



## Assessment Policy and Procedure

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## **Assessment Procedure**

### **Part A – Introduction and Overview**

LMA provides teaching and training to a wide variety of people over the age of 16. Learners are full-time, taught at a College main site at Duke Street, Liverpool and Hope St, Liverpool.

At the heart of this diverse curriculum offer however lie commitments to excellence in assessment, feedback and reporting for all the College's learners. This document describes those commitments.

Assessment is central to the College's personalisation agenda. This affects learners' entitlement in the following ways:

- Learners are encouraged to play an increasing role in assessment of their own learning by seeking and responding positively to regular on-going oral and written feedback.
- Learners are actively encouraged to participate in peer assessment such as peer to peer observations and proof reading each other's work and in self-assessment, where appropriate.

This Procedure sets out a Learner Entitlement in relation to assessment.

All assignment material and the conduct of assessments will be in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and in accordance with assessment regulations and conditions prescribed by the awarding body and/or the College.

The College will provide each learner with:

- Up to date information describing the entry requirements (where applicable) for each learning programme or subject offered, including any required prior qualifications and / or experience.
- Access to appropriate diagnostic assessment both at the start of their programme and throughout their period of study in order to identify their individual learning support needs.
- A clear explanation of the assessment methods and schedule for their particular programme. Where applicable, an assessment plan will be issued at the commencement of each discretely assessed unit, subject, module or other component of the programme. This assessment plan will include:
  - Schedule of assessment
  - Range of assessment methods to be expected
  - Grading criteria
- Details of their programme syllabus including learning objectives and/or unit assessment outcomes. At the beginning of their course all learners will be fully informed of the criteria necessary for the achievement of the final qualification and for progression.
- Access to the Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)/ Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) processes where appropriate in line with Award Body Guidelines.

- A clear assignment brief for each assignment set, including the objectives or criteria being assessed.
- Written feedback and their assessed work within 10 working days following the due date for submission (except in cases where work has to be retained for external moderation where feedback only will be provided). In the case of extended / project work where cross assessment takes place, return of assessed work may take longer.
- Appropriate preparation and support for any e-assessment, in line with the requirements of the specific Award Body.
- Appropriate Access arrangements for external assessments in line with JCQ guidelines.
- Access to an Appeals process including the opportunity to bring forward and to have considered any extenuating circumstances affecting their performance during assessments.

## **Part B – Processes and Procedures**

### **1. THE ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING (APL) / RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) PROCESS**

- 1.1 Every learner enrolled on a programme is entitled to information on, and, where applicable access to the process of the accreditation of prior learning and guidance in the collection of evidence and portfolio production. This will occur during the induction phase.
- 1.2 Operation of APL/RPL will be in accordance with the guidelines set out by the relevant awarding body.
- 1.3 Performance criteria awarded through the APL process can be accredited only if the evidence:-
  - (i) Clearly demonstrates equivalence to the performance criteria for the unit of the qualification for which APL is being claimed.
  - (ii) Is authentic and gained within a time span where the industrial or commercial practices are still valid. Where appropriate, evidence may be gained from paid or unpaid work, leisure activities, education and training.
- 1.4 Wherever the evidence shows that accreditation cannot be awarded since it does not meet all of the requirements in 1.3 then the assessor or adviser must use his/her judgement to decide whether:-
  - (i) Opportunity can be provided for the candidate to gain and demonstrate missing competences.
  - (ii) The candidate can provide additional evidence or authentication.
  - (iii) The evidence presented does not meet the criteria sufficiently to warrant additional action, in which case the APL process should not be continued.
- 1.5
  - (i) In all cases requiring further action, the candidate must be given a clear written statement of the steps required and the reasons for these and must sign the acknowledgement agreement.
  - (ii) In all instances in which the candidate fails to gain credit, the candidate must be given a clear and sympathetic explanation of the reasons for rejection. In cases where a candidate disagrees with an APL decision, he or she has the right to a second assessment of the APL evidence. This will be arranged by the APL adviser.
- 1.6 All learners must have free access to the relevant performance criteria in order to determine their prior learning against those statements.
- 1.7 Validated APL evidence must be retained by the learner or assessor and must be made available to the internal and external verifier.
- 1.8 All competences awarded through the APL process must be clearly indicated on candidate recording systems for use during internal and external verification.

