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Centre Assessment Policy

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Center Assessment Policy

1.1 Introduction

(i) Policy

Assessment is the means by which the progress of candidates is monitored. It is a tool to inform curriculum planning and learning programmes. Assessment at Centers should support each candidate in the achievement of his or her full learning potential and fosters the development of self esteem and personal responsibility. Assessment is the process of obtaining, analysing and interpreting evidence for use by both candidates and tutor to enable the review, planning and improvement of learning. It is fully integrated with the delivery of the curriculum and is an essential component of effective classroom practice.

In addition to providing a measure of the candidates' achievement on qualification-based courses, it also provides diagnostic information that assist both staff and candidates in the ongoing improvement of the learning and teaching process. To contribute usefully to both of these functions, it is essential that assessment:

- Is fair and ensures parity of treatment and comparable assessment demands in subjects of equal level
- Is reliable, ensuring that assessment decisions are made consistently throughout the center
- Is valid, by ensuring that each assessment relates to the intended outcomes of the subject(s) studied
- Is transparent, in that it is clear to candidates, staff and external auditors the criteria and methods by which candidates' work is being judged.
- Recognises and respects equality and diversity.

Why centers should assess?

- To define each candidate's ability; what the candidate knows, understands and can apply.
- To reveal candidates' strengths and weaknesses
- To communicate accurate information about the candidate that is useful to tutors, employers and educational agencies.
- To comply with statutory requirements

Strategies for assessment

- Observation – watching the candidates attempting tasks
- Questioning/discussion with the candidates
- Examining candidates' written assignments
- Marking candidates' work according to the marking policy
- Class devised exercises

Indicators of effective assessment

The tutor's assessment of the candidates' work can be considered effective when:

- Assessment is an integral part of planning, teaching and learning; the tutors use suitable forms of assessment, based on expectations which are clear; realistic and understood by the candidates.

- The candidates written work is regularly and consistently marked in ways that highlight the strengths and shortcomings, using approaches that are well understood by candidates.
- The level and nature of the candidates' prior attainments influence the selection and use of teaching methods and subject content; the candidates' strengths are consolidated and their weaknesses are addressed.
- The purpose of homework is explained clearly; the work which is set is appropriate to the needs of the candidates, reinforces and extends their knowledge and understanding and provides the tutors with evidence of progress.

Scope

This policy should apply to all programmes offered by the center where all or part of the programme is formally assessed.

(ii) Planning for assessment

Assessment is built into planning and takes place during each topic. Weekly plans of work show assessment focus and relevant comments are added to individual records. We at Business & Computing Examinations recognise and encourage the following characteristics of good practice assessment which:

1. **Promotes and supports learning**
 - Identifies what candidates know, understand and can do
 - Enables consistent monitoring of candidates progress
 - Identifies individual learning styles
 - Identifies individual learning strengths and weaknesses
 - Encourages progression in learning
2. **Informs teaching**
 - Assists lesson planning
 - Informs review of content and skills
 - Promotes a variety of teaching strategies
 - Enables consistent monitoring of teaching progress
 - Encourages self reflection
3. **Is both formative and summative**
 - Promotes a shared learning culture
 - Provides clear and regular feedback
 - Diagnoses learning difficulties
 - Measures candidate performance
 - Identifies clear and shared targets for candidates progress
 - Promotes differentiation by outcome
 - Provides effective and progressive candidates records
4. **Uses appropriate and diverse strategies**
 - Is both formal and informal
 - Accommodates a variety of learning styles
 - Tests a range of skills
 - Encourages effective and standardised marking procedure

- Is both quantitative and qualitative
 - Is carried out in a range of contexts
5. **Recognises ALL candidates progress and achievement**
- Rewards progress, effort and achievement
 - Fosters motivation and promotes a commitment to learning
 - Creates opportunities for self direction
 - Fosters self esteem and social development
6. **Develops the capacity for self assessment**
- Shares learning outcomes and assessment criteria
 - Gives sensitive and constructive feedback
 - Supports candidates in self and peer assessment activities
 - Engages candidates in realistic target setting

(iii) **Types of assessment**

Summative is *assessment of learning*. It is used mainly to measure performance and clearly identifies a standard of candidate attainment. It is carried out at the end of a period of learning.

