- If a student cannot attend on the day of a closed book assessment, or submit an open book assessment on the due date, they must contact the College on the day of their absence or before, stating the reason for their absence. They should complete an Application for Extension to an Assessment Date Form on their return and submit this to the Lecturer/LDT.

All awards

- Comply with College procedures in relation to assessment
- Discuss alternative arrangements for assessments and exams with the Learning Development Tutor and Student Experience team
- Comply with College procedures in relation to malpractice (see Edinburgh College Malpractice Procedure)
- Comply with College procedures in relation to remediation, re-assessment and re-enrolment (see key principle 1)

- Apply for an extension to the assessment date using the Application for and Extension to an Assessment Date Form. An extension will only be granted to students who are ill or experiencing personal difficulties and must be agreed by the Lecturer.

Additional requirements for Open Learning students

- Identify a suitable, experienced and qualified local assessor to oversee the performance of practical tasks (where required)
- Provide full contact details of the nominated local assessor to the College assessor

Additional requirements for Scottish Vocational Qualifications

- Collect sufficient valid and authentic evidence to prove competence that meets the standards
- Present evidence to prove competence by cross-referencing against the standards
- Complete assessment action plans provided by the assessor as appropriate

5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASSESSORS

All Awards

- Be competent in the subject/occupational area to a level appropriate to the qualification
- Provide copies of all relevant certificates, to be stored by Human Resources in iTrent
- Work with Internal Verifiers to create and maintain EV folders for all units they are currently delivering. (See Edinburgh College Internal Verification Procedure for full details)
- Disclose any activity that might give rise to a potential conflict of interest (see key principle 3)
- Use current Arrangements Documents, Unit Specifications, and SQA assessment support materials
- Store SQA assessment support materials securely (see key principle 6)

- Check that SQA assessment exemplars being used are valid and relevant to the context in which the unit is delivered
- Follow assessment guidelines set out in Unit Specifications
- Send all centre-devised assessments or assessment support materials that have been changed significantly to SQA for prior verification
- Ensure all assessments used comply with College Quality and Equality of Learning and Teaching Materials (QELTM) guidelines
- Where a student's difficulties in accessing course assessment becomes apparent or are disclosed during the student's course of study, request alternative assessment arrangements for students who have a specific learning difficulty, medical condition or any disability which may affect their ability to undertake assessment. Requests should be made through the Student Experience team. For national exams, all requests must be received by the end of the second week in January.
- Work with the Curriculum Leader and others assessing units included in the course to produce a Course Assessment Schedule with dates for all units which make up the course
- Give students a unit Assessment Schedule during the first meeting of the class
- Inform students of assessment criteria and mode and format of assessments
- Provide induction on the assessment and appeals process
- Identify any additional student requirements and organise support via the Learning Development Tutor/Student Services
- Conduct appropriate diagnostic assessment to plan student learning programmes
- Conduct appropriate formative assessment (Assessment for Learning) to identify gaps in knowledge and understanding and use this information to plan future learning
- Provide timely, direct and constructive feedback (both verbal and written) that moves learning forward
- Conduct internal summative assessment under the conditions set out in Unit Specifications or equivalent. Where use of notes or reference material is allowed, this should be clearly explained by the assessor
- Require students to bring their student ID card as proof of identity to any external assessment. In the absence of a student ID card, they should bring their Passport, Driving Licence or bank card
- Judge student evidence

