

## **ASSESSMENT POLICY – HIGHER EDUCATION**

This policy is available on-line at: [www.stc.ac.uk](http://www.stc.ac.uk)

- We will consider any request for this policy to be made available in an alternative format or language. Please contact Student Services
- We review our policies regularly to update them and to ensure that they are accessible and fair to all. We welcome suggestions for improving the accessibility or fairness of this policy.
- All our policies are subject to equality impact assessments\*. We are always keen to hear from anyone who wishes to contribute to these impact assessments. Please contact Student Services

\*Equality Impact Assessments are carried out to see whether the policy has, or is likely to have, a negative impact on grounds of: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>Version:</b>	<b>Issue Date:</b>	<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>Contact Person:</b>
<b>SEG</b>	<b>v.6</b>	<b>September 2016</b>	<b>July 2018</b>	<b>Principal, South Shields Marine College</b>

**Equal Opportunities:      Impact Assessed**

**POLICY NUMBER 9**

**Review:**

# ASSESSMENT POLICY – HIGHER EDUCATION

## 1 Policy Statement

This policy will ensure that assessment within all Higher Education programmes is valid, inclusive, fair and reliable. All assessments should be conducted in an open manner which encourages active participation and innovation, and does not disadvantage any student due to their age, disability, gender, race or religion whilst meeting the requirements of the Awarding Bodies/HEI's.

### 1.1 Purpose of Assessment

Assessment measures the outcome of learning in terms of knowledge, understanding and skills. Its purpose is:

- To determine if a potential student is ready to start a particular course of learning (diagnostic assessment)
- To provide guidance on how well students are progressing (formative assessment)
- To determine eligibility for final awards (summative assessment)

### 1.2 Students' Entitlements

All learners in the College are entitled to clear, transparent assessment information.

1.2.1 Assessment will be compliant with the prescribed standards laid down by HEI's/Awarding Bodies.

1.2.2 Initial assessment on entry in order to determine whether the course of their choice is appropriate i.e. whether individual students are likely to be able to meet the demands of the course with or without additional learner support. For these students whose initial assessment indicates that the course of their choice is not appropriate, alternative provision should be offered;

1.2.3 Information, support and guidance on all aspects of assessment leading to a clear understanding of exactly what is expected of them in order to achieve the qualification. This information will be supplied to all students at the start of their programme.

1.2.4 Detailed and constructive feedback on their academic progress throughout the course through verbal or written guidance on their formative and summative assessments

1.2.5 Equal treatment with their fellow students in accordance with the assessment regulations applying to the course, including differentiated equality procedures to minimise any barriers to ensure this equal treatment.

1.2.6 Information and guidance on the appeals regulations against assessment decisions.

1.2.7 Where work is submitted on time, formal feedback provided within three working weeks (15 working days) or by the agreed date if externally moderated.

## **2 Scope**

This policy relates to all higher education at English NQF / QCF Level 4 and above, including franchised provision.

## **3 Legislation**

There is no current legislation applicable to this policy.

## **4 Responsibilities**

4.1 The Principal (South Shields Marine School) has responsibility for implementing this policy.

4.2 The Heads of School / Assistant Principals are responsible for overseeing the implementation of section 5.

4.3 Teaching Staff are responsible for meeting students' entitlements as described in Section 1.2.

## **5 Actions to Implement and Develop Policy**

5.1 College Managers should ensure that:

5.1.1 All teaching staff are fully conversant with this policy and the requirements it places on them.

5.1.2 All staff are competent to undertake their roles and responsibilities.

5.1.3 All staff actively promote the principles of equality and diversity and are aware of who to approach for specific modifications to assessment materials and procedures for learners who have a disability/learning difficulty.

5.1.4 All newly appointed staff, including Agency staff have, as part of their induction, training opportunities to meet the basic requirements of this policy.

5.1.5 All other teaching staff, including Agency staff, receive training which promotes and shares best practice in assessment.

5.2 Teaching Staff should ensure that:

- 5.2.1 Assessment is an integral part of the learning process which is undertaken both inside the classroom during lessons and outside the classroom in the form of set work. Assessment should be made a stimulating, challenging and a positive learning experience for students.
  - 5.2.2 Students have access to the clearly defined assessment procedure and criteria and the procedures of assessment panels and examination boards.
  - 5.2.3 In assessing students who have a disability/learning difficulty, they are not to be placed at a disadvantage, compared to other students, for a reason relating to their disability/learning difficulty.
  - 5.2.4 Initial student assessment is used to inform their teaching strategies including the associated methods of assessing students on programme.
  - 5.2.5 Formative and summative assessments employ a range of methods which measure appropriately the learning outcomes defining a particular level of award. Course Teams are responsible for ensuring adequate arrangements for the moderation/internal verification of assessment judgement.
  - 5.2.6 Formative assessment is suitably differentiated to reflect the individual needs of students.
  - 5.2.7 Demands on students are challenging but not excessive. Once agreed, individual teaching staff should uphold the rules governing the hand-in date of assignments.
  - 5.2.8 Feedback to students on their assessed work is timely and constructive. Such feedback should contain reference to the criteria for the marking and grading of work, how far students have met these criteria and what they need to do in future in order to improve. Where work is submitted on time, formal feedback will be provided within three working weeks (15 working days) or by the agreed date if externally moderated.
  - 5.2.9 Any challenge or appeal by students against assessment decisions are dealt with in an open and professional manner consistent with the assessment regulations for the course.
  - 5.2.10 Assessment across the subject areas meet the Awarding Body/HEI procedures and the QAA Code of Practice Chapter B6 <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-B6.aspx> .
- 5.3 Students should ensure that they:

