



RAWDA COLLEGE

## Rawda College Assessment Policy

### 1. Principles of Assessment

Learning is a change in skill, attitude, knowledge and understanding and measuring the extent of these changes is the basis of assessment. Assessment is therefore a judgement made on work presented by the learner. In other words, it is an act of measurement and it confirms that a learning outcome has been achieved at the standards related to the relevant assessment criteria. At RAWDA College assessment will be:

- i. accessible and relevant for learners
- ii. fair and free from bias
- iii. valid, based on achievement of the learning outcomes at the standards provided
- iv. sufficient, allowing the learner to generate the evidence needed
- v. manageable for learners and the college
- vi. completed in accordance with college timescales.

### 2. Assessment Planning

Assessment must be planned to ensure it is robust, appropriately resourced and clear to assessors and learners. Learners must have every opportunity to achieve the standards set for a qualification as stated in the unit specification. In order to fulfil this requirement, the process of assessment must be communicated. All stakeholders should be clear about the plan and the systems, which will be implemented to gather learner work and make the assessment judgements. Learners will receive an academic calendar at the start of each unit or combination of units and this will show the timing of assessment.

The following factors will be taken into account in the assessment planning at RAWDA College. As assessment is part of the learning process and is integral to it, so these factors also relate to curriculum planning.

- ATHE qualifications are comprised of individual units that cover specific topics. There are core/mandatory and optional units with pathways for certain programmes of study and each qualification has agreed rules of combination. Assessment must ensure that learners have the opportunity to achieve the units needed to gain the qualification.
- Core units often provide a foundation of knowledge for other units so the learning and assessment in these units may need to take place first. In some qualifications, ATHE identifies a synoptic unit which because it brings together learning from across the qualification or a group of units should be taken as the culmination to a learner's study.
- ATHE qualification units contain synoptic teaching and learning references and curriculum planning should take notice of these and, where appropriate, incorporate these into curriculum development and delivery.
- ATHE qualification units also contain references to employability and study skills opportunities. They are derived from ATHE's Employability and Study Skills Standards. Again, curriculum planning should take notice of these and, where appropriate, provide for opportunities to broaden learning and develop learners' skills in the relevant areas.
- Some units require learners to complete research or undertake personal training and development. This may require an extended period when individual personalised learning needs to take place before the learner can submit work for assessment.



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- Assessment is by ATHE-set assignment for the vast majority of ATHE qualifications. Any deviation to this (i.e. a centre creating its own assignment) must be explicitly approved by ATHE.
- Learners must not embark on an assignment without knowing what is expected of them. This relates to the tasks which are set and the outputs required. Learners must have a clear understanding of the requirements of the command verbs which are provided in the assessment criteria and the tasks.

### 3. Forms of assessment

At Rawda College assessment will be:

**Diagnostic assessment:** This will mainly be carried out during enrolment or induction and will help to determine the right programme and level of study and any support, which is needed by the learner.

**Formative assessment:** This will take place during learning and will provide feedback and support about the progress made to the learner. Formative assessment should not confirm achievement of grades, but should focus on helping the learner reflect upon their learning and provide feedback to support them to improve their work in order that the learning outcomes are achieved at a pass grade or higher. Formative assessment feedback should therefore be timely and supportive with clear guidance for improvement.

Whilst informal feedback is an ongoing process it is recommended that one opportunity for formal formative assessment is provided for each assessment, once the learner has had the time to complete this. This should be included in the Assessment Plan and formally recorded. Further formal formative feedback should then not be required unless it is clear that a learner had misinterpreted the assessment. This should then ensure that each learner is treated equally and helps assessors manage their assessment workload.

Records of formative feedback should be retained, as this may be asked for during an ATHE Monitoring and Development review.

**Summative assessment:** This assessment normally takes place at the end of a section of a learning programme/unit. This type of assessment measures the extent of the learning and achievement that has taken place and enables a judgement to be made about whether the learner has achieved all the learning outcomes at the standards stated by the assessment criteria within a unit. Summative assessment will take into account the different types of evidence presented in learners' portfolios of work, including both oral and written. An oral presentation or viva may be considered in summative assessment, recorded to form part of the portfolio of evidence available for external moderation.

We recognise that some learners continue to use assessment criteria as headings and follow this with a section of work under each heading. We seek to avoid this mechanistic, compartmentalised learning, particularly for ATHE qualifications primarily developing knowledge and understanding. However, it is recognised that some learners may continue to do so and we will accept this approach.

Where the moderation of learner work is focused on achievement of qualifications directly related to job roles, assessment decisions must be based on achievement of each assessment criterion. Learners should achieve the learning outcome at the standards described by each assessment criterion.



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In line with ATHE's assessment policy and guidance, we will assess and internally verify learner work on the following basis:

- In order to achieve learners must demonstrate achievement of all the learning outcomes in a unit at the standards stated by the assessment criteria. If work is not produced to show achievement of a specific learning outcome the learner cannot achieve.
- Where a learner produces evidence to achieve merit and distinction criteria, this can be used to enable a learner to achieve at pass. In other words, it will support evidence produced for the pass standard. Learners cannot omit completing work to meet the pass standard and simply work to the higher grades, as this would put a pass for the unit in jeopardy. Similarly, learners cannot complete work to meet the criteria for distinction in the anticipation that this will also meet the criteria for merit. However, where work for the pass standard is marginal, assessors can consider any extension work completed as this may support achievement of the pass standard.
- Where a learner consistently misses the requirements of the command verbs given in the assessment criteria, then it is very unlikely that the understanding required by the learning outcome or the ability to do what the learning outcome states will be met. However, where a command verb such as 'evaluation' is missed but there is evaluation in work for other assessment criteria in that learning outcome, or in work for the merit and distinction criteria, this should be taken into account.
- Evidence of plagiarised content in learner work is not acceptable and as the work is not authentic the learning outcome(s) is not met at the stated standards.
- Learners who fail to follow the ATHE sample assignment can still achieve the unit if the evidence demonstrates achievement of the learning outcome at the standards. However, sample assignments should be used as they develop skill and using the assessor guidance learners are more likely to achieve.

