



ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATIONS POLICY

**(for externally accredited
programmes)**

September 2017

Assessment and Examinations Policy

INTRODUCTION

Radius Trust is committed to providing outstanding educational opportunities for all our pupils and students. We believe that together we can offer the very best for our pupils and students and for their local communities.

This policy seeks to provide clear and consistent guidance for addressing all assessment and examination procedures which may occur within Radius Trust. The policy covers all accredited programmes delivered by Radius Trust using awarding bodies that are deemed most suitable for the pupils' or students' learning programmes. This does not replace individual learning programmes, but augments it with a range of accredited and approved qualifications.

The policy covers the following:

- Assessments using accredited qualifications
- Pupil/student entitlement
- Special access arrangements
- Malpractice in assessment and examinations
- Internal verification and moderation
- Appeals against assessment decisions or examinations
- Managing examinations

This policy applies to all pupils/students and staff at Radius Trust. Each provision will keep a central record of awarding bodies, external verifier/moderator details and will provide day to day guidance on all aspects of the policy.

Detailed operating guidelines can be found in the appendices at the end of the policy, as applicable.

All references to students in this policy can be taken to refer to both pupils and students at Radius Trust schools.

POLICY CONTENT

Assessments using Accredited Qualifications

Assessment provides the opportunity for an accurate measure of the student's attainment level and to identify the specific needs of the pupil/student. Assessment occurs prior to the start of a learning programme (initial diagnostic assessment), during the learning programme (formative assessment) and at the end (summative assessment).

All assessment is required to be appropriate for the student and their learning pathway. It will be an accurate, fair and reliable assessment process using both formal and informal assessment methods. All formal assessment methods are required to meet the requirements of the awarding body and Radius Trust.

Student Entitlement

Students are entitled to be entered for vocational qualifications, Entry Levels, functional skills and GCSE examinations. These qualifications will be listed on the student's record. Any amendments to a student's enrolment (qualifications) should be agreed by the Head/Principal.

Radius Trust will ensure that the assessment tools used are suitable for the student, fit for purpose and proportionate to the learning programme.

Special Access Arrangements

Access arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for students based on evidence of need and normal way of working. Access arrangements fall into two distinct categories:

- a) some arrangements are delegated to centres;
- b) some require prior JCQ^{CIC} awarding body approval.

Further details can be found in Appendix 1.

Malpractice and Plagiarism in Assessment

Assessment malpractice can include plagiarism and any actions which contravene the Joint Council for Qualification (JCQ) general guidance and regulations for assessments and examinations.

Plagiarism is the use of another person's or author's work and claiming it as one's own. This includes the use of other people's thoughts or writing, copying and pasting from the internet, books and fellow students' work. Plagiarism is a form of cheating.

Assessment or examination malpractice is the action to gain unfair advantage by contravening the JCQ regulations which are set out by the teaching staff, invigilators and

examinations staff. Examples could include the use of mobile technologies or written notes where these are not permitted.

Further details can be found in Appendix 2.

Moderation/Internal Verification

Moderation/Internal verification (IV) is the process of monitoring assessment practice in order to ensure that assessment decisions meet national standards. It provides a continuous check on the consistency, quality and fairness of marking, grading and overall assessment of students' work.

Further details can be found in Appendix 3.

Appeals against an Assessment Decision

Radius Trust will ensure that all students have access to the appeals procedure for internal assessment and externally assessed and/or marked examinations.

Further details can be found in Appendix 4.

Managing Examinations

Each Radius Trust school is responsible for the administration and, working with the Lead Moderator/Internal Verifier, reporting of all of their internal and external examinations and assessments, including on-line tests. Assessments may take place at any time, on any day of the week either at a Radius Trust school or some other location. The only exception to this is dated examinations such as GCSEs.

Further details can be found in Appendix 5.

APPENDIX 1: ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

Access arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for students based on evidence of need and normal way of working. Access arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centres, others require prior JCQ^{CIC} awarding body approval.

Access arrangements allow students with special needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment: for example, readers, scribes and Braille question papers. In this way awarding bodies will comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'. The definition is provided below:

Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires an Awarding Body to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment.

A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements.

How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the student. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

At the start of the course, each student is assessed and access arrangements for course work and examinations should be considered during this period. The forms should be completed within the first six weeks of the course, although it is recognised that requests may be made at a later date following further assessments. There should be a named person responsible for the access arrangements.

Forms are available at <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>

APPENDIX 2: MALPRACTICE (AND PLAGIARISM) IN ASSESSMENT OPERATING PROCEDURES (INCLUDING CONTROLLED ASSESSMENTS)

The following guidance applies to all students enrolled on courses leading to awarding body qualifications where part of/or the entire award is assessed internally (i.e. by a member of Radius Trust staff).

