

Student Handbook

athe AWARDS FOR
TRAINING AND
HIGHER EDUCATION

Introduction to this document

This Handbook should be used by all Global Students learners as it contains important information and guidance

This Handbook is designed to support you in developing your skills and understanding, achieving your ATHE Qualification and helping you to progress to the stage in your professional development and career

Contents

Welcome	Page 2
Introduction	Page 2
About Global Studies	Page 3
About ATHE	Page 4
Programme Philosophy Your	Page 5
Qualification Recruitment and	Page 7
Admission	Page 8
Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy	Page 9
Learner Support	Page 10
Assessment	Page 12
Student Obligations	Page 16
Actions for Achieving your Qualification	Page 20
What makes a Successful Assignment?	Page 21
Personal Development Planning	Page 22
Command Verbs used in Modules and Assignments	Page 24
Annexes	Page 28
Equality and Diversity Policy	Page 29
Reasonable Adjustment Policy	Page 32
Assessment Policy	Page 35
Internal Verification Policy	Page 40
Malpractice Policy	Page 43
Complaints policy	Page 60
Academic Appeals Policy	Page 63

Welcome

Congratulations on becoming a student.

The relationship that we have with our students is extremely important to us and we want to make sure that you enjoy the experience of learning with us and that we meet your educational needs in terms of your chosen career and by providing pathways of progression to maximise your learning potential.

We believe that we have developed a series of modules and a way of working that will enthuse and excite you, and develop the skills and knowledge via the flexibility offered by online learning.

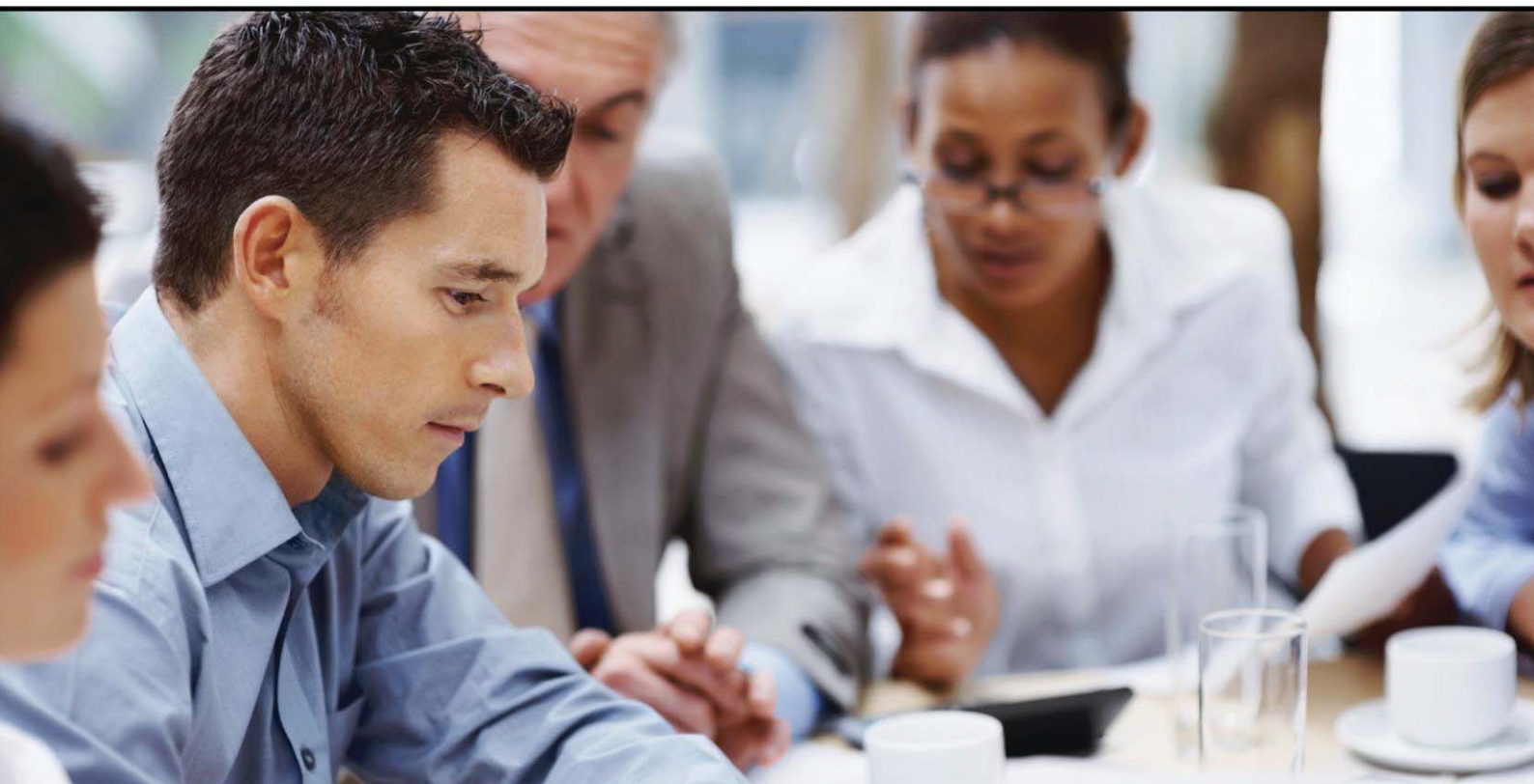
As such, if there is anything that is preventing you from experiencing and benefitting from this type of learning, then please let us know, so that we can be assured that we are meeting your needs and expectations...

Introduction

The purpose of this Handbook is to provide you with information about your chosen programme of study and to direct you to other general information about studying with the college.

This Handbook should be read in conjunction with other guidelines available on the college website, including all referenced Annexes to this document and other supporting documentation.

The material in this Handbook is as accurate as possible at the time of production. Please forward any comments or suggestions relating to the content of this Handbook to the college Administration.



About Global Studies

Affordable study programmes with exclusive online modules fast tracking learners to a University qualification.

Whether you are looking to enhance your skills, improve your team or pursue a professional education, Global Studies learning pathways can provide you with all you need.

Global Studies delivers online university pathway programmes with full Undergraduate and Postgraduate Diploma Awards to learners from all corners of the world. Learners can fast track their way through to a UK University Qualification on campus or by distance learning.

Our web based modules allow students to learn what they want, when they want and how they want and have been designed to facilitate a much faster, more affordable and engaging way to learn. With a 24/7 student networking platform, personal dashboards, 1-2-1 online tutorials, group webinars and bank of pre-recorded group webcasts, the Global Studies provides students with all the support that they need to succeed in developing their professional skill base and achieve a university qualification.

Mohi Eldin Ellaham

Group Chief Executive Officer

With many years' of experience in Distance learning, Mohi has worked with many public and private Universities all over the world. Mohi Founded Global Studies to provide affordable online pathway programmes to University qualifications in various subject areas, designed for both individuals, Colleges and Corporates.



About ATHE

ATHE is an organisation established to contribute to education and training by developing business and sector relevant qualifications, which enable learners to achieve and progress.

Their vision is to become one of the most internationally respected awarding organisations and we are making excellent progress in achieving this ambition. ATHE are known for outstanding contribution to management qualifications and excellent customer service.



Every year thousands of learners take qualifications leading to ATHE awards from over two hundred recognised centres. These learners are studying in many different parts of the world and in cities such as Budapest, Dublin and Lagos.

ATHE expect learners to be registered within 28 days of starting an ATHE qualification so that they can provide the college with the appropriate support while you are studying. Registrations must be done through your centre.

ATHE is regulated by Ofqual (the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation) which is the independent regulator of qualifications, examinations and assessments in England and of vocational qualifications in Northern Ireland. This means you can be assured that we are working to the highest standards.

Contact Details

Learners should always contact their centre if they have queries regarding ATHE qualifications however should you need to speak to ATHE you can contact them through the details below. Please have your ATHE Learner ID number to hand so they can find your details promptly.

Tel: 01603 760 030

Email: info@atheuk.com

Address: ATHE
13 St Benedicts Street
Norwich
NR2 4PE

Programme Philosophy

To facilitate University progression to University top-up degrees, Global Studies is an Approved ATHE Centre. ATHE are an Ofqual recognised Awarding Body. Ofqual is the regulator of qualifications, examinations and assessments in England and vocational qualifications in Northern Ireland.

ATHE provide RQF qualifications in Management, Business, IT & Computing, Tourism and Health & Social Care. Details of the qualifications that ATHE offer can be found at www.atheuk.co.uk/

Programme Structure

Each Course contains a number of online modules, these have been created by Global Studies and approved by ATHE.

The modules have been designed to offer a broad range of skills and knowledge for direct application in the workplace, based on contemporary management practices in real world settings. In addition, they are based on sound pedagogical structures to ensure that the learning is engaging, enjoyable and fun to study.

These qualifications can be taken on their own or in batches as Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Modules. Accessed and studied in this way will not allow you to gain any credit values for Higher Education progressions but it will provide you with skills and knowledge that can be directly applied to the workplace or the enhancement of your career. In addition, you will receive the college Certification to demonstrate that you have completed your chosen CPD modules.

If however, you undertake all the modules in each series, and pass, the corresponding assessments you will be granted access to apply for University Top-up degree programmes at the relevant level.



Qualifications and Progression

Understanding the qualification structure is important in terms of how ATHE/the college qualifications fit within the UK Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF). The RQF is the national credit transfer system for education qualifications in England, Northern Ireland and Wales. The RQF provides a process by which qualifications can be given a value, where one Credit represents 10 hours of learning time and is prescribed by a level of difficulty from entry level to level 8 at the top. The table below outlines the 'equivalent' qualification level compared to ATHE's.

Example ATHE Qualifications	Regulated Qualifications Framework*	European Qualifications Framework	National Framework of Qualifications for Ireland	Higher/Further Education Qualifications
ATHE Level 7 Qualifications	7	7	9	Master's Degrees
ATHE Level 6 Qualifications	6	6	8	Bachelor's degrees
			7	
ATHE Level 5 Qualifications	5	5	6	Foundation Degrees
ATHE Level 4 Qualifications	4		Higher National Certificates	
ATHE Level 3 Qualifications	3	4	5	A-Levels

* Also relates to Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales.

University Pathways

Upon completion of a Diploma with GS, students are able to top up to a Bachelors or MBA degree by distance learning or on-campus through a UK university. Below explains the pathways available:

University Foundation Level, Level 3 Courses are equivalent to A- Levels and will be accepted by most Universities for entry on to their Undergraduate course, subject to any other entry requirements, such as English Language competency.

First and second year of a University Degree, Level 4/5 Courses carry 240 credits and most Universities will accept students for top up onto the final year of an Undergraduate Degree either *on campus or by distance learning*.

Postgraduate MBA Entry, Level 6 Courses will allow students entry onto most university Postgraduate Management courses, relevant work experience and English language competency may also be required.

MBA Advanced Entry, Level 7 Courses. Many Universities will accept 120 credits as advanced entry onto an MBA top up. It should be noted that Universities with AMBA accredited MBAs will not accept any exemptions but will usually accept Level 6 or Level 7 as entry qualifications.

**Please check the website for the most up to date University Pathway options.*

Your Qualification

ATHE qualifications are made up of units and each unit has a credit value. In order to achieve your qualification you will need to gain a certain number of credits, for example to achieve the ATHE level 7 Diploma in Strategic Management you will need to achieve 120 credits. Global Studies have chosen the assignments which you will be marked on and these will be provided to you upon completion of the online modules.

Unit Structure

The table below shows the typical structure of an ATHE unit.

4.6 Corporate Social Responsibility	
Unit Aims	To develop an understanding of CSR policy.
Unit Level	4
Unit code	A/503/7082
GLH	60
Credit Value	15
Unit Grading Structure	Pass
Assessment Guidance	Learners will be required to demonstrate evidence of understanding corporate social responsibility (CSR) issues and the impact of CSR policies on stakeholders of organisations. They will make recommendations for responsible business practice.
Learning Outcomes – The learner will:	Assessment Criteria – The learner can:
1 Understand current corporate social responsibility policy	1.1 define corporate social responsibility (CSR) 1.2 describe background and changing attitudes to CSR 1.3 describe the regulatory framework for CSR 1.4 explain environmental issues in CSR 1.5 explain economic and political issues in CSR 1.5 explain social and community issues in CSR
2. Understand the impact of corporate social responsibility policy on different stakeholders	2.1 assess the benefits of CSR to employees 2.2 analyse the impact of CSR on the supply chain 2.4 explain how a CSR policy impacts on business performance 2.5 explain how CSR impacts on marketing strategy 2.6 assess the potential conflicts which may arise between the needs and expectations of different stakeholders 3.1 review the CSR policy of a specific business 3.2 assess the extent of voluntarism in CSR policy 3.3 recommend changes to CSR policy to benefit different stakeholders

The unit aims indicate what the overall purpose of the unit is.

