

# Quality Assurance Manual

Assessment





## Foreword

The 2019 revision of the Dorset College Quality Assurance Handbook (QAH) is in line with the Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for use by all Providers[1] and the Sector Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for Independent/Private Providers coming to QQI on a Voluntary basis[2], as well as the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, May 2015[3]. This revision also takes into consideration the evolving scope of Dorset College encompassing policies and procedures applicable to higher, further and English language education. The revision is within the context of overall governance and management structures in place to support the delivery of such programmes and specifically encompassing policies and procedures applicable to our current suite of programmes (Level 5 to Level 8) and in the future up to level 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

This edition of the QAH was informed by consultation with key stakeholders of the College including but not limited to learners, staff and faculty and wider engagement with the further and higher educational community as well as external stakeholders for approval by Dorset College Academic Quality Committee upon review by an independent QQI panel.

[1] QQI's Core Statutory QA Guidelines

<https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Core%20Statutory%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines.pdf>

[2] QQI's Sector Specific QA Guidelines

<https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Sector%20Specific%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines%20V2.pdf>

[3] European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)

[https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG\\_2015.pdf](https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf)



# 6. Assessment



## **Content**

### **6. ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1 Award Classification
- 6.2 Progression Eligibility
- 6.3 External Examining
- 6.4 Notification of Assessment to Learners
- 6.5 Formative Assessment
- 6.6 Examinations
- 6.7 Producing Assessments
- 6.8 Recording of Assessment Marks
- 6.9 Board of Examiners
- 6.10 Appeals, Re-checks and Reviews
- 6.11 Work Placement
- 6.12 Plagiarism
- 6.13 Review of Assessment Policies and Procedures



## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance and structure on the assessments conducted by the Dorset College as part of its Further Education and Higher Education programmes.

The adoption of this policy will help ensure that the Assessments in Dorset College are:

- Fair and transparent for learners.
- Inclusive of feedback to ensure that the learner can learn from the assessment process.
- Devised in a coherent and cohesive manner across a programme.
- Conducted with academic honesty and integrity.

---

## Scope

This policy applies to all assessments as part of the Further Education and Higher Education programmes at Dorset College.

---

## Policy Statement

Dorset College recognises the importance of assessments as the key instrument in assessing whether the MIMLOs and MIPLOs have been met. It also acknowledges that the manner in which knowledge, skills or competencies are assessed has changed, as more diverse assessment instruments are becoming increasingly common – for example, work-based assessment. Furthermore, the College is cognisant that a ‘one-size fits all’ approach to assessments may not be appropriate as it neglects to take into account intricacies of an individual programme.



## Policy Statement

Therefore, the assessments at Dorset College will have both an overarching structure that will guide the devising and implementing of its assessments, as well as allowing for programme or module specific traits to be incorporated in the assessment strategy.

# 6.1

## Award Classification

Dorset College shall adopt a percentage grading scheme rather than an alphabetic grading system. In practice this will mean that learners will receive module results as a percentage, where the maximum mark attainable is 100. Also, the learner will receive a programme result based on a credit-weighted mean value of the results from their award stage modules.


Furthermore, Dorset College will adopt the following award classification:

### Classifications of Honours Bachelor's degrees (Level 8) and Higher Diplomas (Level 8)

- \_ First-class honours:  $\geq 70\%$
- \_ Second-class honours Grade 1: 60-69%
- \_ Second-class honours Grade 2: 50-59%
- \_ Pass: 40-49%
- \_ Fail:  $< 40\%$

### Classifications of Higher Certificate (Level 6) and Ordinary Bachelor's Degrees (Level 7)

- \_ Distinction:  $\geq 70\%$
- \_ Merit Grade 1: 60-69%



## Award Classification

\_ Merit Grade 2: 50-59%


\_ Pass: 40-49%

\_ Fail: <40%

**Special Purpose awards** that have a volume of at least 60 ECTS credits will be classified in accordance with the convention for a major award that its level. Special Purpose Awards that have a volume of less than 60 ECTS credits shall be unclassified i.e. Pass/Fail.

**Minor Awards and Supplemental Awards** shall be unclassified.





## Award Classification

### Further Education awards

- \_ Distinction: 80%+
- \_ Merit: 65-79%
- \_ Pass: 50-64%
- \_ Fail: <50%

# 6.2

## Progression Eligibility

Ordinarily, a learner must demonstrate achievement of all MIMLOs of modules equivalent to 60 ECTS credits, including all mandatory modules if applicable, to be eligible to progress onto the next stage of a multi-year programme. However, there are 3 recognised exceptions to this:

1. Pass by compensation.
2. Exemption from part of the programme.
3. Progress carrying the failed modules to be passed during the subsequent stage (trailing a failed module).

### Pass by Compensation

A pass by compensation allows a learner to progress to the next stage of a programme despite having not attained the 40% pass threshold in some modules. This means the learner can progress without the need to repeat such modules. This is also applicable at award stage and is credit bearing.

The following criteria must be met and followed for a learner to be eligible for pass by compensation:

- Grade must be greater than or equal to 35% but less than 40%.

## Progression Eligibility

— The results for all modules in the stage are from first attempts.

— The overall stage-aggregate of credit-weighted excesses of percentage marks (over 40) is greater than or equal to twice the stage-aggregate of credit-weighted deficits of marks (under 40).

— The potentially compensatable results account for no more than one-third of the credit for the stage: i.e. 20 credits in a 60-credit stage.

— No module can be failed outright (i.e. less than 35%).

— At award stage, a learner who passes by compensation remains eligible for honours.

— The mark of the module(s) that a learner compensates is not altered on their transcripts, i.e. the actual result is maintained.

### Exemption from part of a programme

In principle, exemptions are permitted at any stage of a programme in line with *QQI Assessment and Standards, 2013*. Exemptions into Award stage must be reviewed by the Registrar. Where the result of the module is required for calculating an award classification, the College will utilise alternative assessing methods to ascertain the grade that should be given for an exempted module.