Examples:

- Final examinations
- End of topic tests

Formative is *assessment for learning*. It is ongoing and provides evidence of and for progression in learning. It supports learning through identifying difficulties, providing feedback and diagnosing future learning priorities.

Examples:

- Class work
- Home work
- Questioning
- Oral discussion
- Presentation
- Short recall test
- Practical project
- Research

Self assessment encourages candidates to take responsibility for their own learning by:

Evaluating their own achievement against shared learning outcomes.

Identifying their own strengths and areas for improvement

Encouraging individual learning goals and action plans for future progression

Fostering a self reflective learning culture

Encouraging independence in learning

Examples:

- University application forms
- Candidate personal statement

- Record of achievement
- Progress file

(iv) **Recording and Reporting**

Recording and reporting ensures regular and relevant communication of candidate attainment and progress of candidates, tutors and other appropriate external audiences. It is linked to both formative and summative methods of assessment and the recording and reporting of individual candidate assessment outcomes, measured against agreed and shared assessment criteria, is the responsibility of each teach, within the context of the college assessment policies.

Consistent record keeping allows the effective monitoring of candidates' progress and the regular evaluation of teaching content/styles/methods.

1. **Formal reports** - a class performance report is produced for each topic.
2. **Individual references** – for candidates and outside agencies; employers/universities are reported as requested. These are completed by the Principal or Director of Studies.
3. **Final examination** – at the end of the course, final examinations are to be held. Each candidate receives an examination result slip which state subjects passed or failed. Only those who pass all subjects including project receive a Certificate.
4. **Internal reporting** – this is to be held before the final examinations. It is intended to identify a small number of candidates whose performance, based on the evidence of recent performance (class performance report), is either particularly credit worthy or giving cause for concern. Tutors will report to the Center Head and candidates will be informed as required. This is normally a casual meeting with tutor and principal. Afterwards the principal will have words of encouragement with the relevant candidate(s).

(v) **Roles and responsibilities**

The center assessment policy and its implementation within and across departments is monitored and evaluated by the center head.

Good practice can be clearly identified through:

- Consistent planning
- Assessment tasks fully integrated with plan of work
- Standardised marking
- Constructive feedback
- Assessment data used to inform teaching and learning
- Assessment data regularly and consistently recorded
- Assessment data used for regular reporting
- Regular self assessment by staff and candidates
- Liaison with Principal for individual candidate performance

Subject tutors

It is the responsibility of subject tutors to:

- Implement college policy on assessment, evaluating their implementation
- Mark in accordance with approved policy in a positive, accurate, meaningful and diagnostic style

Center Assessment Methods

Instead of just waiting for the final examination, centres can assess students using the following methods:-

Homework - students do not read unless asked to do so. Giving students extra work after lessons helps them perform better in the final examination. Practice makes perfect.

Performance-based items or events – questions, tasks or activities in groups

Projects or experiments – extended performance tasks that may take several days or weeks

Portfolios – collections of student work. Portfolios can be used both formally and informally; ideally, portfolios capture the evolution of students ideas and can be used instructionally as a progress markers for students, teachers and program evaluators.

Internal Marking Policy

The marking of candidates work is an important assessment tool which is essential for both progression in pupil learning and effective teaching. Good practice is promoted through regular, accurate and consistent marking by all tutors. Positive marking and feedback which recognises candidates achievement, highlights both strengths and shortcomings and provides clear guidance for improvement are encouraged.

Effective marking helps to:

- Recognise candidate achievement
- Monitor candidate progress
- Diagnose problems in learning
- Provide feedback
- Provide clear guidance for improvement
- Motivate and encourage candidates
- Record and report candidates attainment
- Assist in evaluation and planning

In the context of a review of assessment within the center, it is the Exam Board's aim that work is marked:

- Promptly, regularly and consistently
- According to learning outcomes
- According to assessment criteria
- Using both quantitative and qualitative criteria
- For improvement, using constructive commentary

Presentation of work policy

Candidate work should be submitted on agreed date. This could be the following day or in a few days times. Maximum number of days for homework, including research, is 7 days. Written or oral feedback must be given to candidates as soon as possible after assessment. In the case of written or other product submitted the feedback must be given within 3 working weeks of the official submission date. Feedback should be

as helpful as possible to the candidate i.e. confirming what has gone well and giving clear guidance on what the candidate needs to do in order to improve on their performance.