This shows what level of the RQF the unit is.

Guided learning hours are an indication of the number of hours of staff time required to teach a qualification or support the learner's achievement.

Credit value indicates the size of a unit and how long it would normally take to complete.

All ATHE units are either achieved (pass) or not achieved (fail)

The Assessment Guidance gives colleges an overview of what the learners should be required to show before achieving the unit.

These are statements of what a learner can be expected to know, understand or do as a result of a process of learning.

These are the specific standards that learners need to meet in order to achieve success in a qualification or unit, or part of a unit. Descriptions of the requirements a learner is expected to meet to demonstrate that a learning outcome has been achieved".

Recruitment and Admissions

Recruitment

Details of the available programmes and their structures can be found on the college website.

To achieve the required entry requirements for each given course, students will be expected to complete a declaration that they have the required level of knowledge and/or experience to embark on their chosen course of study.

For those who wish to progress to a relevant University top-up programme will be required to have the relevant level of English Level proficiency as prescribed by each University partner and in accordance with the National Recognition Centre for the UK (www.naric.org.uk)

Application and Registration

Applications for study should be made through the college website. Those students who wish to have further guidance can speak to the college Admissions Team, where appropriate advice and guidance will be given regarding your chosen programme of study.

Induction

Before students can use the online materials, they will be required to undertake an online induction regarding how to use the materials by referring to the college website.

This will also include an orientation module, so that they can familiarise themselves with the processes and procedures that they will encounter. Students will be able to access the induction module, once they have been provided a unique username and password.



Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy

Teaching Methodology

Delivery of learning is through online learning pedagogies with underpinning learner support.

Online Pedagogy

Students will be provided with key concepts and theories, which are underpinned by a series of guided interactive and engaging activities. These have been designed using an online pedagogic approach which facilitates synthesis of knowledge, reflection, and practical application to the work-place. In doing so, real world examples and case studies are used to expose students to contemporary issues and settings. This approach also develops the analytical skills of students, their ability to problem solve and to develop comprehensible and structured arguments. Students are also provided with access to web links, articles and recommended texts to further develop and consolidate their understanding through self-study.

Webinars

The webinars are designed to expand on the core content and provide students with the opportunity to discuss topics, ideas and theories in a collaborative learning environment facilitated by a Subject Matter Expert. This allows for the sharing of ideas and the stimulation of thought to provide a complimentary depth of learning experience.

Discussion Forums

In addition, students are actively encouraged to use Discussion Forums and Bulletin Boards to interact and share information relating to study courses. This is an effective way to develop an appreciation and understanding from differing perspectives, particularly as students will be from a variety of different cultures around the world.

Recommended Reading

The module format is such that if you utilise all the content and interactive activities, you will have appropriate knowledge to undertake the assessments and meet the Learning Outcomes for each module. However, each module descriptor also contains a list of recommended texts. These are included to enable you to broaden your knowledge of the subject areas presented. These texts are provided as a guide; however, you do not need to restrict yourselves to the provided texts. Students who wish to embark on University top-up programmes are encouraged to read as widely as possible to demonstrate that they have researched areas from a variety of different perspectives. When completing assignments remember that all books and resources used must be referenced appropriately, so make a note of all references used.

Student Workload

In accordance with nationally accepted codes of practice in the UK, each credit unit represents a total of approximately 10 hours of learning. In this programme, each module represents 50 Hours of Study, which is split into 30 hours of Guided Study and 20 Hours of additional self-study, revision time and online assessment.

The ATHE assignments will require that you submit assignments of approximately 5,000 words and you will need to allow sufficient time to research, plan, execute and evaluate your assignments before submission. Although this a general guidance students will not be penalised if they exceed the 5,000-word limit if the content is relevant to the subject.

As such, you will need to balance the time against other commitments and adhere to the principles for effective study found in the Interim Module that you will need to undertake prior to studying with the college as part of your orientation activity.

Learner Support

Tutors

Students will be able to contact external tutors through the Student Dashboard. These tutors will be able to provide students with support during their studies. Students can contact a tutor using the 'Find a Tutor' button on the Dashboard and then sending an internal email directly to them with their query, the tutors are able to assist the student via:

- Email
- Skype
- Telephone

Please be aware that the external tutors work with the college, and as such, they will charge students for their time. The college has secured a flat rate of **£15 per hour**, for any 'one to one' sessions that students may need.

Any queries that a student may have, which does not require an hour session, can be emailed directly to the college who will contact one of the tutors on their behalf in order to obtain the answer, there will be no charge for this.

Learners with Particular Requirements

Each student identified is assessed, according to requirements, in line with **Annex - Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy** and **Annex - Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration Policy** to ensure that the assessment is fair and ensuring that where practicable all necessary support will be provided.

Building candidate confidence is an essential aspect when undertaking study by distance/flexible learning, particularly when candidates may be studying in remote locations and/or have not been in education for some considerable time.

As a result, the college ensures that candidates have the opportunity to build confidence in the following ways:

- During the advice and guidance stage of the enrolment process
- During their induction and orientation
- Using clear policies, procedures and ways of working as in the Student Handbook
- Using simple unambiguous language in all learning and assessment material
- Feedback on progress via the Tutorial process
- Social networking and peer support networks/forum



Assessment

Students will be assessed in 2 ways:

1. **Formative assessment** - ongoing feedback to monitor and improve student Learning, including self-tests and self-assessment. These are designed to check and reinforce learning. Note that undertaking the Multiple-Choice assessments are compulsory, students will not be able to progress to the required formal assessment until they have completed and successfully passed each module.
2. **Summative assessment** – this is used to evaluate student learning and is undertaken having completed the required online modules. This includes a Multiple-Choice activity, containing 30 questions, which have been mapped against the corresponding Learning Outcomes for each module and the completion of assignment, which covers the required awarding body assessment criteria derived from the Learning Outcomes. All summative assessment will be subjected to the Internal Verification procedures of GS and the External Verification procedures of the Awarding Body.

Once completed, students will be able to register with ATHE to seek University top-up progression by completing ATHE set assignments designed to apply the knowledge and skills acquired by students to a practical work-based setting and to achieve the required credits for each given qualification. In addition to providing a comprehensive knowledge of each of the major business functions, the structure of the courses ensure that students have the widest possible range of career, employment and higher education options open to them on successful completion of their studies.

Note: All aspects of the college assessment are contained in **Annex - Assessment Policy**

Assignment Grading

Unit assignments are assessed as **Pass/Merit/Distinction** or **Fail**, depending on the course being studied. A Pass grade is achieved by meeting all the requirements defined in the assessment criteria for each Module as defined by ATHE. Students who do not meet the requirements defined in the assessment criteria for each module will be deemed to have failed.

Submission of Assignments

Students will be required to submit assignments electronically. To safeguard against academic malpractice, learners will be required to submit their assignments with a Top Sheet that contains a signed declaration that it is the student's own work. Refer to **Annex - SAF**

All received assignments will be dated upon receipt and will be subject to checks for plagiarism. Any incidents of malpractice will be subject to the conditions and procedures relating to **Annex - Malpractice Policy**.

Submission Format

Word Process, if possible

We expect that, unless previously agreed, students will submit assignments in typewritten or word-processed format

Identify it

All pages must have the learner name, ID number and page number clearly shown.

Space it

We advise that students submit word-processed work at least one-and-a-half spaced, with wide margins. Similarly, hand-written material must be well spaced: often writing on every other line greatly helps clarity.

Assignment Guidelines

1. Read the assignment questions thoroughly and identify key words and points of issue.
2. Formulate a draft assignment plan featuring the main headings and sub-headings of the assignment.
3. Ensure you have good paragraphs of introduction and conclusion with a bibliography reflecting research sources.
4. Produce a contents list at the commencement of the assignment.
5. The assignment must be in English and preferably typed with each page numbered. Appendices may be included to feature tabulations and other specified relevant data.
6. The sequence of points discussed in the assignment should be logical.
7. The text should be a rational and analytical commentary. Assignments full of assertions and opinions will receive poor (even failing) grades. Logical and well-reasoned arguments will receive high grades. Avoid checklists and any slang language. Summary lists should be fully explained in the text. Ideally use shorter sentences rather than longer sentences. Overall the assignments should have a strategic focus. It should be professionally presented and, where appropriate, be illustrated by examples drawn from your own experiences.
8. All research data used should be referenced in the text and the bibliography.
9. The assignment must represent all your own work and not extracts without acknowledgement from research sources or colleagues/students. Assignments, which copy material from the module or textbooks without acknowledgement, will be given a Fail grade. Do **NOT** copy **any** material from a fellow students' assignment. **BOTH** assignments will be given a Fail grade so don't give your assignment to another student.
10. Keep to the terms of the assignment and do not introduce irrelevant information. Answer the question set, not the one you wish had been set.
11. Ensure the assignment is completed by the date specified and has the required number of words. Diagrams are not considered as part of the word count.

Marking of Assignments

All student assignments are required to be checked for plagiarism, in order to ensure that the work is the students own. After checking the work, assignments will be first marked by Study Centre staff and the feedback and grades recorded and provided to students. They will then be Internally Verified (IV) by a member of the college staff. Assessment decision will then be ratified by the college Exam Board. External Verification (EV) will be undertaken by ATHE in accordance with their Policies and Procedures.

Assignments will be marked as **Pass/Merit/Distinction or Fail**, depending on the course being studied. A student may receive a **Fail** result in the following instances:

- Where a piece of work is not deemed to be entirely the students own work. Refer to **Annex - Malpractice Policy**
- In the event of insufficient content and/or misinterpretation of assignment tasks
- Where no attempt has been made to answer assignment questions

Resubmission of Assignments

In the event of a student failing an assignment they will be provided with feedback from the markers in order to improve their work. They will then be able to resubmit the work for marking again.

Students will be admitted 8 free resubmissions of assignments, during their course. We provide these so that students can use the feedback in order to improve their assignments. If a student needs to resubmit assignments after this they will be charged at £30 per submission.

Students will be able to resubmit the same assignment a maximum of 3 times, if by then you have not received a pass mark your involvement in the course would be assessed and you may not be able to continue learning. This assessment would be completed on a case by case basis.

The Assessment process

ASSESSMENT

After completing your assignments, Global Studies will assess each piece of your work to ensure it has met the learning outcomes at the standard set by the assessment criteria. In the assessment process lecturers provide feedback to learners on why they have met the standards or what needs to be done to achieve success.



INTERNAL VERIFICATION

After the assessment has been completed Internal Verifiers at your centre will check the assessment decisions made by the original assessor to ensure they are valid and reliable. This is done to the nearest 10% of submission, so if a student has 8 assignments within their course one of them will be Internally Verified.

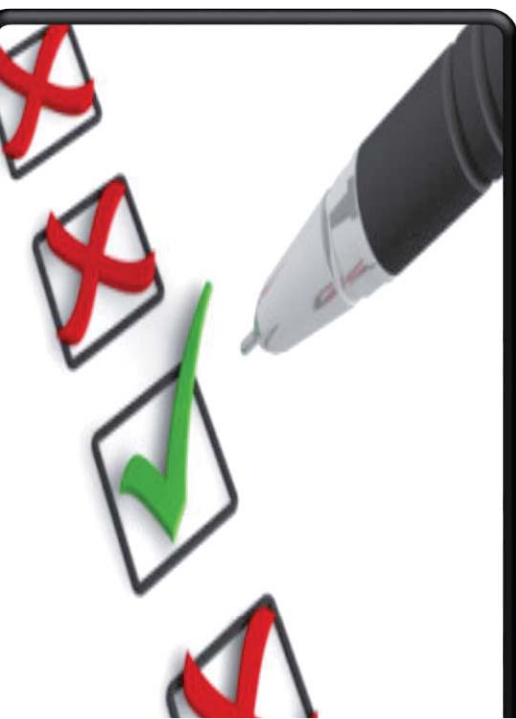


EXTERNAL VERIFICATION

Upon completion of the internal verification at your college the centre will upload learners' results to the ATHE portal.

ATHE will then arrange for an External Verifier to review your work. The purpose of this is to make a judgement on whether the lecturers have assessed the learner work and internally verified the assessors to the correct standards.

Once this is completed the External Verifier will provide a report which will have recommendations on whether the centre has passed the verification. If the centre has passed certificates will be issued for learners within 10 working days.



