1. Introduction

Assessment is how a student's ability, progress and achievement are measured against agreed criteria. It provides the basis on which decisions can be made about a student's learning needs and whether a student is ready to proceed or to qualify for an award. It also enables students to obtain feedback on their learning and helps them improve their performance. As such it must be an integrated aspect of a programme's learning and teaching strategy.

The purpose of assessment is to enable students to demonstrate that they have fulfilled the intended aims and learning outcomes of the programme of study and achieved the standard required for the award they seek. The College therefore requires that students are assessed in accordance with those aims and learning outcomes. Assessment should be designed in such a way as to promote effective learning and to minimise the potential for plagiarism or other forms of unfair practice.

2. Types of Assessment

Most assessments are likely to fall into one or more of the following categories:

a) Formative assessment
Provides learners with feedback on progress and informs development. Every HE student should have the opportunity to improve their skills through formative assessment. This might take the form of in-class exercises, group presentations, practice reports or draft work. Feedback on formative work should show how improvements can be made to summative work. It is important for students to fully understand the learning objectives and how these are aligned with the assessment criteria and students should be given training on the process. Exemplar work may be used where appropriate to demonstrate the standard and layout of assessments. Peer feedback on first drafts and marking exercises are also beneficial to develop skills.

b) Summative assessment
Provides a measure of a student's achievement in relation to the intended learning outcomes of a programme of study. A range of assessment types should be available on each programme as appropriate. Assessment types may include presentations, reports, examinations, practical exercises, role plays, creative work, live briefs and essays. The assessment approval system ensures that all assessments are internally and externally approved. All Assessment briefs are internally moderated and reviewed by External Examiners (Foundation Degrees and Degrees).

Some Open University modules are assessed via a formal Examination. This is usually held at the student's main campus of study. Examinations staff are available at all SRC campuses. The Examinations Team can be contacted in person, via email staffexams@src.ac.uk or via the Examinations Helpline - 028 3025 9613. Examinations

should be reviewed and approved by an Academic Reviewer and must be taken at an agreed date and time. **See Appendix 1 for further details.**

3. Submission of assessed work

Work submitted for a summative assessment component cannot be amended after submission or re-submitted. Student requests for deferral of assessment will not be approved unless made in accordance with Southern Regional College Extenuating Circumstances Procedures as identified in Section 24.1 in the Regulations for validated programmes and subject to penalties invoked as noted in Section 23.1.4 of the Regulations for validated programmes. The submission deadline time is 12 midnight on the deadline date for electronically submitted work. All written work and other work that can be submitted electronically will be submitted via Turn-it-in, which enables proof of submission.

4. Feedback on Assessment

Southern Regional College carries out all higher education assessments in line with the awarding body requirements and in accordance with the safeguarding standards of the QAA (Quality Assurance Agency) UK Quality Code.

All coursework will be returned within 15 working days of submission or as per guidelines outlined by the awarding body. If, due to extenuating circumstances, a lecturer is unable to return coursework within the specified time, the students will be given an explanation and a new date set. Lecturers will ensure that appropriate written feedback is provided to students on assessed work in a way that promotes learning and facilitates improvement.

Formative assessment is a fundamental part of teaching and learning. It is the information and feedback provided during a period of instruction, while learning is taking place. It may be part of the formal assessment process but is also used informally to check student learning and thereby effectiveness of the delivery. It affects what the student and the lecturer do next and should improve both teaching and learning. It does not contribute directly to the final mark given for the module; instead, it contributes to student learning through providing feedback. Some methods include informal observation of students during a lesson, questioning, class activities and student feedback.

Summative assessment demonstrates the extent of a student's success in meeting the assessment criteria used to gauge the intended learning outcomes of a module or programme, and which contributes to the final mark given for the module. Summative assessment is used to quantify achievement and to reward achievement. For all these reasons the validity and reliability of summative assessment are of the greatest importance.

At the end of the year, a provisional percentage mark will be calculated for each module based on your performance in coursework and exams. Students are made aware that all grades are subject to approval by the Board of Examiners and ratification by Open University as appropriate.

