

Assignment Assessment Policy

Last reviewed	May 2019
Next review due	May 2021
Responsible division	Programmes
Responsible director	Executive Director, School Leadership Programmes
Applies to	Internal staff and external contractors assessing on any Ambition programmes Scope includes all offline summative assessment undertaken by Ambition, whether for the purposes of admitting participants onto our programmes or awarding formal qualifications
Exceptions	This policy does not cover live assessments (e.g. interviews) The Masters in Expert Teaching delivered in partnership with Plymouth Marjon University comes under the Plymouth Marjon assessment policies
Audience	Internal staff, contractors, delivery partners, funders and regulatory and quality assurance bodies overseeing the award of qualifications by Ambition
Applicable laws	N/A
Other relevant regulations	DfE NPQ Quality Framework DfE NPQ Content and Assessment Framework Contractual terms with funders (for programme selection)

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1. Objectives

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all offline summative assessment within Ambition is a reliable indicator that the intended standard has been met. We seek to achieve this by laying out a robust process that will lead to fair and consistent marking practices.

2. Background and Legal/Regulatory Framework

The consistency of our summative assessment practices is essential both to ensure that selection processes onto our programmes are meaningful and fair, and to guarantee the integrity of formal qualifications awarded by Ambition. In the case of selection processes for DfE funded programmes, a robust assessment process is a requirement in our contractual terms. In the case of formal qualifications awarded by Ambition, a robust assessment process is an essential element of our Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and is a regulatory requirement of external regulatory and quality assurance bodies overseeing the awarding of those qualifications.

3. Core Principles

- A. This process is designed around the principle of **specialism** - that assessors should specialise in what they are assessing in order to build expertise and thus to support continued improvements to assessment accuracy and to the quality of the supporting evidence and candidate feedback. To achieve this aim, Ambition Assessment Teams will be created for each distinct qualification and level (in the case of NPQs, for each NPQ level), and will be comprised of the following members:

Member	Detail
Programme Leader	The individual who is responsible for the overall leadership of those programmes which offer the qualification/level in question (e.g. NPQ level)
Design Lead	The individual who leads the curriculum/content design for those programmes which offer the qualification/level in question (e.g. NPQ level)
Lead Assessor	This is an experienced and 'strong' Assessor who will quality assure outcomes for the qualification/ level in question and work with Assessors to support and ensure accuracy and quality of outcomes
Assessors (max 5 where possible)	These are experienced and 'strong' educators who have the relevant experience and expertise to assess at the specified level

- B. This process is designed to support **ongoing improvement**; it is therefore designed to be **cyclical** and repeated for each assessment window, allowing learning from previous cycles to be acted on and best practice embedded into future cycles. We will make reasonable efforts to achieve continuity in assessors from cycle to cycle, and where this is not possible we will aim at a minimum to include assessors from previous cycles in the standardisation step below.

4. Process

Step 1: standardisation

Prior to each assessment window beginning:

- > Assessment Teams meet (either in person or virtually) to:
 - Build understanding of the requirements of their specialist qualification/level;
 - Align on what different scores look like for each element being assessed (e.g. in the case of NPQs, what a 0-1-2 looks like for each competency);
 - Build understanding of best practice in the provision of supporting evidence and candidate feedback.
- > Assessment Team members assess one assignment receiving detailed feedback on the accuracy of their assessment and the quality of their supporting evidence and candidate feedback. This will be provided by the Lead Assessor for their Assessment Team.
- > Outcomes from the individual work will be analysed and used to inform planning for Steps 2 and 3, as well as for Step 1 in the next cycle.
- > Outcomes from the standardisation meeting will be used by the Programme Leader and Design Lead to ensure the curriculum and content reflects agreed understanding of requirements.

Step 2: assessment

- > Each Assessor will be assigned a set number of assignments to assess.
- > Where practical we aspire to anonymise assignments.
- > We will ensure all assessors are familiar with our Plagiarism Policy and aware of how to identify and raise concerns about potential plagiarism in accordance with that policy.
- > These assignments will be allocated by programme and/or delivery partner to ensure that:
 - The feedback candidates from any one 'group' receive is consistent in style etc.;
 - We are able to identify trends relating to any participant programme/ delivery partner quickly and efficiently.
- > During the assessment window Assessors will be able (and encouraged) to contact their Lead Assessor and/or the Programme Leader with any queries to ensure that we are able to discuss and agree outcomes in an on-going and 'live' manner and in a way which supports the on-going development of the Assessor.
- > Feedback from Assessors and the Lead Assessor/ Programme Leader on queries will be used to inform planning for Step 1 for the next cycle.

Step 3: quality assurance

Following the window for assessment marking:

- > A sample of marked assignments will be identified by Ambition's Faculty Planning and Assessment team to be re-marked by the Lead Assessor to ensure accuracy of marking and as a quality assurance step (with a focus on the quality of supporting evidence and candidate feedback, and on administrative accuracy). This sample will include:
 - At least one assignment/Assessor;
 - All 'Borderline' Pass/Fail (in the case of NPQs, 1-2 marks above/below bar);
 - All with '0' scores;
 - Top and bottom 5%; and

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- Any assessor whose overall outcomes are significantly above/below the average Pass rate for the group.
 - > Once complete, the Lead Assessor will discuss any discrepancies with the original Assessor to align on final score(s) and/or outcome(s).
 - > The Lead Assessor and Ambition's Faculty Planning and Assessment team will then identify any additional assignments for re-mark and/or review, including:
 - At least two more per Assessor if inaccuracies in their assessment has been identified as inaccurate by the Lead Assessor (this can be focused on specific elements for which we are assessing and not always a full re-mark);
 - All by any Assessor if the Lead Assessor has identified gaps in administrative requirements (these may be returned to the Assessor themselves for revision).

Step 4: external moderation

In the case of formal qualifications, the Accreditation team will submit assessment outcomes and samples of assignments to external regulatory and quality assurance bodies as required under the stipulations relating to the qualification in question.

Step 5: wash-up and feedback

Once external moderation is complete (if applicable) and outcomes confirmed:

- > The Participant Support team will conduct final checks on the appropriateness of feedback before sending out results to the participant (or school where required).
- > The Lead Assessor and Ambition's Faculty Planning and Assessment team will meet to discuss:
 - The accuracy/quality of each individual Assessor in order to identify appropriate feedback and development areas; this feedback and any related required actions will be shared with the Assessor by Ambition's Faculty Planning and Assessment team, who will also be responsible ultimately for barring individual assessors where necessary due to continued errors, poor marking standards or misconduct.
 - The accuracy/quality of the group as a whole and any areas for development which need addressing; this will inform the focus of Step 1 in the next cycle.
- > The Programme Leader and the Design Lead will meet to discuss any trends/themes in outcomes and to identify any next steps/actions relating to curriculum/content design, delivery partners and/or to participant communications.

5. Links to Other Policies

Other policies referenced here include:

- > Malpractice and Maladministration Policy
- > Plagiarism Policy