Assessment Policy

April 2020
Policy authorised by Responsible Officer

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1.0   Introduction

The key role of OTHM is to secure standards for those qualifications we certificate. As part of our commitment to quality assuring standards we aim to provide guidance and support to help Centres and their learners achieve learning and development goals. We also ensure that any regulatory requirements are met, and in turn we support Centres to meet those requirements.

We review all our policies annually or in response to regulatory changes to ensure that they remain fit for purpose.

2.0   Scope of policy

This policy applies to the assessment of learners' work that leads to partial or full completion of OTHM qualifications and accredited or endorsed learning programmes.

3.0   Policy statement

Assessment made possible by, facilitated and supported through, the use of postal means, information and communication technologies such as telephone and internet-based communications, e-assessment and the use of web-based assessment materials, are included in this policy.

Centres must ensure that the method of assessment meets in full any specified requirements for the delivery and assessment of the qualifications and units being delivered.

4.0   Assessment design

OTHM qualifications deliver and assess higher level skills and knowledge from L3 to L8. OTHM has a strong view that assessment of these skills should be flexible to suit learner needs and delivery methods.

OTHM considers a range of assessment strategies when developing or reviewing qualifications in order to ensure that it will meet the needs of learners, industry and employers.

OTHM expect that assignment-based assessment is the predominant method, allowing holistic assessment of the full range of skills and knowledge to be applied to a real-world context.

OTHM recognises that reliability and comparability of standards for the assignment method is a challenge. OTHM therefore provide training for Centres, assessors and External Quality Assurers (EQAs).

OTHM also provide specific guidance on:
- the make-up of the assignment;
- the evidence that needs to be generated by the learner;
- the marking criteria used by the assessor.

OTHM will include a clear outline of the assessment method required for each unit within the qualification specification. Where a particular assessment method can be delivered across a range of units this will be highlighted.

OTHM approach to assessment design is outlined as follows:

1. OTHM will develop at least one assessment brief for each unit (or unit range). This will assist Centres to get started with delivery of its selected qualifications and provide Centres with examples of good practice.
2. Centres are encouraged to devise their own assessments which must be quality assured by OTHM prior to their use.
3. OTHM will limit or remove the use of the Centre-devised option where it deems appropriate for a specific qualification due to issues of comparability, reliability, delivery method, or regulatory compliance.
4. Guidance for marking and assessing assessment outputs will be provided to Centres in the qualification documents, in training and during EQA guidance. Additional guidance documents and/or specialised training may be developed for individual qualifications as deemed appropriate.

OTHM designed assessments are available for Centres to use at any time and can be used in combination with Centre devised assessments.

5.0 Centre devised Assessment briefs

OTHM actively encourages Centres to design and develop their own assessments, however, this MUST be quality assured by OTHM before use. OTHM will support Centres by providing assessment writing workshops and related materials.

Centre devised assessments will be quality assured by OTHM against the following criteria:

a. fit for purpose;
b. appropriate methodology to meet all relevant learning outcomes and assessment criteria;
c. the assessment relates to one clearly identified level and reflects the demand of that level;
d. assessment criteria are clearly mapped to the assessment and clearly fulfill the specification for that qualification;
e. required knowledge, skills and/or understanding are clearly demonstrated;
f. clear and unambiguous assessment guidance and instruction;
g. permits reasonable adjustments to be made, while minimising the need for them;

h. allows each learner to generate evidence which can be authenticated and provides learners with the opportunity to demonstrate the full range of assessment requirements

6.0   Centre based Assessment activity

Where assessment is to be carried out by the centre, OTHM will provide marking guidance and mark sheets for the centre assessor to complete. OTHM will additionally provide training and resource materials to support assessors to undertake their role.

Controlled assessment.
Where a qualification assessment strategy requires all or part of an assessment to be carried out in controlled conditions, centres have overall responsibility for the administration of any controlled assessment tasks and must follow the guidance in the assessment policy [Assessment Policy](#). Assessment carried out in controlled conditions will be devised by OTHM and assessed and internally quality assured by the centre. Assessed work will also be subject to external quality assurance by OTHM.

