

Assessment of Students

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Purpose:	The Collaborations agreed joint policy for managing student assessments			
Audience:	All Student police officers, Babcock employees; partner providers; MPS, agency workers and associates (PEQF)			
Scope:	All Student police officers, Babcock employees; partner providers; MPS, agency workers and associates (PEQF) who may need to highlight or manage any alleged incidents of unfair academic practice in the PEQF programme(s)			
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1. Marking and Moderation

- 1.1. Markers shall assign provisional assessment marks to student work in line with the standards set out in the Collaboration Grade Descriptors and assessment criteria. The marking criteria and bandings will be clearly identified and explained to students so they understand the rationale for the mark they achieve.

2. Anonymous Marking

- 2.1. Anonymous marking is a process undertaken to avoid the possibility of unconscious bias entering the marking process. Wherever possible, the identity of students will be masked from markers and work only identified by student number. Where the method of assessment does not allow anonymous marking (e.g dissertations, oral presentations or oral examinations) **all** (100%) of the work will be internally moderated.

3. Internal Moderation

- 3.1. Every component of summative assessment that contributes to an award, at all levels, will be subject to moderation in order to ensure the maintenance of standards.
- 3.2. Internal Moderation is a process intended to assure that an assessment outcome is fair and appropriate, and that assessment criteria have been applied consistently
- 3.3. A sample of at least 10% or 10 individual pieces of work for each assessment task (whichever is greater) will be moderated for each cohort and should include samples from a range of results e.g fails, borderline and 1sts. Where the marking of any assessment is undertaken by more than one marker, the sample will include the work marked by each individual marker, again relating to a range of performance. In addition all borderline fails should be moderated.
- 3.4. Newly established programmes may be subject to a short period of additional moderation at each level to ensure consistency and fairness of marks awarded.
- 3.5. Collaboration Partners should maintain full records of the internal moderation process and outcomes and provide these to the External Examiners using the standard collaboration moderation forms.

4. Feedback to students

- 4.1. Provisional marks shall be released to students once the process for internal moderation has been concluded. The provisional marks should be released in a timely manner and by end of week 3 following submission. Students shall be advised that such provisional marks are subject to modification and ratification by Assessment Panels and as such they may change before they are confirmed.
- 4.2. Feedback on all assessed work shall be provided to students via the HEI's own system and Portal and oral feedback shall be provided to students on all formal written examinations on request.

5. External Moderation of student assessments

- 5.1. External Examiners are required to comment on all summative assessments. The following should be made available to External Examiners for each assessment block, ensuring sufficient time for external scrutiny:
 - 5.2. Full set of provisional marks for all students attempting the assessment
 - 5.3. All internal moderation or double marking records

- 5.4. A sample of assessed Student Police Officer work
- 5.5. External Examiners are not required to study each piece of work in detail, but are required to satisfy themselves that the work is of an appropriate standard, comparable with that of other United Kingdom higher education institutions and that the marks assigned reflect the published marking criteria and intended learning outcomes
- 5.6. There should be a minimum of 10 assessments, or 10% of assessments, whichever is the greater, for each assessment block made available to the External Examiners. Samples made available should represent the full range of student achievement including all borderline fails
- 5.7. The External Examiner(s) should review no less than 10 assessments, or 10% of assessments, whichever is greater of taught dissertations or final year project reports. The sample should represent the full range of student achievement.
- 5.8. External Examiners should be consulted about the external moderation of non-written assessments. They should be invited to attend any live assessment events, displays etc. Or should be offered the opportunity to see video recordings. External Examiners should receive proper briefings and explicit marking schemes for such assessments.
- 5.9. All assessed material should be available to the External Examiners on the day of the meeting of the Panel, or on request.
- 5.10. External Examiners may also be:
 - a) consulted about proposed changes to the curriculum
 - b) invited to talk to staff and students outside the examination periods.

6. External Examiners

- 6.1. External examiners will be appointed by each HEI recruited to a common framework and role profile agreed by the PEQF Collaboration. This encompasses both the HEI and Babcock delivered elements.
- 6.2. An External Examiner shall normally be appointed for a period of 4 years, but the appointment may be extended by one further year.