- Provide one re-assessment attempt (including where e-assessment is used) if the student does not achieve the required standard at their first attempt, or does not submit work by the deadline, or attend for the first attempt, or request an extension
- Use approved checklists to record assessment decisions
- Complete assessment registers in a timeous manner
- Produce prelims, where required, in line with College guidelines (see key principle 4)
- Submit to SQA estimate grades for National Courses based on evidence from all course components and/or a separate prelim
- Alert the Quality Support Officer immediately if you believe a candidate has suffered as a result of exceptional circumstances when taking a national SQA examination (see key principle 7)
- Contact the Quality Support Officer if you are concerned by a candidate's results in a national SQA examination (see key principle 7)
- Comply with the College malpractice guidelines (see Edinburgh College Malpractice Procedure)
- Record student results by the end of the academic session, unless the student can prove exceptional circumstances. (See Supporting Information 4)
- Comply with College guidelines in relation to remediation, re-assessment and re-enrolment (see key principle 1)
- Provide assessment evidence in line with the schedules for both internal and external verification
- Retain appropriate records and evidence of candidates' work in line with awarding body requirements (see key principle 8)
- Work with IVs to prepare for EV visits
- Contribute to addressing Action Points identified during External Verification (EV) visits
- Do not complete results registers for units scheduled to be externally verified. (Results should be entered only after the EV has confirmed the validity of the evidence)

Additional requirements for assessors who assess SVQs

- Hold a current assessor qualification or be working towards one (contact Quality Enhancement for information on assessor qualifications and training)

- Provide copies of all relevant certificates, to be stored by Human Resources and in the External Verifier (EV) folder in the S:drive (Private)
- Keep up-to-date evidence of continuous professional development (CPD) in assessment practice and current industry competency
- Support candidates in collecting sufficient and valid evidence to prove competence that meets the standards
- Support candidates in correctly presenting their evidence (including cross-referencing) to prove competence that meets the standards
- Meet the requirements laid out in the Sector's Assessment Strategy
- Meet the CPD requirements set out in the Sector's Assessment Strategy
- Review candidate progress and agree an assessment action plan as appropriate

Additional requirements for assessors of Open Learning courses

- Approve the choice of local assessor proposed by the student
- Supply local assessors with a checklist of procedures and requirements for each practical assessment. The assessment should be carried out under the conditions set out in the unit specification

Under no circumstances should SQA assessment support materials for closed book or supervised assessments be emailed or posted to candidates or placed on Moodle. Where assessment support materials have to be sent to external nominated invigilators, they must be posted by recorded delivery.

Responsibilities of the Internal Verifier

- Carry out the College Internal Verification Procedure to ensure that valid, reliable, equitable and fair assessment decisions have been made (refer to Edinburgh College Internal Verification Procedure for details)

Responsibilities of the Student Experience team

- Identify student support needs for summative assessments
- Gather and review evidence to decide on the provision of assessment arrangements for candidates in both internal and external assessments
- Hold formal verification meeting(s) to ensure that all relevant information and evidence has been gathered and considered

- Retain evidence of confirmation from the candidate that they have agreed to the provision of assessment arrangements
- Gather evidence of disability/additional needs and how this affects the learning and teaching situation
- Share information on assessment arrangements required to support the student with relevant teaching staff and record their agreement to provide the support that has been proposed
- Implement the College Alternative Assessment Arrangements Procedure

Responsibilities of the Quality Assurance /Enhancement team

- Provide assessor training to ensure that staff are assessing to the correct standard
- Support the use of e-assessment and e-portfolios
- Provide copies of relevant assessment support materials from the SQA Secure Site
- Enter candidates for National Qualification Course Assessments
- Schedule exams to be held on the national set date, arrange rooms and nominate invigilators to be appointed by the SQA
- Act as Chief Invigilator for external examinations
- Arrange for Visiting Examiners to come to the College to observe and mark practical assessments which generate ephemeral evidence
- Submit externally assessed coursework to SQA
- Operate the SQA Results Services (Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service and Post Results Service – See Key Principle 6)
- Ensure that candidate assessment results are transmitted to the awarding body
- Confirm student achievement

Responsibilities of the Head of Curriculum Planning and Performance

- Oversee the development and implementation of all quality assurance procedures

6. KEY PRINCIPLES

Remediation, re-assessment and re-enrolment

Remediation allows an assessor to clarify the candidate's responses, either by requiring a written amendment or by oral questioning, where there is a minor shortfall or omission in evidence requirements. Where there is remediation, it must be formally noted by the assessor, either in writing or a sound recording, and this must be available to the internal and external verifier.

