Ahlia University Assessment Manual V.5

Ref: UC/P 429/2020

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This document is to be effective as of the Summer Session 2019/2020 and is to supersede previous versions of the same manual (AU Assessment Manual Version 4: UC/P 232/2016).

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This manual will supersede the previous Assessment Manual V.4 UC/P 232/2016 and should be effective for implementation from Summer Session 2019-2020

Version Control of AU Assessment Manual

Version	UC Reference	Approval Date
Version 1	**UC/P67/ 2012**	**28th May,2012**
Version 2	**UC/P 109/2013**	**11th July 2013**
Version 3	**UC/P 163/2015**	**11th February 2015**
Version 4	**UC/P 232/2016**	**28th November 2016**
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Introduction

There are a number of reasons why students are assessed, for example: (1) improve student learning; (2) assessment level of learning; (3) provide confidence to stakeholders such as employers; (4) *comply with* external accreditation *and quality assurance* requirements. In this regard the University requires that assessment should (1) be valid, reliable and fair; (2) be academically appropriate (3) measure performance against the intended learning outcomes; (4) provide students with feedback on learning (5) be moderated internally and externally.

The University has formal arrangements to ensure that learners are assessed, and their learning achievements are recognized against agreed and published criteria, and that the regulations are applied fairly and consistently across the colleges. These arrangements are laid out in the following documents: Assessment Manual, Guidelines for the Undergraduate Project (XXXX499), and Guidelines for the Supervision of the Master's Degree Dissertation and the Guidelines for Undergraduate Internship Programme (INTR400). These documents detail arrangements for the complete spectrum of assessment types embedded within undergraduate and Master's degree programmes at the University.

The University's Assessment Manual includes guiding principles, policies, procedures, processes, regulations and criteria for the design, conduct, marking, verification and moderation of formative and summative assessments, Intended Learning Outcomes attainment as well as provision of feedback to students, release of grades and security of storage across all courses and programmes offered by the University.

Assessment Design

Policy

The University's assessment design policy and procedure provides a framework to ensure uniformity of the principles and methods by which assessments are prepared so that students are tested according to a recognized standard across all departments and colleges. The aim is to devise and utilize valid and reliable assessments that allow each student to demonstrate their level of achievement in regard to knowledge garnered, as well as understanding and skills through a variety of methods within each course. Overall, there must be a clear step-by-step development within courses (as detailed in the course syllabus), and year-on-year progression (as detailed in the programme specification), of academic achievement and demonstration of knowledge, skills, and attributes.

The following guiding principles are applicable to all courses:

1. Assessments are to be designed to ensure that students have the opportunity to develop the aptitudes for and to be assessed on, all the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) of the course.
2. Students must demonstrate a designated level of achievement on all ILOs in order to obtain credit for the course *with appropriate level of complexity in line with NQF placed level.*
3. With respect to any course a valid assessment method measures most appropriately, achievement of the particular ILO. For example, in order to demonstrate acquisition of a clinical skill, the assessment method of choice would be demonstration of that skill and not a multiple-choice question; however, it may not always be so simple. A reliable assessment method would be expected to give the same results if repeated under the same conditions: for example, if two Assessors awarded the same grade for any one assignment of a student. See Appendix: *to Generic ILO- Teaching & Learning Assessment NQF Descriptor linkage Matrix to support assessment method selection.*
4. Course assessments must include *formative methods* mapped to the ILOs so that students receive guidance on how to approach an assessed task and also feedback on their learning to aid further learning within a course (e.g. quizzes, tests and assignments), with that caveat that for each ILO addressed formatively, there must be at least one utilization of summative methods for those ILO. Summative methods provide evidence

of achievement and to make decisions about progression or qualification with respect to the levels of learning (e.g. final examinations).

5. When designing a scheme of assessment, the aims and objectives of the course as well as the purpose of the assessment should be considered if it is to be effective. The choice of assessment task is also influenced by a number of important factors including but not limited to (1) appropriate and proportionate ILO-Assessment (2) Linkage and Weightage of the Course (3) benchmarks (4) Subject and discipline (5) professional frameworks where appropriate. *(6) Complex and in line with NQF Level.*

Procedure

1. **Appropriate ILO-Assessment linkage**: University-wide ILOs for programmes and of all courses (theory, laboratory/practical, clinical, project/dissertation/internship) encompass development of: (A) knowledge and learning, (B) subject specific skills, (C) critical thinking skills and (D) general and transferrable skills; typically these are customized for each degree programme (see Appendix: *Generic ILO- Teaching & Learning Assessment NQF Descriptor linkage Matrix to support assessment method selection.)*

The design team and course instructor/coordinator are required to refer to the University's generic template for linkage of (university wide) ILOs (*see Appendix Course Syllabus/Specification Template*), teaching methods, assessment methods and NQF descriptors (see Appendix *NQF level Descriptors*) when preparing the assessment scheme for programmes and courses. However, the template is a basic guide and should not be considered exhaustive or limiting. The various assessment methods are defined in the Glossary (see Appendix).

2. **Proportionate and Transparent ILO assessment:** The assessment scheme for a course should ensure that each and every ILO is transparently assessed and in a proportionate manner (i.e. the scheme should ensure that specific ILOs are not over assessed at the expense of others). Transparently assessed means that for each assessment question, marks associated with each ILO appertaining to that question are assigned so that the sum of these components equals the maximum marks awardable on the question.

The final exam should be comprehensive insofar as ~80% or more of the topics in the course, and the majority of ILO (except those which are not amenable to testing in this manner; see Appendix: *Generic ILO-Teaching/Learning-Assessment/NQF Linkage matrix*) should be assessed.

