



ETC International College

FEHE Fair Assessment Policy

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1.0 Scope and Purpose

- 1.1 ETC aims to promote fair, relevant and effective assessment for all students studying at ETC International College.
- 1.2 The ETC Fair Assessment Policy is designed to ensure that all candidates have equal and fair access to assessment procedures.
- 1.3 It enables the delivery of internally verified assessments to students according to the learning outcomes at the level of their chosen course.
- 1.4 Assessments follow strict industry guidelines and ETC will not tolerate unfair or unlawful treatment on grounds of the following characteristics:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender Reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity (including paternity)
 - Race (colour, ethnic or national background)
 - Religion or belief (including lack of belief)
 - Sex
 - Sexual Orientation

The College is strongly committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination in any form under the Equality Act (2010). It is also focussed on advancing equality of opportunity and promoting good relations between all students, staff and visitors to the College. More information on equality and diversity at ETC can be found in the [Equality and Diversity Policy](#).

- 1.5 All assessments are written by qualified educational practitioners and are verified according to the Fair Assessment Policy guidelines.
- 1.6 The Fair Assessment Policy also operates according to the guiding principle of a variety of academic awarding bodies that continually monitor the quality of the College's systems and procedures.
- 1.7 This document will clearly state the procedure, including timings of recording and giving feedback to students of marked and internally verified assessments.
- 1.8 In addition, it will explain what students can do if they wish to dispute a result as well as advising teachers on how to get students to the next step if they are unable to achieve at any stage of the assessment process.

2.0 English Course Assessment Process

- 2.1 On arrival at ETC, all students are given an entrance test to determine their English level and placed in an English class according to their results.
- 2.2 During the first week, they are given a Learner Portfolio in which they record their needs for the course and their **CAN DO** statements according to CEFR descriptors for their perceived level.
- 2.3 The teacher will monitor their in-class progress and there may be a level adjustment for the student in the second week of their course.
- 2.4 As they progress through each lesson, they are encouraged to complete their learner portfolios to indicate how proficient they are for each of the **CAN DO** statements.
- 2.5 Once every six weeks, students take a proficiency test to determine their progress and identify weak points for the tutor to focus on in tutorials and feedback.
- 2.6 Movement between the levels will depend mainly on student performance in the class, homework and proficiency test results.

3.0 Further and Higher Education Assessments

- 3.1 Students joining Further and Higher Education Programmes may undertake a 'placement test' but should already have proven their English level during the enrolment process (eg with an IELTS certificate). FE HE Department will complete a full English assessment within the first 2 weeks or a new arrival to inform the student support package for their course.
- 3.2 Subject assessments such as business or engineering also have a system of assessment directly linked to course elements, which come from the course specifications issued by the course validating organisations.
- 3.3 Assignments are written by a qualified member of staff, internally verified and moderated before being given to the students.
- 3.4 Students are normally given a minimum of 4 weeks to prepare the assessment depending on the length of the course with an opportunity for meeting the tutor prior to submission to discuss the first draft of the assessment or presentation.

- 3.5 At this point, the tutor may give general guidance on how to improve the assessment / presentation (“formative feedback”) but may not comment on specific details or actual answers to learning outcomes addressed by the assessment.
- 3.6 Students then have a further 14 days to follow through the advice of the tutor and complete their assignments before handing them in to reception or other designated office and sending them electronically to the e-mail addresses on the front of the assessment / upload to Turnitin.
- 3.7 Assessors are normally then given 7-14 days to mark the assignments, the student is immediately informed of the results by the tutor and told that the result is subject to internal and external verification, which may increase or decrease the value of the result.
- 3.8 Internal verifiers are also typically given 7 working days to check that the assignments and feedback have been marked and written appropriately. Academic teams will hold moderation meetings where assessment will be standardised between teachers, student groups and courses. Moderation meetings will take place a minimum of twice a year. The final mark is then recorded and the student is informed of the verified result.
- 3.9 This process is overseen by the Lead Internal Quality Assurer and the Moderator, who is typically the Programme leader.

