



LONDON PROFESSIONAL ACADEMY (LPA)

ASSESSMENT POLICY

Title: ASSESSMENT POLICY

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Aims of the Policy

This policy aims to outline the guidance around the assessment brief, assessment decisions, internal verification processes and breach of academic regulations.

Policy

- The overarching policy statements of London Professional Academy (LPA) on assessments are listed below which have been prepared by reflecting on the guiding principles outlined in *UKQC Advice and Guidance: Assessment*.
- LPA shall operate processes to ensure that learning outcomes are consistent with the requirements of the relevant national qualifications framework descriptors.
- LPA shall ensure that policies and procedures for marking assessments and moderating marks are clearly articulated, consistently operated and regularly reviewed.
- LPA shall ensure that assessments measure the extent to which students achieve the learning outcomes both at, and beyond, the threshold level.
- The courses offered by LPA shall make use of external examiners, appointed by the respective awarding bodies, who are expected to provide independent confirmation that the assessment processes have been applied appropriately and ensure that qualifications have been awarded equitably and in accordance with the national standards.

Principles of Assessments

All assessments in LPA are based on the following principles:

Authenticity:

All assessment activity must have processes in place to ensure that the achievement is the student's own work.

Validity: The method of assessment and the evidence provided must be appropriate and capable of demonstrating the achievement of learning outcomes and related assessment criteria of the provision at the appropriate level.

Reliability and consistency:

The assessment decisions must be reliable and consistent. The assessment decisions are reliable in that they indicate the achievement of learning outcomes. The assessment decisions are consistent regardless of when the assessment occurs or who does the marking.

Fitness for purpose:

Assessments must be fit for the students and their learning.

Policy on Assessment Briefs and Assessment Criteria

- Students must be provided with written assessment guidelines describing the nature of the task, the format for presentation and the assessment criteria for all items of assessment.
- This normally takes the form of an assessment (or assignment) brief, and provides clear information for students on what they are expected to do, how they are expected to go about it and how their work will be marked.
- Assessment briefs should include:

Assessment criteria - the basis on which the quality of a student's work will be graded.

Any specific constraints or requirements- e.g. word limits, the need for good academic practice, referencing of sources.

Details of any marking scheme (if used) and/or grade criteria.

Submission procedures and deadlines, and the consequences of late, incomplete or non-submission.

- Assessment briefs should allow students to see a realistic scenario, and tasks should reflect the scenarios.
- In establishing assessment criteria, the course teams ensure that they are benchmarked against and take account of subject benchmark statements as appropriate.
- Assessment criteria should be discussed with students in classes, and feedback to students on their assessments should be informed by assessment criteria.
- The course teams are encouraged to produce marking schemes and answer guides for the assessors so that students know what the question requires them to do in order to achieve a pass, merit or distinction.

Guidance on Internal Verification/Moderation

- Internal verification, or quality assurance of assessment, is a part of an overall quality system at LPA.
- Internal verification has two components.
- is concerned with accuracy and consistency of the assessors' judgements on student work.
- It is ensured that every learner's work is internally verified at least once during the course of study.
- The marking and moderation responsibilities in relation to the assessors shall be carried out by people who have subject knowledge in the field of study and is competent in assessing student's knowledge and skills.

- LPA reserves the right to undertake academic integrity checks of any assessments submitted before or after the assessment panel convene and take appropriate actions.
- LPA reserves the right to audit the assessment decision by an assessor responsible for another programme.
- The evidence of a learner's work will be retained for a minimum period of 12 weeks following the certification of the learner.
- The records of assessment will be retained for a minimum period of six months following the certification of the learner.

Internal Verification of Assessment Instruments

LPA has a robust quality system to monitor assessment standards to concerned programmes.

To ensure the monitoring of good assessment practices, the academic head will ensure:

- Assessment plans and scheme of work cover the qualification;
- All assessment instruments are fit for purpose and standardised;
- All assignments are standardised and consistent throughout the programmes;
- Assessment decisions match student evidence to unit grading criteria and assessment guidance;
- 30% of all assessment decisions are internally verified, covering every unit, every assessor and a range of student achievements (e.g. Ungraded, Pass, Merit, Distinction). (Pearson, 2021, pg. 44)

Policy on Assignment Submission

- Assignments are to be submitted on or before stipulated dates.
- Failure to do so without prior authorisation will result in non-acceptance of the assignment in that term and a 'Referred' status will be recorded in the results.

Policy on Late Submission/Extenuating/Mitigating Circumstances

Late Submission:

- If a student submits or attempts to submit an assessment (without a valid reason or approved extenuating circumstances) after the submission due date, it will be classified as a late submission.

- Grades for each assessment evidence (if there is more than one for a module) will be capped at Pass.

Extenuating/Mitigating Circumstances:

- These are circumstances which are unexpected, significantly disruptive and beyond the control of students that affect their ability to meet an assessment deadline or affect performance in assessment.
- Please see the Extenuating/Mitigating Circumstances Policy and Procedures for further information.