3. **Weightage of Assessments:** The assessment methods (e.g. course work and exams) and their respective weighting (so called 'components of assessment') are described in the course syllabus-specification and should be designed accordingly. The components of assessment are as follows:

a. Course work (typically but not exclusively) made up of quizzes, tests and examinations), assignments (homework/in-class work), lab-based/clinical work/practical work, literature reviews/article critiques, case studies, non-research projects, *design project*, *portfolio*, research projects and oral participation/presentation but specifically excluding attendance is worth 40-60%. [1]

b. In recognition of the importance of interactive participation in classroom activities, oral participation/oral presentation should be incorporated in 50% of all courses in all programmes in the College of Arts and Sciences and in the College of Business and Finance in which, among those courses having an oral participation component, with respect to the final grade award schedule, should be worth 5-10%. In the context of any summative assessments involving supervised group work, the latter, involving intra-group student discussions observed by the instructor, is also eligible to satisfy that threshold. Programmes in the Colleges of IT and Engineering, while exempt from these thresholds, ought to verify that oral presentation components are included though presentation of research and/or experimental (lab) findings [2.]

c. The final exam (which may be written, practical/clinical or a combination of these) is worth 40-60% of total marks for a course. *In some colleges such as College of IT and College of Engineering Major Test covering practical examination is also considered as part of the final exam percentage as it is assessing high percentage of ILOs.*

Exceptions to the course work + final exam assessment approach are:

- The undergraduate final year project and the Master's dissertation each of which are assessed by a written project/dissertation (worth 70% of total marks) and an oral presentation (worth 30%) – *in line with the Guidelines as approved by University Council, The Bachelor's Degree Programmes offered by College of Arts and Science are assessed based on other practical demonstration and expected outcomes*
- The undergraduate internship which is assessed by the site supervisor (worth 50%), the academic supervisor (worth 10%), student bimonthly reports (worth 20%) and a final report (worth 20%).
- A course may be designed without a final exam if this is the norm for the course internationally and if certain University wide criteria have been satisfied and approved by the respective department, College and Curriculum Committee.

4. **Difficulty of assessment:** In addition to considering ILO-Assessment Linkage, it is important that consideration is given to the difficulty of the learning outcome when designing an assessment task or question. For example, with reference to the NQF level descriptors a learning outcome for analytical skills at level 7 would typically require '*analysis, evaluation and/or synthesis of information and concepts within the common understanding'* whilst a level 9 learning outcome would typically require the '*use of a combination of approaches to critical analyse, evaluate or synthesize information that extends existing knowledge and concepts'. See Appendix for NQF level descriptors and ILOs terminologies*

1 It is the responsibility of the department council in coordination with the course instructor/coordinator to determine the programme and/or course intended learning outcomes.

[2] In the case of those courses that incorporate marks for class/oral participation, the University has provided a generic rubric which can be customized and applied according to the need of the course(s) concerned (see Appendix).

Transparency of Assessment

Policy

Ahlia University is committed to ensuring that the schedule, methods, marking criteria and guidelines of all assessments used during any course, to assess and evaluate the students' achievement of the course learning outcomes, are clearly defined and transparent to all students.

Under this policy, at the beginning of the semester students should be given a clear schedule of the course assessments together with information on the topics and ILOs covered by each assessment and the assessment and evaluation criteria and guidelines used in the course. During the semester, students should be given sufficient notice of these assessment criteria before submitting their work.

In order to ensure transparency of assessment, Ahlia University also requires that the criteria against which pieces of work are assessed (e.g. tests, quizzes, assignments, etc) are clearly documented (in the form of marking criteria or marking rubrics; and model answers should be provided where appropriate) and these should be available to students concerned as well as the internal and external verifier(s), internal moderation committee, and to the external assessor/examiner.

Ahlia University revision policy mandates that the last lecture of any course with a final examination be devoted to a comprehensive overview of the course as an aid to students in preparation of the final examination *and share the student overall grade for the course work which is out of 60%*.

Procedure:

1. The course instructor/coordinator must ensure that the course syllabus/specification (which details the course aims, objectives, ILOs, teaching and assessment methods and schedule), is verified before the beginning of the course.
2. The course instructor should ensure that all assessment methods have clearly defined marking criteria with ILOs appertaining to each question, on any assessment, clearly identified with marks allocated to each ILO identified per question. Complex questions containing multiple components should be identified by means of sub marks applicable to each component of the question. In addition: (i) solutions should be prepared for multiple choice questions or true/false type questions; (ii) model answers should be prepared for

short answer type questions, essay questions, case studies and non-research-based projects; (iii) university-wide marking rubrics should be employed to evaluate oral presentations/participation and research projects; (iv) there should be a cover sheet for the final examination which lists the questions.

3. The course instructor should ensure that the major piece of course work as well as the final exam is verified prior to being used for assessment *and a copy of the final verified final exam along with key solution is secured with the chairperson in case of any emergency* ***UC/1736/07/2017-18.***

4. The course instructor must ensure that the course syllabus/specification is distributed to all students during the first class of each course and that this document is also made available on the University E-Learning website (Moodle System).
5. During the first class or whenever any assessment is provided to students, the course instructor must explain (and where appropriate provide information sheets) on the following:
    - Question formats comprising the assessment including assessment criteria.
    - Details of how the assessment method relates to the learning outcomes developed through the course
    - *The expected complexity from the students in line with NQF level requirements*
    - The weighting of the assessment tasks and sub-tasks.
    - Marking rubrics for the evaluation of oral participation and research projects
    - The submission dates and methods of submission and collection
    - Whether the assessment is individual or team-based
    - In the case of team assessments, the responsibilities of each individual team member in completing each task and the degree of collaboration required
    - Expectations regarding word count or other length requirements.
    - *Academic Misconduct regulations and (%) of similarity allowed or other code of conduct* (*where applicable)*

Security of Assessment Documents and Records

Policy

The University recognises that the security and confidentiality of its paper-based assessments (whether they are course work or final exams) are of the utmost importance. For this reason, the question papers for all paper-based assessments should be dealt with, processed and stored in an environment that is both restricted and secure.

Under this policy, it is the responsibility of the course instructor(s) or coordinator (for single-section and multi-section courses respectively) to:

(1) Ensure security and confidentiality of all paper-based assessments during preparation, verification (where appropriate), storage, photocopying and distribution to students

(2) Ensure security and confidentiality of student answer scripts during class tests and during the conduct of final exams, and in the marking and moderation processes

(3) Ensuring that the sampling processes for moderation and for course files are carried out securely and according to the requirements of the university's quality assurance system.

In addition, it is mandatory to conduct verification and moderation within a secure area, typically the departmental office.

Finally, it is a University requirement that following completion of the moderation and marking processes, the answer scripts and course files should be stored securely for two years in the University's designated storage facility after which they must be disposed of appropriately. Arrangements are in place to collect and store the exam scripts in the custodial facility designated by the Chairperson and University. However, hard copies of Undergraduate projects and Master's dissertations must be securely stored in the department for as long as the degree programme is offered.

Procedure:

The following two procedures (for single-section and multi-section courses) set out the important steps and activities that should be implemented by instructors and coordinators to ensure complete security and confidentiality for paper-based assessments.