If you do not understand the grade you have received for an assessment you should make an appointment to see your Personal Tutor/Course co-ordinator/Director to discuss the grade and feedback provided. Feedback should:

- Align to learning outcomes.
- Be suitable to level and encourage a scholarly approach.
- Identify academic skills and transferable skills in addition to specific learning outcomes.
- Identify strengths to build on.
- Identify areas to consider.
- Clearly express professional judgements.

5. Referencing

Refer to the SRC Open University Course Handbook.

6. Academic/Assessment Malpractice

Southern Regional College is committed to the provision of high-quality education and training. All offences in connection with examinations and other forms of assessment e.g. Plagiarism, Collusion, Cheating, use of AI and Ghosting will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter. All cases are reported to the college Academic Misconduct and Appeals Committee who serve as a critical body in ensuring academic integrity and fairness within Southern Regional College's Higher Education provision. This committee provides robust oversight of academic misconduct cases and manages student appeals, ensuring that all cases are handled consistently, fairly and in accordance with institutional policies and awarding body requirements. This committee reports to the Quality and Standards Committee.

The Assessment Malpractice Policy and Procedure is set out here: SRC.

The College will ensure that each case of academic misconduct will be determined on its own facts and merits.

If a student is suspected of academic misconduct:

The concern will be raised with the Course Co-ordinator /Director by the Assessor who will decide whether a further investigation is warranted; in terms of plagiarism, collusion, cheating in examinations and assessments and ghosting, within 7 working days.

The student will then be invited to attend an Academic Misconduct Panel at the College, within 7 working days upon receipt of the investigation report by the Course Co-ordinator/Director.

At least two members of staff will be present at the panel, normally the Assistant Director for Higher Education and Quality (ADHEQ), the Head of Quality and Pedagogy (HoQP) or the Head of Faculty/CAM.

Students may be accompanied by a fellow student or family member to provide support.

Students may also request the presence of the Course Coordinator or Personal Tutor.

If the style suggests the assessment is ghost written or purchased the student may be questioned to ascertain that the work is their own and other assessments will be checked.

Academic Misconduct Panels will be held three times each year prior to the meeting of the Board of Examiners.

This meeting will decide whether:

a) There is insufficient evidence to justify the finding of academic misconduct. If so, no further action will be taken under these procedures.

OR

b) The matter should be considered poor scholarship rather than academic misconduct. No further action will take place under these procedures, although the poor scholarship will be considered through the normal marking process. The finding will be noted on the student record and may be considered in the context of any future allegations that the student has committed academic misconduct.

OR

c) That academic misconduct has indeed taken place and a penalty determined.

Following the meeting (within 2 working days) the student will be informed in writing of the decision and the penalty incurred.

HE Academic Misconduct Penalties (based on AMBeR Tariff) See Appendix 2 for details.

a) Academic Misconduct Appeals

The decision of the Academic Misconduct Panel may be subject to appeal on the following grounds:

- There were procedure irregularities on the part of the Academic Misconduct Panel.
- There were mitigating circumstances which affected the student's ability to determine right from wrong, and which, for good reason, were not disclosed at the time of the Academic Misconduct Panel.

An appeal must be submitted, in writing, to the Head of Quality within 5 working days of notification of the decision of the Academic Misconduct Panel. Any information regarding Academic Misconduct offences by learners who have completed one course of study will be held on the learner's file until the end of that course and may be supplied as part of a reference to inform the admission decision for another course at this college. The student will be notified of the decision within 2 working days.

7. Results and grades

Refer to OU Regulations.

8. Internal Moderation

Internal moderation of assessments enables marked work and feedback to be critically appraised to ensure that the marking criteria have been correctly applied and that feedback to students is constructive.

Responsibilities of the Internal Moderator are:

- To ensure that assessments carried out are accurately assessed.
- To ensure that feedback to students supports their learning and development.
- Sample size will be all fails in addition to 30% or 6 whichever is the greater to include a sample of lower, middle and higher marks. This will be internally moderated. The sample will be selected from a variety of marks and students. Feedback will be provided to the lecturer within 10 working days. If Internal Moderation identifies a need for second marking this will be completed within 10 working days upon receipt of moderation reports.