## Progression Eligibility

This will require the learner to produce an assessment that has been designed specifically for the grading of a module for exemption. The specific type of assessment will be specific to a module.

Where the result of the module is not required for calculating an award classification, assessment is not required. However, the College must still be satisfied that the MIMLOs for the exempted module(s) have been achieved by the learner previously.

The process of granting exemptions, and the grounds for which exemptions can be granted, are covered in the College's Recognition of Prior Learning policy and procedures.

### Carrying a Module

Dorset College may allow learners, under exceptional circumstances, to carry a failed module(s) while progressing to the next stage.

The following criteria must be met and followed for a learner to be eligible to carry a module:

A prerequisite module cannot be carried unless there is extenuating circumstances. In such circumstances, the learner must defer the module follow-on module until the carried module is passed.



## Progression Eligibility

\_The maximum missing credits that can be carried is 10 ECTS credits per 60 ECTS credit stage.

\_Learners must get an overall pass in each module and an overall pass at each stage e.g. Level 6 (subject to compensation and carrying a module in exceptional circumstances).

\_Learners can repeat any failed element of a module once module marks have been adjudicated by a Board of Examiners and are officially released.

\_Learners can repeat failed exams at the next available opportunity but the overall grade will be capped at 40%.

\_A failed module shall not be carried into an Award stage save in exceptional circumstances as adjudicated by the Registrar pursuant to an official examination board.

## 6.3

### External Examining

An external examiner is ordinarily appointed by the College for a period of 3 years. This can be extended for an additional year at the discretion of the College. The selection of an External Examiner is put forward by the Registrar and is confirmed by the College's Academic Quality Committee.

\_In selecting an External Examiner, the College will ensure that any individual nominated will have expertise in the cognate area. This is defined as someone with an education qualification at or above the level of the programme for which they are intended to be External Examiner and with at least three years' experience in academia.

\_In addition to the selection criteria above, any potential External Examiner must also be free of any conflict of interest with the College.

\_Where a number of candidates are put forward for consideration, the AQC will select their preferred candidate.

\_A nominee for External Examiner requires a 2:1 majority from the AQC for their nomination to be accepted.

\_The Academic Quality Committee may extend the term of an External Examiner by one year at the end of the three-year appointment.

## External Examining

\_The Academic Quality Committee can terminate the appointment of an External Examiner prior to the conclusion of the three-year term, should the External Examiner not adequately fulfil the main functions of an External Examiner, as set out in Section 1.4 of the *Effective Practice Guidelines for External Examining* (QQI, February 2015) for a HET External Examiner and Section 4.3 of the *Quality Assuring Assessment – Guidelines for Providers* (QQI, 2018) for a FET External Examiner

\_Where the AQC does sanction the removal of an external examiner, the Registrar shall write to the External Examiner and inform them of the reason(s) for their removal. The deliberation that informed their removal shall also be explained. The replacement External Examiner shall be sought without delay and will opt for someone previously considered in the first instance.

\_Upon approval by the AQC, the External Examiner shall receive an induction about the College, the programmes for which they will act as External Examiner, and the duties expected of an External Examiner.

\_The College and the External Examiner will agree time-frames for the External Examiner report after a Board of Examiners meeting.

\_A HET External Examiner shall submit a report to the College that follows the template provided in the *Effective Practice Guidelines for External Examining* and a FET External Examiner shall follow the




## External Examining

template provided in *Quality Assuring Assessment – Guidelines for Providers*.

Upon receipt of the External Examiner's report, the College will ensure that the recommendations made in the report are disseminated. The Academic Operations Director will then action these at the next scheduled Programme Board.






## Procedure for External Examination

	Procedure Stage	Responsibility	Evidence
1.	<p><b>Establishment Selection Criteria for External Examiner:</b> In proposing an individual(s) for appointment as an external examiner, the following essential criteria must be met:</p> <p>— The person(s) nominated should have the requisite academic experience in ‘the broader community of practice within the programme’s field of learning’.</p> <p>— The person(s) accomplishments should be sufficient for them to attest to them having the requisite authority to fulfil the responsibilities of the role.</p> <p>— The person(s) should be free of any conflict of interests’ with the College to ensure objectivity and full independence in the role.</p>	Registrar	CV, or equivalent

## Procedure for External Examination

	Procedure Stage	Responsibility	Evidence
2.	<p><b>Appointment of External Examiner:</b> In order for an individual(s) to be appointed as an external examiner with the College, the following criteria must be met:</p> <p><u>  </u>An individual(s) must meet the selection criteria outlined in Stage one.</p> <p><u>  </u>An individual(s) must be nominated by a member of the College's Academic Quality Committee.</p> <p><u>  </u>In the event that there is multiple nominations put forth for an External Examiner vacancy, the AQC will select an individual based on the criteria outlined in the <b>External Examining policy</b>.</p>	<p><b>Academic Quality Committee</b> <b>Registrar</b></p>	<p><b>Minutes of Academic Quality Committee</b></p> <p><b>Communication to successful individual from the Registrar</b></p>




## Procedure for External Examination

	Procedure Stage	Responsibility	Evidence
	<p>After selection of an individual by the Academic Quality Committee, formal notification will be made to the successful individual(s) by the College's Registrar.</p>		
3.	<p><b>Induction of External Examiner:</b> Prior to commencing in the role of External Examiner, an individual(s) will undertake an induction to familiarise themselves with the College. The induction process will include the following:</p> <p>The College's Registrar will send relevant QA and programme documentation to the External Examiner(s).</p>	<p><b>Registrar External Examiner</b></p>	<p><b>Communication between Registrar and External Examiner</b></p>

## Procedure for External Examination

	Procedure Stage	Responsibility	Evidence
	<p>— The College's Registrar will meet with the External Examiner(s) to clarify any queries and to ensure the External Examiner(s) have the requisite information about the College and its programmes.</p> <p>— The College's Registrar and the External Examiner(s) mutually agree that the External Examiner(s) are satisfied that they can fulfil the role.</p>		
4.	<p><b>Duties of External Examiner:</b> The College would anticipate that an External Examiner(s) would fulfil the following duties in their role with the College:</p> <p>— Review draft examination papers and their associated marking schemes.</p>	External Examiner	<p>Minutes of Board of Examiners Meeting</p> <p>External Examiner's Report</p>



## Procedure for External Examination

### Procedure Stage

### Responsibility

### Evidence

Provide feedback, where appropriate, on the above. This may include suggested alterations to assessment content.

