The Youth Development Academy

<u>Internal Moderation Policy</u>

AIMS

The Youth Development Academy is committed to ensuring that standards of assessment are consistent, transparent and in line with the requirements of our awarding body. The way students' work is assessed must serve the stated learning objectives of the programmes we offer and facilitate the achievement and wider development of our students. Where appropriate course teams should adhere to other awarding organisation verification and moderation procedures.

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this policy is:

a) To assess students' work with integrity by being consistent and transparent in our assessment judgements and processes so that the outcomes are fair, reliable and valid;
b) To ensure that assessment standards and specifications are implemented fully (both in spirit and in letter), so that no risk is posed to the reputation of the awarding body or the qualifications we offer;
c) To establish quality control and recording mechanisms for assignments and their assessment through a system of sampling, moderation, internal verification and cross-departmental co-ordination as appropriate to the requirements of the programmes we offer;
d) To establish quality control and recording mechanisms for assignments and their assessment through a system of sampling, moderation, internal verification and cross-departmental co-ordination as appropriate to the requirements of the programmes we offer.

Scope

The range of the policy covers all courses offered at The Youth Development Academy but may well apply to other assignment-based courses should they become a part of the curriculum in future. This should be read alongside the Academy's Assessment Policy.

Assessment

Internal Assessment is defined as the process where staff make judgements on assessments produced by students against set criteria for all Higher Education qualifications.

All devised assessment materials must be internally and/or externally verified/moderated before being issued to students. The External Verification process plays a critical role in this process in ensuring that academic standards are maintained.

a. Completed student assignments will be assessed internally, and be subject to internal verification and external moderation by the awarding body;

b. Students must be left in no doubt that any grade awarded will be subject to internal and/or external scrutiny (moderation), and that ultimately the final decision rests with the awarding body;

c. The Assessor/Lecturer is responsible for ensuring that assessment processes are consistent and transparent, that evidence is valid, sufficient, authentic and that judgements of evidence are valid and reliable;

d. Students will be given an interim deadline for each assignment. Following feedback a new deadline may be set after which the work is assessed and the outcome entered on the student study sheet. The assessment decisions are then internally verified according to the procedure outlined below. There is a further opportunity to improve assignments before the final deadline;

e. All coursework must be handed in by the stated date. If work is handed in late, a decision about whether it should be marked will be taken by the Course Team in accordance with the policy on coursework.

Role of the Lecturer/Assessor

The role of the Lecturer/Assessor is to:

A. Set tasks which allow students to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do so that they have opportunities to achieve the highest possible grades on their particular course;

B. Ensure that learners are clear about the criteria they are expected to meet in their assignments and that they are fully briefed on the skills which need to be demonstrated in the coursework / portfolio components of a subject;

C. Encourage students by giving detailed feedback and guidance on how to improve work;

D. Set interim deadlines for coursework and advise students on the appropriate amount of time to spend on the work, ensuring it is commensurate with the credit available;

E. Mark and return drafts within two weeks of submission;

F. Adhere to the Awarding Body's specification in the assessment of student assignments;

G. Record outcomes of assessment using appropriate documentation. Outcomes will be held secure for three years, measured from the point of certification. Associated Internal Verifier records should also be kept, to support and verify the decisions that were made for the cohort;

H. Ensure each candidate signs to confirm that the work is their own and that it is endorsed by the teacher after marking the work. A completed original document must be securely attached to the work of each candidate and to that of each sample request.

I. Provide accurate records of internally assessed coursework marks to the Examinations Office in a timely manner via the VLE or e-mail for transfer to the awarding body.

Internal Verification:

1. The Internal Verifier is at the heart of the quality assurance process. The Internal Verification role is to ensure that internally assessed work consistently meets standards verification;

2. Each course will have an identified Internal Verifier (IV). The IV must not internally moderate their own work/units;

3. Internal Verifiers will have the knowledge and qualifications relevant to the qualification(s) and other competence-based award(s) for which they are responsible to enable accurate judgement to be made regarding candidate performance in relation to competence criteria;

4. Provision should be made for opportunities to share 'best practice' and areas of concern between Course Teams. Typically, this will be achieved through an annual meeting of Internal Verifiers at which standards and processes are discussed to maximise consistency between courses;