Student Obligations

Academic Honesty (plagiarism)

Plagiarism refers to students who cheat in examinations or present someone else's material as if it were their own

Very few students commit such offences, but the college believes that it is important that all students understand why academic honesty is a matter of such concern and why such severe penalties are imposed.

What Constitutes Plagiarism?

Some examples of plagiarism are:

- Reproducing or paraphrasing published material without acknowledging the source.
- Presenting information from electronic sources without acknowledging the source
- Passing off ideas, designs, inventions or any other creative work as your own.
- Copying the work of another student.
- Undeclared collusion with another student.
- Getting someone else to do the work for you.

There are degrees of plagiarism, particularly where published work is concerned. Minor instances of plagiarism are at the discretion of the Assessor, for example;

- A student fails to reference work properly.
 - A student fails to acknowledge the source of a short section of an assignment.

Where an instance of plagiarism has been treated as minor, a warning will be issued about future conduct. The assignment may receive a lower mark than might otherwise have been awarded. More serious infringements, which cannot be treated as minor, will result in a report to the Programme Manager and a record placed on the students' file. The college Assessment Board will penalise students who are found to have presented plagiarised work for assessment.

For full details, go to **Annex - Malpractice Policy**

Guide to Referencing

When you write your assignment, you will refer to statements and ideas of Authors you have read. As such, you need to show the marker whose ideas they are. There are several reasons why you need to reference:

- To acknowledge and give credit to other people's work, word and ideas
- To allow the reader/marker to be able to locate references easily
- To avoid plagiarism
- To show evidence of the breadth and depth of your reading, research and evaluative skills
- To avoid losing marks

The most commonly used referencing system is the **Harvard system**.

Referencing is a two-stage process: you need to reference in the text of the report or assignment and at the end in a reference list.

Referencing in the Text

The Harvard system uses the **author's surname and date of publication** to identify cited documents **in the text of an essay or report**. For example:

Brown (1994) notes that traditionally occupations within museums have been undertaken on perceived gender roles.

Or

Traditionally, occupations within museums have been undertaken on perceived gender roles (Brown, 1994).

- When referring generally to the work of several different authors on a topic, put the authors in **alphabetical order**:

Management is the world's fastest growing industry (Jones, 1998; Pearce, 1991; Walcott, 1999)

- When there are **two authors**, give both names in the order they appear on the publication:

Smith & Jones (2000) suggest that the concept of appraisal is now widely accepted in management.

- When there are **more than two authors**, use the surname of the first author and 'et al' (Latin for 'and others'):

According to Cooper et al (2001), management is a key construct in organisations

- For **corporate authors**, for example a company report, use the company or organisation's name:

Over 35,000 volunteers worked for the National Trust in 1997 (The National Trust, 1998).

- For publications with **no obvious author**, for example a government publication, give the title:

Employment Gazette (1999).

- For **direct, i.e. word-for-word quotes**, put the quotation in inverted commas and give the author's surname, date, and page number from which the quote was taken:

"A sound tourism strategy will therefore seek a balance between large, tourism-orientated events and local and regional events" (Getz, 1991:128).

Or

Markwell et al (1997:96) note that the 'typical' historic property is small scale, with "incomes insufficient to warrant full-time professional management".

- If you have several references by the **same author**, they should be put in the order of date of publication, the earliest first. You can use a, b, c, etc., in the text to differentiate between publications by the same author, but be sure to use them in your reference list and make sure they correspond. For example:

Binning this data vector gives the fold of the operator in model-space Claerbout (1998a); and its inverse.

Or

With the development of the helical coordinate system Claerbout (1998b), recursive inverse filtering is now practical in multi-dimensional space.

- Quoting from the **Internet**:

The recently published Global Code of Ethics for Tourism state that tourism should contribute to a "mutual understanding and respect between peoples and societies" (WTO, 1999:1).

How the Reference Should Look

The reference list at the end of the work should only include those sources that have been *directly* referred to in your text, i.e. all texts mentioned in the report or essay should be on your reference list, and vice versa: all the text on your reference list should be in your discussion. If you wish to include other sources that might be of interest to the reader but which you have not directly referred to you need to include a separate list called the **Bibliography**. References should be in **alphabetical order** by authors' surnames.

The following sequence ought to be followed when writing a reference for a reference list:

1. **Author**, editor, organisation, artist or corporate author.
2. **Year** of publication.
3. **Edition** as appropriate.
4. **Editor** in addition to author where appropriate.
5. **Title** – *in italics and followed by a full stop.*
6. **Translator** where appropriate.
7. **Place** of publication.
8. **Publisher**.

You **MUST** be consistent with all your references.

Common Errors

- Check that all the authors/text referred to in the text are in the reference list and vice versa.
- Reference the source of statistics, including dates in tables and figures.
- Insert the page number when using a direct quotation, and put the quote in "inverted commas".
- In your reference list, put page numbers for journal articles and book chapters.
- And remember: be consistent!

How to Reference at the End of the Text

To check that all your references contain the correct information in the appropriate format, we suggest that you use a free online tool or refer to the numerous sites that are devoted to this subject and use those as your guide.

A very good online tool, can be found at:

<http://www.harvardgenerator.com/>

To make sure that you have all the information available record the references using the generator as you use them. There is nothing worse than having finished an assignment and not being able to locate the appropriate references. Also, you need to allow sufficient time to record your references as often this will take longer than you think.

	Author	Year	Title of Article	Title of Publication	Issue	Place	Publisher	Edition	Page Number(s)	URL	Date Accessed
Book	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓			
Chapter	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		
Journal Article	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		
eJournal Article	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓
Internet Site	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓	✓
Newspaper Article	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			

Actions for Achieving your Qualification

Listed below are six actions you should take, in order to help you successfully achieve your ATHE qualification.

1. Develop your knowledge, understanding and skill.

During your programme of study towards your qualification you must use different sources of information to confirm and develop your knowledge of the topics you are studying. The sources of information will be wide ranging and include books, the internet, periodicals, lecture notes. The information will be a mixture of factual details and opinions. You must develop your understanding of the topics you are studying, so you can write assignments in your own words and with clarity and authority. You will need to use a range of skills to be successful in your qualification for example analysis, planning, synthesis, and communication both oral and written.

2. Achieve the learning outcomes at the standards set by each of the assessment criteria listed in each unit you are studying.

You must ensure you understand the meaning and implications of the learning outcomes and the assessment criteria for all of the units that make up your qualification. Read them carefully. You will need to demonstrate that your completed work achieves these learning outcomes and each stated assessment criterion.

3. Understand and take account of the command words in the assessment criteria.

The assessment criteria always begin with a command word. There is a large range of command words and they vary between the different levels of qualification. They include evaluate, explain, review, plan, report, assess and analyse. It is essential that you understand what these command words mean. Check your understanding with your tutor. Your work must demonstrate that you have done what is required by the command word in each criterion. The definitions of command verbs used in ATHE qualifications on page should help you understand these terms.

4. Take account of the feedback provided by lecturers and tutors.

You must do this in order to build on the successes you have made and improve on any aspects of your work that do not meet the standards required. If you are unsure about what the feedback is saying or it does not relate sufficiently closely to the assessment criteria, you must seek clarification.

5. Review the way you work.

It is good practice for you to personally review on a regular basis how you are progressing on your programme of study, in order to identify what works well and the issues which are impeding your success. In your review you should take account of information gained from your tutor and others. You can then plan any improvements which are required.

6. Produce successful assignments.

Use the information provided in the following section in this Handbook to help you produce assignments that meet the required standards.

What makes a successful assignment?

The following is a list of general features which characterise successful assignments. They are provided to help you reflect on what you need to do to achieve a pass standard in your work. However each assignment which is issued to you, as part of the assessment programme for your qualification, is unique. So you must use this information as a general guide and always follow the instructions given to you by your tutors. You should also seek your tutor's guidance if you are unsure how to proceed with an assignment.

1. You must complete the tasks which are given in the assignment to the correct standard. Ignoring the assignment and addressing only the individual assessment criteria provided in the ATHE units is insufficient.
2. You must plan your work carefully. Do not leave things to the last minute as work completed quickly may not meet the standards required for success. As there are no assignment deadlines with Global Studies.
3. You must present the work appropriately so that it is easy for the assessor to read. Some tasks in assignments expect work to be presented in a particular way. You may be asked to draft a report, produce a booklet or prepare slides and other materials for a presentation. You must follow the instructions in the task and present the work as required for the target audience. If you are unsure about the features of a report or how to produce slides or a booklet for a presentation, please ask your tutor for guidance.
4. Fundamentally your completed work must show that you have achieved the stated learning outcomes tested in the assignment. These learning outcomes must be achieved at the standards set by each of the assessment criteria for that learning outcome.

Look at the unit specification for the assignment you have been given and you will see the link between the specification and the tasks in the assignment. You must achieve the standards set by each of the assessment criteria. Check that you have done this, as failure to do so will compromise the success of your work.

5. In each of the assessment criteria there is a command word such as 'evaluate', 'analyse' or 'critically assess'. You must follow the direction given by the command words. You could check with your tutor what these words mean if you are unsure what is required.
6. The best work is produced from the synthesis of data and ideas. Data has been processed, problems have been solved, decisions taken and the conclusions justified.
7. The completed assignment must be coherent, have a logical development of information, ideas, principles and concepts and demonstrate effective thinking.
8. Some tasks may require self-reflection and you need to produce a balanced analytical response which is detailed, factual and wide ranging.
9. As stated above, all of your work must be planned and organised but large projects such as a piece of research must also be managed carefully. You must gather sufficient and reliable information and be able to accommodate any unforeseen developments. You should evaluate the validity of results in assignments against stated criteria.

10. Wherever possible you should try to apply innovative thought in your work. This can be applied to a wide range of tasks but there are certain tasks in assignments which require creativity such as the production of marketing materials or materials for a presentation. All of your work must take account of the target audience and the communications must use appropriate media.
11. Your completed work must have a range of sources of information, which need to be relevant and reliable. Where you are quoting specific sources you must use a standard referencing system and include a bibliography. You should not copy large sections of text written by others, even if you attribute this, unless there is a clearly justifiable reason for doing so. Colleges can use different referencing systems depending on what it considers best for learners and tutors so please follow the instructions provided.

Personal Development Planning

Managing your Study Time

We strongly advise you to 'manage' your study time carefully. You should clarify your aims, identify your strengths and weaknesses, consider the context in which you will be studying and generate a broad strategy for successfully covering the material and completing this course.

You should take a broad overview of the requirements of any module and unit; consider your situation, workload and home responsibilities in the relevant study-period, then develop specific and realistic plans for active study and writing.

You should bear in mind the overall aims that we suggest for each module, but you may also find it useful to formulate more personal and specific objectives for yourself. These will help you to focus your study, assess material and apply ideas.

For example, in relation to the process of studying, you might want to set yourself targets for:

- The amount of time within which you will seek to complete a task
- The quantity of work you aim to do in a particular week
- Progress through the modules and units, bearing in mind your other responsibilities and tasks
- Progress on assignments
-

You should plan and monitor what you do, and where necessary, act to improve the process, quantity and quality of your work. You should make decisions about the importance you will attach to tasks, the time you choose to allocate to them, and the sequence in which you will do them.

People learn in different ways. We do not expect that all students will approach the business of study in the same way, or in a way we prescribe. We advise and expect you to be able to manage your study and to be disciplined about how you do it.

Preparing to Read and Study

When you are faced with any study-task or reading, it is helpful to spend a couple of minutes making notes on what you currently know about the topic, or think about the question. This will bring your own ideas and experience into focus. It could remind you of previous relevant information from the course. It will prepare you to respond critically to what you read and to integrate whatever you learn into your current knowledge and practice.

Brainstorming is sometimes a useful way to start such notes and to ensure that you generate a comprehensive range of points. By this we mean the rapid gathering of ideas, which seem relevant to a particular topic or problem, within a brief time limit and without judgement. You can then reflect on each idea, develop and analyse the material and make connections. Brainstorming is a technique you can use on your own as well as in groups.

Effective Reading

There are various styles of reading, which are appropriate for different purposes. For studying in depth, learning and remembering, you should not necessarily start at the beginning and finish at the end of something you plan to read.

First, look briefly at the whole item to see what is there. Look at headings and tables. Read any introduction or introductory paragraphs, any summary, and any concluding section. You will already be developing an understanding of what is said, without any detailed reading. Skim read each section to amplify your understanding. Finally, read the text in detail. Using these styles of reading, you gradually build up your understanding.