It is the responsibility of Radius Trust staff to ensure they are fully aware of, understand and adhere to the Assessment and Examination Regulations (where involved in qualification assessments and examinations). Any actions by staff at the centre which undermine the integrity of assessment and/or examination will constitute a serious breach of professional conduct and may invoke disciplinary procedures.

Students need to be advised about the consequences of malpractice when submitting course work and not following instructions in examinations. It is the responsibility of each school to advise their students.

Radius Trust is working within the Joint Council for Qualification (JCQ) guidance framework which is available at <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>

A summary of key information is provided below:

Assessment malpractice can include plagiarism and any actions which contravene the Joint Council for Qualification (JCQ) general guidance and regulations for assessments and examinations.

Plagiarism is the use of another person's or author's work and claiming it as one's own. This includes the use of other people's thoughts or writing, copying and pasting from the internet, books, and fellow students' work. Plagiarism is a form of cheating.

Assessment or Examination Malpractice is the action to gain unfair advantage by contravening the JCQ regulations which are set out by the teaching staff, invigilators and examinations staff. Examples could include the use of mobile technologies or written notes where these are not permitted.

Malpractice in Examinations

Radius Trust will ensure that students are made fully aware of the examination requirements to any public examinations: notices are located in every examination location and instructions will be given at the beginning of every examination in accordance with the JCQ guidelines. All staff invigilating examinations will receive training.

Controlled Assessments

The school must adhere to the controlled assessment requirements as set out by the relevant awarding body and JCQ

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/controlled-assessments>

Recording incidents and follow up procedure

The JCQ guidelines state:

“Heads of centres must report to the appropriate awarding body at the earliest opportunity, all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. The only exception to this is malpractice discovered in controlled assessments or coursework before the authentication forms have been signed by the candidate.”

In the case of suspected malpractice the invigilator should follow the JCQ guidelines:

- Instructions for conducting examinations ‘ICE’
- Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments

Malpractice or maladministration by Radius Trust staff

This list covers some of the types of malpractice or maladministration by centre staff:

- Breach of security
- Deception
- Improper assistance to students
- Maladministration
- Misusing the conditions for special student requirements

The details for each type of malpractice can be found on pages 34-37 within the JCQ Suspected Malpractice 13-14 document, available at <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice>

APPENDIX 3: INTERNAL MODERATION/VERIFICATION FOR EXTERNALLY ACCREDITED PROGRAMMES

Introduction

Moderation/Internal verification (IV) is the process of monitoring assessment practice in order to ensure that assessment decisions meet national standards. It provides a continuous check on the consistency, quality and fairness of marking, grading and overall assessment of students' work.

Protocols

- Every externally accredited programme with work that is internally assessed and which contributes to the final assessment outcome of a student must be subject to internal verification.
- Each programme must have identified members of staff who will verify or standardise the assessments for that particular programme. There will be a lead Moderator/Internal Verifier for the overall coordination of the programme.
- Moderation/Internal verification must be carried out continuously throughout the year. In addition to this, each programme will identify appropriate periods of time when internal verification takes place.
- Any evidence that is produced must meet the requirements of the awarding bodies.
- The evidence must be recorded on appropriate documentation, which takes into account the requirements of awarding bodies. This may be part of an e-learning portfolio or paper based.
- Centre-devised assignments must be verified before they are issued as well as when they have been marked.
- Monitoring of internal verification activity will be carried out via the Lead Verifier.
- Records of internal verification must be kept in a secure location.
- Internal verification or moderation must be in line with awarding body guidance.
- Sampling must be across all staff within the team, all types of evidence and all students including plans, reviews and records in addition to student evidence.
- If a Radius Trust school has Direct Claim Status, the specific awarding body guidelines must be followed.

APPENDIX 4: APPEALS AGAINST ASSESSMENT DECISIONS OR EXAMINATION RESULTS

The Appeals Procedure

Any student who disagrees with an assessment decision should discuss this with their teacher as soon as they can. The student should be supported and given full feedback so that the student understands the basis upon which the assessment was made and how they can improve their assessment. If appropriate, the teacher could provide an additional opportunity for assessment. If the student is still dissatisfied they should then take their appeal to the Head of Department or the Moderator/Lead Internal Verifier for that programme. The process is described below.

Background

The Appeals Procedure has been created to provide an effective system to deal with disputed outcomes of assessment and grading. The Appeals Procedure will only vary according to specific awarding body requirements.

