

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING AND COMPETENCE POLICY

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Policy Statement for the Assessment of Learning and Competence

1 Purpose

1.1 To ensure that learners and prospective learners are made fully aware of the criteria and standards against which their progress and success will be judged.

1.2 To ensure that all candidates should be made aware of:

- The timing of assessment, in order that they can prepare work schedules to meet deadlines
- The criteria against which they will be assessed, in order that they can ensure that they are adequately prepared
- The standards to be applied to measure success
- The method(s) by which they will be assessed, to see that these are fair
- The outcome of assessment and the reasons for that outcome, in order that they can judge their own performance for future reference.

2 Principles

2.1 This policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- That all assessments will be carried out in fair and equitable ways, without prejudice or favour
- That any deviation from this policy in favour of one candidate must be fair to all other candidates
- That it is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure understanding of the assessment criteria and standards before presenting for assessment
- That a candidate has the right of appeal against any outcome of assessment or against the process as long as any appeal falls within the College's Appeals Procedure
- Access and support for exams allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment
- That an assessment on demand is available where appropriate
- That formative assessment is a right of learners and should be provided before any summative assessment is made and with such timeliness to ensure the learner has an opportunity to use this formative assessment to improve
- That assessed work is returned to learners within ten working days and will have been internally verified within this time
- Retakes and resubmitted work will be assessed within 10 days of being returned.

3 Code of Practice for carrying out the Assessment Policy

3.1 Where a full qualification may be graded above a straightforward "pass" then the criteria for achieving higher levels must be given to candidates in writing at the start of the programme. Such criteria may be published by the Awarding Organisation. If not, then it is the responsibility of the course leader to draw up the required criteria.

3.2 Within two weeks of commencing a programme, candidates will receive an assessment plan showing when key assessments will be set or carried out and by when they are to be completed and internally quality assured.

3.3 Assessment dates and deadlines may be altered by the Course Leader according to operational need or re-negotiated with candidate(s) according to individual circumstance. Any re-negotiation based on individual's circumstances must be fair to all other candidates.

Course leaders should take into account any specific learning needs when re-negotiating assessment dates/deadlines and should be aware of the College's Single Equality Scheme.

- 3.4 Candidates may present work for assessment outside of the assessment plan provided they can demonstrate that it meets the criteria for assessment. In such instances a teacher is not obliged to make the assessment decision promptly but must negotiate a reasonable return date with the candidate.
- 3.5 The assessment criteria and how these will be applied will be made known to the candidates to make themselves familiar with the assessment criteria prior to submission for assessment.
- 3.6 If a candidate fails to meet a deadline and has made no attempt to negotiate an extension, this will be clearly noted in all records and stated to the candidate. This could lead to the candidate not being allowed to pass the module/unit concerned within the agreed timescale.
- 3.7 Lead Internal quality assurers may authorise a retake or resubmission of assessments in exceptional circumstances where they believe it is necessary, appropriate, meets the Awarding Organisation criteria for resubmissions and retakes and is fair to do so.
- 3.8 Where the course leader feels that an exceptional number of extensions to deadlines have been granted, this should be discussed with the candidate concerned. If the outcome of the discussion is that no further extensions are to be granted then all staff engaged in the programme will be notified of this.
- 3.9 Any candidate dissatisfied with the process or outcome of an assessment has the right of appeal within the appeals process as identified below. It is the duty of Course Leaders to ensure that candidates are aware of this, to give appropriate guidance to the candidate and to co-operate in the appeals' process.
- 3.10 Where controlled assessments, for example, practical activities, are carried out these will follow the requirements as stipulated by the Awarding Organisation to which the controlled assessment relates. It is the responsibility of the Curriculum Team Leader and the relevant invigilator/assessor to ensure that the appropriate requirements are understood and followed.

4 Academic Appeals Process

4.1 Appeals against Internal Assessment of Work

Burton and South Derbyshire College is committed to ensuring that whenever its staff assess learners' work for external qualification, this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification for the qualification concerned. Assessments are conducted by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills, and who have been trained in this activity. The College is committed to ensuring that assessment evidence provided by candidates is produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the relevant specifications for each subject. Where a set of work is divided between staff, internal quality assurance and standardisation will ensure consistency.

- 4.2 If a learner believes that this may not have happened in relation to his/her work, s/he may make use of this appeals procedure.
- 4.3 In the first instance a discussion should take place between the learner and the assessor, involving the Course Leader if required. If a learner continues to believe that the assessment still meets the required standard of work then the matter should be referred to the Deputy Director. If a learner is not satisfied with the outcome, the procedure below should be employed.