Evaluating Ideas, Action and Learning

People generally seem to find it easier to focus on weaknesses and negative points when they are evaluating propositions, people and projects. However, evaluation should cover positive points and strengths, too. To counteract this tendency, and to explore a range of factors relevant to analysis, it is useful at the beginning of a period of evaluative thought to brainstorm (say for a minute each) first the positives, then the negatives and then the interesting things about the matter in question. This approach will bring key ideas to the surface before you consider them in more depth. Of course, the same idea may fall under more than one category however, at this stage that does not matter as you are simply examining ideas. This process is a tool and a technique to support a certain type of thinking, which you will find helpful throughout this course.

Note: There is further guidance on Study Skills and additional resources available as part of the Online Induction Module

Consolidate your Learning

It is important to “consolidate” periods of reading and study to gain maximum benefit from them. At stages along the way, summarise key things you have learned, both about the topic under discussion, and the process of thinking and learning. It is easy to forget new ideas. New tools, methods and skills require practice. To aid your memory, you should review your notes regularly to help develop your skills.

Command verbs used in modules and assignments

The verbs used in the assessment criteria in ATHE units and assignments are very important. The evidence you provide via your assignment needs to show that you have met the assessment criteria so it is important that you understand what the criteria expect you to do.

Here is a list of verbs used in ATHE assessment criteria and assignments. The explanations for the verbs provide alternative words or phrases that help to clarify the verb used. It is also important to take into account the level of the unit when reviewing the command verbs.

Verbs	Explanation
Agree	Have the same opinion about something; concur
Analyse	Break the subject or complex situations into separate parts and examine each part in detail; identify the main issues and show how the main ideas are related to practice and why they are important; reference to current research or theory may support the analysis
Apply	Explain how existing knowledge, practices, standards etc. can be linked to new or different situations Use information to determine outcomes/conclusions /recommendations
Appraise	Assess the value or quality
Assess	Use available information to make a judgement
Calculate	Determine or ascertain by mathematical methods
Carry out	Implement; do; execute
Close	Bring to an end
Collaborate	Work jointly with
Collate	Collect and present information arranged in sequence or logical order which is suitable for purpose
Communicate	Convey or exchange spoken or written information
Compare	Examine the subjects in detail looking at similarities and differences
Compare and contrast	Examine the subjects in detail, identify similarities and differences , consider these from different perspectives
Conduct	Carry out
Consider	Ponder, contemplate or study in order to make a decision

Construct	Form by bringing together various elements
Convey	Communicate (information)
Create	Bring something into existence
Critically assess	Use available information to make a judgement; produce a convincing argument for a judgement
Critically evaluate	Examine strengths and weaknesses, arguments for and against and/or similarities and differences; consider the evidence and discuss the validity of evidence from opposing views; produce a convincing argument to support the conclusion or judgement.
Critically review	Look back over the topic or activity, analysing the positive and negative aspects
Define	State or show clearly and accurately
Demonstrate	Clearly show by giving proof or evidence; give a practical exhibition and explanation
Describe	Provide an extended range of detailed factual information about the topic or item in a logical way
Design	Decide on the look and function of something by making a detailed visual or written document of it
Determine	Ascertain or establish exactly by research or calculation
Develop	Identify, build and extend a topic, plan or idea
Devise	Plan or invent (a complex procedure, system or mechanism) by careful thought
Differentiate between	Discuss identified differences between more than one entity, item, product, object or activity
Discuss	Give a detailed account including a range of views or opinions which includes contrasting perspectives
Distinguish between	Discuss identified differences between more than one item, product, object or activity
Document	Record something in written, photographic or other form
Draw conclusions	Arrive at judgements or opinions by reasoning
Establish	Set up; show something to be true by determining the facts

Evaluate	Examine strengths and weaknesses, arguments for and against and/or similarities and differences; Judge the evidence from the different perspectives and make a valid conclusion or reasoned judgment; Apply current research or theories to support the evaluation when applicable
Examine	Inspect (something) thoroughly in order to determine its nature or condition
Explain	Make something clear to someone by describing or revealing relevant information in more detail
Explore	Investigate or examine a range of issues from different perspectives
Formulate	Draw together; put together in a logical way; express in systematic terms or concepts
Identify	Ascertain the origin, nature, or definitive characteristics of
Illustrate	Explain or make something clear by using examples, charts etc.
Interpret	Explain the meaning of something
Investigate	Carry out a systematic or formal inquiry to examine the facts
Justify	Give a comprehensive explanation of the reasons for actions and/or decisions
Lead	Be responsible for taking people, organisation or a piece of work in a direction
Make recommendations	Use conclusions to suggest ways forward. Revisit & judge the merit of; endorse a proposal or course of action; advocate in favour of
Manage	Be in charge of; control or direct people/resources
Match	Correspond or cause to correspond (something with something else)
Measure	Assess the importance, effect or value of something
Monitor	Maintain regular surveillance
Negotiate	Discuss with a view to finding an agreed settlement
Outline	Identify accurately and describe clearly – the main points
Plan	Decide on something and make arrangements for it in advance; Design or make a plan of something
Prepare	Make something or someone ready for use

Present	Show for others to scrutinise or consider; Formally deliver (e.g. in verbal, written or graphical format)
Produce	Make, create or form something
Propose	Put forward (a plan or suggestion) for consideration by others
Provide	Identify and give relevant and detailed information in relation to the subject
Recommend /Make recommendations	Use conclusions to suggest ways forward. Revisit & judge the merit of; Endorse a proposal or course of action; Advocate in favour of
Record	Put in writing or some other permanent form for later reference
Reflect	Consult with oneself or others, recognising implications of current practice with a view to changing future practice
Reflect critically	Learners should consider their actions, experiences or learning and the implications of these in order to suggest significant developments for future action, learning or practice, producing a convincing argument to support the conclusion or judgement.
Report (on)	Give a spoken or written account of something that has been observed, heard, done or investigated
Request	Politely or formally ask for
Research	Conduct a detailed study of a subject to discover new information or reach a new understanding
Review	Revisit and consider the merit of analysing the positive and negative aspects
Select	Make informed choices
Self-analyse	Examine methodically in detail to explain and interpret oneself and one's actions
Set up	Establish; place something in position
Specify	Identify clearly and definitely
Suggest	Put forward for consideration
Summarise	Give the main ideas or facts in a concise way
Synthesise	Combine into a coherent whole
Translate	Convert
Validate	Demonstrate or support the truth, accuracy or value of something

Annexes

Equal opportunities and Diversity

Academic Appeals

Assessment Policy

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy

SAF Form

Internal Verification Policy

Distance Learning Questionnaire

Malpractice Policy

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

1. Introduction

Colleges are committed to ensuring the establishment of a culture and environment in which learners, staff and visitors understand and embrace the principles and practices of equality and diversity.

The college seek to ensure that all individuals are able to maximise their potential and do not face any unfair barriers and as such, the college will not tolerate any discriminatory behaviour with respect to any of the following protected characteristics of Equity Law.

- Age
- Race
- Gender reassignment
- Religion or belief
- Marital status
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Disability
- Pregnancy and Maternity

2. Aims

The college will continually develop strategies and procedures to tackle varying forms of discrimination, unfair treatment and barriers which may occur.

These will broadly fit into the following categories:

- Direct discrimination – where a person is not treated equally due to any of the categories listed above.
- Indirect discrimination – where a requirement, situation or condition, which is applied for all groups, has an adverse effect on one or more groups.
- Harassment – where someone is subjected to unwanted conduct, i.e. unwelcome sexual attention or racial harassment.
- Victimisation – where someone is treated less favourable due to action taken against others.
- Segregation – where someone is segregated due to his or her beliefs, attitudes or opinions.

3. Roles and responsibilities

It is the duty of all individuals and groups associated with the college to avoid discriminatory practices themselves to condone and discourage discriminatory practices from others.

The college will encourage those who wish to report instances of discrimination and provide a confidential process by which all discriminatory matters can be dealt with by means of the **formal Grievance Procedures**.

A designated the college senior manager who will be responsible for Equality and Diversity monitoring and the point of contact for those who may wish to discuss any discriminatory practice informally in the first instance.

The college will communicate Equality and Diversity in a variety of forms to all staff, learners, potential applicants (staff and learners), contractors and collaborative partners.

The college will take action against anyone who is in breach of the Equality and Diversity Policy.

4. Learners

The college will offer equity for access to all its courses and will encourage the recruitment of students from the widest possible audience both nationally and internationally. The college will also offer flexibility of access to the curriculum by enabling students to enrol for both units of programmes and full awards. This will be reinforced by:

- Marketing literature which is produced for all courses
- An admissions process which is sensitive and supportive to the needs of all students which includes
- An enrolment process, which provides for assessment of learning support for those students who may have special needs.

Regarding the curriculum, student progress and achievement will be monitored by the course review process to ensure that equality of opportunity has taken place.

All students will be made aware of the Equality and Diversity Policy via the induction process and its inclusion in the **Student Handbook**, which will be produced for each course.

All materials used for distance learning study and assessment will be subject to evaluation prior to issue to make sure that they do not contain anything which could be considered discriminatory or offensive to individual students or groups.

1. Statistical Analysis

Equal opportunities statistical information will be provided to focus primarily on equal opportunities statistics of those who register for the college courses.

2. Documentation relevant to Equality and Diversity

- Admissions Procedures
- Induction Procedures
- Assessment Policy
- Grievance Procedure
- Complaints Procedure
- Assessment Policy
- Staff Development Policy
- Accreditation to Prior Learning (APL) Procedures
- Unit Evaluation Forms
- Academic Appeals Policy

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS POLICY

1. Introduction

This Policy sets out the steps to be followed to implement reasonable adjustments and special considerations. The college recognise that:

- Reasonable adjustments may be required, particularly in assessment situations, so that assessments are a fair test of a learner's knowledge and what they capable of.
- The usual format of assessment may not be suitable.
- Our assessments are fair without being prejudicial or advantageous to those who require reasonable adjustments and special considerations to be made.
- All Study Centres should have a Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations Policy

2. Reasonable Adjustments

This refers to any activity that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation, such as:

- Allowing learners extra time to complete the assessment activity
- Adapting assessment materials
- Providing facilitators
- Changes to the learning environment

3. Special Considerations

Special considerations can be applied after an assessment if there is a substantive reason (supported by documented evidence) to believe that the learner has been disadvantaged by the assessment. Reasons for special considerations may include:

- Temporary illness
- Injury
- Bereavement
- Family issues
- Personal issues

Learners cannot enter a plea for special considerations for assessments based solely the grounds of disability. Learners must declare any grounds for special consideration prior to the assessment in time allow the college to make reasonable adjustments.

Where an assessment required that a criterion is met it may not be appropriate to apply special consideration, in which case an opportunity to re-take the assessment may be allowed.

4. Making Reasonable Adjustments

When making decisions regarding reasonable adjustments, the college will take into consideration the following:

- That learners must be able to cope with the level and content of assessment
- That set standards of competence (as laid down by the Awarding Body cannot be altered.
- That learners will not gain an advantage or disadvantage from any adjustment
- Any adjustment will be based on the individual needs of the learner.
- Each adjustment and the circumstances thereof will be considered on an individual basis.
- That any adjustment will not affect the learners' normal way of working, providing that this does not affect what is being assessed in any way.

5. Recruitment of Learners

The college will ensure that:

- Learners are given the appropriate advice and guidance at the outset of their programme of study and that their needs will be met.
- Each learner will be assessed on their potential to achieve any qualifications. In doing, support, where appropriate will be identified and made know to the learner.
- In the event that a learner is identified as not being able to meet the requirements for attainment of a particular assessment or parts thereof, this will be communicated to the learner, so that appropriate study decisions can be made.
- All learners will be made aware of study options available and adjustments that may be necessary and any restrictions on progression routes from learners not achieving certain outcomes.

6. External Verification

The college will ensure that all details relating to any reasonable adjustments given will be made available to the External Verifier during any relevant centre visit pertaining to the following:

- Services for learners with learning difficulties
- Services for learners with hearing impairments
- Services for learners with visual impairment
- Services for learners who have a permanent physical impairment
- Services for learners who have a medical condition or temporary injury
- Services for learners whose first language is not English

In the event that the college needs additional advice and guidance they will contact the Awarding Body to seek clarification before making any decision in accordance with their rules for application.