4.0 Assessor Feedback

- 4.1 Assessors will record their feedback on the submission form according to each element, citing evidence from the student work that matches each learning outcome. They will then follow this with a general comment on the submission form about the student’s overall performance.
- 4.2 Within the feedback, the assessor will make constructive, positive comments linking evidence to learning outcomes as well as giving advice on how the work might be improved in future.

5.0 Student Preparation

- 5.1 Responsibilities for assessment and an understanding of ETC’s procedures are clearly explained to students during their course induction.
- 5.2 From the start of the course, students are motivated to work consistently and independently to achieve the requirements of the qualifications.
- 5.3 They are each given a scheme of work at the start of each unit that explains which learning outcomes relate to which lessons on the course.
- 5.4 Teachers write the aim of each lesson on their weekly plans and on the board during the lesson so that students know how to relate the knowledge gained and write their own ideas as they go along.
- 5.5 Students are advised that their assignments are used to determine their progress on the course and will form the basis for their transcripts and certificates.
- 5.6 Students completing assessments that are part of a Distance Learning component of their course will receive specific tutorial support to ensure the assessment format and content are understood.
- 5.7 Students will be alerted to the importance of meeting assignment deadlines and the consequences of having their marks for merits and distinctions capped should they miss the deadline.

- 5.8 Students are also advised that all the work submitted for assessment must be their own.
- 5.9 Each student is given an assessment guide that explains:
- how assignments are used for assessment
 - how assignments relate to the teaching programme
 - how students should use and reference source materials, including what would constitute plagiarism
 - how students can understand and use key verbs in the learning outcomes
 - how to write their own ideas.
- 5.10 There are definitions of different types of plagiarism within the guide and advice on how to critically evaluate and reference sources within the developing argument of the student using **In-Text** and **Harvard Referencing**.

6.0 Assessment Design

- 6.1 Appropriate assessments are designed according to the nature and level of learning outcomes for a unit of study.
- 6.2 They should involve imaginative or ready-made scenarios and contain tasks that involve the student in a realistic job context applying knowledge acquired from the course to solving an actual problem.
- 6.3 The design of the task should be aimed initially at students being able to use their knowledge to satisfy the pass criteria of the basic learning outcomes.
- 6.4 All assessments should facilitate an opportunity for more advanced students to attain merit and distinction profiles within each task. This can be done through application of theory, formatting, convergent and lateral thinking, independent learning, management of substantial activities and self-evaluation of approaches to learning and scenario resolution.
- 6.5 **Distance Learning Qualifications:**
- Assessments of subjects studied via distance learning will be designed to use the most appropriate media (eg written assignment, online presentation, online viva). For subject material or skills that are best assessed face to face in college (eg group activities, practical skills, interpersonal skills) the assessment should require the student to attend college for that assessment (in the form of a short assessment block, workshop or seminar).
 - Where teaching and assessment are best completed face to face (even on a qualification approved for distance learning delivery), consideration will be given to an integrated teaching & assessment block for the topic.

7.0 Late Submissions

- 7.1 A student may submit an assignment up to 2 weeks after the submission deadline, but will have merits and distinctions indicated but capped with the reason given once they go past the original deadline date and time.
- 7.2 Students may be given authorised extensions for legitimate reasons, such as illness, at the time of submission, in line with ETC policies.
- 7.3 Students are all assessed in the same way with all students receiving the same time for assessment delivery, without gaining unfair advantage from feedback to others, unless

there is a reasonable adjustment made for students with a disability or additional learning need, which are assessed on an individual basis.