Inspection of the submitted assessment instruments, and evaluation of the marks attributed to these.

Attendance at External Examination meetings, and to provide verbal feedback on the inspection that had been conducted of the assessment instruments.

A formal report to be submitted to the College, which follows the relevant template.

5.

**Response to External Examination:**

**Registrar**

**Response to External Examiner**



## Procedure for External Examination

Procedure Stage	Responsibility	Evidence
<p>After undergoing the External Examination process, and in receipt of the External Examiner's Report, the College will undertake the following actions:</p> <p><u>  </u>The Registrar will present the Report to the Academic Quality Committee, who will action any recommendations made.</p>		<b>Minutes of Academic Quality Committee</b>

# 6.4

## Notification of Assessment to Learners

The College will ensure that the learner receives notification of the assessment strategy for each module that they are studying and timely notice of any assessment deadline. An assessment schedule (continuous assessments) shall be provided to learners at the start of each semester.

\_Learners will be notified through the College's VLE on the first week of semester of the assessment strategy of a module as well as the module descriptor. This information will include the type(s) of assessment that the learner will have to undertake for that module, and the relative weighting of each of the assessment instruments.

\_Learners will receive a minimum of 4 weeks' notice for the deadline of any assessment that they will undertake, unless there is a specified reason for them receiving a shorter deadline (e.g. that the assessment is intended to be done in a short time period).

\_Learners will also be informed of assessment strategy and deadlines orally by the lecturer during class.

# 6.5

## Formative Assessment

Dorset College engages in both formative and summative assessment.

Formative assessment - is a crucial part of the learning journey but is Dorset College sees formative assessment is not credit bearing and takes place throughout the module as a means to engage the learner in active and participatory learning in preparation for summative assessment; continuous assessment, proctored examinations, supervised project(s) or final examination.

For grade bearing formative assessment(s), the following regulations apply:

- Feedback should be provided to learners within 4 weeks of submission of assessments.
- The assessment deadline should be clearly articulated to all learners via Moodle. This may also be articulated in other ways, such as verbally in-class, but Moodle is the first point of communication.
- Learners should be informed of the due date for a formative assessment at least 4 weeks prior to this due date, unless it is part of the assessment to give a shorter notification period – for example, an assessment is intentionally structured to be completed in a one or two week period.
- If an extension is granted to an assessment, this should be communicated to all learners as soon as possible via Moodle.





## Formative Assessment

Formative assessments will be accepted after the due date. However, if the learner does not have mitigating circumstances or if they have not been granted an extension, the assessment grade will be reduced by 10% for each day (24 hour period that starts from the submission deadline) that the assessment is late. This 10% penalty is in nominal terms and not relative to the grade received – for example, a 60% grade will be reduced to 50% and not 54%.

If a learner cannot submit an assessment by the given deadline for personal mitigating circumstances, the learner should inform the College of this before the original assessment submission date. Where this is not possible, the learner should communicate to the College as soon as possible after the original deadline and provide legitimate reason(s) as to why they could not inform the College sooner. To avail of special arrangements on the grounds of mitigating circumstances, the learner must complete the Personal Mitigating Circumstances Form with supporting documentation such as a medical certificate etc=.

If a learner cannot complete the requirements of a formative assessment for legitimate reason(s), the learner may be afforded the opportunity to being assessed for that module through an examination instead. In such instances, all the MIMLOs being assessed by the formative assessment will be assessed by the examination.

If a learner is unsuccessful and needs to repeat a module, the arrangements for repeating are as follows:



## Formative Assessment

\_ If the module includes an examination as part of its assessment strategy, the arrangements for repeating are that an examination will be the sole assessment instrument used.

\_ If the module does not include an examination as part of its assessment strategy, the arrangements for repeating are that a single assessment is used.

# 6.6

## Examinations

The College recognises the importance of ensuring the integrity, fairness and transparency of its examinations function.

### Administrative Function

The administrative function for the examinations conducted in the College will ensure that the following requirements are met:

\_ Examinations will be printed no longer than 1 week prior to the date of the examination and securely locked until the date of the examination.

\_ The College will ensure that the learners are informed in a timely manner of the venues for examinations and that they are provided with details of how to get to an examination venue where it is external to the College campus.

\_ There will be 1 invigilator for every 15 students in an examination session.

\_ Attendance for each examinations session will be recorded.

\_ The number of examination scripts returned to the invigilators will be counted for each module and recorded. When an assessor collects the examination scripts from the examinations office, these will again be counted.



## Examinations

and signed.

Examination scripts shall be securely transferred between the examination venue and stored centrally in the College until they are collected by the assessor.

Should a learner require special accommodation for an examination sitting, the College will ensure the necessary provision is made available. The learner should inform the College of any such special accommodations at least 4 weeks in advance of an examinations session to allow the College sufficient time to make the necessary arrangements.

# 6.7

## Producing Assessments

The assessments for a module are typically produced by the module lecturer. This individual is also the assessor. When producing a module's assessments, the following requirements will be met:


\_A criterion-referenced grading scheme for each assessment will be provided.

\_Draft summative assessments and grading schemes for all stages should be submitted to the College. These will be internally reviewed by an individual or committee before seeking advice of an external examiner.

