



CITY OF LONDON COLLEGE

CHANGING FUTRES - ASPIRING SUCCESS

Assessment Marking, Internal Verification & Moderation Policy

2026

Document Custodian: Senior Management Team

Review Cycle: Annually or as required in response to regulatory or strategic changes

Last Reviewed: 2 April 2026

Effective Date: 9 April 2026

Review Date: April 2027

Version: 1.4.26

Circulation: Public (Web Publication)

Sensitivity: Unclassified

1. Introduction - Assessment is central to the integrity, credibility and public value of higher education. Through assessment, the College demonstrates that students have achieved standards consistent with national expectations for higher education awards and that academic judgments are reliable, fair and transparent. This policy establishes the framework through which assessment design, scheduling, moderation and decision-making operate to uphold academic standards and protect student interests.

The College's approach is aligned with national sector benchmarks, including the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and its Advice and Guidance on Assessment, which emphasise that assessment must be valid, reliable, inclusive and aligned to intended learning outcomes. Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education The College also aligns its practices to the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), ensuring that level descriptors inform the design of learning outcomes and the calibration of marking standards across all modules and awards.

The policy is further informed by the mission and regulatory framework of the Office for Students, which places students' interests at the centre of higher education regulation. In particular, the College recognises the OfS emphasis on high-quality academic experience, credible and reliable standards, and positive outcomes for students from all backgrounds. Assessment, when designed and implemented effectively, supports these aims by ensuring that students are assessed rigorously and fairly, that awards are meaningful to employers and society, and that academic standards are protected over time.

The College's assessment framework is enhancement-led and informed by professional guidance from Advance HE. In aligning with the published Assessment Policy and Student Regulations Framework of Plymouth Marjon University, the College affirms its commitment to clarity of assessment purpose, diversity and inclusivity of methods, defined feedback timeframes, robust moderation, and transparent academic governance. The policy therefore provides assurance to students, staff, awarding partners, employers and regulators that assessment at the College is coherent, equitable and consistent with the expectations of the UK higher education sector.

2. Purpose and scope - This policy governs the design, approval, scheduling, conduct and oversight of formative and summative assessment across all higher education provision delivered by the College. It applies to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught modules, regardless of mode or location of delivery, including partner provision where relevant. The policy ensures that assessment:

- Aligns explicitly with intended learning outcomes at module and programme level;
- Is designed and conducted fairly and consistently across all modules;
- Maintains academic standards in line with national expectations;
- Supports student learning, progression and achievement;
- Operates within a robust academic governance framework.

3. Principles and external reference points - Assessment at the College is underpinned by the following principles.

Assessment is aligned. Learning outcomes, teaching activities and assessment tasks are constructively aligned to ensure coherence and validity.

Assessment is fair and inclusive. Tasks are designed to provide equitable opportunities for diverse students to demonstrate achievement without compromising academic standards.

Assessment is valid and reliable. Tasks assess what they intend to assess and are marked consistently using published criteria and grade descriptors.

Assessment is transparent. Students receive clear information about requirements, criteria, deadlines and feedback arrangements.

Assessment supports learning. Formative and summative processes are structured to promote reflection, improvement and progression.

These principles reflect the UK Quality Code and sector-recognised standards overseen by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, and they align with the regulatory expectations of the Office for Students.

4. Roles, responsibilities and oversight - Academic Board holds ultimate responsibility for academic standards and assessment regulations. It delegates operational oversight to the Quality and Standards Committee. Programme Leaders ensure coherence of assessment across modules, including assessment load, sequencing and parity of student experience. Module Leaders are responsible for assessment design, clarity of briefs, alignment to learning outcomes, marking, moderation arrangements and timely feedback. Registry oversees assessment scheduling, examination logistics (where applicable), maintenance of records and administration of assessment boards. The Quality Office monitors compliance, oversees academic misconduct and appeals processes, and reports trends and risks to Academic Board. External Examiners provide independent assurance that standards are appropriate and comparable across the sector.

5. Designing assessment: alignment, standards and fairness - All assessments are explicitly mapped to module learning outcomes and, where relevant, to programme learning outcomes. Assessment tasks are designed during module approval and reviewed periodically to ensure continued validity and level appropriateness. Assessment criteria are published in advance and aligned to institutional grade descriptors reflecting FHEQ level expectations. Parity across modules is maintained through shared descriptors, internal moderation and oversight by Programme Leaders and Heads of Department. Diversity of assessment methods is encouraged to ensure students can demonstrate achievement across different forms of expression, including written, oral, practical, professional and digital formats where appropriate.

6. Formative assessment: purpose and practice- Formative assessment is embedded within modules to support learning and assessment literacy. It provides structured opportunities for practice, reflection and feedback before summative submission. Formative feedback is developmental, identifying strengths, areas for improvement and strategies for enhancement. It may be delivered orally or in writing and is proportionate to the task. Formative activities are mapped to summative tasks to ensure coherence and progression.

7. Summative assessment: purpose, validity and reliability - Summative assessment provides the basis for progression and award decisions. Each summative task must demonstrate clear alignment to learning outcomes and appropriate weighting relative to module credit. Assessment methods are approved through programme validation processes and are subject to periodic review. Reliability is ensured through internal moderation, calibration discussions and, where required, second marking. External Examiners review samples of assessed work to confirm standards.

8. Assessment scheduling, assessment load and the assessment calendar - The College maintains a central Assessment Calendar specifying submission deadlines, examination periods and board dates. Programme Leaders coordinate module deadlines to avoid undue clustering and ensure balanced workload distribution. Changes to published deadlines require formal approval and must be communicated clearly to students.

9. Marking, moderation, feedback and return of work - Marking is conducted by qualified academic staff using published criteria. Moderation processes ensure consistency and fairness. In alignment with Plymouth Marjon University policy expectations, assessed work with feedback is normally returned within 28 calendar days of submission unless otherwise approved and communicated. Students are informed that marks are provisional until confirmed by the relevant assessment board.

10. Reasonable adjustments, inclusive assessment and academic integrity - The College designs inclusive assessment wherever possible. Where students have approved reasonable adjustments, these are implemented without altering learning outcomes. Academic integrity expectations are clearly communicated. Allegations of academic misconduct are investigated under separate procedures, ensuring fairness and due process.

11. Assessment boards, external examining and the maintenance of standards - Assessment boards formally confirm module marks and make progression and award decisions in accordance with published regulations. Boards operate with appropriate quoracy and include External Examiner oversight to ensure comparability of standards. Decisions are recorded formally and communicated to students following ratification.

12. Monitoring, evaluation and continuous enhancement - Assessment practice is reviewed annually through programme monitoring processes and periodically through revalidation. The Quality and Standards Committee receives data on assessment outcomes, feedback timeliness, moderation compliance and differential attainment patterns. Enhancement activity is informed by student feedback, External Examiner reports and sector developments, including guidance from Advance HE.

13. Records, publication and student communication - Students receive clear published information regarding assessment regulations, criteria, penalties (where applicable), and feedback processes. Assessment records are maintained securely by Registry in accordance with data protection and records management requirements.

14. Exceptions and policy review - Exceptions to this policy require formal approval through academic governance structures. The policy is reviewed annually, or earlier if regulatory changes from the Office for Students, updates to the UK Quality Code by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, or institutional developments necessitate revision.

THE END