ASSESSMENT POLICY

1. Underpinning Values of Assessment

- All assessments will be designed to ensure both equity and consistency for students and will be monitored as part of the quality assurance and monitoring process.
- The culture of assessment will be communicated and embraced by all staff and students who are involved with academic/vocational programmes of study.
- All assessments will be a fair test of the learners' knowledge and what they are able to do. However, for some students, the college recognise that the usual assessment format may not be suitable. As such, we ensure that our assessments do not disadvantage anyone and ensure that we have steps in place to ensure equity of access.
- The requirements of all awarding bodies will be adhered within the Assessment Policy.
- All assessment is based upon the achievement of the Learning Outcomes at standards stated by the Assessment Criteria.
- Study Centres will be required to have their own Assessment Policy that is fair and does not disadvantage learners in any way.
- Assessment will be carried out taking into account the Conflicts of Interest Policy

2. Student Focused Principles of Assessment

- **The Assessment Policy and procedures relating to specific programmes will be made available to all students prior to commencement of their course and reinforced throughout their programmes of study to ensure that:**
- They understand the reason for assessment as a means to confirm that learning and understanding has taken place matched against the learning outcomes/assessment objectives laid down by the Awarding Body.
- **Assessment opportunities will be based on good practice and will comprise the following elements:**
 - Common and agreed assessment procedures amongst course teams
 - Interesting, challenging and realistic assessments
 - Comprehensive feedback mechanisms
 - Clear and accurate recording of grades
 - Quality assurance via internal verification and moderation
 - Continual monitoring of candidate performance

Students will be assessed in 2 ways:

Formative assessment - ongoing feedback to monitor and improve student learning. Typically, these will be facilitated via the college online learning modules and the associated activities, therein, including self-tests and self-assessment.

Summative assessment – this is used to evaluate student learning and is undertaken having completed the required the college online modules. This includes a Multiple Choice activity and the completion of assignment, which covers the required awarding body assessment criteria derived from the Learning Outcomes. All summative assessment will be subjected to the Internal Verification procedures of the college and the External Verification procedures of the Awarding Body.

Support mechanisms will give student's equality of opportunity for assessment. This will be enabled by:

- Provision of appropriate resources to enhance learning.
- Appropriately qualified staff to carry out and monitor assessment.
- Provision of appropriate resources for students with special learning needs
- Provision of appropriate resources to take into account differing cultural and linguistic needs.
- Provision of appropriate quality assurance measures related to the assessment process (Refer to **Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy**)

All students will be entitled to the following:

- Advice and guidance on assessment given by specialist tutors appropriate to their programme of study.
- Access to the Assessment Policy as part of their induction process
- where appropriate student's will be encouraged to self-assess their own work
- All assessments will be planned by subject tutors to avoid bunching of assessments. This will be given to students prior to the commencement of the programme.
- The opportunity to have prior knowledge and experience assessed by **Accreditation to Prior Learning (RPL) Policy**.
- Written and where appropriate oral feedback will be given on the outcome of all assignments.
- A copy of the **Academic Appeals Procedure** which is given to all Student's as part of the induction process.
- All documents relating to indicative content will be contained within the **Course Information Pack** which is available on the student Dashboard.

3. Assessment Decisions

Students will receive a **Pass/Merit/Distinction or Fail** (Depending on the course being studied) for all summative assessments. A failed piece of work will be awarded in the following instances:

- Where a piece of work is not deemed to be entirely the students own work. Refer to **Annex - Malpractice Policy**
- In the event of insufficient content and/or misinterpretation of assignment tasks
- Where no attempt has been made to answer assignment questions

In the event of a student failing an assignment they will be provided with feedback from the markers in order to improve their work. They will then be able to resubmit the work for marking again. The first re-assessment is covered in the fees paid. **Any subsequent resubmission will be charged at the rate of £60 each**, payable on application for the re-assessment. Students will be able to resubmit the same assignment a maximum of 3 times, if by then a student has not received a pass mark their involvement in the course would be assessed and they may not be able to continue learning. This assessment would be completed on a case by case basis.

- Assessment decisions will be recorded on the Student database, which will be used for the tracking and monitoring of grades.
- Assessment decisions and feedback will be recorded using Annex - Form SAF

4. Review of Assessment

- In addition to being able to communicate assessment issues with subject tutors, students will also have the opportunity to make comment via the course review questionnaires.
- Course team and Examination Boards will also provide further evidence of the quality of assessment.

Student Submission and Feedback Form

1. PROGRAMME DETAILS

Name:		ID No.		Enrolment date:	
Programme Title:		Subject tutor:			
Course Title:		Assignment No.		Due date:	

Student Declaration:

I declare that the work submitted is my own work:

Signed:

Mentor Declaration:

I declare that the above student is known to me in my capacity as Mentor and that this is the work of that student:

Signed:

Designation:

2. ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK (Reference must be made to the suggested evidence provided for each assignment)

Activity Title	
LO	Feedback/evidence
AC	
LO	Feedback/evidence
AC	
LO	Feedback/evidence
AC	
LO	Feedback/evidence
AC	

Grade Awarded: Pass/Merit/Distinction/Fail (please circle)

General Comments:

Hand in date:		Date returned:		Signed tutor:	
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INTERNAL VERIFICATION POLICY

1. Introduction to Internal Verification

Internal verification is the process through which Global Studies (GS) ensures that all assignments are marked in a consistent manner and assessors receive feedback, in order to further improve their assessment practice and judgements. GS seeks to ensure that the requirements of the awarding body, ATHE, are met. GS is committed to the effective internal verification of all courses provided and in particular that assessors make judgements on whether the learner demonstrates achievement of the LOs at the standards specified by the assessment criteria. Appropriate systems are in place with all tutors, markers and internal verifiers receiving effective training and standardisation to ensure there is a consistency in standards. Assignments will initially be marked by an approved OBS marker and then a minimum of **10% of all assignments marked will be Internally Verified**. In the case that a number of assignments submitted by a student is not divisible by 10, OBS will internally verify the closest amount to 10% as possible. For example a student submits only one assignment so one assignment will be internally verified, or a student submits eight assignments in which case one will be internally verified.

This process is important because:

- It ensures that internal assessment is completed in line with Awarding Body requirements
- It ensures that all markers are supported through the evaluation and validation process
- It ensures that all markers are consistent in their approach to marking, making it fair and reliable
- It reduces the likelihood of any adjustments at the External Verification stage

All markers/assessors working with Global Studies will act as Internal Verifier as and when needed. All markers/assessors will have had feedback and their judgements will have been internally verified in order to ascertain they are marking at the correct level. When selecting a new marker/assessor OBS will ensure that any marking performed by the new marker/assessor will be internally verified at a higher rate of 25%, of all assignments marked, for a period of 1 month. This will help to ensure that the judgements are valid and appropriate feedback is provided. All new colleges will be required to send OBS 25% of their assignments to be internally marked/assessed for the first month of assignment submission so that the level of marking can be verified and modified if needed.

2. Assessment Procedure

Markers will follow the ATHE marking guidance when completing the marking process. Students will receive a Pass/Merit/Distinction or Fail for the assignment, according to the marker's judgement.

The marker will complete the Assignment Front Sheet and may annotate the student's assignment if they wish. Feedback to candidates will be constructive and developmental and will be directly related to the basis for the assessment namely the LOs and the associated AC. Feedback will not be generalised so the learner is unclear why he/she has succeeded or where there is room for improvement. However the assessor Feedback will not disclose specific elements of the marking scheme.

The marking process will be completed within 10 working days of the assignment being submitted. Internal Verification will proceed when a student has completed all assignments included on their course and will be completed within 10 working days of submission.

The marking process will comply with the provisions outlined in the Appeals procedure and Malpractice policies of Global Studies.

All data provided by the Internal Verifier will be collected and held by Global Studies for future reference.

3. Role of the Internal Verifier

Internal Verification will be carried out by an appropriate member of staff, who will have the necessary experience and/or training in relation to the carrying out of moderation activities. This is an independent role as they cannot act as Marker and Internal Moderator.

The internal Verifier will be responsible for:

- Ensuring the consistent application of criteria and standards.
- Identifying areas of good practice.
- Providing advice to markers of what constitutes good practice.
- Forming part of the appeals procedure when an assessment is questioned by a candidate.
- Confirming instances of plagiarism and collusion or malpractice.
- Maintaining consistency of assessment practices.
- Receiving feedback from External Verifier in order to ensure the centre understands what is needed to effect improvements and actions all the tasks provided.
- Providing OBS with copies of all records and documentation as required.

4. Quality Assurance Procedures for Internal Verification

Quality Assurance Aspects of Internal Verification will principally involve the following:

- Verifying assignment grades through the sampling of markers judgements and feedback. In most cases this will be determined by OBS but ATHE may wish to review the Internal Verification, at which point it will be provided access.
- A spread of grades should be moderated to reflect the full range of markers decisions.
- Assignments should be sampled from different students.
- Accurate and clear record keeping using Internal Verification Document provided by ATHE (see next page)

ATHE Internal Verification Form

Qualification Title			
Unit Title			
Assignment Name (where appropriate)			
Learner Name		Learner ID number	
Name of Assessor		Date of Assessment	
<p>Is the feedback to the learner linked to achievement of LOs and the assessment criteria? Yes/No</p> <p>Provide evidence for your judgement</p>			
<p>Has the work been assessed to the correct standards as stated by the ACs? Is achievement of the LO secure?</p> <p>Provide evidence for your judgement Yes/No</p>			
<p>Is the feedback to the learner detailed so they understand what has been achieved and the areas for improvement? Yes/No</p> <p>Provide evidence for your judgement.</p>			
<p>Identify any actions required by the assessor which have resulted from the verification.</p> <p>Provide dates for the actions to be completed and when the learner work needs to be returned to the IV</p>			
Confirmation of actions completed		Assessor Name and Signature	
Date		Internal Verifier Name and Signature	

MALPRACTICE POLICY

Contents

Part A- Policy

- 1: Scope of Policy
- 2: Definitions of Malpractice
- 3: Examples of actions that may constitute Malpractice
 - 3.1: Examples of centre malpractice
- 4: Definition of Maladministration
- 5: Examples of Maladministration
- 6: Dealing with Malpractice or Maladministration
- 7: Academic Malpractice
- 8: Copies of policy
- 9: Responsibility of Centres
- 10: Monitoring and Review

Part B- Procedures to be followed in case of alleged or suspected Malpractice or Maladministration.

- 1: Terminology
- 2: Allegations of Malpractice or Maladministration
- 3: Anonymous Allegations
- 4: Suspected Malpractice or Maladministration
- 5: Application of these Procedures
- 6: Sanctions and Penalties
- 7: Alleged or suspected Malpractice by learners
 - 7.1: Initial Response
 - 7.2: Centre Investigation
 - 7.3: procedures
 - 7.4: The college Action
 - 7.5: Penalties: Learner Malpractice
 - 7.6: Case Records: Learner Malpractice
 - 7.7: Appeals
- 8: Alleged or Suspected Malpractice or Maladministration by Centre Employees
 - 8.1: Initial response
 - 8.2: Centre Investigation
- 9: Alleged or suspected Malpractice or Maladministration by Centres.
 - 9.1: Initial response
 - 9.2: The college Investigation
 - 9.3: Responsibility
 - 9.4: Notification
 - 9.5: Investigation Timescales and Procedures
 - 9.6: Investigation Report
 - 9.7: Investigation Outcomes
- 10: Alleged or Suspected Malpractice or Maladministration by the college Employees
 - 10.1: The college Investigation
 - 10.2: Investigation Outcomes

Summary of the college timelines when reviewing reports of suspected or actual cases of Malpractice.

Part A - Policy

1 Scope of the policy

This policy is aimed at all the college learners and key stakeholders namely Study Centres, (termed 'Centres'), their staff and learners and the college associates and staff, within and outside the UK, who are using any the college products and services and who are involved in suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration.

The policy sets out how centres, learners or other personnel should work with us to deal with such cases and the steps which must be followed when reporting suspected or actual cases of malpractice and maladministration. It also identifies the college's responsibilities in dealing with such cases and the steps that will be followed when reviewing such cases.

2 Definitions of Malpractice

For the purposes of this policy 'Malpractice' is defined as

“Any deliberate activity, neglect, default or other practice that compromises the integrity of the assessment process and/or the validity of certificates”

For the purposes of this policy it also includes some forms of misconduct and forms of unnecessary discrimination or bias towards certain groups or groups of learners.

Malpractice may include a range of issues from failure to maintain appropriate records or systems to the deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates

3. Examples of actions that may constitute malpractice

Examples of centre and learner malpractice are provided below. Please note that these examples are not exhaustive.