\_The assessment instrument will be cross-referenced to the MIMLOs that it is intended to assess. This shall be explicitly stated on the assessment cover sheet. The internal review of the assessment shall adjudicate as to whether the assessment instrument sufficiently addresses the stated MIMLOs.

\_A person participating in the internal moderation of assessment instruments will be free of any conflict with the assessor or the assessment instrument – for example, this would exclude learners from being a member of an internal moderation committee.

\_All relevant assessments shall then be sent to the external examiner for their review.



## Producing Assessments

\_The comments made by the external examiner will be communicated to the faculty lecturers, who will make any amendments to their assessments that are required.

\_All assessments shall be password-protected until such a time as they are to be distributed to learners.

\_An assessment instrument and its password will not be sent together in a single communication.

\_The College will avoid, inasmuch as possible, producing hard copies of an assessment instrument before it is distributed to learners. However, where this is done, all hard copies of an assessment should be retained in a secure location only for as long as is necessary, and then securely shredded.



# 6.8

## Recording of Assessment Marks


The College is cognisant of ensuring that the recording of assessment marks is an efficient and secure process. To ensure this, the College limits the number of people who have access to the recording of assessment marks. Also, the College ensures that the recording of assessment marks is password protected.

\_Lecturers shall record the assessment marks for their module(s) in the first instance. This shall be done through the College's virtual learning environment (VLE). These recorded marks will have been subject to the internal review process of the College.

\_Access to assessment mark input will be restricted to the module lecturers and appropriate College administration and management personnel.

\_The Examinations Officer will export the assessment results into an appropriate format that allow for the production of broadsheets for the consideration of the Board of Examiners.

\_The exported broadsheet will be saved on the College intranet, access to which is restricted to the administrative and management personnel who have direct involvement with the assessment function.



## Recording of Assessment Marks

If the assessments are submitted in hard copy, these scripts are retained for the duration specified in the College's Data Protection policy. These scripts are retained in labelled boxes, and securely stored in the designated storage areas in the College. Access to these storage areas is restricted to staff personnel directly related to the administration and management of assessments.



# 6.9

## Board of Examiners

Meetings of the Board of Examiners will consider, amongst other things:

- Grades for assessment tasks
- Grades for modules
- Eligibility to progress from one stage to the next stage
- Eligibility for awards
- Classification of such awards, where applicable

The minutes of the Board of Examiners will be sent to the College's Academic Quality Committee, who have oversight of the Board of Examiners.

The Terms of Reference of the Board of Examiners is set out in Policy 1: Governance and Management of Quality.

A Board of Examiners will be comprised of all Internal Assessors on a programme, the External Examiner(s), the Programme Manager, the Examinations Officer, Registrar and Academic Operations Director.

For a meeting of a Board of Examiners to proceed, a quorum of participants is required. The quorum for a meeting is as follows:

- Registrar or Academic Operations Director (as chair)
- Examinations Officer, or nominated deputy



## Board of Examiners

- One internal assessor from each stage of a programme
- External Examiner (where learners are being considered for awards)

\_If an External Examiner cannot attend a meeting of a Board of Examiners, they will have visited the College, examined the assessments, agree with the recommendations on the draft broadsheet of results and provide a written report that will be read out at the Board of Examiners meeting. The External Examiner can then be represented at the Board of Examiners meeting by a nominated deputy who is independent to the proceedings.

\_Ordinarily, a Board of Examiners will meet 2 times a year, but can meet more regularly if required.

\_All proceedings of a Board of Examiners shall remain confidential and all participants are bound by this confidentiality.

\_Decisions of a Board of Examiners should ordinarily be reached by consensus. In instances where consensus cannot be reached, a Board must agree by a ratio of 2:1.

\_In the event of an irresolvable disagreement between Internal Assessor(s) and an External Examiner, the Board of Examiners' decision is final. However, the disagreement should be formally recorded in the minutes of the meeting and in the External Examiner's report.



## Board of Examiners

Where a systematic error is discovered any necessary adjustments to marks/grades should be applied to all learners affected. The decision to make such adjustments and the supporting rationale should be recorded in the minutes so that the Academic Quality Committee is informed.

Borderline results will be dealt with as follows:

- A module result at 39% shall be brought to 40% unless there is a compelling reason not to do so (for example: if the learner was found guilty of academic impropriety).
- A module result at 36%, 37% or 38% shall be considered for an increase to 40%. However, the increase is not automatic and must be supported with a justifiable reason for doing so. If such a reason is not forthcoming, then the result is maintained.
- An award stage result that is 1% below a grade band (i.e: 39%; 49%; 59%; 69%) shall be brought up to the next grade band unless there is a compelling reason not to do so.
- When considering the borderline results at module and stage level, such as those outlined above, a Board of Examiners does have the authority to reduce grades as well as increase them. This is important as it can allow a counterbalance to potential grade inflation.

# 6.10

## Appeals, Re-checks and Reviews

### Re-check

The College recognises that the learner has the right to query the result of their assessment(s) should they have legitimate grounds.

To facilitate this, the College has a 'Feedback Day', once formal exam results are issued by the College, to allow learners to discuss their results with their lecturers. In the event of a lecturer not being available, the College will nominate another individual to meet with the learner on the Feedback Day typically the Quality Assurance Officer or Examinations Officer. The learner will be advised of the day and time of this feedback session. This feedback is distinct from the formal mechanisms available to learners for querying a module grade.

The formal mechanisms for querying a module grade consist of Re-check, Reviews and Appeals. The Review and Appeals procedures will be coordinated by the College's Assessment Committee, details of which are outlined in Policy 1: Governance and Management of Quality.

Each of these mechanisms is set out below:

  A Re-check is an administrative procedure that further checks the recording and combination of component marks for a module or stage.

  This is designed as an initial assessment querying mechanism. However, learners are not required to start at this stage. They can proceed directly to the Review stage should they so wish.

## Appeals, Re-checks and Reviews

### Review

\_ The fee for a re-check is €30, which will be refunded to the learner should a module or stage mark be increased as a result of the re-check.