5. The role of the Internal Verifier/ Moderator:

   The Internal Verifier should:
   - Not verify their own work or assignments.
   - Plan with the course team an annual internal verification schedule linked to assessment plan.
   - Ensure that all assignment briefs are verified as fit for purpose prior to their being circulated to students. The assignment briefs should enable students to meet the unit grading criteria.
   - Make recommendations to the assessor on how to improve the quality of the brief if necessary.
   - Consider the assessment decisions of all units and all assessors to judge whether the assessor has assessed accurately against the unit grading criteria.
   - When sampling, the experience of the assessor should be taken into account when selecting the sample size.
   - Ensure the sample size is sufficient to assure the accuracy of the assessment decisions for the whole group.
   - Consider alternative methods of moderation/verification as required for non-written assessments (e.g. assessments of performance, oral presentations, and work placements). In most cases, the documentary record of the assessor(s) will provide the basis for verification.
   - If a concern is raised the IV should discuss this with the assessor prior to the final confirmation of the marks for all the students taking the assignment. As a result of the IV process it may be necessary for the assessor(s) to reconsider the marks awarded for the entire cohort of students and, as a consequence, to make changes either to all marks or to some marks.
   - Maintain secure records of all work sampled as part of their verification process using a standard template.
   - Where re-sampling is necessary the work should be verified again and signatures obtained.

- Make all IV evidence available to the Lead Internal Verifier/Standards Verifier/External Examiner as appropriate

6. The role of the Lead Internal Verifier (where applicable) for all Higher Education and Further Education programmes:

- A Lead Internal Verifier (LIV) is the person designated by a centre to act as the point of sign-off for the assessment and internal verification of programmes in a Principal Subject Area (PSA).

    The Lead IV should be:

- Someone with the authority to oversee assessment outcomes.

- Directly involved in the assessment and delivery of a programme, so that they understand the units.

- Able to coordinate across assessors and other internal verifiers for a Principal Subject Area (PSA).

- Someone who ensures that there is an assessment and verification plan for the programmes which is fit for purpose and meets Awarding Body requirements.

- Someone who signs off the plan and checks that it is being followed at suitable points.

- Someone who undertakes some internal verification and as good practice it is suggested that they sample work across campus to gain an awareness and manage the possibility of any potential risks across the team.

- Someone who will ensure that records of assessment and samples of learner work are being retained for use with Standards Verification (SV) if necessary. Plan to set aside examples of work that has been verified to different levels and grades

- Someone who will liaise with the Standards Verifier to ensure that appropriate sampling takes place, if and when sampling is required

- Each year a sample of programmes will be monitored through Standards Verification to ensure that the standards are being maintained and that the accreditation of the Lead IV can continue. Centres and programmes will be chosen for this using a risk-based approach. Some of the risk criteria that will be used to establish which Principal Subject Areas and centres are chosen, include:

- new programmes being approved within a Principal Subject Area (PSA)

- a significant rise in registration on a given Principal Subject Area in the previous year.

- where specific issues have been identified through the Awarding Body e.g. Quality Review and Development Process.

Investigating Student Misconduct

There will be an investigation if student misconduct is suspected which may lead to disciplinary action.

a) Students who attempt to gain an award by deceitful means will automatically have their result(s) suspended (held) pending a thorough investigation by a member of the Course Committee. The student will be informed at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences.

b) The outcome of the investigation will determine the appropriate course of action to be taken by the Academy. Malpractice is a breach of Academy's rules and may invoke the Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. Any case where student malpractice is found to be substantiated will be reported to the awarding body.

c) If no evidence is found that the student cheated, then the benefit of the doubt should be given to the student and the grade achieved should be awarded.

Appeals Procedure – see Academy's Appeals Procedure.

Grounds for Appeal:

A student would only have grounds for appeal against an academic assessment decision if procedures have not been followed or new extenuating circumstances have arisen after an Exam Board.

a. The work is not assessed according to the set criteria or the criteria are ambiguous (procedural);

b. The conduct of the assessment did not conform to the published requirements of the Awarding Body (procedural);

c. Valid, agreed, extenuating circumstances were not taken into account at the time of assessment, which the Academy was aware of prior to the submission deadline (extenuating circumstances).

d. Agreed deadlines were not observed by staff (procedural).

e. The decision to reject coursework on the grounds of malpractice (procedural).