Examples of centre malpractice

Failure to meet the college centre recognition and qualification approval requirements as stated in the centre contract and the college policies. *Examples of this would include:*

- failure to continually meet the college centre recognition and qualification approval requirements e.g. failure to advise the college of centre changes related to the delivery of the college qualifications; external verifier action plans repeatedly not implemented within agreed timescales;
- repeated short-notice cancellation of External Verifier visits by a centre
- continued failure to meet the college requirements for assessment, internal verification
- failure to keep learners' portfolios of evidence secure
- providing deliberate erroneous advice to learners

Failure by the centre to implement the agreed internal Malpractice policy relating to staff and learners.

Examples of this would include:

- improper assistance to learners over and beyond normal levels of supervision such as to put in doubt learner ownership of work
- inventing or changing judgements for internally assessed work (coursework or portfolio evidence) without following agreed internal policies and processes
- repeated incidences of insufficient evidence of the learners' achievements to justify the marks given or assessment decisions made (fraudulent claims for certificates)
- inappropriate retention of certificates
- fraudulent use of the college logo and/or claiming to offer the college qualifications without formal recognition as a college centre.
- Failure to deal appropriately with learner malpractice such as:
 - plagiarism of any nature
 - collusion with others
 - copying (including the use of ICT to aid copying)
 - deliberate destruction of another's work
 - false declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework
 - impersonation

Failure to meet the requirements of the regulations for the conduct of timed assessments or other forms of assessment under controlled *conditions including:*

- non-adherence to any arrangements agreed with the college for such assessments
- amendments to assessment materials without permission
- failure to provide access arrangements for assessment in accordance with the college requirements.

4. Definition of Maladministration

For the purposes of this policy this is defined as:

'any activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in the centre or candidate not complying with the specified requirements for delivery of the qualifications as set out in the relevant regulatory and awarding organisation requirements'.

For the purposes of this policy it also includes persistent mistakes or poor administration within a centre

5. Examples of Maladministration

Examples of actions that may constitute maladministration are listed below. These are exemplars and the college reserves the right to consider as maladministration other actions not listed but falling under the general definition of maladministration.

- Delay in issuing certificates
- Unreasonable delay in responding to requests for information or other communications from the college
- Inaccurate claims for certificates
- Incorrect action or failure to take any action when requested to by the college
- Failure to provide information when reasonably requested to do so
- Inadequate record-keeping for example in relation to assessment of learners
- Failure to investigate
- Misleading or inaccurate statements

6. Dealing with Malpractice or Maladministration

In accordance with the requirements of the regulatory authority, all allegations of malpractice or maladministration must be investigated. The nature of the investigation, and of the actions taken if malpractice or maladministration is proven, will be commensurate with the nature and the gravity of the malpractice or maladministration. The college regards all allegations and suspicions of malpractice or maladministration as potentially serious issues, and as such all must be investigated and recorded formally, no matter how trivial they may at first appear.

7. Academic Malpractice

This section identifies the steps that the college will take in detecting and dealing with academic malpractice. As such it is applicable to its own operations and those of its Centres.

Definition:

Academic malpractice is any activity – intentional or otherwise - that is likely to undermine the integrity essential to scholarship and research. It includes;

- plagiarism,
- collusion,
- fabrication or falsification of results,
- anything else that could result in unearned or undeserved credit for those committing it.

Academic malpractice can result from a deliberate act of cheating or may

be committed unintentionally. Whether intended or not, all incidents of academic malpractice will be treated seriously by the college.

Safeguards:

- Wherever practicable assessment tasks and topics will vary from year to year.
- Assessment will focus on demonstration of the understanding of knowledge rather than the relatively straightforward repetition of such knowledge.
- Students will be asked to submit a draft or outline of major pieces of work; this allows useful formative feedback, affords you the opportunity to spot possible plagiarism, and helps to combat plagiarism from the Web.
- All assignments issued to Distance Learning students will require that they sign a declaration that it is the student's own work. This will be countersigned by a designated Mentor using **Form SAF.**
- Wherever practicable assignments will be submitted for electronic scrutiny using the plagiarism detection systems (usually 'Turnitin') to check for passages found elsewhere on the web, in books and journals or in work submitted previously. The college will inform students of this procedure as required.
- The college will give students clear guidance on the appropriate styles of referencing, the need for bibliographies and their layout, etc.
- Students working in groups or teams will be given specific guidance on how assignments arising from their legitimate collaboration are to be assessed and to what extent 'shared' material may be appropriate in individual assignments submitted for assessment.
- A single instance of the copying or close paraphrasing of two or three sentences of perhaps no more than 50 words in total of someone else's material, without direct acknowledgement, or the reproduction of a single unacknowledged diagram should not necessarily be regarded as plagiarism. These might better be described as 'poor academic practice', rather than malpractice. In such cases, students should be informed why they fall below the standards required, and should then be penalized accordingly through appropriate assessment criteria, which explicitly mention the need for the use of quotation marks, referencing and the provision of a full bibliography.
- Before reporting suspected instances of collusion, the college will check with the students concerned, at the earliest opportunity, that they have properly understood what is required of them in terms of the submission or presentation of assignments. In cases where misunderstandings have apparently occurred, a request for resubmission or re-presentation would probably be the most appropriate form of action.
- The college appreciate that international students, who come from different academic cultures that may have different practices and expectations, should be treated with special consideration. Appropriate induction arrangements will be put in place for in order to clarify the conventions that are considered important within the UK system of HE, but once these conventions have been shared with these groups of students, they will be enforced in the same way as with all other students.

8. Copies of the policy

Copies of the policy can be downloaded from our website.

9. Responsibility of Study Centres

It is important that all personnel involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of the college qualifications are fully aware of the contents of this policy. Staff in the college centres and learners studying for the college qualifications must be clear that the college will take action in all cases of alleged malpractice. When a centre is seeking recognition, it will need to confirm that they have read and understood the college Malpractice and Maladministration Policy. In addition, the centre must have robust internal policies in place to combat malpractice and maladministration and this will be checked by the college. Centres must ensure these policies are fully implemented and that staff and learners strictly adhere to the procedures stated in this documentation.

A failure by a centre to report suspected or actual cases of malpractice or maladministration, or a failure to have in place effective arrangements to prevent such cases, may lead to sanctions being imposed on the centre. Details of sanctions that may be imposed are set out below.

A centre that requires guidance or advice on how to prevent, investigate and deal with malpractice and maladministration should contact the college which will provide such advice and/or guidance.

A centre's compliance with this policy and how it takes reasonable steps to prevent and/or investigate instances of malpractice and maladministration in the institution will be reviewed by the college periodically through the centre monitoring arrangements. On their centre visits, External Verifiers will check not only that centres have received this policy but have also prepared internal malpractice policies which are being implemented and that all relevant colleagues and learners are aware of the contents and purposes of both documents.

10. Monitoring and Review

An annual report on any cases of malpractice or maladministration including those found not proven will be made to the college Management Board.

The college will review this policy annually as part of its annual self-evaluation arrangements, the college will take into account the operation of the policy in the previous time period, feedback from stakeholders, or changes brought about by external agencies and regulatory authorities. The review will ensure that procedures continue to be consistent with the Ofqual Conditions of Recognition and are applied properly and fairly in arriving at judgements.

Part B

Procedures to be followed in cases of alleged or suspected malpractice or maladministration

1. Terminology

In all cases, to avoid prejudicial language, until an investigation has been completed and the allegation or suspicion proved, centres and the college will use the terms 'alleged malpractice or maladministration' or 'suspected malpractice or maladministration', as appropriate to the circumstances, in relation to the case in question.

2. Allegations of malpractice or maladministration

Allegations may be made by any person having knowledge of the assessment process, including learners, assessors, centre employees, the college employees or associates and members of the public. Allegations should normally be made in writing. Where an allegation is made orally, the receiver of the allegation should attempt to obtain written confirmation from the person making the allegation, but if this is not possible he/she should make a written record. In such cases, care will need to be taken in noting accurately the details of the allegation.

Allegations may be made to centres, centre employees, or the college staff or associates. Allegations may also be made indirectly via a third party (for example, the police or the regulatory authority).

Cases of alleged malpractice in centres will initially be dealt with by applying the centre malpractice policy. There will however be cases where suspected cases of alleged malpractice or maladministration are notified directly to the college. In such cases allegations, should normally be put in writing (which may include email) and enclose appropriate supporting evidence. Such allegations should normally be reported to the college within 5 working days of the discovery of the alleged malpractice.

All allegations should include (where possible):

- centre's name, address and number
- learner's name and the college registration number (where relevant)
- centre or the college person's details (name, job role) if they are involved in the case
- details of the college course or qualification affected or nature of the service affected
- nature of the suspected or actual malpractice and associated dates
- details and outcome of any initial investigation carried out by the centre or anybody else involved in the case, including any mitigating circumstances

In all cases of suspected malpractice and maladministration reported to the college it will protect the identity of the 'informant' in accordance with its duty of confidentiality and/or any other legal duty.

3. Anonymous allegations

An anonymous allegation should normally only be acted upon if there is sufficient supporting evidence, but may require investigation without such evidence depending on the nature of the allegation. While the college is prepared to investigate issues which are reported anonymously and/or by whistle-blowers it will always try to confirm an allegation by means of a separate investigation before taking up the matter with those persons about whom the complaint or allegation relates.

Sometimes a person making an allegation of malpractice or maladministration may wish to remain anonymous. Although it is always preferable for 'informants' to reveal their identity and contact details to the college, the person may be concerned about possible adverse consequences and request the college not to divulge their identity to third parties. If it helps to reassure the 'informant' on this point, the college should confirm that it is not obliged (as recommended by Ofqual) to disclose information if to do so would be a breach of confidentiality and/or any other legal duty.

4. Suspected malpractice or maladministration

Suspicion of malpractice or maladministration may arise when assessing a learner's work, but may also arise under other circumstances, for example, when analysing assessment records.

5. Application of these procedures

These procedures are designed to cover a wide range of circumstances in relation to: the subject of the allegation or suspicion; the person making the allegation or developing the suspicion; the person or organisation receiving the allegation; the nature and gravity of the alleged malpractice or maladministration. Examples of malpractice or maladministration may arise where these procedures are not wholly appropriate and they may therefore need to be adapted in some cases to suit the actual circumstances. In cases where there is an allegation or suspicion of centre malpractice, the college will immediately inform the regulatory authority irrespective of whether the investigation has been completed.

6. Sanctions and Penalties

The college reserves the right in suspected cases of malpractice and maladministration, both during the period of the investigation and when the outcome is known, to apply sanctions. Sanctions/penalties may only be imposed based on the evidence presented and must be justifiable and reasonable and consistent in their application. Examples of sanctions include:

- Suspending individual learner or group registrations
- Withholding results
- Withdrawing approval for any assessor/internal verifier implicated in Malpractice
- De-registering the centre, recognising a duty of care to learners

7. Alleged or suspected malpractice by learners

7.1 Initial response

Where a centre discovers any irregularity in internally assessed work, they do not need to report this to the college. Centres will be expected to have robust policies in place and reference the actions they will take should malpractice in learner work be identified for example a refusal to accept learner work for assessment purposes.

The college external verifiers who discover or suspect malpractice in assessments when visiting centres, or when sampling learner evidence record their findings, including supporting evidence in full in their report. The centre is given initial oral feedback on the findings and the contents of the report. The centre is also informed that the report will be sent to the Head of Quality and Assessment at the college for final checking and approval. In such cases the college will formally write to the Head of Centre and request information so that an investigation into the malpractice and appropriate action can be undertaken.

7.2 Centre investigation

The regulatory authority explicitly requires the college as the awarding organisation to conduct a full investigation or instigate a centre led investigation of all instances of alleged or suspected malpractice.

The college reserves the right to issue advice to the centre on the conduct of any preliminary investigation, or to require the involvement of the college staff in the investigation, or to conduct the investigation itself should the circumstances appear to it to warrant such a course of action, for example, where the alleged malpractice has been brought to its attention by an external verifier, where the suspected or alleged offence is serious, or has potentially wider consequences, (for example, implicates a group or groups of learners).

7.3 Procedures

If a centre conducts a preliminary investigation prior to formally notifying the college, the centre should ensure that staff involved in the initial investigation are competent and have no personal interest in the outcome of the investigation. However, it is important to note that in all instances the centre must immediately notify the college if it suspects that learner malpractice has occurred as the college has a responsibility to the regulatory authorities to ensure that all investigations are carried out rigorously and effectively.