Single-section Courses

The preparation, photocopying, storage and administration of all paper-based assessments are the sole responsibility of the course instructor. In addition, the instructor is charged with making copies of scripts of all major assessments (those contributing 20% or more to final course grade) of students.

1. The instructor must prepare paper-based assessments in strict security and confidentiality. For each course, as per HEC guidelines, the instructor must prepare two final examinations (the second being used as a fallback to the first should the instructor have reason to doubt the security and confidentiality of the first.)
2. For final exams, the instructor must personally give the assessment and its key solution to the internal verifier to be verified according to the Internal Verification Procedure. The verification must be done in a closed meeting with the instructor and in complete security and confidentiality. Subsequently, the instructor must make any necessary modifications to the final exam and/or its key solution, according to the suggestions of the verifier.
6. The instructor must make the required number of copies of the paper-based assessment, taking every care that no trace of the assessment is left behind. The copies of the assessment must be stored in the instructor's safe custody *and a copy of the final verified final exam along with key solution is secured with the chairperson in case of any emergency* until the time of release to students.
3. The instructor must distribute the assessment question papers to students at the due time either directly or in collaboration with other invigilators.
4. On completion of the paper-based assessment, the instructor and/or other invigilator(s) must collect the answer scripts from students.
5. The students' scripts must be marked by the instructor in conditions of full and complete security and confidentiality.

6. After the marking process for continuous and final assessment, the instructor must keep sample copies of the answer scripts in the Course Files according to the requirements of the university's quality assurance system.
7. For paper-based assessments during continuous evaluation (e.g., tests/exams, quizzes, etc.), course instructors must return marked answer scripts to students after evaluation and marking.
8. For final exams, three sample answer scripts must be selected for the Internal and External Moderation Procedures and these must also be handled in a way that preserves strict confidentiality and security.
9. After the moderation and marking processes are completed, the instructors must assure that all marked student scripts of final examinations (original copies) and/or of marked student scripts of major assessments (verified copies as the original, as per university guidelines, having been returned to students) are submitted to the chairperson of the concerned department.

Multi-section Courses

In any multi-section course, the coordinator must make sure that all major paper-based assessments such as tests and exams are common for all sections. The preparation, photocopying, storage and administration of all common paper-based assessments in multi-section courses are the sole responsibility of the coordinator in coordination and collaboration with all instructors teaching the course. The course coordinator is charged with making copies of scripts of all major assessments (those contributing 20% or more to final course grade) of students.

1. The coordinator must prepare the paper-based assessment in coordination and collaboration with all instructors teaching the course and in strict security and confidentiality. For each course, as per HEC guidelines, the course coordinator, in collaboration with all the aforementioned instructors, must prepare two final examinations (the second being used as a fallback to the first should the coordinator have reason to doubt the security and confidentiality of the first)
2. For final exams, the coordinator must personally give the assessment and its key solution to the internal verifier to be verified according to the Internal Verification Procedure. The verification must be done in a closed meeting with the coordinator and in complete security

and confidentiality. Subsequently, the coordinator in consultation with other instructors must make any necessary modifications to the final exam and/or its key solution, according to the suggestions of the verifier.

3. The coordinator must make the required number of copies of the paper-based assessment, taking every care that no trace of the assessment is left behind. The copies of the assessment must be stored in the coordinator's safe custody *and a copy of the final verified final exam along with key solution is secured with the chairperson in case of any emergency* until the time of release to the students.
4. The coordinator must distribute the assessment question papers to students at the due time in coordination and collaboration with other instructors of the course and with invigilators.
5. On completion of the paper-based assessment, the coordinator must collect the answer scripts from students in coordination and collaboration with other instructors of the course and any invigilators, whenever applicable.
6. The students' scripts from all sections must be marked by course instructors according to the University guidelines using team-based marking; specifically, the questions must be distributed among the instructors, each instructor marks few questions only but across all sections. This must be done in full and complete security and confidentiality.
7. After the marking process for continuous and final assessment, the coordinator must collaborate with other instructors to ensure that sample copies of the answer scripts are kept in the Course Files according to the requirements of the university's quality assurance system.
8. For paper-based assessments during continuous evaluation (e.g., tests/exams, quizzes, etc.), the coordinator must collaborate with other instructors to ensure that marked answer scripts are returned to students after evaluation and marking.
9. For final exams, the coordinator must collaborate with other instructors to ensure that three sample answer student scripts are selected from each section to be used for the Internal and External Moderation Procedures and that these are also handled in a way that preserves strict confidentiality and security.
10. After the moderation and marking processes are completed, the instructors must return all of the marked student scripts of final examinations (original copies) and/or of marked student scripts of major assessments (verified copies as the original, as per university

guidelines, have been returned to students) through the course coordinator to the chairperson of the concerned department.

Custodial Standards and Security of Assessment Records

1. Electronic records of all learner assessments (irrespective of whether the assessment is qualified as major or minor) are maintained and secured within the University's Admissions & Registrations System (ADREG). The regulations for data entry, extraction and security of records in ADREG are described in the ADREG system user guidebook.
2. *Each Instructor is responsible to ensure that the results of all the assessments are documented within ILOs Achievement Matrix – Excel Sheet which generates the % of ILOs achievement, the excel sheet is required to be uploaded in ADREG system while entering the overall grade.*
3. Final grades are entered by the course instructor after verification of final grades subsequent to examination administration. Grades of other assessments are entered within one month after the administration of the test or the receipt of the project or assignment from the student or on the prescribed date for entry of the final grade, whichever deadline comes sooner).
4. Chairpersons serve as the custodians of paper-based final examinations and major assessments. Final exam scripts are stored securely in the department (or other designated university storage facility under the "lock and key" of the relevant chairperson) for *two* years. *Course file which includes sample of assessment* scripts are stored securely in the department (or other designated university storage facility under the "lock and key" of the relevant chairperson) for two years.

Marking of Assessments

Regulations

The University requires that all student assessments within a course will be marked fairly and consistently, and with strict adhere to the marking criteria, as well as solutions, model answers or

marking rubrics (as appropriate). Marking must be conducted in a secure environment in order to ensure the integrity of the assessments.

The physical process of marking student assessments for any one course is normally the responsibility of the course instructor (who may be assisted by a laboratory demonstrator or graduate teaching assistant, as appropriate), with reference to the marking criteria as well as solutions, model answers or rubrics as appropriate. In the case of multi-section courses each Instructor is assigned a part of the exam to mark for students across all sections and in this manner the marking is deemed to be fair and transparent (see UC/P13/201: Roles and Responsibilities of Coordinators of Multi-section Courses).