- 4.4 This procedure is available from the exams office and is posted on the exams notice board.
- 4.4.1 Appeals should be made as early as possible and within two weeks after the assessment decision is made known to the learner.
 - 4.4.2 Appeals should be made in writing (with support where required, from the College if requested) by the candidate to the MIS and Examinations Manager (MEM), who will investigate the appeal with at least two other members of staff who have not been involved in the internal assessment decision. The relevant Director of Curriculum should be made aware at this stage by the MEM. If the MEM was directly involved in the assessment in question, the Director of Quality and Performance will appoint another member of staff of similar or greater seniority to conduct the investigation. Likewise if the MEM is not able to conduct the investigation for some other reason.
 - 4.4.3 The purpose of the appeal will be to decide whether the process used for the internal assessment conformed to the published requirements of the Awarding Organisation and the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ).
 - 4.4.4 The complainant will be informed in writing (with support where required, from the College if requested) of the outcome of the appeal, including any relevant correspondence with the Awarding Organisation and any changes made to the procedure relating to internal assessment.
 - 4.4.5 The outcome of the appeal will be known to the Vice Principal, Learner Voice, Services and Reputation and will be logged as a complaint. A written record will be kept and made available to the Awarding Organisation upon request. Should the appeal bring any significant irregularity to light, the Awarding Organisation will be informed.
 - 4.4.6 If the complainant is not satisfied with this decision an appeal may be made directly to the Awarding Organisation in accordance with its guidelines for such an instance.
- 4.5 After work has been assessed internally, it is moderated by the Awarding Organisation to ensure consistency between centres. Such moderation may change the marks awarded for internally assessed work. This is outside the control of Burton and South Derbyshire College but the College may support an appeal in accordance with section 5 below.

5. Appeal to an Awarding Organisation

5.1 THE PROCEDURE FOR APPEALS AGAINST RESULTS FROM EXTERNALLY ASSESSED QUALIFICATIONS AND THE COLLEGE'S DECISION TO SUPPORT SUCH AN APPEAL

Where a candidate enrolled on a qualification at the College undertakes an examination where the assessment is outside of the College's control, any appeal against the results of these examinations should be made by the candidate directly to the Awarding Organisation concerned using that Awarding Organisation's published procedures. These can be obtained on-line or via the College's MEM.

- 5.2 The College may or may not support the appeal depending on the circumstances but will only support the appeal if the following procedures have been followed;
- 5.2.1 The candidate discusses their intention to appeal with the relevant subject or personal tutor who can advise of the appropriateness of the grounds for appeal. The tutor may seek advice from the Examinations Officer (MEM) about this appropriateness.
 - 5.2.2 If the tutor advises that the grounds for appeal appear appropriate the candidate must submit the grounds for the appeal in writing (with support where required, from the College if requested) to the MEM within two weeks of the results of the examination

detailing the grounds for appeal and formally requesting the College's support with this appeal. This request must authorise the College to disclose such information about a candidate as it deems appropriate to support the appeal. In addition, the letter must state that a candidate will share details of any contact by the candidate with the Awarding Organisation. A copy of the appeal which must already have been made to the Awarding Organisation should be included.

5.2.3 The MEM will consider the grounds for appeal.

5.2.3a If the MEM considers that there are grounds for appeal and a reasonable chance of the appeal succeeding the MEM will write to the Awarding Organisation stating the College's support for the candidate's appeal and the grounds for doing so. This will occur within ten working days of receipt of the candidate's request for support. A copy of this letter will be sent to the candidate.

5.2.3b if the MEM does not consider that there are grounds for appeal the College will not support the candidate's appeal. The reasons for this will be sent to the candidate in writing within ten working days of the request for support being made. (If a candidate disagrees with this decision the matter will be referred to the Director of Quality and Performance whose decision will be final).

5.2.4 The College will only ever support an appeal which a candidate has already made to an Awarding Organisation. It will not instigate an appeal on behalf of an individual candidate nor will it act as an advocate or channel of communication between the Awarding Organisation and the candidate. The College will, however, inform a candidate of any communications with an Awarding Organisation concerning any appeal that it is supporting.

5.2.5 Where a candidate withdraws an appeal to an Awarding Organisation the College must be notified in writing (with support where required, from the College if requested) within five working days of the appeal being withdrawn.