Centres must comply with the following requirements;

- Ensure the safe and secure conduct of controlled assessments.
- Ensure arrangements are in place to co-ordinate and standardise all marking of centre-assessed components. This will ensure that learner's centre-assessed work is assessed and quality assured consistently in accordance with the specification.
- Ensure internal centre deadlines for the completion of controlled assessments are made clear to both learners and staff.
- Obtain the confidential assessment tasks set by OTHM in sufficient time to prepare for the assessment(s).
- Ensure that assessment materials are stored securely at all times.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that all associated administrative tasks are completed in an accurate and timely manner.
- Maintain records of controlled assessment tasks, with schedules, timelines and deadlines published and shared with all relevant parties, ensuring that all staff involved have a calendar of events.
- Ensure that individual assessors are informed of their responsibilities with regard to controlled assessment and that relevant centre staff are clear about, and are prepared for, the requirements of the specification.
- Ensure that tasks are completed under controlled conditions so as to meet the levels of control for teacher supervision.
- Ensure staff use only current assessment tasks to assess learner's knowledge and skills
- Undertake internal quality assure the assessed work prior to any marks being submitted to OTHM.
- Ensure learners work is retained securely between assessment sessions - there should be a centre policy regarding the storage of learners' work, both during and following completion of controlled assessment tasks.

- Ensure the secure storage of all controlled assessment tasks. This includes materials stored electronically.

Authentication

Every member of staff involved in the internal verification of controlled assessment must ensure that each piece of assessed work can be authenticated with confidence as being the work of the learner who submits it.

Assessors must sign a declaration after the work has been completed confirming that the work was completed under the required conditions.

7.0   Appendices guidance

Learner work should aim to minimise the amount of unnecessary attachments or appendices. Information that is essential to the learners to meet the Assessment Criteria should be included within the main body of the report.

All use of tables, graphs, diagrams, Gantt chart and flowcharts should be incorporated into the main text of the assessment, but not included in the word count. Any published secondary information such as annual reports and company literature, should be referenced in the main text of the assessment but not included.

8.0   Bibliography guidance

Where required, learners should use a recognised referencing convention and should be mindful of the risk of plagiarism and collusion.

9.0   Learners' work authentication

Centres must have robust systems in place to ensure that it does all that is possible to identify and minimise opportunities for learner malpractice.

Through rigorous assessment and internal quality assurance processes, Centres must take all reasonable steps to ensure that:
- evidence submitted by each learner for assessment is authentic;
- where an assessment is required to be completed under specified conditions, learners complete the assessment under those conditions (other than where any Reasonable Adjustments or Special Consideration require alternative conditions);
- a declaration of authenticity is signed by learners and assessors for each submitted assessment;
- evidence of authenticity is made available to OTHM as part of the External Quality Assurance process.

10.0   Guidance for Distance Learning Assessments

Centres engaged in distance learning must ensure that the distance learning assessment for qualifications they deliver:

- allows each learner to generate evidence which is valid and can be authenticated;
- ensures access to fair assessment for all learners;
- allows each specified level of attainment detailed in the specification to be reached by a learner who has attained the required level of knowledge, skills and understanding;
- allows assessors to be able to differentiate accurately and consistently between a range of attainments by learners;
- is conducted accurately, effectively and efficiently.

11.0   Regulatory references

Ofqual requires all regulated Awarding Organisations to establish and maintain evidence of their compliance with the General Conditions of Recognition. As part of its ongoing process of compliance, OTHM policies and procedures will reflect the conditions and criteria they address.

This policy addresses the following Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition (GCR).

GCR Ref.	GCR Section title
C1	Arrangements with third parties
C2	Arrangements with Centres
D2	Accessibility of qualifications
E4	Ensuring an assessment is fit for purpose and can be delivered
G1	Setting the assessment
G2	Language of the Assessment
G3	Use of Language and Stimulus Material
G6	Arrangements for Reasonable Adjustments
G7	Arrangements for Special Consideration
G8	Completion of the assessment under required conditions
G9	Delivering the Assessment
H1	Marking the Assessment

12.0   Policy review date

July 2021

13.0 Useful contacts

For more information on our qualifications and services visit: www.othm.org.uk. Alternatively, call at: +44(0)20 7118 4243 or email at: info@othm.org.uk

End of policy