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ECC Academic Policy

1. Vision

ECC empowers learners with the confidence to participate, critically and creatively, in their programme of study. The aim of providing both professional trainings and transnational education consultancy to develop.

We encourage inclusive learning through promoting equality, diversity and equal opportunity and all staff, tutors and students work in partnership to encourage and contribute to effective learning and teaching.

2. Quality Assurance System

The Academic policies and procedures are intended to build upon existing good practice within the institute and to secure the best quality of its educational provision. Its key components cover procedures in respect of the QAA Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education:

3. ECC's Approach to Teaching and Learning

3.1. Introduction

The overall aim of ECC's learning and teaching strategy is to enable students to work towards attaining a certified qualification while enhancing their skills and knowledge.

The Institute accepts that different individuals may have different learning styles; as such, to ensure that the students' learning experience is of high quality, a variety of teaching and learning approaches are adopted and developed.

To this extent, the centre's teaching and learning strategy can be adjusted to the needs of different individuals or groups.

3.2. Principles of Effective Teaching at ECC

- Flexibility and adaptability to meet different needs of different people
- Active involvement of learners – to engage interest and receptiveness
- Interactivity – to promote involvement and team-working
- Respect and equality – to promote relationships between staff and students and between students that create a positive learning environment (Student Council)
- Encourage independence and self-reflection – encouraging students take responsibility for their own studies
- Appropriate role for assessment – to ensure that assessment is in line with the requirements set by the awarding bodies and it covers all the skills that are to be developed (See Skills Development)
- Constructive feedback meant to encourage students to develop their skills



- Frequent observations by Principal and peer observation

3.3. Subject knowledge

The aim of is to ensure business graduates are able to demonstrate relevant knowledge and understanding of organisations, the external environment in which they operate and how they are managed. In particular, students will gain knowledge and understanding in the following areas, predominantly influenced by guided learning with a limited critical perspective:

- Markets: the development and operation of markets for resources, goods and services
- Customers: customer expectations, service and orientation
- Finance: the sources, uses and management of finance
- People: the management and development of people within organisations
- Operations: the management of resources and operations
- Information systems: the development and management of information systems
- Communication and information technology: the comprehension and use of relevant communication and information technologies for application in business and management
- Business policy and strategy: the development of appropriate policies and strategies within a changing environment
- Pervasive issues: sustainability, globalization, corporate social responsibility, diversity, business innovation, creativity, knowledge management and risk management

3.4. Skills development

The teaching and learning strategy focuses on the development of the essential skills needed for progress to university or to employment:

- Critical thinking, analysis and synthesis
- Effective problem solving and decision making
- Effective communication, oral and in writing
- Effective self-management in terms of time, planning and behaviour, motivation, self-starting
- Self-awareness, openness and sensitivity to diversity in terms of people, cultures, business and management issues
- Effective performance within a team environment including leadership, team-building, influencing and project management skills
- Interpersonal skills of effective listening, negotiating, persuading and presentation
- Abilities to conduct research into business and management issues.



3.5. Personalized service

ECC Institute provides a personalized service adapted to different needs of different students by:

- Ensuring that teaching is in small groups
- Effective pastoral care. The Institute has a dedicated Student Welfare Officer, and students may in addition, meet the Academic Manager or Principal to discuss their concerns
- Mid-term tutorial meetings
- A mentor system with a tutor or member of the academic team
- Peer mentor
- Support with UCAS applications
- Career development advice

4. Assessment Introduction

Through summative and formative assessment, the Academic department aims to provide appropriate and timely feedback to students on assessed work in a way that promotes learning and facilitates improvement; but does not increase the burden of assessment.

Concentrating staff effort on providing feedback during the learning process has the added benefit of giving students advice about how to improve their performance in time to affect their final mark (formative assessment). Additional to this, since October 2016, the Institute have termly assessment boards in line with Edexcel's requirements, following the terms of reference as guided by the awarding body and the Institute's academic and senior management.

4.1. External Reference Points

MCC are under license to Edexcel, the awarding body who have validated and approved the BTEC Higher Nationals and BTEC Professional qualifications run at MCC. We have a responsibility to ensure that quality of provision meets the level and standard required by Edexcel, QAA and ASIC.

The requirements of the awarding body will be adhered to within the assessment policy and the terms of reference for all assessment boards.

4.2. Assessment Aims

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.