- 5.3.1 Make a positive commitment and contribution to their own development and individual learning targets/goals.
- 5.3.2 Pay careful attention to the advice and feedback from the teaching staff on their progress.
- 5.3.3 Complete and submit course work on time or before the scheduled time/date.
- 5.3.4 Prepare thoroughly and present themselves for all tests and examinations.
- 5.3.5 Comply with the assessment regulations for the course/programme as described in the Student Handbook, including the Procedures governing Late/Non-Submission of Course-Work.

## **6 Late submission of course work**

- 6.1 If a student is aware that she/he may need extra time, whenever possible, this must be raised with the lecturer concerned before the assignment submission time. This can be done by telephone, fax, e-mail or land mail if necessary. The lecturer will consider the reasons given and then decide whether to accept the late work or decline it. If the reasons are accepted by the lecturer, a new submission time will be given to the student. Failure to hand in before this new time will incur the penalties outlined below. If the reasons are declined by the lecturer, the original submission time will stand and the student can still submit the work subject to the penalties outlined below.

The penalties that will be enforced for late submission are outlined in the course student handbook.

Student contact to the staff member after the assignment submission time will not be considered and a nil mark will be given unless covered by the Extenuating Circumstances (section 6.2) given below.

### **6.2 Extenuating Circumstances**

If a student considers they have good reason for not being able to submit the work on time and is unable to contact the lecturer before the submission time, they must provide evidence (e.g. authorised medical certificate or other valid documentation) together with a covering letter explaining the circumstances and in particular why the lecturer could not be contacted. This must be done immediately on return to the college.

The lecturer will then consider the evidence and decide whether to accept the work or decline it. The Lecturer will also consider if equality issues could have influenced the late submission (e.g. religious festivals or holidays). If the reasons are accepted by the lecturer, a new submission time will be given to

the student. Failure to hand in before this new time will incur the penalties outlined above.

If the reasons are declined by the lecturer, the original submission time will stand and the student can still submit the work subject to the penalties outlined above.

- 6.3 If a student is dissatisfied with any part of the above informal assessment, then they should raise the matter with the Curriculum Co-ordinator who will initiate the College Appeals Policy for internal assessment, which requires the student to submit a form CA1.

## 7 Processes for internal moderation of assessments

This policy ensures that assessment marks in **every** module should be moderated regularly internally, and before any external review to ensure fairness, clarity and the maintenance of standards.

Second marking should be carried out by a suitably qualified member of staff who scrutinises a sample of assessed work (examination scripts or coursework) from a given module after first marking is complete. The second marker should see samples of work for failed, borderline and clear pass assessed work. The second marker should comment on the marks awarded for the individual pieces of work; the marking scheme (where appropriate) and standards in general; and the quality of proposed feedback where applicable.

Where the main assessment element of a module is marked by a single member of staff, such as project work, then all scripts must be second marked.

Following second/double marking, a discussion should take place between the markers, which may lead to some adjustment of the original marks. If the second marker is in complete agreement with the first marker, no further marking need take place.

Whatever method is used for moderation there must be a method of resolving differences between markers. Possibilities are as follows:

- discussion and negotiation between the two markers on all differences;
- discussion and negotiation between the markers on specified differences e.g., for relatively large differences, fails or borderline pass/fails.
- if the second marker can discern a regular pattern (e.g. of over- or under-marking), marks throughout the whole batch of scripts may all be altered accordingly in consultation with the first marker i.e. all scripts are given an addition or a penalty of 'x' marks, and no further marking need take place. If, however, the second marker cannot discern any regular pattern to discrepancies in the assessment of first marker and second marker, the whole batch of scripts must be second marked
- taking the mean of different marks: this may be done for all differences, for relatively small differences or where both marks are clearly above or below the pass fail line or above or below limits for compensation. It is

recommended that where differences straddle critical boundaries the differences should be settled by discussion and negotiation.

- resort to a third marker. This should be an additional internal examiner.

All marks, both original and second marker should appear on the central student records, and a note placed within this record where an original mark has been changed.

Where marks are adjusted over 10% of the graded mark, or where a candidate is moved from pass to fail or fail to pass, then the Head of School / Assistant Principal should be informed, and they will confirm that appropriate resolution of the mark change has taken place.

## **8 Monitoring & Evaluation**

The HE Operational committee will monitor the operation of the policy by receiving termly reports on all informal and formal appeals received and their outcomes.

## **9 Related Policies**

- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Plagiarism Policy
- Late Submission of Course Work Policy
- Internal Assessment Appeals Policy
- Archive Policy
- Conducting internal examinations policy