Arrangements for candidates with special assessment requirements

Assessment must be available to all those who have the potential to achieve the standards required for a particular qualification. However, some candidates may need access to alternative means of providing evidence and/or additional support. Care must be taken that any proposed assessment methods are equal quality and rigour to those for mainstream candidates and demonstrate that the candidate has achieved minimum requirements.

Candidates may be identified as having particular or assessment requirements in relation to, for example, learning difficulties, a visual or hearing impairment, a mental illness, or English as an additional language. This means that they will need appropriate support in their development to help them meet the required standards such as:

- Help with communication
- Adapted equipment and physical environment
- Special information technology
- Confidence-building

1.2 Policy on BCE Student Manual Tasks/Exercises

1.2.1 What centers are expected to do

The center-based assessment tasks are linked to standards because the tasks focus on outcomes, they are valid instruments for what they are designed to assess, and where appropriate, the marking guidelines are related to the wording of the outcomes and the performance standards.

In summary, in a standards-references approached to BCE assessment, centers are expected to:

- Conduct sound assessment programs that allow candidates to demonstrate the breadth and depth of their knowledge, skills and understanding
- Develop quality assessment tasks and well-constructed marking guidelines
- Provide effective feedback to candidates in relation to their strengths and weaknesses and areas for improvement
- Encourage candidates to take greater responsibility for their own learning
- Evaluate and refine teaching programs in response to candidate performance

To create good cooperation between BCE and centers, centers must develop and implement policies and procedures to:

- Inform candidates of the assessment requirements for each course on the first day of the commencement of the course, including pass marks and course work requirements.
- Give homework, weekly tests, group assignments to candidates on a regular basis. This improves the candidates academic record and also prepares them for the final examinations. Provide meaningful feedback on candidates' performance.

- Maintain records of marks awarded to each candidate for all assessment tasks. This information will be helpful when comparing with the final examinations marked at international level.
- Address issues relating to illness, misadventures and malpractices in assessments
- Address issues relating to late submission and non-completion of assessment tasks
- Advise candidates when they are not meeting the assessment requirements in a course and advise when necessary for candidates to sit for final examinations

Important Assignment Information

1.2.2 Centre Administration Department

1. Each task/exercise should be marked by the tutor and then the administration department records all candidate marks.
2. All marked scripts for each task/exercise should be filed by the administration department.
3. BCE inspectors make impromptu visits to check on candidates recorded marks and filed marked scripts. BCE can suspend a centre if the following malpractice is discovered:
 4. The tutor gives higher or lower marks unnecessarily.
 5. The administration department recording incorrect marks
 6. The administration department not keeping a proper filing system on candidate marked scripts
 7. The tutor doing work for the candidates
 8. The administration department recording marks with no scripts available to support the marks.
 9. Tutor or the administration department accepting work after closing deadline
10. Each BCE centre should have adequate personnel responsible for checking candidates' assignments. It is the responsibility of a centre to make sure candidates submit their own work.
11. Candidates are not allowed to hand in tasks/exercises after the closing date.
12. For each subject, a chart should be displayed (see sample below) on the notice board, at reception or in class, stating the deadline for the tasks for that particular week. The tutor is responsible for giving the deadline date, but the administration department should have the same information to enable collection of marked scripts on time.
13. Tasks should be handed in on the next lesson, unless for research tasks, which should be handed in within 5-7 days.
14. All tasks which fall within a covered lesson should be handed in as stated in 7 above.
15. The administration department should name a single person responsible for recording candidates' marks and filing the scripts.
16. Centre Head is responsible for overseas for all activities.

Class Assignment Hand in Dates

Diploma in:

.....
Lecturer Name:

.....
Administration Personnel responsible:

.....
Subject:

	Lesson Date	Date and time to hand in the work	Lecturer's signature	Administration signature
Task 1				
.....				
.....				
Task 110				

NB: Lecturer marks the candidates' tasks/exercises and then passes it to administration department for (i) recording the marks (ii) filing the candidates work. When administration department receives work from the lecturer, they both sign. Each candidate manual has the number of tasks/exercises candidates should do.