9. Second marking

In the event of the internal moderation process identifying that marks are inconsistent or have been awarded incorrectly against the marking scheme, the College will implement second marking of all scripts.

Second marking will be used as a supporting mechanism for all newly appointed inexperienced teaching staff.

For more information, refer to the Open University Handbook for Validated Awards and the SRC OU Regulations for Validated Awards.

10. External Moderation

The External Examiner will check that all assessment materials are fit for purpose, prior to the commencement of the programme. The internally moderated sample will be made available to the External Examiner. However, scripts from the full cohort will be available if required, should the External Examiner wish to review. The External Examiner will also attend the Board of Examiners meeting.

11. Extenuating Circumstances

Refer to the **College Extenuating Circumstances Procedures** document here to obtain guidelines for students who are unable to attend, submit coursework or sit examinations. Extenuating Circumstances Form (EC1) here

12. Assessment Appeals

The student has the right of appeal as provided for in the Assessment Appeals Policy.

If there is no satisfactory outcome or agreed action the student is entitled to submit a formal complaint following the guidance which may be found in the College's Complaints and Compliments Policy.

Appendix 1

Open University Examinations Student Guide

Some Open University modules are assessed via a formal Examination. Each Campus at SRC has Examinations staff who are available if you have any queries before your examination or if you encounter any problems in preparation of or during your examination.

Examinations team can be contacted via email staffexams@src.ac.uk.

Examinations team helpline: 028 3025 9613.

1. Examinations Information

1.1 Examinations are held at your campus of study and are usually held during January and/or summer series.

1.2 Examination dates/times and Exam rooms will be published on Examinations timetable section of website Exam Timetables | Southern Regional College and shared by Course teams on VLE.

1.3 Examinations Invigilators will be in each examination room and candidates are required to adhere to all regulations and instructions issued by the Examination Invigilation team. For more details see Section 3 below.

2. Prior to Examinations

2.1 Students with learning difficulties or disability, should contact the Learning Support Team on campus who will liaise with examinations to advise access arrangements. Students should contact Learning Support when accepted onto the programme of study and at least 8 weeks prior to any examination dates. The Head of Learning Support is based at Newry Campus.

Contact the email address: learningsupport@src.ac.uk

Examinations will contact the Learning Support Co-ordinator on campus to ensure any approved access arrangement is put in place in advance of examination sittings.

2.2 If students have a temporary illness or injury prior to an exam, the Examinations office should be contacted on campus or email: staffexams@src.ac.uk. Examinations will endeavour to accommodate the additional support required.

3. During Examinations

3.1 Students are expected to adhere to the Invigilators regulations when they enter the Examination room:

- Information For Exam Day can be found here: Preparing to sit your exams 26-27; Understanding and avoiding malpractice – Joint Council for Qualifications