In conducting any preliminary investigation the centre must follow the procedures stated in their internal policy. This will normally include the following actions:

- Inform the learner in writing at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged or suspected malpractice, of the procedures that will be followed, and the possible penalties if malpractice is proved
- Undertake an investigation of the allegation or suspicion
- Provide the learner with an opportunity to contest or refute the allegation or suspicion, either in writing, or at a hearing, or both
- Allow the learner to be accompanied by a friend at any hearing

- Make a decision based on the investigation and hearing
- Ensure that the person or persons conducting the investigation, any hearing, and making any decision:
 - are not the same as the person making the allegation or raising the suspicion
 - have sufficient professional standing and authority, and, if necessary have appropriate subject knowledge.
- Inform the college if it is unable to meet either of the above requirements (for example, if it has a small number of employees), which will advise the centre on how to meet the requirements, if necessary by the involvement of persons external to the centre
- Inform the learner of the outcome in writing
- Where malpractice is proved, immediately inform the college in writing
- Keep a full case record (see below) and make available such a record to the college on request
- Ensure that the assessed work is included in any sample of work considered by the Internal Verifier
- Ensure that the work is included in any sample of work provided to the college authorised person (External Verifier) so that he/she can view the evidence and report the findings to the college.

7.4 The college action

Once the centre has gathered all the information, completed their investigation and forwarded all the documentation to the college, the college will confirm the outcome and recommend the appropriate penalty. The recommendation will be considered and confirmed by the college Director of Operations. Where the nature or gravity of the malpractice appears to warrant it, and the proposed penalty is severe, the case may be referred to Chair of the Quality and Standards Committee as appropriate for independent advice. The outcome of the investigation will be sent to the centre within 10 working days of receipt of all the relevant documentation relating to the investigation.

7.5 Penalties: learner malpractice

The following penalties may be imposed, depending on the nature and gravity of the malpractice:

- A written warning
- Loss of credit in the unit concerned
- Disqualification from the qualification concerned
- Learner is barred from registering for qualifications for a set period of time
- A combination of two or more of the above
- Other actions

Where the malpractice appears to involve a criminal offence, it may, after advice from the college, be appropriate to report the case to the police

7.6 Case records: learner malpractice

Case records for learner malpractice should include:

- A statement of facts
- A detailed account of the circumstances
- Names of all persons involved and their roles in the case
- Copies of any written statements by learners and staff
- Details of the investigation carried out by the centre
- A record of any hearing
- Copies of learner's work that is the subject of the allegation/suspicion of malpractice
- A record of the decision
- Copies of the centre's procedures for informing learners of assessment regulations including those relating to malpractice
 - A record of the proposed penalty imposed if the allegation or suspicion is upheld (and a record of the confirmed penalty once this is agreed)

7.7 Appeals

Where a learner wishes to appeal against the decision, he/she should use the procedures as described in the colleges Academic Appeals policy and procedures.

8. Alleged or suspected malpractice or maladministration by centre employees

8.1 Initial response

Where a centre employee is suspected of malpractice, or maladministration or is alleged (whether by another employee of the centre, a learner or a member of the public) to have committed malpractice or maladministration, the centre must immediately inform the college in writing. Where a member of staff of a centre is suspected by the college of malpractice or maladministration, or the college receives an allegation of malpractice or maladministration by an employee of a centre, the college Director of Operations will immediately inform the centre (normally the Principal or some other senior member of staff nominated by the centre) in writing.

8.2 Centre investigation

Upon receipt of an allegation or suspicion, it is the responsibility of the centre as the employer of the employee concerned:

- to conduct an investigation;
- to determine the outcome;
- to determine the appropriate penalty;
- to comply with the centre's own employment and disciplinary procedures;
- to comply with appropriate employment legislation.

In conducting the investigation, the centre should seek the advice of the college, and should consider any evidence that the college may provide. Subject to agreement between the centre and the college it may be considered appropriate for a college member of staff to give evidence at any hearing called as part of the investigation.

Where the malpractice or maladministration appears to involve a criminal offence, the centre and the college should consult about whether it is appropriate for the centre to report the case to the police.

Notwithstanding the outcome of the investigation by the centre into the actions of its employee, the college reserves the right to undertake an investigation of the centre, as the employer of the person concerned, in order fully to discharge its responsibilities to the regulatory authorities. This investigation will be undertaken following the procedures in section 9.

9. Alleged or suspected malpractice or Maladministration by Centres

9.1 Initial response

Where a centre is suspected by the college of malpractice or maladministration, or the college receives an allegation from a learner, an employee or a member of the public of malpractice or maladministration by a centre, or where the investigation by the centre into alleged malpractice or maladministration by one of its employees is not considered sufficient, the college will initiate an investigation. All notifications of suspected cases of malpractice and maladministration received by the college will be passed to the Programmes Manager who will acknowledge receipt, as appropriate, to external parties within three working days.

9.2 Responsibility

The college Programme Director will be responsible for ensuring the investigation is carried out in a prompt and effective manner and in accordance with the procedures in this policy and will allocate a relevant member of staff to lead the investigation and establish whether or not the malpractice or maladministration has occurred, and review any supporting evidence received or gathered by the college. Throughout the investigation the college Programme Director will be responsible for overseeing the work of the investigation staff to ensure that due process is being followed, appropriate evidence has been gathered and reviewed and for liaising with and keeping informed relevant external parties.

At all times the college will ensure that personnel assigned to the investigation have the appropriate level of training and competence and they have had no previous involvement or personal interest in the matter.

9.3 Notification

In all cases of suspected or actual malpractice, the college will notify the centre (normally the Head of the Centre) involved in the allegation that the college will be investigating the matter – in doing so it may withhold details of the person making the allegation if to do so would breach a duty of confidentiality or any other legal duty.

Where applicable, the college will inform the appropriate regulatory authorities if there is reason to believe that there has been an incident of malpractice or maladministration which could either invalidate the award of a qualification or if it could affect another awarding organisation, and may be required to act on any advice received.

Where the allegation may affect another awarding organisation and their provision the college will also inform them in accordance with the regulatory requirements and obligations imposed on the college by Ofqual.

9.4 Investigation timescales and procedures

The college aims normally to complete all stages of the investigation within 10 working days of receipt of the allegation and no more than 20 working days. In some cases the investigation may take longer; for example, if a centre visit is required. In such instances, the college will advise all parties concerned of the likely revised timescale.

The fundamental principle of all investigations is to conduct them in a fair, reasonable and lawful manner, ensuring that all relevant evidence is considered without bias. In doing so investigations will be based around the following broad objectives:

- To establish the facts relating to the allegation, suspicion or complaint in order to determine whether any irregularities have occurred
- To identify the cause of the irregularities and those involved.
- To establish the scale of the irregularities
- To evaluate any action already taken by the centre
- To determine whether remedial action is required to reduce the risk to current registered learners and to preserve the integrity of the qualification
- To ascertain whether any action is required in respect of certificates already issued
- To obtain clear evidence to support any sanctions to be applied to the centre, and/or to members of staff, in accordance with the college Sanctions Policy
- To identify any adverse patterns or trends.

The investigation may involve a request for further information from relevant parties and/or interviews with personnel involved in the investigation. Therefore, the college will:

- Ensure all material collected as part of an investigation is kept secure. All records and original documentation concerning a completed investigation that ultimately leads to sanctions against a centre will be retained for a period of not less than five years. If an investigation leads to invalidation of certificates, or criminal or civil prosecution, all records and original documentation relating to the case will be retained until the case and any appeals have been heard and for five years thereafter.
- Expect all parties, who are either directly or indirectly involved in the investigation, to fully cooperate with us.

Either at the time of notification of a suspected or actual case of malpractice or maladministration and/or at any time during the investigation, the college reserves the right to impose sanctions on the centre in accordance with its Sanctions Policy in order to protect the interests of learners and the integrity of the qualifications.

The college also reserves the right to withhold a learner's, and/or cohort of learners' results for all the college course/qualifications and/or units they are studying at the time of the notification or investigation of suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration.

Where the college finds that the complexity of a case or a lack of cooperation from a centre means that it is unable to complete an investigation, it will consult the relevant regulatory authority in order to determine how best to progress the matter.

9.5 Investigation report

After an investigation, the college will produce a draft report for the parties concerned to check the factual accuracy. Any subsequent amendments will be agreed between the parties concerned and the college. The college will make the final report available to the parties concerned and to the regulatory authorities and other external agencies as required. In cases where the original notification of the suspected or actual case of malpractice came from a person or organisation external to the college (or its centres and learners) it will also inform them of the outcome – normally within 10 working days of making the decision - in doing so it may withhold some details if to disclose such information would breach a duty of confidentiality or any other legal duty. In cases where the investigation is internal into a member of the college staff the report will be agreed by the CEO with the relevant college manager and appropriate internal disciplinary procedures will be implemented.

9.6 Investigation outcomes

If the investigation confirms that malpractice or maladministration has taken place the college will:

- impose appropriate actions in relation to the centre with specified deadlines in order to address the instance of malpractice or maladministration and to prevent it from recurring
- impose appropriate sanctions on the centre – if so these will be communicated to the centre in accordance with the Sanctions identified above along with the rationale for the sanction(s) selected.
- in cases where certificates are deemed to be invalid:
- inform the centre concerned and the regulatory authorities of the reasons why they are invalid and any action to be taken for reassessment and/or for the withdrawal of the certificates
- ask the centre to inform the affected learners of the action the college is taking and that their original certificates are invalid and ask the centre – where possible – to return the invalid certificates to the college
- amend its database so that duplicates of the invalid certificates cannot be issued
- expect the centre to amend its records to show that the original awards are invalid.
- amend as appropriate aspects of its qualification development, delivery and awarding arrangements and assessment and/or monitoring arrangements and associated guidance to prevent the issue from recurring.
- inform relevant third parties of its findings in case they need to take relevant action in relation to the centre
- inform the appropriate regulatory authority(s)

In proven cases of malpractice and/or maladministration by a centre the college reserves the right to charge the centre for any reissuing of certificates and/or additional external verifier visits. The fees for these will be the college prices current for such activities at the time of the investigation.

In addition, to the above the Director of Operations will record any lessons learnt from the investigation and pass these onto relevant colleagues within the college to help prevent the same instance of maladministration or malpractice from recurring.

If the relevant party (ies) wish to appeal against the decision to impose sanctions, the college Appeals Policy and Procedures should be used.

10. Alleged or suspected malpractice or maladministration by the college employees

10.1 The college investigation

Where an employee of the college is suspected of malpractice or maladministration, or is alleged (whether by another employee of the college, a learner or a member of the public) to have committed malpractice or maladministration, it is the responsibility of the college as the employer of the member of staff concerned:

- to conduct an investigation;
- to determine the outcome;
- to determine the appropriate penalty;
- to comply with the college's own employment and disciplinary procedures;
- to comply with appropriate employment legislation.

In conducting the investigation, the college may seek the advice of the Regulatory Authority. Where the malpractice or maladministration appears to involve a criminal offence, it may be appropriate to report the case to the police. During the investigation the employee may be suspended or moved to other duties until the investigation is complete.

10.2 Investigation outcomes

If the investigation confirms that malpractice or maladministration has taken place the college will take such actions as are necessary and relevant to the case in order

- to safeguard the integrity, validity or reliability of any assessment process and/or the validity of any certificates
- to protect the interests of learners
- to maintain public confidence in the college
- to maintain the college's status as a awarding organisation

These actions may include:

- in cases where certificates issued are deemed to be invalid:
- inform the centre(s) concerned and the regulatory authorities of the reasons why they are invalid and any action to be taken for reassessment and/or for the withdrawal of the certificates
- ask the centre(s) to inform the affected learners of the action the college is taking and that their original certificates are invalid and ask the centre – where possible – to return the invalid certificates to the college
- amend its database so that duplicates of the invalid certificates cannot be issued
- amend as appropriate aspects of its qualification development, delivery and awarding arrangements, assessment and/or monitoring arrangements and associated guidance, internal operational procedures, staff recruitment and training, to prevent the issue from recurring.
- inform relevant third parties of its findings in case they need to take relevant action
- inform the relevant regulatory authority(s)

In addition, to the above the Programme Manager will record any lessons learnt from the investigation and pass these onto relevant colleagues within the college to help prevent the same instance of maladministration or malpractice from recurring.

Summary of the college time lines when reviewing reports of suspected or actual cases of malpractice

Report from centre alleging malpractice or maladministration	Acknowledge within 3 working days of receipt
The college investigation into malpractice or maladministration	Action and resolve all investigations normally within 10 working days and no more than 20 working days unless a centre visit is required in which case the investigation will be completed as soon as possible
The college decision on sanctions/penalties following centre investigation into alleged malpractice	Inform centre of decision within 5 working days from completion of the investigation

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

COMPLAINTS POLICY

1.0 Overview

The college seeks to always provide the highest possible levels of service but also recognises that in doing so, there may be times when this falls short of student's expectations. In these instances, the focus is on finding an acceptable outcome. All complaints are taken seriously and will be investigated according to the procedures laid down.