1.2.3 Policy on Tasks/Exercises

- a. All tasks/exercises count towards the final examination. They carry 50% of the final coursework for each subject.
- b. Candidates answer tasks/exercises on loose paper, not in books as each work is filed by administration department
- c. All work should be handed in before the deadline.
- d. All tasks/exercises pertaining to a covered section should be handed in the following lesson, unless if it is research.
- e. All tasks/exercises which state “research” should be handed in after 5-7 days.
- f. Lecturers should mark all work within 7 days
- g. Each question is marked of out 20

1.2.4 Staff responsible for marking tasks/exercises

1. Encourage candidates to think and use their own understanding
2. Copied work from (a) the internet (b) books (c) course manuals should be given a zero mark. Candidates should understand the importance of **developing** themselves. The whole idea of these exercises is to make sure candidates understand the subject so that they:
 - (i) perform better in the final examination
 - (ii) became knowledgeable – which makes them:
 - Get better jobs
 - Be distinguished from others
 - Build self esteemThey say knowledge is power, but one cannot be knowledgeable by copying.
3. Candidates who fail to submit their tasks/exercises as required should be given 0 marks.
4. Candidates who fail to submit 3 consecutive tasks on more than three occasions may not be allowed to take final examinations.
5. Ask candidates questions when marking their work to ascertain they actually did the work themselves.
6. Some tasks should be done in class to avoid cheating

1.2.5 Candidate Responsibilities

1. Please note these tasks/exercises are meant to improve you academically.
2. Do the exercises as soon as possible, do not wait for the deadline. You can even do the work in advance.
3. Use your own words – do not copy. The whole idea of studying is to improve your by gaining knowledge and to prepare yourself for the future.
4. Give enough time when doing your work. Put enough effort. It shows if you quickly scribble on your way to college or during the lesson – you are not cheating anyone, but yourself.
5. Do not expect your work to be excellent after the first lesson. Remember you are **learning**. You make improvements gradually and that is what tutors look for when marking your work. BCE inspectors also check candidates work and if they suspect you copied, they will question you on the relevant topic.
6. Feel proud of your achievements, not somebody else's work. **DO NOT COPY. DEVELOP YOURSELF.**
7. Use loose paper to answer your work, not in your exercise books as your work will be filed.
8. Once you finish the syllabus, you will be given back your scripts, two to three weeks before the final examinations, provided BCE inspectors have checked the scripts, so that you can use them for revision.

Submission of tasks/exercises

1. Make sure you submit your work before the deadline.
2. The answers to most tasks/exercises should be a minimum of 2 paragraphs (recommended for short questions) up to 2 pages maximum. A paragraph should be about 18-20 lines. Obviously, the more information you write, the better marks you get.
3. Write meaningful answers, remember this is about improving yourself
4. Spend time on your work, show interest.
5. Do not give a one word/sentence answer, elaborate as much as possible.
 - (i) Give examples where possible
 - (ii) Use diagrams/tables where necessary. Draw in pencil
 - (iii) Use simple English
 - (iv) Use correct grammar, spelling etc.
 - (v) Make sure your work is neat and easy to read/follow
 - (vi) Number your work
 - (vii) Do not repeat/rewrite the question

End of Chapter

At the end of each chapter, each candidate must design 5 questions to ask others in class.

1.2.6 Tutor/Lecturer

1. Plan your work in advance (a minimum of two weeks in advance), four weeks recommended.
2. Give notes to candidates. Candidates need something to read when summing up the lesson.
3. Encourage candidates to take notes when you lecture. During the class everything seems simple because you are in charge doing the talking. However, when it is their (candidates) turn to do tasks/exercises/homework, they get stuck.
4. Ask candidates questions to make sure they are following the lesson well.
5. Devise ways of making the class interesting. Candidates get bored doing the same thing over a period of time.
6. Never be late for the lesson.
7. Be prepared – candidates can always tell if a tutor is not ready or didn't plan.
8. At the end of each chapter, design 5 questions which will be forwarded to BCE. Do not follow the same format of questions in the manuals. Use your own format.
9. Prepare notes for each chapter section. Candidates should be able to answer tasks using "their own words" which they learn during the lecture and from notes you give them.
10. **Candidates should do their own work and you should not directly answer questions relating to tasks/exercises.**
11. If there is a section which requires certain expertise i.e. Computer (Web, IT, Programming, Database etc.) Accounting/Finance, Economics knowledge, notify administration in advance (about 3 weeks) so that necessary arrangements can be made for another tutor to take the lesson. Please note that, the tutor would also need time to prepare/plan – so give as much time as possible.

End of Chapter

At the end of each chapter, you are required to set 5 questions which will be sent to BCE.