3.2 Students should have their college lanyard or other photographic ID for verification.

3.3 Mobile phones and smart watches are strictly prohibited within Examinations rooms.

3.4 If a student encounters any difficulties during an examination, they should seek assistance from Invigilators.

3.5 All Examinations materials must be submitted to Invigilators at the end of the Examination.

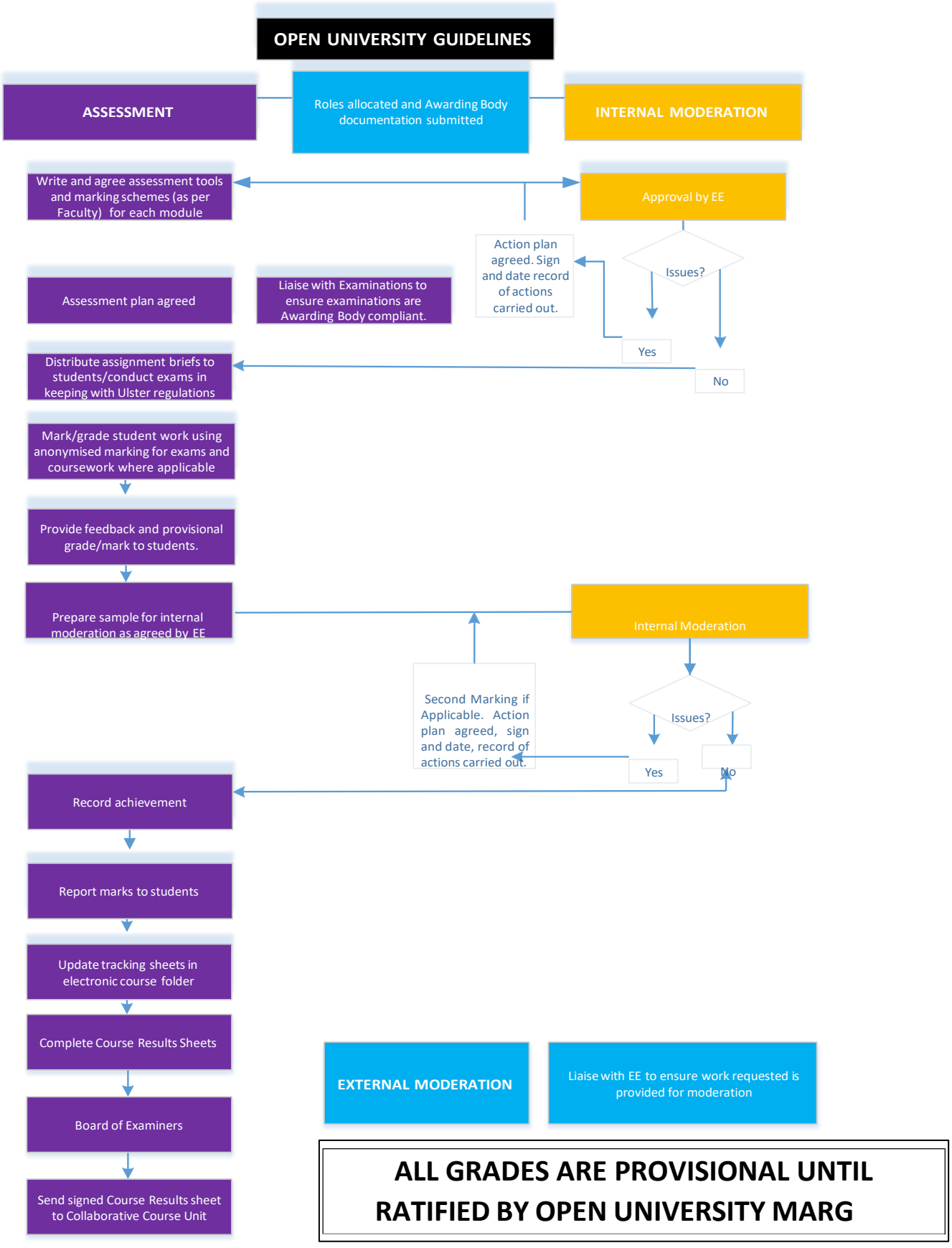
3.6 All concerns should be made to the examinations team on campus or by email: staffexams@src.ac.uk Alternatively, students can call the Examinations Helpline: 028 3025 9613

4. Special Considerations

4.1 Special consideration may be applied after an examination whether a student's ability to prepare or their performance may have been affected by a circumstance beyond their control, for example:

- temporary illness or accident/injury at the time of the assessment
- bereavement at the time of the assessment
- domestic crisis arising at the time of the assessment
- serious disturbance during an examination
- accidental events at the time of the assessment such as being given the wrong examination paper

Contact Examinations as soon as possible for advice on next steps and liaise with the Course Co-ordinator/Director where necessary.


OPEN UNIVERSITY GUIDELINES
ASSESSMENT
Roles allocated and Awarding Body documentation submitted
INTERNAL MODERATION
Write and agree assessment tools and marking schemes (as per Faculty) for each module
Approval by EE
Action plan agreed. Sign and date record of actions carried out.
Issues?
Yes
No
Assessment plan agreed
Liaise with Examinations to ensure examinations are Awarding Body compliant.
Distribute assignment briefs to students/conduct exams in keeping with Ulster regulations
Mark/grade student work using anonymised marking for exams and coursework where applicable
Provide feedback and provisional grade/mark to students.
Prepare sample for internal moderation as agreed by EE
Internal Moderation
Second Marking if Applicable. Action plan agreed, sign and date, record of actions carried out.
Issues?
Yes
No
Record achievement
Report marks to students
Update tracking sheets in electronic course folder
Complete Course Results Sheets
Board of Examiners
Send signed Course Results sheet to Collaborative Course Unit
EXTERNAL MODERATION
Liaise with EE to ensure work requested is provided for moderation
ALL GRADES ARE PROVISIONAL UNTIL RATIFIED BY OPEN UNIVERSITY MARG
Retain student work until 6 months after the relevant Board of Examiners.
Manual student files should be retained 6 years after leaving.
Course results sheets should be retained indefinitely.

