

ASSESSMENT

Guidelines, Policy and Procedure

Version	6.0
Effective date	September 2024
Date for review	August 2025
Policy owner	Head of Quality
Reference points	QAA Guide to Assessment: https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code/2018/advice-and-guidance-18/assessment
Audience/handling notes	Academic, Staff, Students, External
Dissemination and implementation plan	This Assessment policy will be published on the NHAM website, staff and student portals for reference by students and in the student handbook. Lecturers will receive training in how to apply this policy and its procedures. They will also be directed to where it is published. The Programme Leader will be responsible for the dissemination of the policy and procedures to academic staff; the Academy Manager will be responsible for training support staff on extenuating circumstances for those involved in pastoral or personal tutoring.
Linked Policies, Procedures and Forms	Deferral of Assessment (Policy), Extenuating Circumstances (Policy) Student Handbook, Disability Disclosure (Policy), Engagement & Attendance (Policy), Equity Diversity & Inclusion (Policy), Extenuating Circumstances Form.
Date approved	September 2024

1 Introduction

Quality Assurance is our way of ensuring that we create academically robust, valid, industry relevant assessments, which are marked accurately and consistently and correct grades, at the right level are awarded. Robust assessment processes are a requirement of our validating institution. It is not something that only happens once, quality assurance is an integral part of the academic cycle at NHAM. This document outlines the processes embedded into the academic cycle and the associated documents, policies and processes accompanying it.

Relevant related assessment policies, procedures and reference points

- Assessment
- Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
- Deferral of Assessment
- Extenuating Circumstances
- Marking and Moderation Process training slides for lecturers
- Moderation of Assessment Briefs
- Moderation Sampling Record
- Moderator's Report for Assessment Boards

2 Assessment, Marking and Moderation Training

At the beginning of each academic year, the Head of Quality reviews all documentation related to assessment, marking and moderation, updating documents in line with guidelines from our validating institution and best practice in teaching, learning and assessment.



NHAM always feeds back areas of best practice in marking and assessment so that new ideas, best practice and feedback can be shared amongst lecturing staff.

All lecturers attend a training session to discuss any changes to assessment processes, documentation and guidance as a result of advice and guidance from the Final Exam Boards each Summer.

At this session, lecturers are given training in assessment practice to ensure that grades are awarded in line with UWL and NHAM's validated programme specification and assessment guidance but also that grades are consistently awarded across each module and programme offered at NHAM. Lecturers are also trained on submission, resubmission, deferral of assessment and extenuating circumstances policies that are relevant to the whole assessment process.

The session also contains details on the moderation process and sample materials are given to lecturers to train them on reviewing assessment briefs, marking, second marking, moderation and feedback writing processes.

3 Moderation of Assessment Briefs

NHAM prides itself on assessments that are not only academically robust but also industry relevant. Each term, lecturers will meet to discuss assessments and whether assessments need to be changed in any way. Ideas for assessment will then be agreed and checked against NHAM and its collaborative partner (validating institution) programme specification to ensure validity and compliance.

All Assessment Briefs are created using the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria outlined in the relevant module guide from the programme specification.

4 Assigning grades, second marking and moderation

Module assessments will usually be first marked by the Module lecturer mapping comments and grades against the assessment criteria. Once first marks have been allocated, these are returned via the marking sheets to the Academy Manager

The Programme Leader will select a sample of 20 % of the submitted marks across the range of marks. This sample can be sent for second marking.

In second marking, assessors are looking to verify that the grade awarded matches the level attained in the work submitted and also that the comments given reflect the grade and allow the student to develop as a result of being assessed.

Those marks are then sent for moderation. During this process, the Head of Quality is looking for consistency of grades awarded, comments given that marking is consistent across all Modules being assessed during that assessment period.

If the Head of Quality agrees with the marks in all cases, assessments, feedback and reports are finalised and marks returned to students.

If the Head of Quality does not agree with the marks, there will be a discussion with the lecturer concerned and marks adjusted across the whole module to ensure that marking decisions are consistent across modules and programmes.

Sometimes, remarking is required. If so, the Head of Quality will make a decision and marks will be remarked by another set of markers alongside the original marker for training. These marks will then be moderated and released. A report will be written by the Head of Quality.



All moderation reports are logged and tracked by the Academy Manager. Each term, these reports are scrutinised and discussed at Student Rep and Education committee meetings, to ensure transparency of the process to students and also at Final Exam Boards to identify areas for development and/or best practice in assessment. Any development or best practice then feeds into staff training and development on marking, which is updated annually.

5 Guidelines for students

We take the quality of education you receive here at NHAM really seriously. This means that we want you to understand why and how we assess you. At the Notting Hill Academy of Music (NHAM) we will assess you at the end of every module. The reason for this is that assessment is a tried and tested way of consolidating your knowledge, skills and understanding. It lets us, and you, understand how you are doing on the course. This kind of assessment is called a 'summative' assessment. It means that it counts towards your final award and tests you on the range of knowledge, skills and understanding you have gained throughout the module.