At Rawda College, all assessors will have participated in training, coaching and other forms of staff development to assist them in their role. Assessors will not be involved in making judgements on learner work where there is a conflict of interests. If such a conflict exists, learner work will be assessed by a different assessor (please see Conflicts of Interests statement).

#### **4. Assignment submission**

It is the responsibility of learners to submit assignments for assessment as required by the tutor and in accordance with the dates provided. Where a learner submits an assignment after the deadline without prior discussion with the tutor, the work should be assessed without penalty in the first instance.

A student who is unable to meet an assignment deadline because of mitigating circumstances, may request either an extension to the deadline or to defer the assessment (see the College's Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy). Such requests should be made prior to the assessment deadline and formally approved and recorded. Wherever possible, an extension deadline should not be after summative feedback has been given to other learners on the programme.



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### **5. Assessment performance**

To achieve the full qualification, the learner must pass all the core units and the required number of optional units (the 'rules of combination') in order to gain the total number of credits required.

To achieve each unit the learner must provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate achievement of each learning outcome at the standards provided. The learner must show sufficient knowledge and/or skill and must deliver what is required by the command verbs provided in each assessment criteria.

To achieve a higher grade (where this is available) the learner must achieve each of the merit criteria and each of the distinction criteria as stated in the unit. If the learner fails to meet the standards for the higher grades, the evidence provided can be used in judgements about the pass level as noted above.

Where learners do not meet the standards for a pass based on centre assessment, they will be referred and given feedback on the reasons for the decision. Learners will need to take account of the feedback and resubmit any parts of the work which did not meet the standards. This includes work for extension activities. A deadline will be provided for the resubmission. Learners will have an agreed number of opportunities [determined by the centre] to resubmit work for re-assessment.

Once submitted to ATHE for external moderation, should learners' work fail to meet the required standards one further re-take can be re-submitted to ATHE for further moderation. After this, if the work still does not meet the standards the learner will have failed the unit and will need to register to restart the unit in question.

Where a learner resubmits work for a merit or distinction grade and it is judged to meet the standards the specific grade will be awarded.

The work of learners who have achieved a pass and then wish to submit additional work for merit and distinction grades will be accepted.

### **6. Group work in assessment**

Working in groups is an accepted part of learning providing benefits to learners such as developing teamworking skills. However, care must be taken if using group work for assessment purposes. In a group assignment, it is essential that each student provides their own individual coverage of each of the unit assessment criteria.

### **7. Assessment feedback**

All learners will receive detailed and specific feedback on their work. At RAWDA College the feedback will be provided on the electronic copy of the submitted work and this will be returned to the learner. The feedback will clearly identify good practice, showing where the work meets the standards and why. The feedback will also identify where there are omissions, insufficiency of evidence and/or errors.

The feedback will be directly related to achievement of the learning outcomes at the standards given by the assessment criteria. All assessors will use the standard ATHE template for the feedback, so there is consistent practice.



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### **8. Notification of grades**

All internal grades awarded by the assessor will be documented using tracking grids, so the performance of the learner across each unit is recorded at learning outcome and assessment criteria level. Learners will have electronic access to their personal tracking grid and will have access to a record of the assessor judgements and the grade(s) awarded. The internal grade(s) will be provisional until the work has been internally verified and the provisional grade(s) has been sent to ATHE for external moderation. The actual grade(s) will not be confirmed until the external moderation by ATHE has been completed and the college has received the report.

In order to satisfy the requirements for the award of the whole qualification a learner must have received a minimum number of credits as specified within the ATHE qualification. Learners will however receive certification for any unit(s) which has met the standards.

### **9. Malpractice**

At Rawda College any form of malpractice or academic misconduct will be treated seriously and if proven will directly impact on the assessment judgements. Details of the college's policy on malpractice and how this will be managed can be found in the Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

### **10. Verifying assessment judgements**

Rawda College has a series of processes in place to check the validity of the assessment judgements (please see Internal Verification Policy). In addition, before the results are submitted to ATHE for external moderation a meeting of the Assessment Group will take place. This group will include representatives from assessors, tutors and managers and will be led by the Internal Quality Assurer. At the meeting this group will:

- review the grade profile for each learner and check for any anomalies
- check that any assessment judgements made on resubmitted work are recorded on the grid
- check that any special considerations granted for the learner are recorded on the grid
- check that all learner work and associated documents are available for EQA sampling
- ensure that the results are accurate enabling submission to ATHE.

### **11. Claims of error in the conduct of the assessment process.**

If a learner believes there has been irregularity in the assessment process, they have the right to appeal against the assessment judgements. The Appeals Policy provides information on the grounds on which an appeal will be considered, how the learner should make the appeal and how this will be managed. Learner appeals that are unable to be resolved through the Centre Appeals Policy may be escalated to ATHE in line with their published Enquiries and Appeals Policy.