- 7.4 If a late submission is accepted without documents supporting mitigating circumstances, the assignment will be assessed normally, when it is submitted, using the relevant assessment criteria; with any penalty or cap applied after the assessment.
- 7.5 Where the result of assessment may be capped, due to late submission of the assignment, the student will be given an indication of their uncapped mark; in order to recognise the learning that has been achieved, and assessment feedback will be provided in relation to the uncapped achievement.
- 7.6 Uncapped and capped marks will be recorded and ratified by an appropriate assessment board; taking into account any mitigating circumstances that may have been submitted.
- 7.7 Students may still get a merit or distinction for the unit if there is another assessment within the unit that they have submitted on time and is worthy of merits and distinctions.

8.0 Formative and Summative Assessment

- 8.1 Registration onto a unit which forms part of the whole course, entitles students to:
 - One delivery of the unit
 - Access to learning and teaching resources
 - An initial opportunity to attempt the assessment tasks
 - One resubmission opportunity (if required - capped)
 - One re-take opportunity (if required – capped at Pass) – Repeat unit
- 8.2 One formal opportunity to provide final formative assessment feedback will be included in each assessment plan at a point when students will have had the opportunity to provide evidence towards all the assessment criteria targeted.
- 8.3 Normally, further formal opportunities for formative feedback should not be necessary. However, if it is clear at the formative assessment stage that a student has misinterpreted or have been misdirected by the assignment brief, there may be the need for another formative assessment once issues have been addressed.
- 8.4 Following formative assessment and feedback, students are able to:
 - Revisit work to add to the original evidence produced to consolidate a pass grade or to enhance their work to achieve a higher grade
 - Submit evidence for summative assessment and final unit grade
- 8.5 Summative assessment is a final assessment decision on an assignment task in relation to the assessment criteria of each unit. It is the definitive assessment grade that is recorded. Should a student not achieve at least a pass grade after both formative and summative assessment, the submitted work will be recorded as a “Fail” where the student may be allowed to resubmit (pending the Academic Board Meetings).
- 8.6 If a student does not achieve the minimum pass criteria for the unit overall, they are entitled to a resubmission at the end of the unit (capped at a Pass level).
- 8.7 Assessment decisions will be internally verified (on a sample basis) before being released to students. See Internal Verification Policy.

9.0 Plagiarism

- 9.1 All work handed in is submitted electronically so that assessors can conduct an electronic anti-plagiarism check and also check sources cited. If it is suspected that a student has copied someone else's work without referencing, they will be asked to either attend a viva to or resubmit the work with the appropriate sources.
- 9.2 Please see further information in our Malpractice, Maladministration and Plagiarism Policy.

10.0 Vivas

- 10.1 A viva can be held for a number of reasons:
- To give a student the opportunity to clarify points addressed in the written assessment and enable the possibility of achieving passes, merits and distinctions, where there may not have been enough information, evidence or explanation to pass the work the first time.
 - If it is suspected that a student has submitted work which is not their own, the student will have the chance to demonstrate that they understand and can explain the work they have submitted and still be eligible for merits and distinctions should they prove successful.
 - As a presentation to complement the written work they have submitted. This is followed by a question and answer session where the assessor will seek to check the underpinning knowledge of the student.
- 10.2 Normally, the viva would aim to take the student up to the next level. So:
- if they have been unable to obtain a pass, the assessor would focus on questions for a pass.
 - If they have achieved a pass, the assessor would focus on questions for a merit.
 - If they have achieved a merit, the assessor would focus on questions for a distinction.
- 10.3 Conducting a viva will involve one or more assessors on a panel who will question the student about their knowledge of the work they have submitted.
- 10.4 The student will be notified at least 1 week in advance of the viva and sent the list of the main questions. They will also be advised that the assessor(s) may ask supplementary questions if they are not satisfied that the student's response contains enough evidence to match the learning outcomes.
- 10.5 If the student answers all the questions correctly in the viva and in the rest of the assignment, they may also be assessed for merits and distinctions.
- 10.6 **NB If a student is unable to pass the viva or refuses to take a viva, they will be invited to resubmit their work with the appropriate referencing but any merits and distinctions will be indicated and then capped with the reason given for the cap.**