Policy on Feedback to students and Return of Assessments

Return of Assessments:

- In normal circumstances, assessment items should be marked and returned to students with feedback within one week of the date of submission.
- Where, for valid reasons, this cannot be achieved, the member of staff concerned should consult with academic head and where appropriate SMT; agree on an alternative date, and inform the students affected of the revised date of return.
- In such circumstances, it may be desirable to provide students with feedback in advance of the return of the assessment item and determination of the provisional grade.
- Staff should enter grades for marked coursework assessment items onto LPA data record system as soon as possible after the work for the whole group has been marked.
- Students must be advised that all grades for assessment items remain provisional until confirmed and therefore a provisional 'fail' grade can be turned into a 'pass' grade or vice versa.
- Effective and timely feedback (i.e. commentary on performance identifying strengths and ways in which improvements could be made with an emphasis on feedforward) should be given to students for all formative and summative assessments.
- See the Guide to Assessment Feedback to Student for further information.

Formative feedback:

- Students have the opportunity to receive formative feedback on their assessment evidence.
- Formative feedback is due between when all learning outcomes for a module is complete or covered.
- LPA allows students enough time to reflect on the formative feedback provided and make the necessary corrections before the submission deadline.
- The feedback provided to the student should inform them of what is needed to improve on the quality of their assessment, with clear guidance.

- Dialogue between the student and educator is encouraged for better transmission and feedback delivery.
- All feedback should be recorded to clarify what is mentioned during the formative stage.
- The feedback should be recorded in the 'Formative Feedback to Learner' form by the educator.
- All feedback should be documented for quality assurance and external visits.
- In group assessments, student's will be provided with feedback prior to an assessment activity. This includes but is not limited to:

-Group presentation

-Group Poster presentation

-Writing in groups oral assessments

-Group events

- After a student receives formative feedback, they should be able to make changes in their original evidence to either consolidate a pass grade or improve for a higher grade.
- It should be noted by the assessor that errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar in a student's work should be highlighted to the student in the formative feedback stage.
- Formative feedback is provided once to students for each assessment evidence. For example, if a student has two assessments in a single module (report and presentation), then the assessor can provide formative feedback on each of those assessments.

Publication of Results

- LPA's Academic Department is responsible for the publication of official results to students.
- Publication of results will be made electronically.
- It is the student's responsibility to ascertain his or her results.
- The student will be provided with an official transcript when a student completes their studies.

Re-assessment

Resubmissions for Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF)

- 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.
- Only one opportunity for reassessment of the unit will be permitted.
- Reassessment for course work, project or portfolio-based assessments shall normally involve the reworking of the original activity.

- 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 reassessed in any component of assessment for which a Pass grade or higher has already been awarded.
- If an academic head does authorise a resubmission, the following conditions apply:
 - The resubmission must be recorded in the relevant assessment documentation.
 - The student must be given a clear and realistic deadline for resubmission that is consistent across all students granted a resubmission (e.g.- 15 working days).
 - The resubmission must be undertaken by the student with no further guidance.
 - Only one opportunity for reassessment of each assessment criterion will be permitted.
 - The original evidence submitted for the assessment can remain valid and be extended, or may need to be replaced partially or in full.

Repeat Units

- The key points regarding repeat units are detailed below.
 - A unit can be repeated if it is decided that it is an appropriate course of action.
 - The unit must be studied again.
 - The unit must be capped at a Pass grade.
 - The unit can only be repeated once.

Repeat Units (RQF)

- The following applies to a student who, for the first assessment opportunity and resubmission opportunity, still failed to achieve a Pass for that unit specification:
 - At LPA's discretion and decisions, a student can be permitted to repeat a unit.
 - The student must study the unit again with full attendance and (if required) 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.
 - A student who, for the first assessment opportunity within a repeated unit, has failed to achieve a Pass for that unit specification shall be expected to undertake a reassessment.
 - This reassessment will be subject to the standard RQF resubmission rules and regulations as stated above.
 - If a student repeats an RQF unit and still does not achieve a Pass in neither their first submission nor resubmission, they will be required to either complete a different unit in full or take the unit as compensation.
 - In either instance, LPA must make sure that the relevant rules of combination and requirements have been met.

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct covers a range of offences which collectively can be described as misrepresenting or misappropriating student work for the learner's benefit in violation of academic principles. The following is not an exhaustive list and LPA reserves the right to include any other type of cheating under the terms of this policy:

- Plagiarism** by copying and passing off as the student's own, the whole or part(s) of another person's work, thereby not properly acknowledging the original source. This particularly relates to material downloaded from the Internet or copied from books, journals or magazines.
- Collusion** by working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work done by another learner as their own including work paid for from professional sources.
- Impersonating** another candidate in an examination, introducing unauthorised materials into the exam room, unauthorised communication during an exam and obtaining an advanced copy of an 'unseen' exam paper.
- Falsely claiming** extenuating circumstances to gain an unfair advantage in assessment outcomes.