The requirements of all awarding bodies will be adhered within the assessment procedures. Please see appendix 1 for the assessment board terms of reference.



4.3. Approach to Assessment

The assessment procedures relating to specific programmes will be made available to all students prior to the commencement of their course and will be reinforced throughout their programme of study. Students are advised at key points; inductions, tutorials and through correspondence of the BTEC specification as of October 2016. Students follow the guidelines given to them and which are posted in each classroom and on all noticeboards.

This is to ensure they understand the reason for assessment and to confirm the learning and understanding that has taken place is matched against the learning outcomes/assessment objectives laid down by the awarding body. It also ensures students understand that they can use assessment and feedback to their advantage, or not, if they so choose.

Assessment opportunities will be based on good practice and will comprise the following elements:

- Assessment planning
- Common and agreed assessment procedures amongst tutors/assessor
- Interesting, challenging and realistic assessments
- The inclusion of common/basic skills as appropriate
- Comprehensive feedback mechanisms
- Clear and accurate recording of grades
- Quality assurance via internal verification and moderation
- Tutor monitoring of candidate performance
- Formal feedback in writing to all students on the outcome of the assessment board

The Academic Team, supported by the Dean at the Institute aim to promote understanding of the use of assessment and best practice through group meetings and one to one meeting with tutors and will address topics ranging from the design of tasks - which minimize opportunities for plagiarism, accommodate the different cultural backgrounds and learning styles of students to sharing new approaches to formative and summative assessment.

5. Resources & Mechanisms to Support Students

The Institute will provide:

- Appropriate resources to enhance learning. Our aim is to continue identifying and recommending up-to-date resources. Currently available are: the Institute's own library, HN Global and an agreement with Oxford Union.
- Appropriately qualified staff to carry out and monitor assessment
- Appropriate resources for students with special learning needs
- Provision of appropriate resources to take into account differing cultural and
- Quality management related to the assessment process
- The Institute is committed to the use of appropriate technologies in the delivery of its courses. We will make periodic updates of its resources utilized in the classroom by tutors or in the computer area by students. In addition to this, the Institute will continue to develop an effective social media communication system.



5.1. What Students Can Expect

All students will be entitled to the following:

- Advice and guidance on assessment given by specialist tutors appropriate to their programme of study through timely feedback
- Access Assessment policies as part of their induction process
- Where appropriate students will be encouraged to self-assess their own work and be made aware of their responsibilities with respect to the assessment process and facilitating understanding of assessment requirements
- All assessments will be planned by subject tutors to avoid the same deadline date at the end of each term
- Written and, where appropriate, oral feedback will be given on the outcome for all assignments
- An explanation of the internal verification process
- A copy of the Academic Appeals Procedure which is given to all students as part of the induction process which is incorporated into the student handbook
- A copy of the APL procedure which is incorporated into the student handbook

5.2. Benchmarking Of Grades

Various approaches will be used to ensure the consistency of the academic judgment made by teaching staff:

- Termly assessment boards
- Internal verification
- Video recording of presentations
- Witnessing presentations
- Moderation, where there are significant differences between markers

5.3. Student Obligations Regarding Assessment

Students must:

- Undertake assessments as required by their tutors
- comply with assessment deadlines
- Follow guidelines on referencing conventions
- Maintain good academic conduct in relation to collusion and plagiarism which is incorporated into the Student Handbook and covered in Student Induction
- Actively engage with formal and informal assessment feedback

MCC is required to assess learners' evidence against published learning outcomes and assessment criteria. All BTEC National units are individually graded as 'pass', 'merit', 'distinction' or 'refer' and BTEC Professional qualifications as 'pass' or 'refer'.

To achieve a pass grade, learners must meet the assessment criteria set out in the

specifications. This gives transparency to the assessment process and ensures adherence to national standards.

All units have a standard format which is designed to provide clear guidance on the requirements of the unit for learners.

Outcomes and assessment criteria – each unit contains statements of the evidence that each learner should produce in order to receive a pass. Learners must meet all assessment criteria in order to pass the unit.

6. Internal verification policy

6.1. Introduction

ECC Institute's internal verification policy is designed to ensure that the quality of the assessment practices meets the requirements of BTEC Edexcel and are managed in accordance with the QAA and BAC guidelines.