The exceptions to these marking regulations are:

1. The undergraduate final year research project (in which the oral exam and written report are marked by an examination committee consisting of the supervisor and two other internal examiners using university-wide criteria and rubrics, and the results averaged)
2. The Master's dissertation (in which the oral exam and the dissertation are marked by an examination committee consisting of the supervisor, internal and external examiners using university-wide criteria and rubrics, and the results averaged)
3. The undergraduate internship (marked by the site supervisor and academic/internship supervisor and the results collated)
5. The marking of these exceptions are described in the respective guidelines: *Guidelines for the Undergraduate Project (XXXX499), and Guidelines for Supervision of the Master's Degree Dissertation and the Guidelines for Undergraduate Internship Programme (INTR400).*

Internal Verification and Moderation

Introduction

This section explains the principles, policies and procedures for:

1. Internal verification of the course syllabus-specification, *major piece of work (where applicable)* and final examination for all taught courses at Ahlia University.
2. Internal moderation of the marking for *major piece of work (where applicable)* and final examinations and the overall grade distribution for all taught courses (but excluding Undergraduate Project and Master's dissertation)

Guiding Principles

1. Ahlia University aims to ensure that assessment of students is valid (or appropriate, i.e. measures what is supposed to measure), fair and meets the intended learning outcomes for each respective course by:
    a. Promoting effective learning through independent internal verification of the course- syllabus specification, major piece of course work and final examination.
    b. Utilize a process of internal moderation to ensure that the marking criteria as well as solutions, model answers or rubrics are fairly consistently applied in relation to the major piece of work and final examination.
2. The University has defined the policy and procedures for internal verification and moderation and explained when these should be applied.
3. This policy should be considered a minimum level of acceptable practice for verification and moderation.

Policy and Procedure: Internal Verification

1. The course syllabus, major piece of course work and final examination for a respective course shall be subject to verification
2. The role of verification is to determine:
    a. Validity of the assessment methods as regards the aims, objectives and intended learning outcomes for each respective course (as detailed in the Course Syllabus-Specification)

b. Whether or not the assessment scheme for each course is fair and effective
c. Validity of the final examination vis-à-vis the course intended learning outcomes
d. Validity of the complexity level of assessment in line with the NQF placed level.

4. Internal verification is to be undertaken by a minimum of one faculty member (the 'verifier'), who is not an instructor of the respective course but who teaches in, or is well acquainted with, the subject area (and selected the Chairperson).
5. The Course Instructor should provide the verifier with:
    a. Course Syllabus-Specification (including tentative dates for each assessment)
    b. Major piece of course work and marking criteria as well as solutions, model answers or rubrics, as appropriate
    c. Final examination script and marking criteria as well as solutions, model answers or rubrics, as appropriate
    d. The marking criteria or rubric for evaluating the practical component of the courses including the major piece of coursework and final examination if applicable
6. The verification process for the Course Syllabus-Specification, major piece of course work, the marking criteria or rubric for the practical component of the courses and final examination consists of answering a number of questions (and providing constructive remarks where appropriate) which must be recorded on the appropriate forms (see below), and thereafter the verifier discusses this feedback with the Instructor concerned and any changes are made accordingly.
    a. Internal Verification of the Course Syllabus-Specification
    b. Internal Verification of the major piece of course work
    c. Internal Verification of the Final Exam.
7. The completed forms, original and the final versions of the course syllabus-specification, major piece of course work or final exam are forwarded to the Chairperson for review as well as secure storage in the department office *and placed within the Course File.*

Process: Internal verification of course specification or syllabus/specification

1. The Chairperson of the Department/*Programme Coordinator* nominates a verifier for each course two weeks before commencement of the semester. It is at the discretion of each Department/College to decide how many verifiers are required for all the courses in the degree programme concerned.
2. The Instructor[3] or the Coordinator of multi-section course meets the respective verifier and hands-over the syllabus/specification to her/him as early as possible, and no later than one week before the commencement of the semester.
3. The Verifier verifies the Course Syllabus/specification and completes the form: Internal Verification of Course syllabus/specification. Thereafter the Verifier discusses this feedback with the Instructor concerned and any changes are made accordingly, prior to distributing the course syllabus-specification to students.
4. The completed form, original and the final version of the assessment are forwarded to the Chairperson/ *Programme Coordinator* for record keeping *and placed within the Course File*, as well as used for completion of the form: Internal Verification and Moderation Summary Report which should then be forwarded to the College Dean for monitoring of the process and for him/her to provide critical feedback to Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee (if any)

[3] In the case of multi-section courses, the Coordinator finalizes the course syllabus/specifications with all the Instructors of the course, and then provides the Internal Verifier with the documents

Process: Internal Verification of the major piece of course work and final Examination paper

1. Normally, the Internal Verifier is the same person responsible for checking the course syllabi/specifications prior to the start of the semester.
2. The Instructor provides the Internal Verifier with the major piece of course work and final examination paper as well as the marking criteria and solutions, marking criteria or rubric for the Practical component of the courses, model answers or rubric and model answers as appropriate, at least two weeks before these assessments are conducted.

3. The Internal verifier records his/her findings in the appropriate forms (i.e. Internal verification of the major piece of course work or Internal verification of Final Examination and returns these to the Instructor.
4. The Instructor makes any recommended changes to the documents before conducting the assessments.
5. The Internal Verifier submits the completed form, original and the final version of the assessment to the Chairperson/ Programme Coordinator for secure record keeping *and placed within the Course File.*, as well as for completion of the form: *Internal Verification and Moderation Summary Report.*
6. The *Internal Verification and Moderation Summary Report* should then be forwarded to the College Dean for monitoring of the process and for him/her to provide critical feedback to the *Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee (if any)*

A guide to timelines for the above processes is provided in Table 1

Policy and Procedure: Internal Moderation

1. The moderation will be conducted by the Internal Moderation Committee which normally consists of the concerned Course Instructor/Coordinator (in the case of multi- section courses), the Chairperson of the Department (or *Programme Coordinator*), and one other faculty member.
2. All courses will have their major piece of course work, final examinations and overall grade distribution *as documented within ILOs achievement matrix – excel sheet internally moderated*
3. As a minimum requirement, moderation should consist of:

    a. A review of the major piece of coursework with the highest, average and lowest marks (i.e. one or two from each category) to ensure that the assessment criteria have been correctly and accurately applied.