\_ The learner will have at least 3 working days from the issuance of marks to apply for a re-check (typically 3 working days from the Feedback Day).

\_ A Review is the reconsideration of an assessment decision, either by the original assessor or by another competent person nominated by the College.

\_ Learners must state the grounds on which they would like the requested review to take place. It is anticipated that the learner will have some ground to suspect that the assessment mark was erroneous in some respect.

\_ The review of module marks shall be overseen by the Assessment committee.


\_ The fee for a Review is €50, which will be refunded to the learner should a module or stage mark be increased as a result of the review.

\_ A learner does not need to have undertaken a re-check prior to applying for a review. However, a learner cannot skip the review stage and go straight to appeal stage if they wish to query an assessment mark.

\_ Review must be applied for within 5 working days of the issuance of marks

### Appeal

\_ An appeal is a request to a higher authority for the alteration of the decision or judgement of a lower authority.




## Appeals, Re-checks and Reviews

  An appeal should only be made in an instance where the learner deems that the decision taken in the review process was erroneous or unfair.

  A learner must have already gone through the review process before applying for an appeal.

  A learner is required to clearly outline the reason for their appeal when making an application. This should include reasons as to why the learner deems the review process to have not yielded a desirable outcome for them.

  An appeal must be applied for within 10 working days of the issuance of results.



## Appeals, Re-checks and Reviews

### NOTE

\_ An appeal should only be made in an instance where the learner deems that the decision taken in the review process was erroneous or unfair.

\_ A learner must have already gone through the review process before applying for an appeal.

The only permissible grounds for appeal are:

\_ The learner believes there was a substantive irregularity with the College's procedures and/or in the manner in which those procedures were executed.

\_ The learner believes there was a substantive irregularity in the Assignment Brief or Examination Paper of the assessment process.

\_ The learner believes that there were circumstances known to the College that the decision making committee was not aware of when its decision was taken.

\_ Disagreement with a decision, including an assessment decision is not considered grounds for review or appeal. Reviews and/or appeals which question academic judgment of examiners shall not be admissible; disagreement with the judgment of the Examination Board does not constitute grounds for review or appeal.

\_ The Quality Assurance Officer will receive all appeals applications and ensure that the learner has complied with submission requirements in order to be forwarded to the Assessment Committee who will consider the appeal and the grounds on which it is sought.

## Procedure for Re-checking a Module or Stage mark

	Procedure Stage	Responsibility	Evidence
1.	<p><b>Written request:</b> The learner is required to submit a written request for a re-check within 3 working days of formal issuance of assessment results and typically after the Feedback Day.</p>	Learner	Module/Stage Re-check form
2.	<p><b>Pay fee:</b> Prior to the re-check being conducted, the learner is required to pay a €30 fee (which is refundable if the module or stage mark is changed).</p>	Learner Academic Operations	Receipt of re-check fee
3.	<p><b>Re-check of assessment:</b> An internal examiner is selected, who will consider the assessment under the re-check criteria.</p>	Examinations Officer Internal examiner	Confirmation from internal examiner that the assessment mark was correct/incorrect
4.	<p><b>Adjustment of mark (if necessary):</b> Should the internal examiner find that</p>	Examinations Officer	Amended mark on broadsheet (if necessary)



## Procedure for Re-checking a Module or Stage mark


	Procedure Stage	Responsibility	Evidence
	the assessment mark was incorrect, this will be amended.		<a href="#">Module/Stage Re-check form</a>
5.	<p><b>Communication to learner:</b> The College will communicate the outcome of the re-check to the learner in writing.</p>	<a href="#">Examinations Officer</a>	<a href="#">Communication to learner of outcome of re-check</a>
6.	<p><b>Review procedure (if necessary):</b> Should the learner not be satisfied with the outcome of the re-check, they can escalate their query to the review process.</p>		

## Procedure for Reviewing a Module or Stage mark

	Procedure Stage	Responsibility	Evidence
1.	<p><b>Written request:</b> The learner is required to submit a written request for a review within 5 working days of the issuance of formal assessment results. Also, if the learner has opted for a re-check before applying for a review, the application for a review should be made within 2 working days of the learner being issued with the outcome of the re-check. (there should be 5 working days in total from issuing results to Review).</p>	Learner	Module/Stage Review form
2.	<p><b>Pay fee:</b> Prior to the review being conducted, the learner is required to pay a €50 fee (which is refundable if the module or stage mark is changed).</p>	Learner  Academic Operations	Receipt of review fee

## Procedure for Reviewing a Module or Stage mark

	Procedure Stage	Responsibility	Evidence
3.	<p><b>Appointment of assessor:</b> The College will appoint an assessor who is independent of the initial grading of the assessment to conduct the review.</p>	<p>Examinations Officer</p> <p>Independent Assessor</p>	<p>Communication to assessor regarding the assessment under review</p>
4.	<p><b>Review of assessment:</b> The independent assessor reviews the assessment and provides the College's Assessment Committee with their assessment. This will contain their recommendation as to whether the mark should be reviewed up, reviewed down, or maintained as is.</p> <p>The Assessment Committee then makes the ultimate decision. It would be anticipated that in most instances the recommendation of the independent individual(s) will be adopted, unless the Committee has grounds not to do so.</p>	<p>Assessment Committee</p> <p>Independent Assessor</p>	<p>Report on Review of assessment</p> <p>Minutes of Assessment Committee meeting</p>



## Procedure for Reviewing a Module or Stage mark


	Procedure Stage	Responsibility	Evidence
5.	<b>Communication to learner:</b> The College will communicate the outcome of the review to the learner in writing.	<b>Examinations Officer</b>	<b>Communication to learner of outcome of review</b>
6.	<b>Appeal procedure (if necessary):</b> Should the learner not be satisfied with the outcome of the re-check, they can escalate their query to the appeals process.		