Any student who makes a complaint shall not be disadvantaged in any way and the complaint will be undertaken by the college impartially and without bias. Privacy and confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process and each case will be considered on its own merits and taking into account:

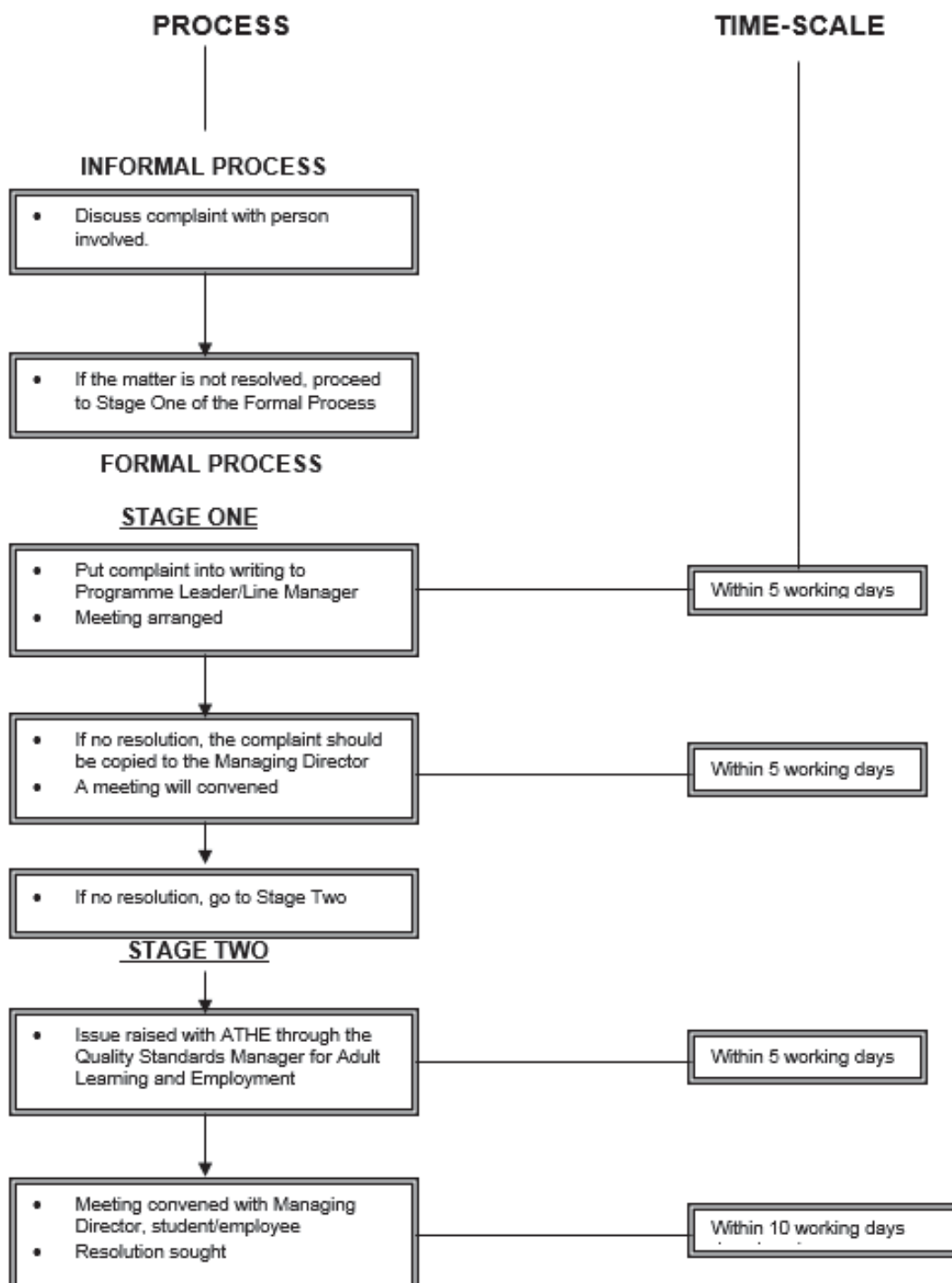
- The seriousness of the issue raised
- The credibility of the concern
- The likelihood of confirming the issue from attributable sources.

2.0 Aims

The college are committed to the following in terms of the complaints procedure for learners:

- Making the process open and transparent
- Placing the emphasis on prompt resolution
- Not apportioning blame
- Taking forward all reasonable complaints made
- Ensuring that complaints are quickly rectified
- Ensuring that learners are supported during the complaints procedure
- To collect equality data on complaints for monitoring purposes (through confidential means)

3.0 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE (using Form SCP)



Notes:

1. Student has the right to be accompanied by other.
2. This Policy relates to specific issues not covered by the Appeals Procedure

STUDENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Student Name: _____

Enrolment No: _____

Course of Study: _____

Year of Course: _____

Course Tutor: _____

Programme Leader: _____

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES – STAGE 1

Reason for Complaint:

Response:

Agreed:

Signed Programme Leader: _____

Signed Student: _____

Date: _____

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE – STAGE 2

Response:

Agreed:

Managing Director: _____ Signed Student _____

Date: _____

ACADEMIC APPEALS POLICY

1. Role of the college

As a provider of learning for students, the college is duty bound to provide a means by which students are able to appeal against assessment decisions. The aim of this document is therefore to detail the mechanism by which appeals against assessments can be made.

2. Right to Appeal

The Appeals Process is available to all the college students. Students have the right to appeal in the following circumstances:

- Any grade awarded for any piece of work that contributes to the final grade
- Any grade awarded which may affect a student's transfer/progression opportunities between courses or years of courses
- A final year/course grade

3. Grounds for Appeal

As part of the quality monitoring of the college courses, students can appeal against any aspect of an assessment decision outlined in 2.0 above. However, it is expected that student's would normally appeal against the following:

- That parts of the documented procedures have not been applied and in doing so has disadvantaged the student to a degree which has materially affected the decision/recommendation made, rendering it unsound. (Refer to **Annex - Assessment Policy**)
- The lack of opportunity to show examples of competency against the assessment criteria/and or national academic standards.
- That the decision-making body took a **decision which no reasonable person would find comprehensible**. Disagreement with the decision does not make it manifestly unreasonable. To apply this ground, students must provide substantive argumentation as to why no reasonable person could have arrived at the decision that was made.
- The prejudice or bias of an assessor, which can be proven.

4. Invalid Grounds for Appeal

The following circumstances will not be considered grounds for appeal:

- Perceived past shortcomings in tuition, supervision or support not previously raised with the college cannot be considered as grounds for appeal. Concerns relating to the quality of teaching or supervision, or other circumstances that relate to the delivery of a programme of study before the point of assessment should be raised under the Student Complaints Policy as they arise.
- An Appeal may not be made to question the academic judgment of the Assessment Board. The student's feeling that the result unfairly reflects the merit of their work or their ability is not a ground of appeal.
- An Appeal may not be made against the actual mark awarded for a piece of assessed work, which is a matter of academic judgement, except where the case rests on a claim of procedural irregularity.
- Errors in calculating or recording marks on the basis of which the original decision was made cannot be submitted as grounds for appeal, unless these errors have been identified by the student and brought to the attention of the college.

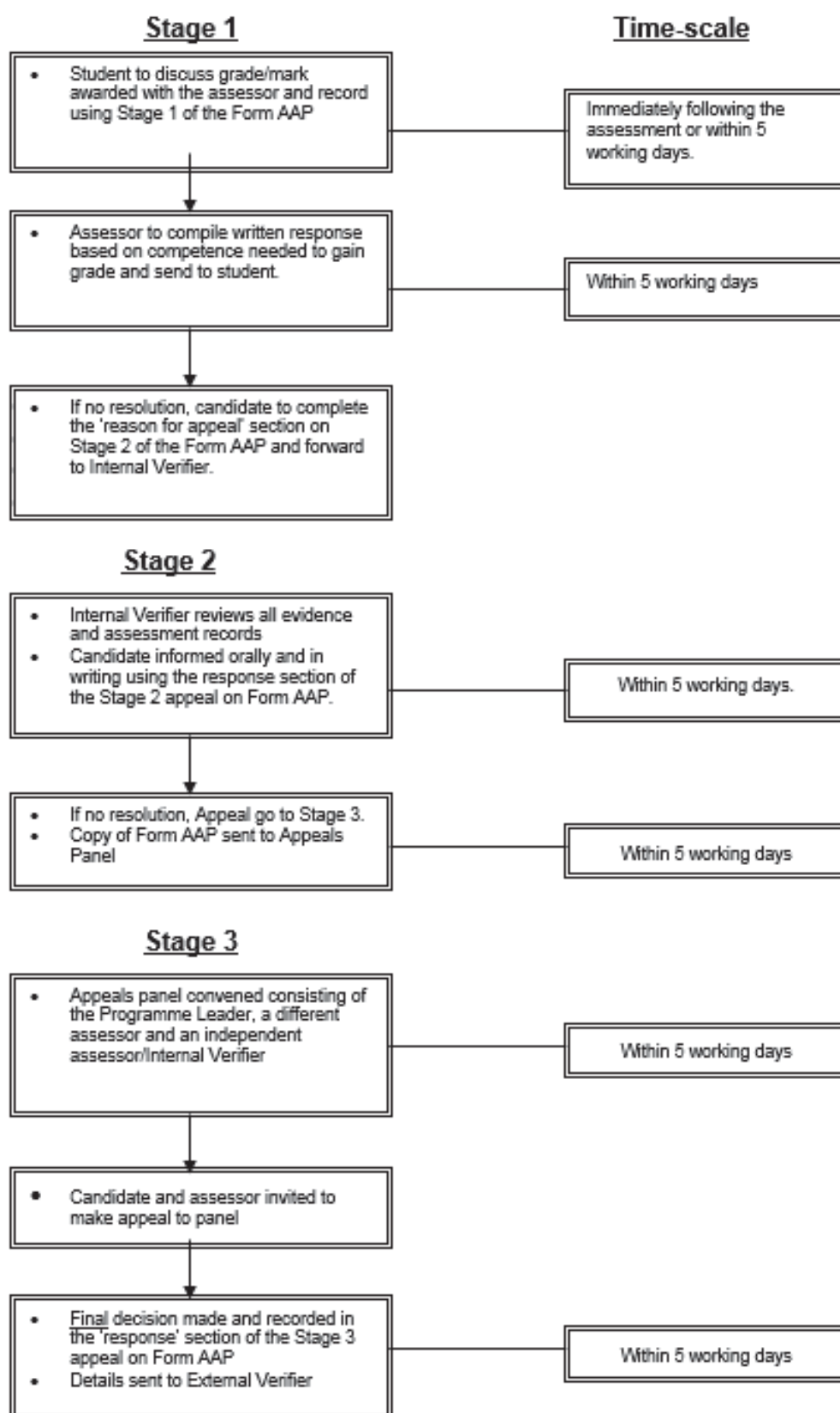
5. Submission of Appeals

- Appeals will only be accepted if submitted within one calendar month of the student receiving notification of the decision they wish to appeal against (or publication of results in the case of classification appeals).
- Only written cases, made using the Appeal form and presented clearly and comprehensibly, in accordance with the requirements set out in the Appeals Procedure, will be accepted.
- There may be times when a student submits an appeal, the subject of which is actually a complaint, or vice versa. In these cases, the college may decide to reclassify the appeal or complaint, at whatever stage of the procedure that has been reached, and the college will inform the student of this.

6. Academic Appeals Procedure

- The procedure for Academic Appeals is shown on **Form AAP**
- The Academic Appeals procedure is split into 3 stages, which represent the process of acceleration, the internal and external personnel and the time scales involved.
- The mechanism for recording the process is shown by **Form AAP**

Academic Appeals Procedure (Using Form AAP)

FORM AAP


ACADEMIC APPEAL – STAGE 1

Student Name:

Course of Study:

Assessor:

Reason for Appeal:

Response:

Agreed:

Signed Assessor: _____ Signed Student: _____

Date: _____

ACADEMIC APPEAL – STAGE 2

Reason for Appeal:

Response:

Agreed:

Signed Internal Verifier: _____

Signed Student: _____

Signed Assessor: _____

Date: _____

ACADEMIC APPEAL – STAGE 3

Response:

Signed Chair of Appeals Panel: _____

Date: _____

