



Working Together

Your Guide to Being Assessed and How to Make an Academic

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Your Guide to Being Assessed

Borders College is responsible for ensuring that internal assessments are able to be used, reliable, valid and fair.

Advice on external assessment for qualifications should be discussed with your Course Tutor.

What do we mean by assessment?

Assessment measures if a student has the knowledge and skills required to achieve a qualification.

Methods of Assessment

The work, which students produce to meet assessment tasks for all of our qualifications is assessed either internally, externally, or through a combination of both.

Internal Assessment

Staff at the College are responsible for deciding how students have performed in meeting the standards for the qualification. This is done either by setting assessment tasks, which have been devised by College staff, or by using assessments, which the awarding body have devised. An example of the former might be when a lecturer uses an assessment, which has been devised in consultation with colleagues to assess candidates' performance in a Higher National Unit. An example of the latter might be where a lecturer applies an assessment from the SQA National Assessment Bank (NAB), for a National Unit.

In internal assessment, the College is responsible for assessing a student's work in line with awarding body guidance and subject to that body's quality assurance processes. The College is also responsible for submitting students results to awarding bodies.

External Assessment

The relevant awarding body, for example SQA, City & Guilds etc, is responsible for devising and marking external assessments. Staff in the College are responsible for administering the assessments in accordance with awarding body guidance.

Types of Assessment

You can be assessed in different places such as a classroom, workshop, kitchen, salon or out of College (perhaps at a riding stable or nursery).

You can be assessed by submitting work (for example an essay), by observation or being asked questions. Sometimes you can use books to help you (called open book assessment) and sometimes you cannot (closed book assessment).

Some assessments can be completed without supervision (perhaps at home or in the library). When an assessment is not supervised you will be asked to sign a document to confirm that the work is your own.

Are Assessments Valid?

Each assessment – whether it's a written question paper or a project brief – will be designed in such a way that it provides students with an opportunity to produce the evidence that shows they have the knowledge and skills to achieve the qualification.

An assessment is valid when it:

- is appropriate (e.g. a practical assessment will be used to assess practical skills)
- allows evidence to be produced of students' performance which can be measured against the standards of the qualification
- allows students to produce sufficient evidence of all the skills and knowledge required to achieve the qualification
- helps reliable assessment decisions to be made by all assessors
- is accessible to all students who are potentially able to achieve it

Are Assessments Able to be Used?

For assessments to be used (i.e. practicable and therefore capable of being carried out both efficiently and cost effectively) there has to be adequate resources and time. Examples of this are:

- for oral assessments or interviews, balancing the need for assessment reliability with considerations of staff and student time and potential stress
- for assessing practical skills, keeping in mind any resource implications
- an assessment system with the flexibility to meet the needs of all students

Are Assessments Reliable?

To be reliable, assessment decisions (based on the standards in a qualification) on students' performance must be consistent across all assessors and all candidates undertaking the same assessment. In any assessment system, procedures have to be put in place to ensure this.

Assessment decisions are reliable when they are based on evidence that is:

- created by valid assessments provided under consistently-applied conditions of assessment (e.g. open book, supervised or invigilated)
- the work is that of the student being assessed

and when they are:

- based on clearly-defined performance and/or grade-related criteria
- consistent across the range of assessors applying the assessment in different situations, contexts and with different candidates
- consistent over time

This information should be considered along with the Student Handbook (given to all students at Induction) and the leaflet on Examinations (available from your Course Tutor).

Are Assessments Fair?

For assessments to be fair they must be:

- accessible to all learners
- all learners have an equal opportunity to be successful

Is it your Own Work?

Work produced for assessment purposes must be the student's own.

The College will take action if a student attempts to pass off work as their own which has been plagiarised (for example downloaded from the internet or is the work of another student).

For this reason students may be asked to sign a feedback sheet or similar document to confirm that work is their own. Students should also look at 'Information for Students on Copyright' in the Student Handbook.

Appeals

Academic Appeals Procedure

All students have the right to appeal against the results of assessment.

Internal Appeals Procedure:

The College operates an Internal Appeals Procedure, which allows students to appeal against the results of internal assessment prior to final results being sent to the relevant Awarding Body.

It would be anticipated that students first discuss results with their assessor/lecturer and only if necessary follow the Academic Appeals Procedure.

Appeals are only permitted in relation to the College's Summative Assessments (formal assessments) carried out for submission to an awarding body such as SQA for a recognised qualification.

STAGE 1

STUDENT

Must appeal within 7 days of receiving result

SUBJECT LECTURER/ASSESSOR

Must reply to the student in writing within 7 days of receipt of the Appeal



If student wishes to continue with an Appeal:

STAGE 2

STUDENT

Must respond to Stage 1 outcome to Head of Department within 7 days

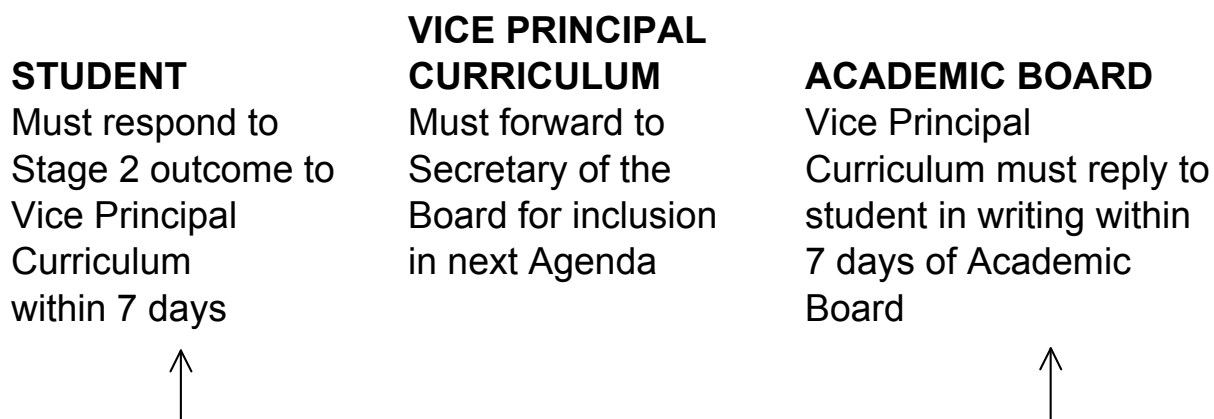
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Must reply to the student in writing within 7 days of receipt of the Appeal



If still wishing to continue with an Appeal:

STAGE 3



This is the final decision

Note that should a Head of Department also be the assessor/lecturer then the Quality Enhancement Manager would deal with Stage 2. If required, the Vice Principal Quality and Innovation may take an active role at Stage 3.

External Appeals Procedure:

It is possible to appeal against final results once issued by an awarding body:

- Most Awarding Bodies operate their own appeals procedure, which candidates can access once final results have been issued by that Awarding Body. Details of these processes are available from the relevant Awarding Body.