    b. A review of final exam scripts with the highest, average and lowest marks (i.e. one or two from each category) to ensure that the assessment criteria have been correctly and accurately applied.

c. A review of the major piece of course work and final exam scripts for borderline-fail students

d. *Confirmation of ILOs achievement rate which is 60% and incase of any ILO did not attain the % actions to be taken by the department. (The attainment rate may be set higher than 60% as per the college requirement)*

4. Details of the moderation should be recorded on the form: Internal Moderation of the major piece of course work and Final Examination and Overall Grade Distribution and any recommendations implemented by the Instructor.
5. The completed forms and the final grade distribution are forwarded to the Chairperson/ Programme Coordinator *and placed within the Course File.*

Process: Internal Moderation

1. The Chairperson (or *Programme Coordinator*) forms the Internal Moderation Committee which normally consists of the concerned Course Instructor/Coordinator (in the case of multi-section courses), the Chairperson/*Programme Coordinator*.
2. The Chairperson/ *Programme Coordinator* prepares the schedule of Meetings for moderation of each course giving two days for evaluation of the major piece of course work and the final exam scripts by the Instructor(s) after the final examination of the course.
3. Using the form: Internal Moderation of the major piece of course work and Final Examination and Overall Grade Distribution, the Internal Moderation Committee reviews the students' major piece of course work and the final exam scripts (one or two of the highest, the average and the lowest marks) against the marking criteria and solutions, model answers or rubric as appropriate, and the Grade sheet *documented within ILO Achievement Matrix* submitted by the Instructor/Coordinator.
4. The Instructor/Coordinator implements any recommendations from the committee and finalizes the students' grades accordingly.
5. The completed form must be retained by the Chairperson (or *Programme Coordinator*) for record-keeping *and placed at the course file*, as well as for completion of the form Internal Verification and Moderation Summary Report which should then be forwarded

to the College Dean for monitoring of the process and for him/her to provide critical feedback to the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee (if any).

A guide to timelines for the above processes is provided in Table1.

Table 1. A guide to timelines for Internal Verification and Moderation

No	**Description**	**Responsible Person(s)**	**Proposed Time Period**
1.	Nomination of Verifier(s)	Chairperson/ Programme Coordinator	Before commencement of the Semester
2.	Internal Verification of Course Syllabus/ Specifications for each course to be offered	Course Instructor in coordination with the Internal Verifier	Before commencement of the Semester
3.	Internal verification of: • Major piece of Coursework as well as the marking criteria and solutions, model answers or marking rubric as appropriate • The final examination question paper as well as the marking criteria and solutions, model answers or marking rubric as appropriate	Course Instructor in coordination with the Internal Verifier	Two weeks before the assessment is distributed to students
4.	Communication of the Schedule for moderation to all faculty members by the Chairperson/Programme Coordinator	Chairperson/ Programme Coordinator	Before commencement of the final examinations
5.	Internal moderation of sample student exam scripts (highest, average, lowest) and the final Grades	Internal moderation Committee	Before uploading of Grades by the Instructor

External verification and moderation

Introduction

The University recognizes the importance of the External Assessor/Examiner in validating the performance of the internal verification and moderation systems as well as providing feedback on the overall standard of each course within a particular degree programme. This section explains the principles, policies and procedures for External Assessment of all courses (except the Master's dissertation and Project).

Policy on the Application of External Moderation and Verification

The University's assessment system is designed to demonstrate confidence in academic standards by adopting the use of independent and external Assessor/Examiners, for review of the (i) the course syllabus/specification; (ii) the major piece of course work and the related marking criteria, solutions, model answers or rubric, (iii) samples of students' major piece of course work and the final examination scripts; (iv) grade distribution for a course and the overall standard of the course concerned, and this must be completed before the release of the final grades to students (so that recommended grade changes can be applied if deemed appropriate and necessary). The external verification and moderation processes are designed so that, all non-service courses applicable to the programme specialization, are covered. *Such implies that all offered courses in a degree programme are moderated and verified within a 2 years cycle*. The owner of this process is the chairperson/Proragmme Review Coordinator charged with running the programme in coordination with the departmental council. For service courses, the courses should be forwarded for external moderations once annually making sure that all the courses offered are externally moderated, the owner of the process is the dean of the college.

Procedure for the Application of External Moderation and Verification

In prioritizing courses for external moderation and verification, with respect to non-service courses, all scores derived from the course contents portion of the Instructor and Course Evaluation are ranked in descending order (lowest first / highest last). The lowest sixth are identified in the first term of the cycle with the caveat that there should at least be one course at each level: 100, 200, 300 and 400. In the next term, the next lowest sixth is identified subject to the same multiple level constraint and proceeding likewise until all courses have been moderated and verified externally. For that purpose, summer term is excluded. For service courses, the order of moderation and verification is solely derived from descending order ranking.

Policy for Nomination of External Assessor/Examiner

Inclusion criteria

External Assessor/Examiners are appointed from outside of the University if they show appropriate evidence (by means of a short curriculum vitae), of satisfying the following criteria:

1. A Ph.D. qualification in the field of the programme and/or Master's Degree with extensive academic experience where appropriate.
2. Competence and experience in the fields, covered by the concerned programme.
3. Fluency in the language instruction of the degree programme.
4. Awareness of standards and current developments in the design and delivery of related curricula.
5. Competency and experience relating to design and implementation of student assessment methods appropriate to the subject.
6. Respect of professional peers due to sufficiency of standing, credibility and breadth of experience within the field.

Exclusion criteria:

1. A member of a governing body, advisory board or committee of the University
2. A graduate student, a current or a former faculty member of the University who served at the university during the last four years.
3. A job applicant to Ahlia University in the year of the evaluation or in the following three years.
4. The external Assessor/Examiner should not have been previously been appointed as an external Assessor/Examiner within the last two years at Ahlia University or extended for re-appointment.
5. Any person with a close professional, or personal relationship with a member of staff or student involved in the degree programme.
6. Any person who is, or who has been significantly involved in collaborative research activities with a faculty member involved in the delivery of the degree programme or its courses within the last three years.
7. Reciprocal arrangements involving similar programmes at another University.