11.0 Assessment Boards

- 11.1 ETC holds assessment boards each term for all of its BTEC Higher National programmes. The main purpose of ETC's Assessment Board is to make recommendations on :
- The grades achieved by students on the individual units
 - Extenuating circumstances
 - Cases of cheating and plagiarism

- Progression of students on to the next stage of the programme
 - The awards to be made to students
 - Referrals and deferrals.
- 11.2 ETC's Assessment Board may also monitor academic standards. The main boards are normally held at the end of each term.
- 11.3 ETC may also hold separate boards to deal with referrals.
- 11.4 Assessment Board reports and minutes provide valuable evidence for QAA's Review of College Higher Education process.

12.0 Issuing Assessment Decisions and Feedback

- 12.1 Once the assessment team has completed the assessment process for an assignment, the outcome is a formal assessment decision. This is recorded and reported to students. The information given to the student:
- will show the formal decision and how it has been reached, indicating how or where criteria have been met
 - may show why attainment against criteria has not been demonstrated
 - must not provide feedback on how to improve evidence but how to improve in the future.

13.0 Resubmission Opportunity

- 13.1 An assignment provides the final assessment for the relevant learning outcomes and is normally a final assessment decision. A student who, for the first assessment opportunity, has failed to achieve a Pass for that unit specification shall be expected to undertake a reassessment.
- 13.2 Any criteria that a student hasn't achieved will be communicated as early as possible to enable them enough time to re-present within the time of their studies, but this will be officially authorised, if the termly academic board meeting decides that this is the appropriate step to take
- Only one opportunity for re-assessment of the unit will be permitted.
 - Re-assessment for coursework, project or portfolio-based assessments shall normally involve the reworking of the original task.
 - For examinations, re-assessment shall involve completion of a new task.
 - A student who undertakes a reassessment will have their grade capped at a pass for that unit.
 - A student will not be entitled to be re-assessed in any component of assessment for which a Pass grade or higher has already been awarded.
 - Should a student not submit work that consolidates a pass grade, the unit will be recorded as a "Fail".
- 13.3 Re-submission assessment will be on a 'task for task' basis and will usually be of the same form as the initial task. However an alternative form of assessment task may be set if it is not appropriate for a student to be assessed by exactly the same method as at the first attempt, for example if this was group work or took place on a field trip.

14.0 Repeating a Unit

- 14.1 A student who, for the first assessment opportunity and resubmission opportunity still failed to achieve a Pass for that unit specification:
- At ETC's discretion and Assessment Board, decisions can be made to permit a repeat of a unit.
 - The student must study the unit again with full attendance and payment of the unit fee.
 - The overall unit grade for a successfully completed repeat unit is capped at a Pass for that unit. Units can only be repeated once.
 - If you repeat an RQF unit and still do not achieve a Pass, you will be required to either complete a different unit in full or take the unit as compensation. In either instance, the College must make sure that the relevant rules of combination and requirements have been met.
 - The External Examiner is likely to want to include assessments that have been re-submitted as part of the sample they will review.

15.0 Appeals

- 15.1 If a student is not satisfied with their marks, except in the case of clear plagiarism, they may go through the appeals process involving double marking by a second teacher, who may upgrade or downgrade the mark according to the level of evidence within the work to match the criteria.
- 15.2 A student may appeal for a review of the grade awarded if they feel the assessment decision is incorrect or that the assessment has been conducted unfairly.
- 15.3 Because of the level of extra work involved in this process, there will normally be a supplementary charge to pay for the necessary remarking and processing. This will be notified to the student by the school according to the nature and amount of work to be undertaken.
- 15.4 Please see ETC's Appeals Policy for further information on the appeals process.

16.0 Associated Documents

- Malpractice, Maladministration and Plagiarism Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Reasonable Adjustments Policy
- Appeals Policy
- Internal Verification Policy