## Procedure for Appeal

	Procedure Stage	Responsibility	Evidence
1.	<p><b>Written request:</b> The learner is required to submit a written request for an appeal within 5 working days of notification of the review process. This request must also include supporting evidence for the appeal.</p>	Learner	Appeal Application
2.	<p><b>Pay fee:</b> Prior to the appeal being conducted, the learner is required to pay a €50 fee (which is refundable if the module or stage mark is changed).</p>	Learner Programme Administrator	Receipt of appeal fee
3.	<p><b>Interview with Learner</b> The College will appoint a suitable individual to conduct an interview with the learner, to ascertain further details of the reason for the appeal. This individual will be a member of the College staff.</p>	Examinations Officer Nominated interviewer	Scheduled interview with learner

## Procedure for Appeal

	Procedure Stage	Responsibility	Evidence
	who has not had any direct involvement in the assessment that the learner is appealing.		
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Consideration of Appeal:</b> The Assessment Committee shall collectively consider the evidence from stage 1 and 3, above, and any other pertinent evidence from the Review process.</p> <p>The decision of the Assessment Committee shall ideally determine each appeal by consensus. However, should a consensus not be possible, the appeal must be accepted by a margin of at least 2:1</p>	<p><b>Assessment Committee</b></p> <p><b>Independent Assessor</b></p>	<p><b>Report on Appeal of assessment</b></p> <p><b>Minutes of Assessment Committee meeting</b></p>

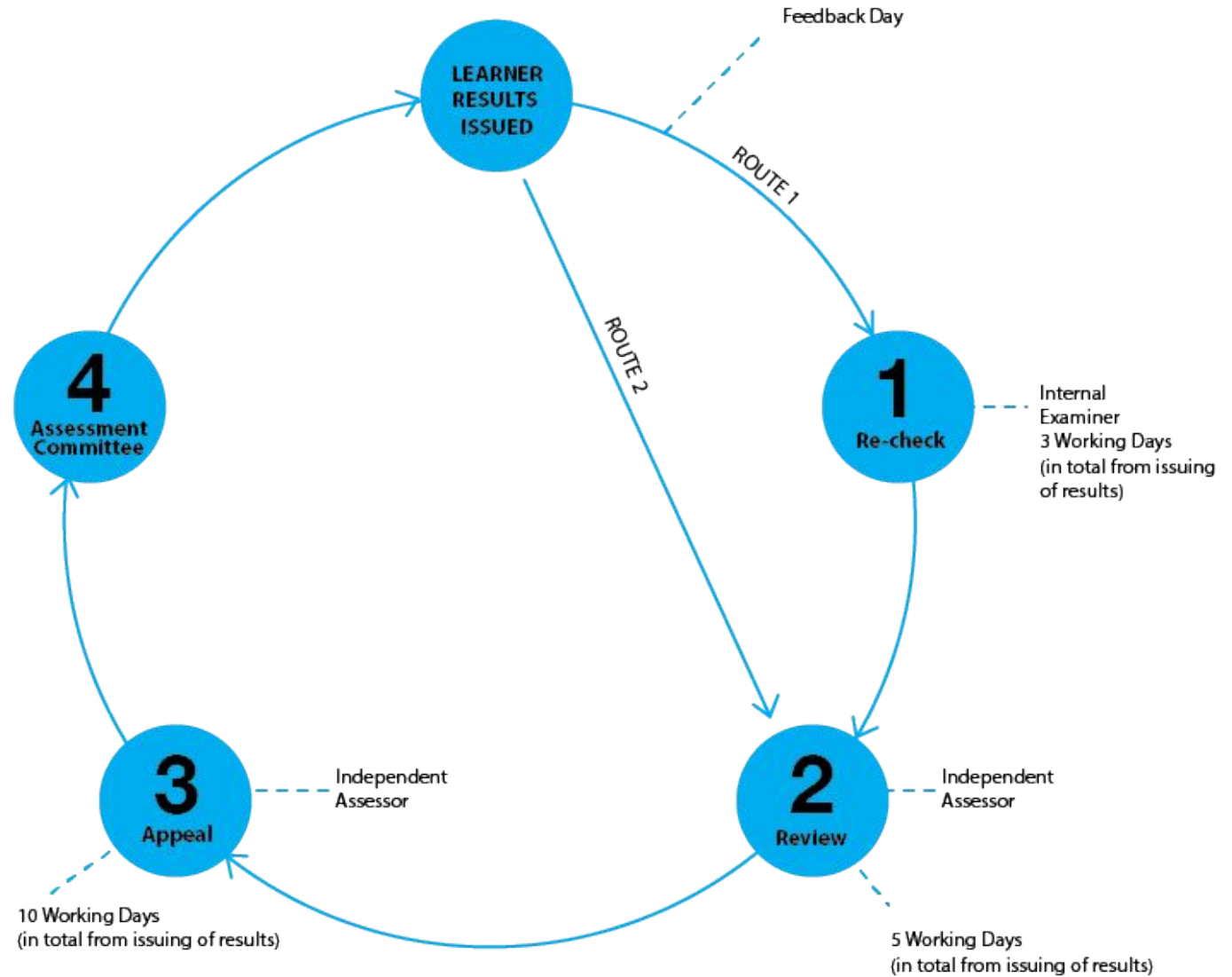


## Procedure for Appeal

	Procedure Stage	Responsibility	Evidence
5.	<b>Communication to learner:</b> The College will communicate the outcome of the appeal to the learner in writing.	<b>Examinations Officer</b>	<b>Communication to learner of outcome of review</b>

# Recheck, Review & Appeal

Forms provided by Programme Administrators  
Process managed by QA Officer/ Examinations Officer







# 6.11

## Work Placement

The College facilitates work placement as an optional component on some of its programmes. Where it does, the work placement is typically a small element of the overall weighting of an award.

The assessment of a work placement will:

\_Be a collaborative effort between the College and the Work Placement provider.