It is at the discretion of the College concerned to decide whether or not the same Assessor/Examiner is suitable to provide feedback on more than one-degree programme within the College. *However, one external assessor/examiner cannot be appointed for more than two academic programmes at Ahlia University*

The appointment period for external assessor/examiners is two years, an extension of 2 years is possible subjected to an official request by the College and approval by University Council.

Procedure for Nominating, Approving and Inviting the External Assessor/Examiner

1. The College Council nominates (or selects) up to three External Assessor/Examiners according to the criteria stated above and completes the form: Nomination of External Assessor/Examiner Form
2. *Courses offered as part of Postgraduate Programmes should be coordinated by the offering department.*
3. Finally, the nominations are forwarded to the University Council for approval. If all nominations are approved, then the Chairperson/Programme Coordinator can select any of the nominees based on their availability.
4. On approval of the nomination, an invitation and agreement letter will be forwarded from the Chairperson of the concerned programme, to the proposed Assessor/Examiner.
5. The duration of appointment will normally be two years *could be extended for two years subjected for approval by University Council.*
6. The External Assessment process begins once the nominee has agreed to participate.

Procedures and Process: External assessment

1. Role of the Chairperson/ Programme Coordinator

1.1. The Chairperson/Programme Coordinator shall initiate the External Verification and Moderation process by preparing a Schedule in consultation with the External Assessor/Examiner (see Table 2 below).

1.2. The Chairperson/Programme Coordinator shall arrange for the External Assessor/Examiner to visit the University and undertake the verification and moderation process. If the External Assessor/Examiner is unable to attend, the Chairperson will consult the Vice President (Academic Affairs) who will confirm the process to be followed.

1.3. At the meeting on University premises convened for this purpose, the Chairperson shall provide the External Assessor/Examiner with the following documents:

a) Written confirmation of his/her appointment and the Schedule of meetings
b) Hard/e-copy of the current *Course Directory*
c) The University Assessment Manual
d) The Programme specifications, Course syllabus/specification
e) Major piece of course work, final examination paper and marking criteria, as well as solutions, model answers or rubrics as appropriate
f) The External Assessor/Examiner Forms E1 and E2
g) Students' final exam scripts for courses offered in the Semester
h) ILOs Achievement Matrix- Excel Sheet highlighting the ILOs attainment rate and overall grade distribution

1.4 The Chairperson/Programme Coordinator shall ensure that Forms E1 and E2 duly signed by the External Assessor/Examiner after completion of the Process are utilised in the grade confirmation meeting (see 1.4) and retained in line with university requirements.

1.5 The Chairperson/Programme Coordinator shall convene a meeting of the Departmental Council to consider reports from the Internal Moderation Committee and from External Assessor/Examiners, make any grade adjustments and confirm final grades. The feedback from the external assessor/examiner will be used for the upcoming course offering.

2. Role of External Assessor/Examiner

2.1 The External Assessor/Examiner shall attend the University to carry out his/her Verification/Moderation duties

2.2 At the meeting on University premises convened for this purpose, the External Assessor/Examiner shall

i) carry out the verification process in line with the framework stated in Form E1 and complete Form E1 including remarks and comments on the overall process.

ii) carry out the moderation process for a sample of answer scripts in line with the framework stated in Form E2 and complete Form E2 including any recommendations for grade change.

2.3 The External Assessor/Examiner shall submit Forms E1 and E2 to the Chairperson/Programme Coordinator of the Programme immediately after the verification/moderation process is completed.

Supporting Documents to be forwarded to the external assessor/ examiner

a) Course Syllabus Specification of the Course
b) Samples of Major Piece of Work (*if applicable*)
c) Samples of Final Exam
d) ILOs Achievement Matrix
e) Programme Study Plan
f) Programme Specification
g) Course Directory
h) NQF Level Descriptors

3. Schedule for the External Verification/Moderation Process

Table 2 below shows the time period in which the External Verification and Moderation process shall be completed. **Table 2. Guide to Timelines for External Verification/Moderation**

No	Description	Responsible person(s)	Time period
1.	Initiate dialogue with the External Assessor/Examiner and agree the schedule for External Assessment	Chairperson/Programme Coordinator	Two weeks before the beginning of semester final examinations
2.	Notify the External Assessor/Examiner of arrangements for the Verification/Moderation Meeting at the University and provide appropriate documents from the list in section 1.3	Chairperson/Programme Coordinator	As soon as Internal Moderation is complete for 25% of the Programme courses
3.	Attend the Verification/Moderation Meeting at the University, carry out the Verification/Moderation process and submit completed Forms to the Chairperson/Programme Coordinator	External/ Assessor/Examiner Chairperson/Programme Coordinator	Within 72 hours after notification by the Chairperson/ Programme Coordinator
4.	Convene Department Council meeting to discuss reports by External Assessor/Examiner Internal Moderation Committees and approve the final grades	Department Council	Within one day after the External Assessor/Examiner reports are received

5.	Convene Master Programme Committee meeting to endorse final grades after meeting of Department Council*	Department Council/Master Committee	Within one day after the Department Council meeting
6.	Upload final grades into ADREG system	Instructors	Within one day after the Department Council meeting
7.	Verify final grades in ADREG system and authorize release to students	Chairperson/ Programme Coordinator	Within one day after the Department Council meeting
8.	Submit to Dean of College the minutes of the Departmental Council meeting and summary of programme results	Chairperson/ Programme Coordinator	In line with College Council meeting timetable

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) Achievement Procedure

Course ILOs Achievement Procedure

a. **Purpose**: The purpose of measuring the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) per course is to assure that the learners has attained the required learning outcomes throughout the learning period of the course. The course ILO achievement also feeds in the Programme ILOs achievement through aggregation of data every semester by the concerned cohort.

b. **Frequency of Implementation:** Upon the conduct of Internal Moderation as part of AU Assessment Manual, ILOs achievement should be conducted every semester.