Internal Assessment Decision

If the appeal has not been resolved between the teacher and the student, an appeal must be formally lodged with the Head or moderator/Internal Verifier for the programme. This must be in writing and signed. Another teacher will be allocated by the moderator/Lead Internal Verifier to carry out a further assessment, which should take place within five working days of the written appeal being received, or at the first opportunity and allowing for timely completion of the qualification.

The Head/moderator/Lead Internal Verifier and Assessor will communicate the assessment decision to the student no later than five days after the assessment.

If the student still wishes to pursue the appeal, then the matter must be referred to the Executive Head who will review the appeal and take appropriate action. The examining body may be consulted if required. The Executive Head will meet with the student within ten days of the appeal being referred and the result communicated to the student no later than five days after the meeting. The Executive Head's decision will be final.

External Assessment Decision (GCSEs etc.)

If a student wishes to appeal against an external assessment decision, the student must appeal in writing, to the Head/Principal within one week of receipt of the result. This appeal will be referred to the External Board according to their specific regulations.

Note: Advocacy and any other appropriate support will be provided to a student who wishes to lodge an appeal.

Managing appeals against centre decisions

If the student disagrees with a centre decision not to support an enquiry about results, then the matter must be referred to the Executive Head who will review the appeal and take appropriate action. The examining body may be consulted if required. The Executive Head will meet with the student within ten days of the appeal being referred and the result communicated to the student no later than five days after the meeting. The Executive Head's decision will be final.

APPENDIX 5: MANAGING EXAMINATIONS AND CONTROLLED ASSESSMENTS

Each Radius Trust school is responsible for the administration and, working with the Lead Internal Verifier, reporting of all of their internal and external examinations and assessments including online tests. Assessments may take place at any time, on any day of the week either at the provision or other specified locations. The only exception to this is for dated examinations such as GCSEs.

Student Registration and Examination Entry

The Head/Principal will ensure that students are entered for examinations within the timeframes set out by the Awarding Body.

Organising Examinations and Assessments

The Head/Principal has responsibility to ensure that their school complies with awarding body rules and regulations relating to all examinations and assessments.

The school will notify its students of the place, date and time of an examination which may be online. A schedule of all examinations is maintained by each provision and published in a suitable place in hard and/or soft format.

Each provision will supply sufficient invigilators to meet the awarding body requirements for the conduct of examinations and assessments. The JCQ procedures on invigilation must be adhered to. All invigilators must be trained.

It is the responsibility of invigilators to collect the examination papers from the centre located examinations safe or locked cupboard before the examination and return them as soon as the examination is finished.

For online examinations, laptops will be wiped of any software or internet access other than for the examination requirements. IT support will be available during online assessments.

Examination scripts and documentation relating to coursework will be sent to awarding bodies within 24 hours of completion of the examination or on receipt of documentation.

Communicating with Students and Staff

Radius Trust schools will send out examination certificates as soon as possible following receipt from the awarding body, with the option of the student collecting the result.

If results are known but certificates are not available, students can be provided (in exceptional circumstances) with written confirmation of a pass or results can be provided over the telephone, subject to the Trust's data protection requirements.

For GCSEs, students will be invited in from 10-12 noon on the official results date to collect their results. After 12 noon, the certificates will be posted first class to the student's home address.

Each school will maintain a central record containing electronic links to current awarding body guidance, regulations and approvals documentation.

Each school will maintain information on examination schedules, FAQs and other information and guidance relevant to assessment and accreditation.

Reporting Student Achievement

These will be recorded on the individual student's record, using SIMS/REMS as appropriate.

APPENDIX 6: GCSE CONTROLLED ASSESSMENTS – RISK ASSESSMENT

Example risks and issues	Possible remedial action		Staff
	Forward planning	Action	
Timetabling			
Controlled assessment schedule clashes with other activities	Plan/establish priorities well ahead (e.g. at the start of the academic year)	Plan dates in consultation with school calendar – negotiate with other parties	
Too many controlled assessments close together across GCSE subjects	Plan controlled assessments so they are spaced over the duration of the course	Space controlled assessments to allow candidates some time between them	
Accommodation			
Insufficient space in classrooms for candidates	Once the size of the cohort is known at the start of the year, flag instances where regular classroom space may not be suitable to conduct controlled assessments	Book a specific room and extra rooms where required	
Insufficient facilities for all candidates	Careful planning ahead and booking of rooms/centre facilities	Book a specific room and extra rooms where required ensure adequate facilities are available.	

