

External Assessment Policy

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Introduction

Purpose

To provide guidance on the management of external assessment of qualifications to meet the requirements of the awarding body. External assessment is a form of independent assessment where assessment tasks are set, marked or assessed by the Awarding Organisation. The Outdoors School seeks to ensure that its assessments are clear and transparent, accurately measure the purpose of the qualification/end-point assessment and show no bias towards any particular group.

Policy Statement

The Outdoors School will comply with the quality criteria and procedures specified by awarding bodies for the management of external assessment.

Roles & Responsibilities

1. The Deputy Headteacher is responsible for the management of this policy.
2. The Phase 3 Lead is responsible for the management of awarding body procedures for external examinations.
3. The Admin Team is responsible for the operation and implementation of awarding body procedures for external examinations.
4. The Admin Team is responsible for communicating awarding body information, timetables and entry deadlines to Phase 3 Lead and learners.
5. The Phase 3 Lead is responsible for ensuring that learners are informed of timetables and entry deadlines.
6. The Phase 3 Lead, through action or delegation, is responsible for ensuring that the course delivery schedule is informed by the external assessment timetable.
7. The Phase 3 Lead, through action or delegation, is responsible for providing the Admin Team with accurate entry details and, where applicable, estimates to meet awarding body deadlines.

Procedure

1. The Phase 3 Lead will liaise with the Admin Team to coordinate the issue and completion of documentation for candidate entry to meet the awarding body timescales.
2. The Phase 3 Lead, through action or delegation, will ensure that all candidates are enrolled to undertake the appropriate examination or external element of the course.
3. Where appropriate, assessors will organise and conduct a preliminary examination following awarding body 'prelim' requirements to provide evidence for any appeal that may be made.

4. Where appropriate, verifiers will submit to the Admin Team, within the awarding body deadlines, an estimate of the grade which individual candidates are expected to achieve in the external assessment/examination.
5. The Admin Team will forward accurate entries and, where applicable, estimates to meet the awarding body deadlines.
6. The Admin Team will make arrangements for invigilation, appropriate accommodation and the secure storage of examination papers and materials.
7. The Admin Team will package completed scripts and related documentation and forward these to the awarding body.
8. The Admin Team will liaise with The Phase 3 Lead, and The Head of Teaching & Learning to process any appeals.
9. The Admin Team will make assessment arrangements for learners with particular needs.

Invigilation

Invigilators are responsible for upholding the integrity of the external assessment by ensuring the procedures outlined in this document are followed.

There must be at least one invigilator for every:

- 30 learners (paper-based assessments)
- 15 learners (onscreen assessments)
- 8 learners (onscreen assessments where learner is supplying the device)

If only one invigilator is used, they must be able to call for assistance without disturbing learners or leaving them unattended.

Learners granted a reasonable adjustment to use a reader or writer must be allocated a separate room to other learners completing the assessment at the same time.

Invigilators must not include:

- anyone related to a learner completing the assessment
- anyone responsible for supporting a learner with reasonable adjustments during the assessment
- We will ensure that tutors involved in preparing the learners for assessment are not used as invigilators.

Storage Of Paper-Based Assessment Materials

The exams officer must ensure that the confidentiality of assessment materials is maintained by ensuring:

- they are stored securely until destroyed.
- they are not used for practice or mock assessments.
- their content is not used or reviewed by centre staff for any purpose.

Before The Assessment

The exams officer must not download assessment materials unless they are prepared to print them. Once assessment materials have been printed, electronic copies must be permanently deleted (i.e., removed from the recycle bin or equivalent).

The confidentiality of the assessment materials must be maintained during transportation. If posting to another location, the exams officer must ensure assessment materials are sent in tamper-proof packaging and that the delivery can be fully tracked

External assessment materials must not be posted outside the UK without our prior written consent.

Following the assessment

The exams officer is responsible for ensuring that:

- all question papers have been accounted for and securely destroyed
- all learners answer sheets are sent to the awarding body for marking as soon as possible following the assessment, along with the attendance list and any additional documentation (e.g. malpractice reports or details of disruption to the assessment)
- the seating plan is retained for 12 months following certification

Face To Face Assessments

The role of the invigilator

The exams officer should ensure that the invigilator is provided with access to the assessment materials on the day of the assessment.

The invigilator must not review the content of the assessment materials or learners' responses.

Before the assessment begins

Invigilators must ensure:

- the room has been set up correctly with a sign outside indicating an assessment is in progress and a clock clearly visible showing the correct time
- that any learning materials or displays that could assist learners in the assessment have been covered or removed
- the seating plan is appropriate
- they're aware of any reasonable assessment adjustments (e.g. extra time).
- they're aware of any learners using their own device for onscreen assessments
- any personal items not required for the assessment (including switched off mobile phones, watches and other smart devices) are out of reach of learners

Once learners are seated

Invigilators must:

- inform learners they are now subject to the rules of the assessment

- remind learners they must not attempt to communicate with any other learners until they leave the assessment room
- check that learners have all the necessary materials
- ensure learners are clear on how to complete their answer sheets and what to do if they make an error
- remind learners to sign their theory paper answer sheets (we will not be able to mark the assessment if this isn't completed).
- provide learners with their personalised assessment paper and answer sheet (paper-based assessments) or personal login details (on-screen assessments)
- remind learners completing onscreen assessments that they must not navigate away from the assessment window or open other tabs or applications during the assessment.
- check that learners have the correct assessment materials.
- announce clearly when learners can begin and specify the time allowed.
- write start and finish times so that they are clearly visible to all learners.
- check and complete the learner register.