Role of the Instructor/Coordinator of Multi-Section Course:

Every faculty member should fill the excel sheet in line with the below classified steps:

a. **Step 1:** Upon verification of the course syllabus as part of AU Assessment Manual, the instructor must fill sheet 1 pertaining to general information and include the CILOs verified and relate them with assessment methods.

b. **Step 2:** Upon verification of the assessment appropriateness to the level of the course as part of AU Assessment Manual, each faculty member is required to assess the CILOs using various assessment activities as verified within the syllabus such as test, quiz, final exam etc. (for more information refer to ILOs teaching & learning and assessment matrix)

c. **Step 3:** The faculty member should define how each assessment method is mapped to the CILOs, for the assessments above 20% should be internally verified and moderated as part of AU Assessment Manual

d. **Step 4:** The course assessment workbook (CAW) will generate a measure for CILO attainment as well as a chart "dashboard" highlighting the level of CILOs attainment as course.

e. **Step 5:** The faculty member should forward the course assessment workbook (CAW) to the chairperson for discussion at departmental level, in case of ILOs did not score (60% or above) the faculty should provide his/her justification Note * *(The attainment rate may be set higher than 60% as per the college requirement)*

Role of the Chairperson/ Programme Coordinator:

Every semester chairperson/ Programme Coordinator should conduct the following actions:

a. **Action 1**: Chairpersons must ensure that CILOs achievement procedure is conducted for all the offered courses (including multi-section)

b. **Action 2:** Chairperson should discuss the results at departmental level and ensure that all the courses achieved their ILOs for those ILOs they did not score 60% or above a clear improvement plan should be developed at departmental level to improve the content of the course.

c. **Action 3:** Chairperson must aggregate the data from each course assessment workbook (CAW) and develop Programme ILOs achievement considering the cohort analysis and suggest any modification to the programme ILOs to the college council.

d. **Action 4:** Following the implementation of the corrective actions, the department should then monitor the progress in PILO attainment and determine if the change was successful. This should be illustrated in graphs that clearly shows the progress.

Role of the Dean of the College:

a. The dean must ensure that every department has conducted the CILOs and PILOs procedure for their offered courses/programmes and discuss any improvement actions (if needed)

Programme ILOs Achievement Procedure

a. **Purpose**: The purpose of measuring the Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) is to assure that the learners have attained the required learning outcomes throughout the

learning period of the study. The Programme ILO achievement also feeds into the achievement of the graduate attributes in line with the University Teaching and Learning Plan through aggregating course ILOs achievement of all the offered courses every semester.

b. **Frequency of Implementation:** Upon the conduct of Internal Moderation as part of AU Assessment Manual, ILOs achievement should be conducted every semester

Role of the Instructor/Coordinator of Multi-Section Course:

a. Every faculty member should fill the excel sheet in line with steps stated within the "Course ILOs achievement procedure UC/P286/2018"and forward the filled version to the course verifier/moderator for review as part of Internal Moderation of Final Exam Process

b. The faculty members should submit the signed version after the review by the course verifier/moderator to the chairperson of the department for further discussion.

c. Upon discussion at department council and approval the course assessment workbook (CAW) will be forwarded to the chairperson for conducting the PILOs achievement procedure

Role of the Chairperson/ Programme Coordinator:

The chairperson of the department is responsible to collect all the course assessment workbook (CAW) of all the offered courses within the semester. The chair should map the all courses' ILOs to the Programme Intended Learning outcomes by filling the excel sheet "PILOs assessment matrix" and initiate the following actions:

a. **Action** 1: The chairperson must collect all the course assessment workbook (CAW) and collate all the information within the "PILOs assessment matrix".

b. **Action 2:** Chairperson should discuss the results at departmental level and ensure that each course achieved its ILOs and will positively contribute to the attainment of PILOs. For those courses whose ILOs that did not meet the threshold (60%) a clear improvement plan should be developed at departmental level to improve the content of that specific course. Note * *(The attainment rate may be set higher than 60% as per the college requirement)*

c. **Action 3:** Chairperson must assure the PILO attainment rate for all the PILOs within the Programme is attained. In case ILOs they did not score (60% or above)a clear improvement plan should be developed at departmental level to improve the content of the programme

d. **Action 4:** Following the implementation of the corrective actions, the department should then monitor the progress in PILO attainment and determine if the change was successful. This should be illustrated in graphs that clearly shows the progress

Role of the Dean of the College:

a. The dean must ensure that every department has conducted the CILOs and PILOs procedure for their offered courses/programmes and discuss any improvement actions (if needed)

Quality Assurance required documentation:

Roles and Responsibilities of the Chairperson:

a. Documented all the filled course assessment workbook (CAW) discussed and finalized by departmental council
b. The filled "PILOs assessment matrix"
c. Minutes of the department council discussing the results of the Course and PILOs attainment rate
d. Improvement Plan (if applicable)

Roles and Responsibilities of the Dean:

a. Minutes of the College Council discussing the PILOs attainment rate
b. Improvement Plan (if applicable)

Approval of Assessment Results

Policy

In line with its mission to achieve quality, fairness and transparency in education provision, the University is committed to ensuring that student certification results/grades are verified, moderated and approved efficiently, consistently and fairly. Assessment of students must strictly be guided by the Ahlia University Assessment Manual which requires that student assessments and results go through processes for internal and external verification as well as internal and external moderation to ensure appropriateness for the course level and fairness to students.

It is the policy of the University that students should not have access to their final grades until

the due processes of verification, moderation and approval of results have been followed, as laid down by the University's procedures and processes. This policy applies consistently to all *undergraduate and postgraduate programmes* offered by the University.

Procedure

The following procedure must be applied across all university programs and by all departments to approve students' assessment results and grades by the end of each semester.

1. The students' final marks (out of 100 marks) must be finalized by the instructor after adding the final examination marks to the total mark of the course continuous evaluation (such as quizzes, tests, assignments, etc.) obtained during the course. *The instructor must final the ILOS achievement template –excel Sheet (CAW) and* assign final grades to the students according to the University's grading system. The instructor must then submit the detailed mark-sheets (with final grades) and the assessed/marked final examination answer scripts to the chairperson of the department within 72 hours after the final examination.
2. In the case of a multi-section course, the coordinator must coordinate the evaluation/marking of final examination scripts and the finalization of grades according to the University Policy on and Procedure for Multi-Section Courses. The coordinator must submit the *final the ILOS achievement template –excel Sheet (CAW)* (with final grades) and the assessed/marked final examination answer scripts of all sections to the chairperson.
3. The Internal Moderation Committee for the course, which consists of at least three members including the Chairperson of the Department (in the chair) and the instructor/coordinator of the course, must meet within one day of the submission of the final marks and grades sheet to examine student marks and grades and to verify the marking/evaluation of final exams according to the guidelines of the Internal Moderation Procedure stated in Ahlia University Assessment Manual.
4. After receiving the reports of the Internal Moderation Committees of at least 25 percent of the offered courses, the Chairperson must initiate the external moderation process according to the University Assessment Manual, which must be completed within 72 hours.
5. On completion of the internal and external moderation processes, the Department Council must meet to consider the moderation reports and to approve the finalised grades of students in all departmental courses
6. *The department council must take into account any modification to the grades suggested by the external assessor/examiner (if any) and take an action.*