Downloading awarding body set tasks			
IT system unavailable on day of assessment	Download tasks well ahead of scheduled assessment date in all cases	Book IT equipment well ahead and download tasks before scheduled date of assessment	
Teaching staff unable to access task details	Test secure access rights ahead of controlled assessment schedule every year and every session	Ensure teaching staff have access rights for the correct area of awarding body secure extranet sites well ahead of the controlled assessment schedule	
Loss of task details in transmission	Download tasks well ahead of scheduled assessment date	Contact awarding body and ask for replacement task; download again	
Validity of assessment	Check task validity date and ensure it is valid for the year of entry of the unit		
Absent candidates			
Candidates absent for all or part of assessment (various reasons)	Plan alternative session(s) for candidates	Alternative dates, rooms and facilities sourced	

Candidates have scheduling clash for exams or assessment	Always consider candidates timetables well ahead and decide on priorities in advance. Ensure all assessments and exams are scheduled into the Academy calendar to help minimise clashes.	Check before requesting the date; provide an alternative date, where necessary and consult awarding body procedures for dealing with timetables clashes	
Control levels for task taking			
The assessment is undertaken under incorrect level of control (time, resources, supervision and collaboration)	Ensure teaching staff know what level is applicable and understand what is involved. Provide training if required	Seek guidance from the awarding body	
Supervision			
Student study diary/plan not provided or completed (Not all GCSE controlled assessments will require the completion of a study diary or study plans)	Ensure teaching staff are aware of the need for study diary/plans to be completed early in course	Ensure candidates start, continue and complete study diary/plans that are signed after every session	
Teaching staff do not understand that the supervision of controlled assessments is their responsibility	Ensure teaching staff fully understand the nature of controlled assessments and their role in supervising assessments	Fully inform teaching staff of their responsibilities prior to the controlled assessment occurring	

A suitable supervisor has not been arranged for an assessment where teaching staff are not supervising	A suitable supervisor must be arranged for any controlled assessment session where a teacher is not supervising, in line with the awarding body's specification	Book suitable supervisor in plenty of time.	
Candidates copy sections of work from a published source	Candidates asked to sign a set of guidelines about work before beginning controlled assessments	Seek guidance if plagiarism is suspected	
Task setting			
Teaching staff fail to correctly set tasks	Ensure teaching staff fully understand the task setting arrangements as defined in the awarding body's specification. All tasks whether set by the awarding body or the centre must be developed in line with the requirements of the specification.	Seek guidance from the awarding body	
Assessments have not been moderated in line with the awarding body's specification	Check specification and plan required moderation appropriately	Seek guidance from the awarding body	

Security of materials			
Assessment tasks not kept secure before assessment	Ensure teaching staff fully understand the importance of task security	Contact the awarding body to request/obtain different assessment tasks	
Candidates' work not kept secure during or after assessment	Define the appropriate level of security, in line with the awarding body's requirements, for each department as necessary	Seek guidance from the awarding body	
Insufficient or insecure storage space	Look at provision for suitable storage at the start of the GCSE course	Find alternative storage within the centre	
Deadlines			
Deadlines not met by candidates	Ensure all candidates are briefed on deadlines and the penalties for not meeting them	Mark what candidates have produced by the deadline Seek guidance from awarding body on further action	
Deadlines for marking and/or paperwork not met by teaching staff	Ensure teaching staff are given clear deadlines (prior to the awarding body deadline) to complete marking/paperwork (Marks can then be processed and submitted ahead of awarding body deadlines)	Seek guidance from awarding body	

Authentication			
Candidate fails to sign authentication form	<p>Ensure all candidates have authentication forms to sign</p> <p>Ensure that the authentication form is securely attached to their work when it is completed and handed in for marking</p>	Find candidate and ensure authentication form is signed	
Teaching staff fail to complete authentication forms or leave before completing the authentication process	Ensure teaching staff fully understand the importance of authentication forms and the requirement of a signature	<p>Return the authentication form to the teacher for signature</p> <p>Ensure authentication forms are signed as work is marked</p>	
Teaching staff have doubts about the authenticity of a candidates work	Ensure candidates are given a copy of the JCQ 'Warning to candidates' prior to the start of the Controlled assessment and are told of the penalties for plagiarism	<p>Do not accept the candidates work for marking.</p> <p>Seek guidance from the Exams office</p>	
Teaching staff interpret marking descriptions incorrectly.	Ensure appropriate training and departmental moderation.	Arrange for re-marking.	

Example risks and issues	Possible remedial action		Staff
	Forward planning	Action	
Marking			
Teaching staff interpret marking descriptions incorrectly	<p>Ensure appropriate training and practicing of marking</p> <p>Plan for sampling of marking during the practice phase</p>	<p>Arrange for re-marking</p> <p>Consult the awarding body's specification for appropriate procedures</p>	
Centre does not run the standardisation activity as required by the awarding body	Plan against the awarding body's requirements for standardisation, i.e. when and how this activity must be conducted	Check with the awarding body whether a later standardisation event can be arranged	