Failure to comply with these assessment rules may invalidate learners' results.

During the assessment

Invigilators must:

- supervise learners throughout the whole assessment
- remain alert, observing learners throughout the assessment
- not undertake any other activities whilst invigilating
- alert learners when they have between 5 and 10 minutes remaining

For on-screen external assessments, the invigilator must also:

- ensure learners only have one web browser tab/window open
- ensure learners do not navigate away from the assessment
- intermittently check what is on each learner's screen

Learners arriving late to the assessment

Learner arriving late may be allowed to sit the assessment, at the invigilator/centre's discretion, providing:

- they arrive within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time
- it doesn't compromise the invigilation of other learners

If a late arriving learner sits the assessment, the invigilators will need to ensure the details and circumstances are recorded for External Quality Assurance.

Learners finishing the assessment early

Learners can be allowed to leave the assessment room from 30 minutes after the scheduled start time, provided:

- this doesn't interfere with other learners' assessments
- all assessment materials and notes are passed to an invigilator
- the invigilator confirms that the answer sheet has been signed by the learner before the learner leaves

Once a learner has left the assessment room, they cannot re-enter.

Misconduct

Invigilators must take steps to stop any inappropriate behaviour. If the incident is serious, an invigilator must collect the learner's assessment materials and instruct them to leave.

Invigilators must immediately report any misconduct to the Phase 3 Lead detailing:

- the time and nature of the incident
- the persons involved and witness statements
- considerations allowed for other learners affected

The invigilator will need to provide a written report to the Phase 3 Lead as soon as reasonably possible after the incident.

Disruptions to external assessment

If an external assessment is interrupted by circumstances beyond learners' control (e.g., fire alarm), the invigilators must ensure:

- the assessment room is evacuated safely
- all assessment materials are left on learners' desks
- assessment conditions are maintained wherever possible

Providing learners are closely supervised and assessment conditions are maintained, learners can be allowed to resume the assessment and given the full time once the disruption is resolved.

Ending the assessment

At the end of the assessment time, invigilators must:

- tell learners to stop
- collect all assessment materials and notes
- confirm that learners have signed their answer sheets before they leave the assessment room
- place the answer sheets in the order on the schedule register
- sign each answer sheet to confirm authenticity
- ensure all assessment materials and paperwork is securely passed to the exams officer

External Assessment Appeals

The Outdoors School on behalf of the learner may make appeals against external assessment decisions. The Admin Team and The Phase 3 Lead will gather and submit within awarding body deadlines the evidence required to support the claim.

Team Roles and Responsibilities

The Outdoors School is responsible for identifying staff members to hold the roles of Assessor, Internal Verifier and Lead Internal Verifier.

The Quality Nominee

The Quality Nominee is Robyn Vincent (Headteacher)

The Role of Quality Nominee

The role of a Quality Nominee is to act as Pearson's single point of contact for all Quality Assurance matters. This is a mandatory role that is required under the Terms and Conditions of being a Pearson Approved Centre for BTEC Vocational, Functional Skills and Work-Based Learning provision.

Responsibility of the Quality Nominee

A key responsibility of the Quality Nominee is to monitor and audit the internal quality assurance processes which are conducted for Speaking, Listening and Communication assessment. This includes:

- ensuring the Lead Internal Verifier has completed the Online Standardisation for Centre Assessors (OSCA) Activity
- ensuring teams meet regularly for ongoing standardisation activity.
- auditing internal verification activity
- auditing live assessment recordings and Assessor decisions
- ensuring Standards Verification is conducted in a timely manner.

The Lead Internal Verifier

The Lead Internal Verifier is Craig Vincent (Head of Teaching and Learning)

The role of the Lead Internal Verifier

The Lead Internal Verifier ensures that assessments across the centre consistently meet national standards.

Responsibility of the Lead Internal Verifier

The Lead Internal Verifier is responsible for:

- registration and completion of the OSCA Activity
- ensuring all Assessors and Internal Verifiers complete the OSCA Activity
- supporting the work of Assessors within the centre to monitor and ensure consistency in the interpretation and application of standards
- ensuring all Assessors and Internal Verifiers have access to a copy of assessment requirements as specified in the Assessment Record Sheets
- sampling assessment decisions made by all Assessors across all sites
- maintaining up-to-date records of internal verification and sampling activity and ensuring that these are available for standards verification
- managing the Standards Verification activity

Speaking and Listening Standardisation for Lead Internal Verifiers

The Lead Internal Verifiers will keep Speaking and Listening Assessment to standard and their assessment teams.

Lead Internal Verifiers must keep an accurate record of the standardisation process which can be reviewed by the Standards Verifier as a check that the training is being carried out.

The Lead Internal Verifiers will train the assessment team, the standardisation will then be effective with records kept for standards verification purposes. A clear record of these standardisation activities will be retained by the school and shared with the Standards Verifier on request to evidence that these activities have taken place.

The school evidence will contain the following:

- the date the Lead Internal Verifier accessed exemplar materials
- the date of the internal standardisation training
- the ARAS completed by each assessor
- the names of individual Internal Verifiers and Assessors who attended internal standardisation training
- records of any discussion points or clarifications required