Reporting alleged Malpractice

If the assessor suspects any student with a possible breach of assessment regulations including assessment malpractice, the following actions must be taken:

- Relevant assessor completes the assessment malpractice form and sends it to LPA SMT.
- SMT decides whether a case can be argued for the malpractice.
- If an arguable case exists, the relevant student is invited for an assessment malpractice meeting.
- If following the meeting, malpractice has been established a range of penalties dependant on the offence may be applied.
- The penalty will be proposed by LPA SMT.

Malpractice during examination or tests

- If, during an examination (if any), it is believed that a student has engaged in academic misconduct, LPA will normally inform the student and inscribe the student's answer book as follows: with the time, and a brief description of the incident and with her/his initials.
- Any prohibited material will be removed and retained.
- The student shall then be permitted to continue, in a new answer book.

- A written report of the incident shall be made to LPA SMT as soon as possible and normally within 7 working days of the incident.

Consequences of Academic Misconduct

- LPA does not tolerate cases of academic misconduct.
- These will be investigated, and where appropriate, LPA's disciplinary procedures will be in force.
- Students are advised that this can affect their career prospects.
- All students who are found to have engaged in academic misconduct with regards to assessments may be asked to develop their referencing skills.

Range of Penalties for HND programmes

- Counselling accompanied by a formal caution.
- Assessment capped at bare pass.
- The module will be failed and the student will have to retake it.
- Failure of the module and repeat the module which will be capped to bare pass.
- Retake the year.
- Dismissal from LPA.

Penalties will be determined based on severity of offence. It is likely on a first offence that first penalty will be applied. A penalty for a second or subsequent substantiated allegation of academic misconduct will normally be one penalty level higher than that suggested below, or one level higher than the previously imposed penalty, whichever is higher.

- **Reprimand (first penalty):** a formally recorded warning kept on the student's record. The tutor shall mark the work, but the mark may be reduced to reflect a student's failure to address the assessment criteria in areas of collation of sources and their citation. The student may be required to redo the work on pedagogic grounds.
- **Failure in the item of assessment (second penalty):** with reassessment right where permissible. The assessment mark will be capped at a minimum pass.
- **Failure in the item of assessment (third penalty):** with reassessment right where permissible. The module result will be capped at a bare pass.
- **Failure in the module (fourth penalty):** the student must re-register for the same module at the next opportunity where the re-registered module result will be capped at a bare pass. Where a re-registration of the same module, or suitable alternative, is not permissible the student will not be able to continue on the course.
- **Failure in the module (fifth penalty):** the student must re-register for the same module and the re-registered module will be capped at a bare pass. Where a re-registration of the same module, or suitable alternative, is not permissible the student will not be able to continue on the course.
- **Expulsion (sixth penalty):** A student will not be permitted to exit with their named award, but may be permitted to exit with a lower award.

If any penalties are applied, then these must be approved by LPA.

Appeal against an outcome of an academic misconduct

- A student may request in writing, within 10 working days from the date of receipt of the notification of the decision, a review of the allegation of academic misconduct against the student.
- When requesting a review, a student may dispute the allegation and/or also make representations against the level of the penalty imposed.

Assessment Appeals

- A student can appeal against the assessment decision(s) within 14 days of the assessment result release date.
- All appeals against an internal assessment or grading decision will be subject to the process outlined by LPA's Review policy.

Termination of 'Student Status' based on Academic Grounds

- Where LPA determines that, despite all efforts to engage with a student(s), they have not shown a willingness to submit assignments / assessments either on time / at a pre-arranged time or not at all, then they may be subject to a disciplinary action which may lead to students being withdrawn from their course and their 'Student Status' at LPA terminated.
- Non-submission of assignments without any documented medical, personal or other extenuating circumstances is not permitted.
- All examinations and assessments must be attended and completed on time (and within any pre-agreed extensions already granted), unless approved by SMT.
- Non-submission of assignments will result in a warning letter being sent by LPA.
- Following the initial letter, if a student's non-submission is still of concern, s/he may be invited to attend a meeting to discuss the reasons behind such non-submission.
- Those students who received the warning letter but did not attend the interview or those who attended the interview but did not give a valid reason or their submission and pass rate has not improved, will be subject to a disciplinary process.
- A notification of termination letter will be issued to a student who has not submitted and passed three units over the first two terms.
- This is in addition to progression rules that a student has to meet.
- A student can make an appeal within 14 days from the date of the letter.
- A confirmation letter of withdrawal will be issued to a student who has lost an appeal against the notification of termination letter.

Standardisation and Moderation of Marking

- LPA offers Standardisation and Moderation of Marking to ensure that academic standards are appropriate and consistent across the teams to reflect assessment criteria, and that the assessment outcomes for students are fair and reliable.
- In marking and grading of assessments of courses, the assessors shall follow the guidance and regulation of LPA.

Ownership and Archiving of Students' Assessed Work

- The material produced by students for assessment (essays, projects, computer disks, etc.) is the property of LPA, and may be retained until confirmation of marks awarded, possible appeals and quality audits.
- Assessed coursework that has not been collected by the student will be retained by LPA for six months (on some courses, it will be twelve months), after which time it may be disposed of.