The responsibilities of ECC Institute's internal verifier

- Are to ensure that assessors are producing assignments that comply with BTEC requirements
- Unit briefs to include:
- The teaching programme and assignment deadlines
- Grade descriptors, where appropriate contextualised

An assignment/tasks designed to elicit evidence from the students at the level required

- An appropriate scenario or case study

6.2. The Internal Verifier:

- Will verify and/or second mark student assignments, as required (see 6.3)
- Will provide feedback/recommendations with regard to the assessment and the grading decisions
- Will provide reports on the assessment termly, to be considered at tutor meetings

The internal verification administrator (Registrar) is responsible for:

- An internal verification plan
- Recording internal verification decisions on work sampled
- Feedback is given to assessors to support them in their assessment decision making
- Producing timelines for internal verification
- Resolving disagreements between internal verifiers and assessors
- Feedback and recommendations from internal verification are followed up by assessors



- Documentation to provide an audit trail of internal verification activities is created and filed

7. Internal Verification Sampling Strategy

- At the end of each term will ensure that each term a sample of 10% of each unit is internally verified
- The work of each student enrolled will be verified at least once during their programme of study
- Each Unit for every cohort of students will be sampled

Internal verification will be more frequent when:

- The qualification is revised
- There are problem units
- There are problem students
- There are problem assessors

Internal verification will be less frequent when the programme is established and when there are fewer problems.

8. External Verification for Pearson Qualifications

Pearson Edexcel as the awarding body for the Institute's programmes are responsible for allocating an external examiner.

The external verifier helps us ensure that the academic standard of each award and its component parts is set and maintained at the appropriate level, and student performance is properly judged against this standard.

The assessment process measures student achievement appropriately against the intended outcomes of the programme, is rigorous, consistent, and reliable.

The external verifier in addition reports on:

- Whether the academic standards set for its awards, or part thereof, are appropriate.
- The extent to which the Institute's assessment processes are rigorous, ensure equity of treatment for students and have been fairly conducted within the institutional regulations and guidance.
- The standard of student performance in the programmes or parts of programmes for which they have been appointed to examine.
- Where appropriate, the comparability of the standards and student achievements with those in other higher education institutions.
- Good practice they have identified.



- Prior to certification the external verifier will confirm grades awarded to students meet the outcomes of the assessment

Appendix 1

Assessment Board-Reporting to Academic Board Terms of Reference

Remit / Objectives

The purpose of the Academic Assessment Board is to make judgments and decisions on the following:

- Grades achieved by students on the individual units
- Progression of students onto the next stage of the programme
- The awards to be made to students, including the award of any "merit" or "distinction" grades
- Referrals and deferrals
- Consideration of requests by students who believe their work was impaired for such reasons as medical or personal or any other extenuating circumstances
- Cases of cheating and plagiarism

In carrying out its duties, the Board will ensure compliance with the requirements of MCC's accrediting bodies,

The Academic Assessment Board is responsible to the Academic Board

Membership

- Chair (Principal)
- Secretary (Head of Centre)
- Internal Verifier
- Module Tutors/Assessors
- External Quality Assurance Advisor*
- Pearson External Examiner *
- Minute taker

*Although a member of the Academic Assessment Board team, if this member chooses not to attend a meeting, the Board may nonetheless meet and carry out its duties.

To be quorate, the Chair, Secretary and Internal Verifier must be present at Board meetings. If the Chair has been involved in delivery and marking of a given module as a tutor, Chairmanship of the Academic Assessment Board will be rotated to ensure objectivity.

Working methods

- The proceedings of the Assessment Board are strictly confidential. The Board's discussions of individual candidates must not be divulged to candidates.



- Once grading decisions or amendments have been made, the Secretary will ensure that the results are recorded in the internal Student Management system and the Pearson recording system or other awarding bodies.
- Candidates will be informed of grades as soon as practicable after the Board has met. A result letter or email to an address specified by the student and for whom consent has been sought should be sent in this way. Results should not be given over the telephone.

Meetings and Sharing of information

- The Board will meet on a termly basis, bearing in mind progression dates.
- Confidential Minutes will be kept of all decisions relating to student performance. In any related published minutes, no individual student must be identifiable by name. Draft minutes will be issued within two weeks of Board meetings.
- Minutes from Academic Assessment Board meetings are to be made available to the Pearson Quality Assurance representative.
- In accordance with Data Protection legislation, any comments made on examination scripts or comments made about a student in the Confidential Minutes of the Academic Assessment Board may be accessed by the student

Reviewed: June 2022

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