7. Criteria for Appointment

- 7.1. Each external examiner shall normally be or have been a senior member of academic staff at a different higher education institution, member of a professional body with appropriate standing, or a member of another recognised authority in the appropriate discipline. External Examiners should be drawn from a wide variety of institutional or professional contexts and traditions in order to benefit from wide-ranging external scrutiny.
- 7.2. All External Examiners should have recent learning, teaching and assessment experience relevant to the level of the programme and specific subject knowledge obtained within the industry and an understanding of academic standards in other institutions sufficient to enable them to assist with national comparisons of standards.
- 7.3. There must be at least one academic External Examiner appointed at each HEI. Where necessary, External Examiners with professional expertise and experience should be appointed to ensure that the team as a whole is able to discharge their duties.

- 7.4. External Examiners will be appointed as per the collaboration role profile
- 7.5. External Examiners may not be current students or members of staff of the Universities for the programme. Former staff of the Universities within a period of typically 4 years immediately following the cessation of their contract of employment with the Universities. Former students of the Universities may not be appointed as External Examiners normally within a period of 4 years from completion of their studies.
- 7.6. An interval of at least 4 years must normally separate any two periods of appointment as an External Examiner to the individual University and may not work across more than 2 partner universities without prior agreement between the relevant HEI's.

8. Process for appointment

- 8.1. All External Examiners will be recruited as per the individual HEI's internal nominations process

9. Role and Responsibilities

- 9.1. The role of the External Examiner(s) is to provide informative comment and recommendations whether:
 - 9.1.1. An institution is maintaining the threshold academic standards set for its award in accordance with the frameworks for higher education qualifications, applicable subject benchmark statements and relevant professional and statutory bodies;
 - 9.1.2. The assessment process measures student achievement rigorously and fairly against the intended outcomes of the programme(s) and is conducted in line with the collaborations and Universities policies and regulations;
 - 9.1.3. The academic standards the achievements of students are comparable with those in other UK higher education institutions of which the external examiner has experience.
 - 9.1.4. The institution ensures that students who are awarded qualifications have the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the thresholds level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK institutions
- 9.2. The Collaboration also expects External Examiners to provide informative comment and recommendations on:
 - 9.2.1. Good practice and innovation relating to learning, teaching and assessment;
 - 9.2.2. Opportunities to enhance the quality of the learning opportunities provided to students.
 - 9.2.3. Consistency of practice across HEI's
- 9.3. External Examiners should have access to any available material they deem necessary to reach judgements required by their position. External Examiners are requested to discuss the type of information or materials they would need with an authorised member of staff in the Department at an early stage.
- 9.4. External Examiners examine at Level 5 and 6 but all assessments at any level can be made available to them
- 9.5. EEs, by attending Panels and Boards, are part of the decision making and are therefore, by default, confirming appropriateness of assessment/marketing/moderation and decision making at Panel/Board and this will be clear in the minutes. Should any concerns arise from the External Examiner, they should indicate this in their moderation report and at the Panel of examiners

10. Consistency and oversight

- 10.1. Babcock and the MPS need to ensure consistency of delivery and assessment across the PEQF Collaboration. Course delivery, assessment and marking standards are already defined within the validated programme. Each Collaboration partner must deliver to agreed quality standards. Monitoring will be done internally by each HEI as part of their own quality assurance. Standardisation and calibration events will be held across the PEQF Collaboration (coordinated by Babcock).
- 10.2. The Quality Steering Sub Group will have oversight on the outputs from the External Examiners and the Babcock central monitoring role. This will be to review and ensure consistency across the collaboration and ensure that the Collaboration Partners are implementing the agreed quality assurance process. The sub-group will report findings and actions to the Steering Group.
- 10.3. The Steering Group and sub-group can receive aggregate assessment data (without student personal data), which would clearly show performance and outcomes by Collaboration Partners and by cohort. Any variances would need to be explained (which might be for good reason) and provide details of actions put in place to address identified variances (where applicable) and mitigate risks of potential variances
- 10.4. Any issues can be raised with individual Collaboration Partners (and a formal response required) or through the Quality/Delivery sub-groups
- 10.5. Annual/periodic monitoring processes within each individual HEI will involve Babcock and will provide a further check on quality and standards. Additionally, in line with the overarching ESFA regulations on sub-contract management and to satisfy the broader customer requirements Babcock will undertake additional monitoring of delivery
- 10.6. All External Examiner reports will be shared with Babcock.

