

ABERDEEN COLLEGE

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

Revision Date: 23 January 2012

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY (incorporating e-Assessment Strategy)

1.0 Introduction

Aberdeen College is committed to providing opportunities for individuals to develop their skills, to obtain better understanding of their strengths and areas for development, and to obtain certification of their natural and acquired skills. In order to do this the process of assessment is fundamental. This includes:

- assessment of starting point, through pre-entry guidance, and through on-entry diagnostic testing and through self-assessment in the context of learning planning
- assessment of developing knowledge and identification of areas for further development through routine formative testing
- assessment of attained level of skill for the purposes of certification as an aid to progression into employment or higher levels of education
- assessment of "distance travelled" in achieving broader personal and essential skills for learning, life and work that are applicable to employment or personal life or academic success, through processes of self-assessment and dialogue with guidance staff and academic staff.

2.0 Context

- 2.1 Aberdeen College is committed to ensuring that assessment is integrated seamlessly into the overall educational and training context – and that assessment does not in itself become a barrier to learning or to attainment or to achievement in its broader sense.
- 2.2 Aberdeen College is also committed to providing flexible access to assessment as and where appropriate.
- 2.3 Aberdeen College recognises that assessment must be proportionate to the requirements of the information necessary to establish starting points, progress and achieved skills, and commensurate with the requirements of awarding bodies.
- 2.4 Aberdeen College recognises that there are many different types of assessment and that the choice of assessment type needs to take account of the learners' needs, although this will be constrained by the requirements of awarding bodies.
- 2.5 Aberdeen College recognises that learners with additional needs must be provided with reasonable adjustments to assessment processes appropriate to their needs, in so far as this can be achieved within awarding body requirements and without diminution of the rigour of the assessment process.
- 2.6 Aberdeen College recognises that electronic-based forms of assessment have a role to play with respect to many aspects of this overall commitment – in particular in terms of allowing flexibility of access, in providing opportunities for a range of assessment types, and in facilitating alternative arrangements that support those with additional needs.
- 2.7 Aberdeen College also recognises that electronic-based forms of assessment have the potential to remove from teaching staff some of the more routine and unfulfilling aspects of assessment – by allowing computer-marked assessment in place of lecturer-marked assessment.
- 2.8 Aberdeen College recognises that online assessment may have a role to play both in relation to candidates undertaking provision at a distance (e.g. undertaking e-learning or taking part in community-based learning) as well as those undertaking College-based provision.
- 2.9 Aberdeen College also recognises that electronic forms of assessment have the potential to generate efficiency savings by taking advantage of pre-moderated online assessments and by preventing unnecessary use of staff time in routine marking and invigilation. In recognising this the College accepts that there may be some initial or ongoing additional "outlay" but that these are compensated for by the reduction in staff time in routine marking – and in reduction of the risk to the organisation from some unforeseen problem in assessment.

3.0 Strategy

Aberdeen College's Strategy is to:

- train all staff in effective assessment techniques – both formative and summative
- monitor in-class assessment as part of the processes of quality assurance, quality audit, materials audit and lesson observation and implement corrective actions where necessary
- ensure that assessments are scheduled in advance and that scheduling is appropriate, and that learners are notified of the schedule
- ensure that assessment undertaken for external certification is in line with awarding body requirements, but does not exceed them in rigour without due cause
- develop online approaches to assessment wherever possible
- take part in national initiatives to develop online assessment banks where relevant
- seek out provision that meets learners needs and provides prepared online assessment (in place of provision that does not provide this facility)
- obtain relevant software and hardware that promotes or facilitates online assessment
- provide support structures and staffing that enable or promote online assessment
- develop procedures and protocols for the effective management of online assessment, to include:
 - sourcing/creating online assessments
 - storing online assessments
 - authentication of identity of candidates in online assessment
 - maintenance of the integrity of the assessment process online (i.e. preventing academic dishonesty)
- prepare for the changes to assessment arrangements resulting from the implementation of the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence.

Aberdeen College will ensure that these elements of the Strategy are communicated to all teaching (and related support) staff and will allocate relevant resources to fulfil the commitments made in the Strategy.

This Strategy should be read in conjunction with the College's Learning and Teaching, and Retention, Achievement and Attainment Strategies.

4.0 Responsibilities

- 4.1 Vice Principal (Director of Human Resource Management and Development) and Director (Curriculum and Learning)
- Maintaining effective arrangements for assessment, including internal verification/moderation.
- 4.2 Associate Principal (Student Support Services)
- Ensuring appropriate resources and arrangements are in place to facilitate online assessment.
- 4.3 Director (Curriculum and Learning)
- Ensuring staff in each curriculum team integrate online assessment into their delivery where appropriate.