

**Accredited Courses - Assessment, Internal Verification and Malpractice Policy –Reviewed October 2020**
Next Review: November 2022**1. Aims and Objectives of the policy****Aims**

The Shrubberies School is committed to ensuring that standards of assessment are consistent, transparent and in line with the requirements of our awarding bodies. 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.

Objectives

- 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 bodies or the qualifications we offer.
- c) To establish quality control and recording mechanisms for all accredited work and its 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 provide learner-centred approaches to assessment, which provide opportunities for students to achieve at levels commensurate with the demands of their course.

2. Range and scope of the policy.

The range of the policy covers all accredited courses and qualifications offered at The Shrubberies School.

3. Assessment

Internal Assessment is defined as the process where staff make judgements on evidence produced by students against required criteria for the qualification.

- a) Completed student work will be assessed internally, 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 is responsible for ensuring that assessment processes are consistent and transparent, that evidence is valid, sufficient and authentic, and that judgement of evidence is valid and reliable.
- d) Assessment decisions are internally verified according to the procedure outlined below. There is a further opportunity to improve assignments before the final deadline.

3.1 Role of the Assessor

The role of the 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 courses.
- b) Encourage students by giving detailed feedback and guidance on how to improve work,
- c) Adhere to the Awarding Body's specification in the assessment of student work.
- d) Record outcomes of assessment using appropriate documentation. Outcomes will be held securely for three years, measured from the point of certification. Associated records should also be kept, to support and verify the decisions that were made for the cohort.
- e) Where possible ensure each candidate signs to confirm that the work is their own and/or that it is endorsed by the teacher after marking the work.
- f) Provide accurate records of internally assessed coursework marks to the Exams Office in a timely manner.

3.2 Internal Verification

- a) The Lead Internal Verifier is at the heart of quality assurance on accredited programmes. The role is to ensure that internally assessed work consistently meets national standards but can also lead to staff development and quality improvement.
- b) Each course will have an identified Lead Internal Verifier (LIV) who is not otherwise involved in the assessing or setting of work which he or she is asked to verify.
- c) Internal Verifiers may also be appointed who 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 judgements to be made regarding candidate performance in relation to competence criteria.
- d) Provision will be made for communication between course teams to share 'best practice' and areas of concern.

e) **The role of the internal verifier:**

The internal verifier should:

- Not verify their own work or assignments.
- Complete internal moderation and make recommendations to the assessor on actions needed. Make all IV evidence available to the EV
- Consider the assessment decisions of all units and all assessors to judge whether the assessor has assessed accurately against the unit grading criteria
- Verify samples of work – one third of all students per unit and ensure all students' work is scrutinised throughout the duration of the course. New or inexperienced assessors may be given additional support by the IV.
- Consider alternative methods of moderation/verification as required for non-written (ephemeral) 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.
- Maintain secure records of all work sampled as part of their verification process.
- 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.
- Where re-sampling is necessary the work should be verified again before being sent to the EV and records kept.

3.3 Authentication of Candidate's Work

- a) On each piece of work teachers / assessors should confirm that the work assessed is solely that of the candidate concerned and was conducted under required conditions.

3.4 Student Misconduct

Misconduct covers a range of offences, which can be collectively described as cheating. The following is not an exhaustive list and the School reserves the right to include any other type of cheating under the terms of this policy.

- a) Plagiarism: taking someone else's work, images or ideas, whether published or not, and with or without their permission, and passing them off as your own: thereby not properly acknowledging the original source. This particularly relates to material downloaded from the Internet or copied from books
- b) Copying the work of other students with or without their permission and knowingly, allowing another student to copy one's own work.
- c) Colluding with other students to produce work, which is then submitted individually, except where this is specifically required/allowed by the assessment criteria.
- d) Falsely claiming extenuating circumstances to gain an unfair advantage in assessment outcomes
- e) Submitting work done by another student as your own.

3.5 Preventing Student Misconduct

The School will take positive steps to prevent and reduce the occurrence of malpractice by students. These will include:

- a) Using the induction period and the course handbook to inform students of the School's policy on malpractice and consequent penalties.
- b) Showing students the appropriate formats to highlight cited texts and other materials or information sources including websites. Students should not be discouraged from conducting research; indeed evidence of relevant research often contributes to the achievement of higher grades. However, the submitted work must show evidence that the student has interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and has acknowledged any sources used.
- c) Introducing procedures for assessing work in a way that reduces or identifies malpractice, eg plagiarism, collusion, cheating, etc. These procedures may include:
 - supervised sessions during which evidence for assignments/tasks/coursework is produced by the student.
 - altering assessment assignments/tasks/tools on a regular basis.
 - the assessor assessing work for a single assignment/task in a single session for the complete cohort of students.
 - using oral questions with students to ascertain their understanding of the concepts, application, etc within their work.
 - assessors getting to know their students' styles and abilities.
- d) Ensuring access controls are installed to prevent students from accessing and using other people's work when using networked computers.

3.6 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 senior staff. 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 School. Malpractice is a breach of School rules and may invoke the sanctions agreed with the head teacher. 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.

3.7 Appeals Procedures-see separate appeals policy

3.8 Staff Malpractice

The following are examples of malpractice by School 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 School 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
- k) Maladministration: a failure to adhere to the assessment regulations, or malpractice when conducting or handling exams or assessments

Where staff malpractice is suspected, an investigation will take place. The Headteacher, in consultation with the exam officer, is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice. Where malpractice is suspected or an allegation of malpractice has been made, the school will follow guidance as laid out in the JCQ "suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessment".

4 Responsibility

- Responsible for Policy: Exams Officer
- Responsible for implementation: Course Assessors, IVs and HoDs.

4.1 It is the responsibility of teachers to:

- a) Provide assessment processes that are fair and meet the requirements of students and of the qualification;
- b) Provide accurate, timely and informative assessment feedback to inform students of their individual progress and tell them what they need to do to improve.
- c) Record assessment decisions regularly, accurately and systematically.
- g) Familiarise themselves and learners with the School Assessment Appeals procedure(s);

- h) Be aware of and keep up-to-date with Awarding Body guidance in respect of assessment, standardisation, moderation and verification;
- i) Ensure that the quality of assessment is assured by carrying out internal standardisation, moderation or verification as required by the School and Awarding Body.
- j) Record internal standardisation, moderation and verification decisions accurately and systematically,
- k) Provide special arrangements for learners with learning difficulties and or disabilities according to the regulations of the awarding body.

4.2 Internal verifiers are responsible for :

- a) Verifying a sample of assessment decisions
- b) developing the skills of assessors, especially those new to assessment.
- c) maintaining the consistency of assessment decisions by holding standardisation meeting of assessors

4.3 It is the responsibility of the Exams Officer

- a) To facilitate the IV process
- b) To meet the deadlines for registering learners with the awarding body
- c) To ensure that awarding body data is kept up to date with timely withdrawal or transfer of learners
- d) To claim learners' certificates as soon as appropriate
- e) To claim unit certification when a learner has not been able to complete the full programme of study.

5 Access to Policy

- a) Copies of the policy will be available via the school server and website.
- b) Student induction programmes will highlight key aspects of this policy.
- c) Training for assessors will be given as part of staff induction if necessary.