\_Be graded by the College as much as is possible. Therefore the assessment strategy for a work placement will be designed to allow for the College to be able to assess them even though faculty are not present at the learning site. This would include, for example, the use of appropriate assessment instruments such as Reflective Learning Journals.

\_Incorporate as assessment by the workplace provider of the learner's performance. This element of the assessment will require a nominated individual within the workplace to assess the performance of the learner, provide feedback to the learner, and to grade the learner. The College will provide as much assistance as possible to the workplace providers with this assessment – for example: training how to assess learners.

# 6.12

## Academic Impropriety

Learners are advised that Dorset College takes all cases of academic impropriety very seriously and will apply penalties up to expulsion from the College with no right to return or refund.

Academic impoverishment should not be confused with academic impropriety with the latter clearly being an intention to secure an unfair advantage through dishonest academic practice(s) including but not limited to cheating.

Academic impoverishment shall be addressed through formative and summative feedback throughout the academic term.

Cheating includes but is not limited to:

- \_ Cheating
- \_ Collusion
- \_ Essay Mills
- \_ Plagiarism

# 6.12

## Academic Impropriety

Plagiarism is a serious offence and constitutes academic impropriety. Plagiarism is the act of presenting another individual(s) work as your own. It is defined by the act not the intention, so even careless accidental copying is still classed as plagiarism, for it gives the false impression that the learner is the author and denies the genuine author their due acknowledgement.


As an education institute, Dorset College aims to foster academic integrity within its learner body. A key principle is that appropriate acknowledgements be made for the contributions of others to any work submitted for assessment or publication. The attribution of these sources should be in the form of standard and consistent referencing and bibliographic conventions.

Should an instance of plagiarism be identified, the College has a two-stage process for dealing with such instances:

— The first stage is an **informal process** and the second stage is a **formal process**.

— The decision as to whether a suspected instance of plagiarism should follow the informal or formal process will be made by the lecturer and programme manager. Other staff members, such as the Academic Operations Director or Registrar, may also be consulted if necessary.

— In determining if a suspected instance of plagiarism should follow either the informal or formal.



## Academic Impropriety

process, the **severity of plagiarism** (assessed through the similarity score determined by a plagiarism checking software such as Turnitin), the **perceived intention of the learner** (assessed through whether the learner is deemed to intentionally pass off another person's work as their own or whether the plagiarism has arisen as a result of poor referencing or over-quotation etc.), and the **previous academic record of the learner** (assessed through whether a learner has previously been found guilty of plagiarism).

\_Should all of these three indicators be negative, the College will adopt the formal process.

\_Should both the severity and the perceived intention indicators be negative, the College will adopt the formal process.

\_Should the perceived intention indicator be negative, the College will adopt the formal process.

\_If the learner have been found guilty of a previous instance of plagiarism, the College will adopt the formal process.

\_Should the severity indicator be negative, and the other indicators positive for the learner, the College must make a decision as to whether to adopt the informal or formal process. The decision will be determined by the level of severity of the plagiarism score.

## Procedure for Academic Impropriety (informal)

	Procedure Stage	Responsibility	Evidence
1.	<p><b>Identification:</b> The Lecturer will identify and highlight instances of suspected academic impropriety such as plagiarism and consult these with the Programme Manager/Academic Operations. They will jointly agree if the suspicion is sufficient to merit further investigation. If it is, they will jointly agree as to whether the suspected instances should be classified as warranting the formal or informal process.</p>	<p>Lecturer</p> <p>Programme Manager/Academic Operations</p>	
2.	<p><b>Learner Notification:</b> Should the suspicion of plagiarism be judged to warrant further investigation, the learner will be notified of this, and as to the process that will be followed in the investigation.</p>	<p>Programme Manager//Academic Operations</p>	<p>Communication to Learner of suspicion of academic impropriety</p>

## Procedure for Academic Impropriety (informal)

	Procedure Stage	Responsibility	Evidence
3.	<p><b>Collation of Evidence:</b> The lecturer shall collate and present the evidence as to the suspicion of academic impropriety.</p> <p>This evidence may include, but is not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>  </u> Identification of the source of the materials used by the learner without proper attribution, or represented as the learner's own work.</li> <li><u>  </u> A demonstrably marked difference in the writing style of the learner, as compared to previous work, or variations in font, grammar and spelling from section to section.</li> </ul>	Lecturer	Evidence of Suspected instance of academic impropriety

## Procedure for Academic Impropriety (informal)

	Procedure Stage	Responsibility	Evidence
	<p>__ Testimony from others regarding a learner's use of academically dishonest means to complete a piece of coursework.</p> <p>__ First-hand observation of the learner engaging in improper academic behaviour.</p> <p>__ An unusual or suspicious degree of similarity in work submitted by different learners.</p> <p>__ Admission by the learner that s/he engaged in improper academic behaviour.</p>		
4.	<p><b>Decision:</b> The Lecturer and the Programme Manager will jointly decide as to whether the evidence presented is sufficient to conclude</p>	<p><b>Lecturer</b></p> <p><b>Programme Manager/Academic Operations</b></p>	<p><b>Plagiarism Report – Informal Process</b></p>

## Procedure for Academic Impropriety (informal)

### Procedure Stage

### Responsibility

### Evidence

that there has been an instance of academic impropriety.

**Academic Operations  
Director or Registrar (if  
necessary)**

Should the Lecturer and the Programme Manager/Academic Operations not be able to reach an agreement, the Academic Operations Director or Registrar shall be consulted in order to reach a majority decision.

**5.**

#### **Penalty:**

If the decision is that the evidence does not support the suspicion of plagiarism, there is no penalty and the learner will be graded without prejudice or bias.

**Lecturer**

**Programme  
Manager/Academic  
Operations**

**Notification to learner  
of penalty (if  
necessary)**

**Warning on Learner  
file (if necessary)**

If the decision is that plagiarism was detected, the potential penalties are as follows:



## Procedure for Academic Impropriety (informal)

### Procedure Stage

### Responsibility

### Evidence

— The assessment mark is reduced by an agreed amount. This may result in the learner still receiving a pass mark, but lower than the mark originally given. However, the mark may also be reduced to a point that would result in the assessment being awarded a fail mark.