Every student is entitled to one **re-assessment** attempt if they do not meet the standard at the first attempt or do not submit work by the deadline for the first attempt, or do not attend for assessment (i.e. if the student is absent for an assessment and has not agreed an extension in advance or has not contacted the LDT, lecturer or other designated person on the day of the assessment to explain their absence, they will be regarded as having had their first attempt).

For closed book assessments, it is necessary to use an alternative set of questions for the re-assessment attempt. For practical and activities and performance, the student may only be required to be re-assessed on those aspects of the unit where criteria were not met satisfactorily at the first attempt. **Guidance in the Unit Specification in relation to remediation and re-assessment should always be followed.** Re-assessments should normally take place within the unit delivery time.

In the event of a student not reaching the required standard for the second time, the decision will be to fail the student. The assessor may recommend re-enrolment. Please note that the result of 'fail' must be entered into the assessment register at this point and the re-enrolment procedure (as outlined below should be followed). The practice of using a so-called 'remediation code' is not allowed; at this point a student must, for Scottish Funding Council purposes, be identified as having either passed or failed.

Where the student has failed the first attempt and the re-assessment attempt as specified above, the following options are available:

- Re-enrolment for the unit, with full unit fee for the unit paid by the student: tuition, re-assessment (two attempts) and remediation. Students must complete a new Application Form and be entered by the Curriculum Manager on to an infill course.

- Payment of half the unit fee: re-assessment and remediation (no tuition received and one attempt). The Student Resit Payment Form should be used.
- Re-enrolment for the unit, with waiver of the unit fee for receipt of tuition and assessments where there are exceptional personal circumstances, e.g. serious illness or bereavement. The student should put their case for waiver of the unit fee to the Curriculum Manager in writing, including any documentary evidence, e.g. medical certificate. The Curriculum Manager will decide whether to approve a waiver of the unit fees.

Grounds for making an appeal against an assessment decision

Students have the right to appeal against an assessment decision. The only reason for appealing a result is that the College assessment procedures have not been followed.

In the first instance, appeals should be handled on an informal basis by students raising their concerns with their assessor/lecturer. They must do this within seven days of receiving their result. The assessor must note the student's concerns on their assessment paper. If no agreement is reached, then the assessor should arrange to have the student's paper internally verified and refer the matter to the Curriculum Manager, who will arrange a meeting (no more than seven days after the internal verification has been carried out) to speak to the assessor and the student to review the assessment decision. At that point an agreement on the assessment decision may be reached.

If this is not possible, the student must put their appeal in writing (no later than seven days after the meeting with the Curriculum Manager) before sending it to the Head of Curriculum Planning and Performance for review and to decide if there are grounds for appeal.

If it is deemed that there are grounds for appeal, the Head of Curriculum Planning and Performance (or other designated member of the Quality team) will gather information on the appeal. This will include interviewing the student who has the right to bring with them an officer of the Edinburgh College Students' Association (ECSA). It is the responsibility of the student to contact ECSA to ask them to come with them to the interview.

Once all the information has been gathered, the Head of Curriculum Planning and Performance and the Assistant Principal Curriculum Design and Delivery will make a decision to either dismiss or uphold the appeal. Students will be informed in writing within 10 working days whether their appeal has been upheld and given information on the next steps to be taken.

Students who are undertaking non-regulated qualifications (HNs, NQs) have no further right of appeal against internal assessment decisions. The final decision rests with the College and SQA will not accept internal assessment appeals.

If students are undertaking regulated qualifications (e.g. SVQs) then they can escalate their appeal to the SQA. If they have gone through all the stages of Edinburgh College's internal assessment appeals procedure and remain dissatisfied with the outcome or the way in which it was handled, they can:

- Appeal to SQA the awarding body
- Appeal to SQA Accreditation if they feel that the College and/or SQA (awarding body) has not dealt with their appeal appropriately

SQA Accreditation cannot overturn assessment decisions or academic judgements but may investigate the effectiveness of the centre and/or SQA's appeals process and require corrective action.