We may also set you other assignments throughout each module. We do this as a way of helping your practice and prepare for the summative assignments that will count towards your final award. We also do this because assignments are a great way of helping you apply your learning. Any assignment that is to develop your learning is called a 'formative' assessment and won't count towards your grade but is equally as important in helping you develop the knowledge, skills and experience that will set you apart in the music industry.

Each assessment that you do reflects the skills, knowledge and understanding that you will need to develop to succeed real world of work. Every assessment we set has been designed especially by us, in consultation with a range of educational and creative industries experts. We don't assess for the sake of it. These assignments will genuinely develop you.

It is important you stick to deadlines, and you understand the reasons we need to make sure you do so with this policy. Your commitment to your study is likely to reflect your commitment in the workplace. In the fast-paced world of the creative industries, you'll need to meet deadlines. We need you to get used to that now, as you're learning.

Details of your assessments and their dates will always be published ahead of time through email and our student portal. This means you can plan your work, seek advice and guidance early if you feel you might need it and you know what's coming. Our team of lecturers and support staff are always on hand if you need to ask any questions. Assessment is about developing your learning and your employability, so it's worth your while really engaging with the process. It's all great evidence of your skills for a potential employer.

Make sure you use your feedback. It's an opportunity to understand how you did, where you can improve and what you're doing well. After your assessment, we'll always talk your grade through with you in a tutorial and this is your chance to ask any questions too.

6 Submission Procedure for students

- You must submit your assessment online using our student portal, by midnight on the day it is due.
- Presentations will be marked on the day by the person examining you; usually your module lecturer.
- Any assignments that are late, will be capped. This means you can only receive a pass mark as a maximum.



- Sometimes, there will be good reason for your assignment being late. If this is the case, you need to contact the Academy Manager as soon as possible.
- Details of acceptable reasons for late submissions and how you apply for Deferral or Extenuating Circumstances are outlined in the Deferral of Assessment Policy & Procedures and Extenuating Circumstances Policy & Procedures available on our website and you must complete an ECF (Extenuating Circumstances Form)
- If you are granted deferral on the grounds of Extenuating Circumstances, your submission will be treated as a first attempt and will not be capped at the pass rate of 40%.
- You will normally receive your results two weeks after your submission date
- If you have failed your assessment, you will have one chance to resubmit your assignment within the resubmission period, which will be published on the academic calendar available online in the student area. The resubmission of this assignment will be capped. If you have failed an assessment for any reason, you will have opportunity to discuss this with your tutor or lecturer in order for you to identify any opportunities for improvement.

All grades received are subject to a final check and ratification at your programme's Final Exam Board. This means that in some circumstances your grades may go up or down. Whilst this is unusual, it can happen and you will be given a full explanation as to why.

- Your result will be final. Sometimes, you do not receive the grade you expected and there might be reasons for this we were unaware of when you submitted your work. If this happens, you can submit an Academic Appeal. The guidelines for this are available in our Academic Appeals Policy & Procedure available on our website.
- Each term, we hold an Education Committee to keep track on your progress and also ensure the quality of the marks we award. The minutes of these meetings and marks we award are checked by our collaborative partner (validating institution) to ensure the integrity of the work we do. We hold a Final Exam Board at the end of your programme to ensure that the grade you receive is accurate, fair and in line with the collaborative partner's quality assurance processes and equivalent programmes at the same level within England and Wales.
- You are not allowed to appeal your grade on the basis of the lecturer's academic decision. Your work is rigorously marked by internal and external professionals and their decision is final.
- For each submission you will receive detailed feedback, which you should use to help develop.
- Work will be marked by your lecturer. It will also be second marked by another trained lecturer and then moderated by our Head of Quality to ensure that those marks are accurate.
- Each module's marks will be second marked and moderated by trained assessors and externally examined by the collaborative partner (validating institution), to ensure that all students have been marked accurately and fairly.

7 Enforcement, Monitoring and Review

All staff and students at NHAM must adhere to Assessment policies, procedures and guidelines. These are essential to ensure that students receive academically robust teaching, learning and assessment at



NHAM.

Assessment processes and procedures are overseen by NHAM's collaborative partner (validating institution) and its Education Committee as part of its commitment to Quality Assurance and its own Quality Assurance Processes.

Every two years, the Academy must review this policy to ensure that:

- it remains up to date and continues to meet the expectations of the UK Quality Code and Office for Students, applicable legislation or guidance;
- areas of improvement, or any concerns, raised by students, relevant external colleagues, or professional bodies have been addressed; and
- opportunities to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy have been taken.