- 1.9 Collection of evidence towards an APL portfolio is the candidate's responsibility and this should be made clear to candidates by the course delivery staff.
- 1.10 APL evidence must be assessed by an assessor who is competent to validate specific performance criteria and who has been accepted as an assessor by the awarding body.

## **2. PROCEDURES FOR MONITORING AND RECORDING ASSESSMENT DECISIONS**

- 2.1 Each programme team will devise clear criteria for the conditions of progression from year 1 to year 2 programmes and for the award and grading (where appropriate) of the qualification. The criteria will include any requirements for repeating, re-sitting or re-submission. In preparing this information teams must refer to award body or course submission documentation for guidance.

**Any repeat of work must be subject to award body requirements and this must be made clear to learners at the start of the course.**

- 2.2 At the beginning of their course all learners will be fully informed of the criteria necessary for the achievement of the final qualification and for progression.
- 2.3 Programme teams will meet to review progress and achievement to date of each learner. All decisions and recommendations regarding learners' assessment or progression must be clearly documented and retained in the appropriate course portfolio. Including:
  - (i) Detailed record of recommendations.
  - (ii) Summary report including lists of grades/passes with individual referred learner actions and deadlines.
  - (iii) A plan for communicating feedback to learners and/or parents and carers for under-19 learners.
  - (iv) Details of any extenuating circumstances affecting assessment decisions and a record of judgements made/ actions taken.

## **3.0 SUBMISSION OF ASSESSED COURSEWORK**

- 3.1 Learners must be informed that initial assignment marks or grades will be subject to internal moderation/standardisation where appropriate which may lead to a change of mark or grade.
- 3.2 Every assignment which contributes to the final award must have a 'due date' which is made clear to the learner. This 'due date' is the last date for the acceptance of assignment work by the relevant staff member.
- 3.3 If it appears that the learner will not meet the due date it may be possible to agree a new date with the member of staff. Penalties may occur as follows:-
  - (i) In some programmes the award of marks or credits may be at risk if the due date is not met.

(ii) There may be a limitation on the mark or grade which can be obtained. This will normally be a “pass” or equivalent where other grading systems are used. In all cases this limitation must be agreed by the delivery team and communicated to all learners.

3.4 All information relating to revised due dates must be kept by the relevant staff member as these may be required for scrutiny by Assessment Boards, External Verifiers, etc.

3.5 If a request for an extension is turned down, the learner has the right to appeal to the appropriate Head of Department. A further appeal can be made to the Director of TLA and/or Vice Principal at which stage the decision will be final.

#### **4.0 APPEALS ON ASSESSMENT DECISIONS**

4.1 Learners will be made aware of the systems of appeal and how to gain access to the procedures involved. Relevant information may be contained in programme literature provided to learners at the start of a course.

4.2 Learners have the right to appeal if they are not satisfied with the assessment decision, whether this be a final or interim assessment.

#### **PROCEDURES FOR APPEALING AGAINST A MARK OR GRADE OR OTHER FORM OF ASSESSMENT DECISION.**

4.3 An appeal should be made in the first instance to the member of staff responsible for the assessment. It is anticipated that this initial stage will result in a satisfactory settlement. If not, the learner may ask for a second stage of the appeals procedure to be implemented.

4.4 A learner who wishes to appeal against an assessment decision and whose appeal has not been resolved at stage one, must submit an application in writing to the Head of Department within five working days of the notification of grade.

4.5 The Head of Department will convene an appeals panel within ten working days of receiving the application and provide notice of such a hearing to the learner and the lecturer concerned with the grading.

4.6 The appeals panel will comprise:

- Head of Department
- Academic staff members from a different programme but with subject knowledge where possible.
- The member of staff against who’s grading the appeal is being heard and the learner (and a representative if required) may be in attendance.

4.7 The appeals panel must be in possession of all relevant documents and other information.

4.8 The outcome of the appeal may be:

- Confirmation of original decision.

- Notification of new decision, which can be a higher or lower grade/mark or a confirmation of existing result.