11. Assessment Panels

- 11.1. Each Collaborative Partner is responsible for establishing appropriate Assessment Panels for each cohort and assessment block contributing to a programme leading to an award of the University. Each Panel shall comprise a minimum of a Chair and Deputy Chair; Internal Moderators and External Examiner. The Panel is quorate and competent to transact its business with representation as described above. The meetings can be held virtually or face to face.
- 11.2. Where the External Examiner appointed for the programme is unable to attend a scheduled meeting of a Panel or Board, a nominated person maybe deputised to attend or if not possible the Chair may, subject to the agreement of the External Examiner(s) concerned allow the meeting to proceed, provided that full moderation of the assessments by the External Examiner(s) has taken place.
- 11.3. The relevant Panel is responsible for determining the marks to be assigned to individual students who have attempted the assessment for each assessment block.
- 11.4. The Assessment Panel shall be responsible to their respective Senates/Academic Board for:
 - a) Notifying all relevant Boards of the date by which recommended marks will be available;

- b) Considering the academic performance of students on each assessment block
- c) Confirming the integrity and fairness of the assessment process, including the marking and moderation, taking into account records and reports of the assessment process;
- d) Submitting to the Assessment Board confirmed marks for each student in each assessment block, together with such other information, as the Board may require by the due date.

11.5. An Assessment Panel shall not confirm marks for assessment blocks until it is satisfied with the integrity and fairness of the assessment leading to the marks. Where the Assessment Panel has insufficient confidence in the integrity and fairness of the outcomes of an assessment, it shall take appropriate action in order to achieve sufficient confidence. The Assessment Panel may require the reconsideration by markers of the marks for the complete cohort of students taking an assessment. Only in very exceptional circumstances may the Panel scale marks for a particular assessment and must then record the justification and rationale for the adjustment. Marks for an individual student may not be adjusted, unless they have been wrongly recorded or additional information is present.

11.6. The Chair of the Assessment Panel shall be responsible for presenting all recommended marks and other paperwork, and an account of proceedings of the Panel which shall indicate how and whether extenuating circumstances were taken into account by the Panel in relation to particular Student Police Officers or particular assessments to the Assessment Board. The Chair is also responsible for ensuring that an appropriate record of proceedings is promptly placed on file and distributed to the Chair of the Collaboration Quality Group.

12. Assessment Boards

12.1. An Assessment Board shall be convened to consider the status and confirmed marks/grades of students, actions to be taken in respect of accepted Extenuating Circumstances and recommendations for progression and/or award.

12.2. Each Board shall comprise a Chair Independent of the delivery; the Chair or nominated member of the Student Review Panel, relevant Course Leads, the External Examiner and for final award a senior member of professional staff of the University who can advise on regulatory matters and help to ensure process has been followed. The Board is quorate and competent to transact its business with representation as described above. The meetings can be held virtually or face to face.

12.3. The Assessment Board shall be responsible for decisions to be taken about the academic performance of students, including where appropriate, recommendations to Senate for awards and their classification in accordance with the Harmonised Regulations, relevant regulations and approved programme specifications.

12.4. The Assessment Board shall meet as necessary to consider the progress of all students registered on the programme and their progression, reassessment and award. Ensuring all students are issued their results within 6 weeks of the submission date.

12.5. An Assessment Board may:

- a) In light of the report of the Student Review Panel, take action in respect of accepted extenuating circumstances (please refer to the Extenuating Circumstances Policy)
- b) Not adjust the mark assigned to any student by an Assessment Panel.
- c) Defer making a progression decision or award recommendation if it has insufficient evidence about the student's performance available to it.

