

Prepared by:		Approved By:	
--------------	--	--------------	--

Appendix 1: Frequently Asked Questions – Staff

Q: How can we ensure standardisation in assessment judgements across the sector?

A: The guidance supports standardisation of approach across the sector. These are truly exceptional circumstances and, in light of timescales and logistics, it will not be possible to moderate assessment judgements sector wide. SQA have acknowledged that colleges are experienced, trusted and trustworthy institutions that are able to utilise and apply professional judgement and evidence to deliver fair and reasonable outcomes for our students.

Q: How do we quality assure?

A: Internal Quality Assurance will be strengthened within each college to support, advise, moderate and confirm the work of course teams in line with SQA guidance. This will support the change from assessment decisions being made by individual assessors to a more holistic, course team approach to decision making.

Q: Can we share resources and approaches across the sector?

A: SQA will support with guidance and resources wherever possible. Colleges may use existing networks for sharing of resources where possible and practicable. However, approaches for supporting students in generating assessment evidence are dependent on a wide range of local factors, including the stage to which assessment has already been achieved, access to equipment and resources, and remote communication networks. Therefore, assessment approaches and conditions will be based on professional judgement at local level.

Q: Can we use open-book assessment in lieu of closed-book?

A: Yes, this would be a suitable alternative approach in some cases, in agreement with SQA. For example, it may be desirable to set this as a timed assessment. Whilst flexibility around conditions of assessment may allow open-book activities to replace established closed-book practice, care must be taken not to compromise existing secure assessment materials.

Q: Will staff be able to devise and implement alternative assessment instruments without having these prior verified?

A: The approaches to alternative assessment and the development of any additional instruments of assessment would be entrusted in these exceptional circumstances to the professional judgment of the course team, and subject to normal internal verification arrangements.

Prepared by:		Approved By:	
--------------	--	--------------	--

Q: How will all of this apply to students with additional support needs?

A: Staff should choose the most appropriate assessment methodology to make the assessment accessible. This will be in partnership with college student support services. This could include, for example, the use of professional discussion as an alternative to written evidence if a scribe is usually required

Q: What about SVQ? Can we apply the same guidance?

A: No, SVQs are subject to regulatory requirements, and separate guidance will be issued in respect of these.

Q: How can we apply a grade to a Graded Unit where this cannot be completed and may even be the weakest element of available evidence?

A: The Graded Unit is the summation and application of the candidate's understanding of mandatory units in the HN to meet the course aims. The course team, through a professional discussion, review the quality and sufficiency of candidate evidence, in addition to any work submitted for the Graded Unit, to determine a grade.

Q: What about other awarding bodies? Can we apply the same guidance?

A: No, each awarding body will establish its own arrangements, and separate guidance will be issued in respect of these.

Q: Does there need to be evidence for all outcomes?

A: The course team, using professional discussion and judgement, will reach an outcome decision, where possible, based on **holistic review of all available candidate evidence**, as well as staff knowledge of their candidates, their engagement, progress and their achievements to date. This may include areas where the available evidence is used to infer competence or predict an outcome that is reasonable and justifiable in respect of the wider evidence base available. Staff should refer to the Decision Tree (Appendix 3) for guidance.

Prepared by:

Approved By:

Appendix 2: Frequently Asked Questions – Learners

Q: Why do I need to still undertake assessments?

A: Although face-to-face learning and teaching has stopped, arrangements have been made in many areas for learning to continue remotely to enable you to complete your course successfully despite the very challenging conditions we are all experiencing currently. Continuing to engage in assessment opportunities will ensure that you have comprehensive assessment evidence. Staff will review this to decide on a result for you.

Q: Shouldn't all students just pass the course? It isn't our fault we can't continue as normal.

A: It is vital that any award made is supported by a rigorous and **fair** assessment process. The college recognises the challenge and frustration experienced by our students and is working hard to support you and to ensure that your hard work and achievement is rewarded.

Q: How will my course result be determined?

A: Experienced college assessors will review all the available assessment evidence to assess whether you have met the course aims. Using this evidence, and their knowledge of your engagement and progress, they will holistically estimate your individual success.

Q: I have additional support needs. What does all of this mean for me?

A: Staff will use the most appropriate assessment methodology to make the assessment accessible for you. This will be in partnership with college student support services. This could include, for example, the use of professional discussion instead of a written exercise if you normally require a scribe.

Q: I have a conditional offer from university and my Graded Units will be impossible to complete.

A: Where it is not possible to complete the Graded Unit (for example because you have no access to necessary resources or equipment), staff will use any Graded Unit work completed to date plus a range of other assessment evidence to predict and award a grade, where it is possible to do so. This will depend on the quality and sufficiency of evidence available.

Q: I haven't been able to fully achieve my course because my assessment evidence was insufficient. How and when will I be able to complete any units that I did not get awarded?

A: Where you have not achieved your award and this is considered a direct result of the impact of college closure, your entry can be left open and you should be given the opportunity to engage in further learning,

Prepared by:		Approved By:	
--------------	--	--------------	--

teaching and assessment when conditions allow. Colleges are seeking to ensure that there is no detriment to learner funding entitlements in these situations.

Q: What if I don't get the grade I expected?

A: If you feel that the assessment outcome reached does not accurately reflect your achievement you will be able to submit an appeal follow the college's academic appeals process

Q: I don't have computer access to my college. How will my assessment decision be determined?

A: We recognise that, for some students, there are particular barriers to continuing to engage with learning, teaching and assessment. If there is already a significant amount of evidence in place, it may be possible for staff to use this to predict a grade. However, there may simply be insufficient evidence. If this is the case your entry can be left open and you should be given the opportunity to engage in further learning, teaching and assessment when conditions allow. Colleges are seeking to ensure that there is no detriment to learner funding entitlements in these situations.

Q: I have caring responsibilities and haven't been able to engage with ongoing opportunities for assessment.

A: We recognise that, for some learners, there are particular barriers to continuing to engage with learning, teaching and assessment. If there is already a significant amount of evidence in place, it may be possible for staff to use this to predict your grade. However, there may simply be insufficient evidence. If this is the case, your entry can be left open and you should be given the opportunity to engage in further learning, teaching and assessment when conditions allow. Colleges are seeking to ensure that there is no detriment to learner funding entitlements in these situations.

Q: Will universities recognise my grades?

A: Yes. Your result and grade will result from a rigorous evidence-based assessment process. This will be a valid result that reflects your achievement throughout your course.

Q: Can I progress within college with an incomplete result?

A: This will depend on your individual progress. Staff would discuss with you the available options.

Prepared by:		Approved By:	
--------------	--	--------------	--

Appendix 3: The decision-making process



Assessment Decision Tree (Contingency for COVID19)