Conflict of interest in relation to assessment

A conflict of interest is a situation in which an individual, or organisation, has competing interests or loyalties. In the case of an individual, the conflict of interest could compromise or appear to compromise their decisions if it is not properly managed.

As an assessor, you are required to disclose any activity that might give rise to a potential conflict of interest. At the beginning of the semester in which examinations and assessments will be taken, assessors must inform the SQA Co-ordinator of any candidates being entered for examinations and other assessments, who are family members, other relatives or friends, so that alternative assessment arrangements can be made. Failure to inform the SQA Co-ordinator and to make appropriate arrangements, could result in the candidates' results being voided and sanctions being applied to Edinburgh

College as an accredited centre. Disciplinary action will also be taken against the assessor.

Prelims

A prelim is a practice run for an exam. Where externally assessed exams are included in the course, it is common practice to set a prelim. It is College Policy to use the marks obtained from a prelim for the purpose of providing estimates to the SQA and for providing evidence to meet the requirements of the SQA Results Services. To be valid, prelims must replicate the standard, format, duration and security arrangements which will be used in the exam. The marking instructions used and their application should correspond as closely as possible to the exemplars provided by the SQA. Prelims should be marked by mid-April at the latest so that estimates can be forwarded to the SQA. If using internal assessments for estimates, these also must be marked by mid-April.

Prelim papers can be produced by:

- The assessor choosing a selection of questions drawn from past SQA papers. Questions should be drawn from at least three past papers and should be adapted (i.e. they should not be identical to those previously used). A past SQA paper in its entirety will not be accepted as evidence to support an appeal. Questions should not be heavily weighted towards one of the past papers (e.g. 70%, 15%, 15%)
- Using a commercially produced question paper. Only the current year's commercial papers will be accepted in their entirety for appeals. It is possible to use previous years' commercially produced question papers in the same way as past SQA papers (see above).

All prelims should be subject to the internal verification process to ensure consistency of application and marking. It is imperative that a prelim is administered for all candidates on the same day. Failure to do so could compromise the authenticity of results service evidence. Where issues arise, please contact the Quality Assurance Manager

Malpractice

Please refer to Edinburgh College Malpractice Procedure.

Security of assessment instruments

As a Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) approved centre, Edinburgh College is required to comply with SQA guidelines on the secure storage of all assessment support materials.

Assessment support materials are distributed to Edinburgh College through the SQA secure website which can be accessed only by authorised personnel. Lecturing staff who require a copy of these support materials should first check if they are stored in the appropriate EV folder in the S: drive. If you wish to check the currency of the support materials, please go to:

<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/46233.2824.html>

To access new support materials, please email the Quality Assurance mailbox. Please state the Unit Number, Unit Title and the award to which it belongs, and the materials will be forwarded to you.

Once you have received the support materials, it is your responsibility to store these materials securely. Please follow the guidelines below to ensure the security and confidentiality of assessment materials.

WHAT TO DO

1. Store all assessment support materials electronically in the EV folder on the S: drive (private)
2. Store paper copies of assessments in secure areas to which students have no access. If it is necessary to store assessments in classrooms or other areas to which students do have access, keep them in a locked cupboard. (The stockpiling of large quantities of assessments well in advance of assessment events is discouraged).

3. For open/flexible learning, mail assessments to approved local assessors by recorded delivery.
4. Securely dispose of assessment support materials in designated 'confidential paper shredding and recycling' bins.
5. Apply the same principles to the access and storage of internally-devised assessments as to assessments published by the SQA.
6. Collect back in assessments which have been issued to candidates during assessment and either shred them, put into confidential waste or store again securely.
7. Make candidates aware that taking away assessments, copies or images of assessments is malpractice and could result in a disciplinary process.
8. Any breaches of security of assessment must be reported immediately to the SQA Co-ordinator, Gavin Lang.
9. Electronic assessment evidence should be submitted by the candidate and held securely using an e-portfolio or Moodle.