13. Joint Assessment Boards

- 13.1. A Joint Assessment Board is a Board at which both Assessment Panels and Assessment Boards are considered. The Joint Assessment Board will first convene as an Assessment Panel, then as an Assessment Board. These are an optional alternative method to separate Panels & Boards as above
- 13.2. When the number of cohorts increases it may be practical to hold the Assessment Panels and Assessment Boards on the same day.
- 13.3. The Joint Assessment Board will initially convene as an Assessment Panel as outlined in section 6. The Joint Assessment Board will then convene as an Assessment Board as outlined in section 7
- 13.4. In all cases the Chair shall preside over all elements of the Joint Assessment Board as set out in sections 6 and 7
- 13.5. The membership requirements for the Assessment Panels and Assessment Boards shall apply to the relevant elements of the Joint Assessment Board.

14. Procedures of Assessments Boards relating to Extenuating Circumstances

- 14.1. Full consideration shall be given to reports on accepted extenuating circumstances referred by a Student Review Panel at the meeting of the Assessment Board. Where a student's performance was affected in a range of subjects, the Assessment Board is also responsible for ensuring that due account has been taken of the students situation overall in determining any decision on progression or recommendation for an award.
- 14.2. The report of the Student Review Panel relating to each accepted instance of extenuating circumstances shall be available to the Board. Full details of all students submissions concerning extenuating circumstances shall be available to the Chair and the External Examiner in attendance at the meeting of the Board.
- 14.3. The existence of extenuating circumstances for a student must be clearly shown on the mark sheet presented to the Board (for example by the letters EC). Instances of extenuating circumstances at all previous levels of study leading to the award must also be indicated to the Assessment Board when making recommendations for an award.

15. The role of External Examiners at Panels and Boards

- 15.1. Each External Examiner shall be notified in advance of, and are expected to attend, meetings of any Assessment Panel or Board of which they are a member, and are entitled to take part in any vote(s) that should arise as part of the business of the meetings. Final responsibility for any decisions or recommendations rests with the Panel or Board as a whole.
- 15.2. The responsibilities of an External Examiner at a meeting of an Assessment Panel are to:
 - a) fully participate in discharging the responsibilities of the Panel;
 - b) comment on specific assessment tasks;
 - c) contribute to the quality assurance of the assessment process as it relates to individual assessment blocks.
- 15.3. The responsibilities of an External Examiner at a meeting of an Assessment Board are to:

- a) fully participate in discharging the responsibilities of the Board;
- b) comment and give advice on the structure, content and assessments of programmes as they deem appropriate;
- c) comment on the overall conduct of the assessment process, the performance of candidates and matters relating to the programme as a whole.

15.4. External Examiners do not have the power to raise or lower individual or group marks. They should however, raise any concerns regarding the integrity or fairness of the assessment process and/or outcomes, and make any recommendations to, the Assessment Panel or Board as appropriate.

15.5. Each External Examiner present at a meeting of an Assessment Board shall confirm their agreement for recommending the granting of an award of the University by either electronic means or by attendance at the meeting. The confirmation of the External Examiner is taken to indicate the External Examiner's agreement that (i) the outcomes of assessment are appropriate, and (ii) processes have been carried out according to the conventions of the institution. The approval of the relevant External Examiner must be sought by the Chair of the Assessment Board where a change is proposed to any award recommendation previously endorsed by the External Examiner(s).

15.6. Where an External Examiner has serious concerns about the decisions of a Panel or Board, they should make the reasons for concern clear to the Chair and Chair of the Collaboration Quality Group.

15.7. Collaboration Partners are expected to provide External Examiners with opportunities for meetings with staff. External Examiners have the right to meet groups of students by request.

16. Publication of results

16.1. Student Police Officers will be notified of their confirmed results for each assessment block and the decisions or recommendations of the Board, as soon as possible after the meeting of the Board and within 6 weeks of the submission date through the portal.

17. The role of the Centrally Appointed Person (Babcock)

17.1. Babcock will appoint a central role to monitor consistency across the collaboration and identify any issues or concerns and raise these with each HEI. The HEI would respond formally to Babcock as appropriate. They cannot directly influence the HEI's award/progression Board but do have the right to identify and ask for evidence where deviation is observed in order to satisfy the broader customer requirement around consistency of standards.