Formal Appeals Procedure

a) If, after informal discussion with the Internal Verifier, the candidate wishes to make a formal appeal, the candidate should follow the Academy's Appeals procedure.

Staff Malpractice

The following are examples of malpractice by Academy staff. This list is not exhaustive:

a. Failure to keep any awarding body mark schemes secure;

b. Alteration of awarding body assessment and grading criteria;

c. Assisting students in the production of work for assessment, where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment, for example where the assistance involves Academy staff producing work for the student;

d. Producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the student has not generated;

e. Allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the student's own, to be included in a student's assignment/task/portfolio/ coursework;

f. Facilitating and allowing impersonation;

g. Misusing the conditions for special student requirements;

h. Failing to keep student computer files secure;

i. Falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud

j. Fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the student completing all the requirements of assessment;

Responsibility

It is the responsibility of Lecturers to:

a. Provide assessment processes that are fair and meet the requirements of students and of the qualification;
b. Provide students with a schedule of assessment;
c. Provide accurate, timely and informative assessment feedback to inform Students of their individual progress and tell them what they need to do to improve;
d. Record assessment decisions regularly, accurately and systematically, using agreed documentation;
e. Comply with the Academy and Awarding Body guidelines regarding work that is submitted after the submission date and work that is re-submitted following a referral decision;
f. Familiarise themselves and learners with the Academy Assessment Appeals procedure(s);
g. Be aware of and keep up-to-date with Awarding Body guidance in respect of assessment, standardisation, moderation and verification;
h. Ensure that the quality of assessment is assured by carrying out internal standardisation, moderation or verification as required by the Academy and Awarding Body;
i. Record internal standardisation, moderation and verification decision accurately and systematically using agreed documentation;
j. Provide special arrangements for learners with learning difficulties and or disabilities according to the regulations of the awarding body.

Internal Verifiers are responsible for:

a. Verifying assignment briefs prior to distribution to students;
b. Verifying a sample of assessment decisions;
c. Developing the skills of Lecturer assessors, especially those new to assessment;

d. Maintaining the consistency of assessment decisions by holding standardisation meeting of assessors.

It is the responsibility of the Examinations Office to:

a. meet the deadlines for registering learners with the awarding body;
b. ensure that awarding body data is kept up to date with timely withdrawal or transfer of learners;
c. claim students' certificates as soon as appropriate;
d. claim unit certification when a learner has not been able to complete the full programme of study;
e. where appropriate, communicate with the awarding bodies.

It is the responsibility of the Quality Assurance Manager to:

a. act as Quality Nominee for the Academy, to act as a conduit for information from awarding bodies to course teams, and to ensure standardisation of processes and documentation across the programmes

Glossary

Assessment criteria - those topics/aspects of a subject area that a marker would expect to be included in the piece of work being assessed including any apportionment of marks to the various elements of an assessment.

Moderation - the checking of a sample of students' assessed work in order to confirm that the assessment and marking criteria have been applied so that relative grading is appropriate. Note that moderation is a normative rather than a criterion-referenced process and, as such, does not apply to vocational programmes such as BTEC and NVQ.

Assessment - Assessment is where Academy staff make judgements on the assessment evidence produced by students against the required standards for the qualification.

Verification - is the process by which the Academy and the awarding body ensure that national standards are consistently applied to the assessment of students' work.

Internal Verification - ensures that assessment decisions are made against specific criteria, are accurate and to the national standard.

External Verifier - a person appointed by an awarding organisation to monitor the work of approved centres and to ensure the consistency and quality of local assessments.

Moderator - one whose role is to ensure that the marker(s) has applied assessment and marking criteria equitably and appropriately.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, or if there is a change in legal or other business related requirement.

Review date	Description	Reviewed by	Next Review date
29 July 2019	Internal Moderation Policy	SMT Team	27 July 2020
24 July 2020		SMT Team	26 July 2021
26 July 2021		SMT Team	27 July 2022
27 July 2022		SMT Team	28 July 2023
28 July 2023		SMT Team	25 July 2024
10 July 2024		SMT Team	11 July 2025