— The assessment mark is reduced to zero and the learner must re-submit the assessment instrument. This resubmission would count as a subsequent sitting of that assessment, with the appropriate penalty applied for a resubmission.

Should either penalty option be adopted, the learner shall also receive a formal warning of academic impropriety, which will be placed on their academic record for the duration of their programme of study.

## Procedure for Academic Impropriety (formal)

	Procedure Stage	Responsibility	Evidence
1.	<p><b>Identification:</b> The Lecturer will identify and highlight instances of suspected academic impropriety such as plagiarism and consult these with the Programme Manager/Academic Operations. They will jointly agree if the suspicion of academic impropriety such as plagiarism is sufficient to merit further investigation. If it is, they will jointly agree as to whether the suspected instances should be classified as warranting the formal or informal process.</p>	<p>Lecturer</p> <p>Programme Manager/Academic Operations</p>	
2.	<p><b>Learner Notification:</b> Should the suspicion of academic impropriety be judged to warrant further investigation, the learner will be notified of this, and as to the process that will be followed in the investigation.</p>	<p>Programme Manager/Academic Operations</p>	<p>Communication to Learner of suspicion of academic impropriety.</p>

## Procedure for Academic Impropriety (formal)

3.

### Procedure Stage

### Responsibility

### Evidence


#### Collation of Evidence:

The lecturer shall collate and present the evidence as to the suspicion of academic impropriety.

This evidence may include, but is not limited to, the following:

   Identification of the source of the materials used by the learner without proper attribution, or represented as the learner's own work.

   A demonstrably marked difference in the writing style of the learner, as compared to previous work, or variations in font, grammar and spelling from section to section.



## Procedure for Academic Impropriety (formal)

### Procedure Stage

### Responsibility

### Evidence

---

— Testimony from others regarding a learner's use of academically dishonest means to complete the assignment.

— First-hand observation of the learner engaging in plagiarism.

— An unusual or suspicious degree of similarity in work submitted by different learners.

— Admission by the learner that s/he acted improperly or plagiarised.

The Programme Manager/Academic Operations shall supplement this evidence with details of the learner's academic record, if necessary.

## Procedure for Academic Impropriety (formal)

	Procedure Stage	Responsibility	Evidence
4.	<p><b>Interview with Learner:</b> After the collation of evidence, the learner will be invited to meet with the Programme Manager/Academic Operations, who will outline the evidence for the suspicion of plagiarism. This will focus on the severity of the suspected plagiarism and the perceived intention. The learner will also be informed as to whether their academic record will have any bearing on the investigation. The learner will be given 3 working days notice of this meeting. The learner will also be advised of their right to be accompanied to this meeting, should they so wish. This meeting shall be minuted.</p>	<p>Programme Manager/Academic Operations and Assurance Officer</p> <p>Learner</p>	<p>Plagiarism Report – Formal Process</p>
5.	<p><b>Decision:</b> The Programme Manager will present the Plagiarism Report to the Academic Impropriety Committee who will</p>	<p>Programme Manager/Academic Operations &amp; Academic Impropriety Committee</p>	

## Procedure for Academic Impropriety (formal)

	Procedure Stage	Responsibility	Evidence
	<p>decide as to whether the evidence presented is sufficient to conclude that academic impropriety such as plagiarism has been committed by the learner.</p> <p>The learner will be advised of their right of appeal to the registrar within 3 working days.</p>		
6.	<p><b>Penalty:</b> If the decision is that the evidence does not support the suspicion of academic impropriety such as plagiarism, there is no penalty and the learner will be graded without prejudice or bias.</p>	<p>Programme Manager/Academic Operations</p> <p>Academic Impropriety Committee Registrar</p>	<p>Notification to learner of penalty (if necessary)</p> <p>Warning on Learner file (if necessary)</p>

## Procedure for Academic Impropriety (formal)

7.

### Procedure Stage

### Responsibility

### Evidence

If the decision is that academic impropriety such as plagiarism was detected, the potential penalties are as follows:

— The assessment mark is reduced to zero and the learner must re-submit the assessment instrument. This resubmission would count as a subsequent sitting of that assessment, with the appropriate penalty applied for a resubmission.

— The module mark is reduced to zero and the learner must register for the next available assessment session for the module. The subsequent sitting would have the appropriate penalty applied for a repeat sitting.

## Procedure for Academic Impropriety (formal)

### Procedure Stage


### Responsibility

### Evidence

**Suspension.** This would apply in instances of repeat offending of plagiarism. Should a suspension be warranted, the Programme Manager and Registrar (and Academic Operations Director, if necessary) shall agree to the duration of the suspension, which should be no shorter than one week of term. The learner shall be marked as absent during this period and will not be eligible to submit or sit for assessments during the suspension period.

**Expulsion.** This would be an extreme outcome and would only be applicable in the event of multiple instances of plagiarism. This decision would come, only come after a suspension penalty has been applied. Should an expulsion be warranted, the learner will be removed from their programme of study, and the relevant stakeholders will be informed.





## Procedure for Academic Impropriety (formal)

### Procedure Stage

### Responsibility

### Evidence

---

Should any penalty option be adopted, the learner shall also receive a formal warning of academic impropriety, which will be placed on their academic record for the duration of their programme of study and they will also be advised of their right to appeal to the Registrar with 3 working days of receipt of the decision.



# 6.13

## Review of Assessment Policies and Procedures

The College will review these Assessment policies and procedures on an annual basis. The following individual(s) will be involved in this review:

[Registrar](#)

[Director of Academic  
Operations](#)

[Examinations Officer](#)

[QA Officer](#)

[1 Lecturer](#)

[1 Learner](#)



**Thank you.**