WHAT NOT TO DO

- Do not place assessment materials for closed book or supervised assessments on Moodle.
- Do not mail or email assessment support materials for closed book or supervised assessments to students.
- Do not store assessment support materials on a memory stick or other portable storage device.
- Do not leave assessments lying in classrooms or work rooms.
- Avoid accepting assessment evidence by email, unless used with locked password access.

The Curriculum Leader for your programme area will check that assessments are stored in secure conditions and will keep a log of where assessments are stored.

Staff who give assessments, copies or images of assessments to candidate out with the assessment process, without good reason or permission, are committing malpractice, which could result in a disciplinary process.

SQA Results Services

In academic year 2013-14, SQA introduced Results Services to replace the previous Appeals Service.

Key features include:

Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service

This service will run prior to results being published. If you believe that a candidate has suffered as a result of exceptional circumstances (e.g. bereavement or illness during an exam), you should contact the Quality Support Officer immediately and they will relay this information to the SQA who will review the circumstances and decide if the College can submit alternative evidence of attainment demonstrated by the candidate. This evidence can be coursework, class assessments or prelims.

Post Results Service

This service will run after candidates have received their certificates. If you are concerned by a candidate's results, you should contact the Quality Support Officer who will request a clerical check and/or a marking review of the script. If this leads to a change of grade (either up or down), this will be amended on the SQA system and a new certificate will be issued to the candidate. There will be no consideration of 'alternative evidence' with this service.

For full information on the SQA Results Services go to <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/65427.html>

Evidence retention

Student evidence should be retained at least until the end of the academic year in which the qualification is delivered. **This includes evidence for all SQA awards.** This is to ensure that all evidence is available for Internal and External Verification. Where other awarding bodies require retention beyond this period (e.g. for 3 years) then evidence should be kept in line with these requirements. Guidance on retention requirements is provided on awarding body websites. Please check websites for the most up to date guidance. All queries regarding evidence retention should be directed to the Quality Assurance inbox.

Retention of candidate assessment records

Records of candidate assessment must be retained in line with Awarding Body and Accreditation requirements.

Assessors should retain:

- Internal verification records in the EV folder on the S: Drive
- Assessment checklists showing the name of the assessor, location, date and outcome of assessment for candidates, in the EV folder on the S: Drive

The College will centrally retain:

- A list of candidates registered for each qualification offered in the centre
- Assessment results

These records must be stored for one calendar year following completion of the qualification. If any candidate's internal assessment is or has been subject to assessment appeal, malpractice investigation, appeal against a malpractice investigation or is subject to investigation involving a criminal prosecution or civil claim, then the assessment records must be retained for six years.

Assessment records for all Ofqual regulated qualifications must be retained for six years.

These records must be made available to the External Verifier, SQA, SQA Accreditation and the regulatory authorities as appropriate on request. Records must be stored securely and in a retrievable format.

Applying for an extension to an assessment date

Students who wish to apply for an extension to an assessment date must have a sound reason for doing so and should complete the Edinburgh College Application for Extension to an Assessment Date form. This form should be placed on the relevant Moodle page for students to access or it can be found [here](#) (S: drive > Quality & Equalities> Public >Quality Forms and Templates). The final decision as to whether or not an extension should be granted rests with the Curriculum Manager.

Where it is not possible to offer an assessment date within the academic session in which the student is enrolled (i.e. if there is no time to complete the assessment before the last day of summer term) then the assessment must be completed within the two non-teaching weeks in August before the start of the following academic session. The assessment register can be held open only where an Application for Extension to an Assessment Date form has been completed and approved and sent to the Quality Assurance inbox. The result must be inserted into the Assessment Register within the first two non-teaching weeks of the following academic session and evidence should be retained in line with College and awarding body requirements.