4.9 Notification of the outcome of the appeals panel will be provided in writing to the tutor and learner within five working days of the decision

4.10 Heads of Department must inform External Moderators or Verifiers.

4.11 Learners who consider that the appeals procedures have not been carried out properly can submit a formal appeal as described in Enclosure 1.

**4.12 Any appeal on a grade or mark or other assessment decision, internal or external, can result in a lower level of result if the appeals panel agrees that the initial result was too high. This brings the College in line with external Award Bodies who also have the power to impose lower grades or marks than those originally reported.**

4.13 In the case of grades or marks awarded by an external award body, the procedure for appeals is laid down by that body. A learner can receive details of the relevant procedure for his or her course either directly from the College's examinations officers or via their lecturer or tutor.

## 5.0 DEALING WITH MALPRACTICE AND PLAGIARISM

**Malpractice is not tolerated in the College.** Malpractice can be described as those acts, which undermine the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications and/or damage the authority of those responsible for conducting the assessment and certification. In cases of malpractice, the College will:

- (i) Report this as soon as it is discovered, by completing the appropriate documentation any established, suspected or alleged case of malpractice, whether involving a candidate (during external examinations or following the authentication of coursework or following the verification of other assessed qualifications) or malpractice or maladministration by a member of staff.
- (ii) Investigate any instances of suspected malpractice in accordance with the JCQ publication Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments: Policies and Procedures and provide such information and advice as the awarding body may reasonably require.

**Plagiarism is not tolerated by the College.** Plagiarism is the unauthorised use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author presented as your own work. This includes cutting and pasting from web sites and copying another student's' work. If a student wishes to use the work of another author to back up their arguments, this work must be correctly referenced (see Harvard Referencing System).

In the event of an act of plagiarism being identified, the College will:

- (i) Commence disciplinary procedure against the learner under Gross Misconduct, leading to possible removal from programme.

- (ii) The assignment containing the plagiarised work will be marked as a **fail** and will affect the final grade for the qualification.



## **Enclosure 1 – College Formal Appeals Procedure**

### **LMA**

#### **Appeals against Internal Assessments in External Qualifications**

LMA is committed to ensuring that whenever its staff assess the work of candidates for external qualifications this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification for the qualification concerned. Assessments will be conducted by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills. The work of candidates must be produced and will be authenticated according to the requirements of the awarding body. When assessment of a piece of work is divided among several staff, consistency will be maintained by internal moderation and standardisation.

If a learner feels that these procedures have not been carried out in relation to their work, they should first discuss the matter with the relevant Head of Curriculum / tutor who carried out the assessment procedure. If the problem cannot be resolved in this way, the candidate may use the formal appeal procedure described below. Appeals may be made only against the procedures that led to the assessment and not against the mark or grade.

#### **The Appeal Procedure**

1. Appeals should be made in writing to the Principal. The application must be made as soon as the circumstances become known and always before the date of the first written paper of the examination series.
2. The Principal and another senior member of the staff, not directly involved in the assessment in question, will conduct the appeal. If the Principal was directly involved in the assessment in question, or is otherwise unable to investigate, the Principal will appoint another senior manager in their place.
3. The person(s) who conduct the appeal will decide whether the procedures used for the internal assessment conformed to the requirements of the awarding body.
4. The outcome of the appeal will be reported in writing to the student before the last written paper of the examination series. Any changes made to the assessment of the work, any changes made to improve the application of the procedures, and any correspondence with the awarding body will also be reported.
5. The outcome of the appeal will be made known to the Principal. The College will notify the awarding body of any outcome of the appeal that has implications for the conduct of the examination or the issue of results. A written record of the appeal will be kept and must be made available to the awarding body at their request.

## **Notes**

1. After work has been assessed internally it is moderated by the awarding body to ensure consistency between centres. Such moderation may change the marks awarded internally but it is beyond the control of the College.
2. Appeals against the marking of externally-assessed examination components are dealt with after the publication of results according to procedures published by the awarding bodies.
3. More information about the awarding bodies' procedures may be obtained from the College's administration support team.

**The Code of Practice for Assessment can be found on the Regulatory Authority, Ofqual, website:**

*[www.ofqual.gov.uk/for-awarding-organisations/96-articles/247-codes-of-practice-2010](http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/for-awarding-organisations/96-articles/247-codes-of-practice-2010)*