Appendix 2 (AMBeR Tariff)

Points are assigned based on the following criteria:

1st offence	100 points
2nd offence	150 points
3rd offence +	200 points

Amount/Extent

Below 5% AND less than two sentences	80 points
As above but with critical aspects or key ideas plagiarised	105 points
Between 5% and 20% OR more than two sentences but not more than two paragraphs	105 points
Between 20% and 50% OR more than two paragraphs but not more than 5 paragraphs	130 points
Above 50% OR more than five paragraphs	160 points
Submission purchased from essay mill or ghost-writing service	225 points

Level

Level 4	70 points
Level 5	115 points
Level 6/7	140 points

Value of assessment

Standard weighting (20 credits)	30 points
Large Project (e.g. final year dissertation)	60 points

Additional characteristics

Evidence of deliberate attempt to disguise plagiarism by changing words, sentences or references to avoid detection	40 points

Penalties are awarded based on points as below

Penalties (Summative Work)

In all cases a formal warning is given and a record made according to the appropriate level of the Student Disciplinary Policy, considering the student's previous history. Where the penalty is

expulsion, a Formal Hearing will take place and the final decision made by the Disciplinary Panel in line with the AMBeR Tariff.

Points	Penalties (select one)
280 – 329	• No further action beyond formal warning • Assessment awarded 0% - re-assessment required, with no penalty on mark
330 - 379	• Assessment awarded 0% - re-assessment required, with no penalty on mark • Assessment awarded 0% - re-assessment required but mark capped at 40% / Pass
380 – 479	• Assessment awarded 0% - re-assessment required but mark capped at 40% / Pass • Assessment awarded 0% - no opportunity for re-assessment
480 – 524	• Assessment awarded 0% - no opportunity for re-assessment • Module awarded 0% - re-assessment required, but mark capped at 40% / Pass • Module awarded 0% - no opportunity for re-assessment, but credit still awarded
525 – 559	• Module awarded 0% - re-assessment required, but mark capped at 40% / Pass • Module awarded 0% - no opportunity for re-assessment, but credit still awarded • Expelled from College but credits retained • Expelled from College with credits withdrawn
560+	• Expelled from College but credits retained • Expelled from College with credits withdrawn

Penalties (Formative Work)

280 – 379	Informal warning
380+	Formal warning, with record made contributing to the student's previous history

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION

YOUR ASSIGNMENT IS SUBMITTED INLINE WITH SUBMISSION DATES AND THROUGH THE APPROPRIATE ONLINE METHOD AS OUTLINED BY YOUR TUTOR. AN EC1 FORM NEEDS TO BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO SUBMISSION DATE IF YOUR PERFORMANCE HAS BEEN AFFECTED BY YOUR EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES.

Marking

The tutor delivering this module will mark your work and you will receive an interim grade within 15 working days. it is important to note that this grade may change after a number of Quality Assurance Processes.



INTERNAL MODERATION

A Sample of marked work is then the graded by a different tutor within the college to ensure that it is marked accurately inline with the assessment criteria..

EXTERNAL EXAMINER

A subject specialist is appointed who will review samples of the work to ensure they are graded inline with academic requirements of the course and the profession.



BOARD OF EXAMINERS

Your Grades can then be confirmed by the Board of Examiners. Official results will then be released.

ALL GRADES ARE PROVISIONAL UNTIL RATIFIED BY OPEN UNIVERSITY MARG

APPEALS

If you need to appeal against an assessment decision please refer to the assessment appeals policy .