7. If the department offers any course to the *Postgraduate Programme*, the approved grades of these courses must be submitted to the *Programme Coordinator* for endorsement and thereafter the grades of these courses are treated just like other courses.
8. Immediately following the Department Council meeting, course instructors must upload the approved grades into the University ADREG system as per the Grade Entry Procedure of the University and upload the *final the ILOS achievement template –excel Sheet (CAW)*.
9. Following grade entry, the Chairperson must verify the grades in the system by comparing them with the results approved by the Departmental Council and authorise the grades to be made accessible to students in the ADREG system.
10. The Chairperson must submit to the Dean of the College the minutes of the departmental meeting(s) in which the grades were approved and a summary of the program results. In the case of the Postgraduate Programme, the Programme coordinator must submit a summary report of the Programme's grades to the Dean of the College offering the prorgamme.
11. The Dean must present the results of all programs within the college to the College Council for information.

Feedback on the Student Assessments

Policy

The University considers the feedback given to the students regarding their performance in the course assessments as a crucial and integral part of the learning process. Students should obtain regular and constructive feedback on their academic performance and attainment of the course learning outcomes. Regular, informative and constructive feedback enables students to monitor their progress, make sensible judgments regarding their learning achievements (knowledge and skills gained) and determine areas of improvements; it also encourages them to enhance their performance in subsequent learning activities.

For these reasons, course assessments should be appropriately spaced across the semester to facilitate the provision of feedback to students at various stages during the learning process. In particular, feedback should be given to the students regarding their performance on the previous assessment and before the next assessment method is due. It is also important that

students receive informative and constructive feedback on their academic performance on all assessments taken during the study period before the final examination.

Procedure:

1. Before the beginning of each semester, course instructors must carefully review the course syllabi/specifications to ensure that the course assessment methods are appropriately spaced across the semester to facilitate the provision of feedback to students at various stages during the learning process. In addition, the course syllabus/specification is verified by an internal verifier as per the University Internal Verification Procedure.

2. Course instructors must ensure that they provide regular feedback regarding assessment to students using the appropriate method

    - Oral feedback on formative and summative assessments given in class: this may be by instructors or by peers and may relate to presentations, participation in discussions and group debates and may be to individual students or to the class as a whole. Oral feedback is compulsory on a major assessment (weighted 20% or more of the course grade).
    - Oral feedback through direct face-to-face contact with individual students during discussion in office hours. Oral feedback during office hours is compulsory only with students who are deemed "in-need;" meaning those who have attained a grade of C- or lower on a major assessment should be communicated to the Student's Academic advisor. Students who miss the oral feedback session under these circumstances are to be reported to the student's academic advisor and the Dean of Students Affairs for follow-up.
    - Written feedback and comments on assessment papers which are returned to students on completion of the marking and evaluation process. Written feedback, at a minimum, ought to include corrections of all incorrect or incomplete answers written in the assessment.
    - Written feedback through provision of key assessments solutions on major assessments. Key solutions may be presented in class or be made available to students in the appropriate format (hard or soft copy through Moodle system) after completion of each assessment (except the final examination).

- Feedback given through Moodle interactive tools which allow communication with students.

3. Course instructors must ensure that they return student scripts and provide feedback on major assessments to students within seven working days (on minor assessments three working days) after the assessment with major assessments carrying a minimum weightage of 20% of the course grade. For research projects embedded in courses at the 200-, 300 and especially 400-level, course instructors have 14 days to do the same in recognition of the burden of providing feedback on a wide variety of academic content on an individual basis.

4. Course instructors must ensure that all paper-based assessments (except for the final examination) are returned to students on completion of the marking process. In keeping with security of records, however, the instructors must photocopy sample of scripts that relate to major pieces of work (assessments bearing a weightage of 20% or more of course grade). In addition, the instructors must keep sample copies of assessed work according to the requirements of the University quality assurance system.

5. In addition, it is required that course instructors provide students with their total marks for course work (Continuous evaluation marks) prior to attending the final examination *which is out of 60%.* Students are encouraged to seek feedback from the course instructor, and it is expected that this feedback must relate to the assessment criteria as discussed above

Student challenge of grade

Policy

It is the policy of Ahlia University to ensure that all students have access to a fair mechanism through which they can address their concerns regarding course performance as efficiently as possible. To ensure that such concerns are dealt with swiftly, the University ensures that every student has the right to challenge the results of any major assessment in addition to the final course grade. For the purposes of challenge of grade, a major assessment is considered to be 20% or more of the final course grade.

The deadline for challenging the results of a major assessment is one month from the receipt of

the assessment script by the student. In no case, however, will a challenge of a major assessment be entertained if the final grade for the course has already been entered. At that stage, the student's only recourse is to challenge the final course grade.

The deadline for challenging a grade is defined as the end of the semester after the grade was awarded and for purposes of this deadline, the summer session does not count. In order to ensure an objective investigation, any Challenge of Grade will be investigated by an ad- hoc committee constituted by the Dean of the relevant College, which will consist of three faculty members and which may include the instructor of the course. The student may appeal against the decision by following the University Appeal Procedure.

In addition, a student can challenge a grade not on the merits but on the basis of a mitigating circumstance that rendered the student at a disadvantage in undertaking the assessment. The challenge may be with respect to a major assessment or with a final grade but, in the event that the challenge is with respect to a major assessment, the major assessment should be a test with a weightage no less than 20% of the final course grade. (for assignments, the appropriate remedy is for the instructor to provide an extension of the deadline for submission proportionate to the circumstance besetting the student.)

Procedure for Appeal against the Result of a Major Assessment not based on a Mitigating Circumstance

1. The student must submit a completed Challenge of Result of a Major Assessment Form to the Directorate of Admission and Registration and pay any stipulated fees – this date is the start of the process.
2. Directorate of Admission and Registration must forward the Challenge of Result of a Major Assessment Form to the Dean of the relevant college.
3. The College Dean, in coordination with the relevant department, must appoint an ad hoc Challenge of Grade Committee consisting of three faculty members who may include the instructor of the course to review the challenged grade.
4. The Challenge of Grade Committee must review the student's answers and the marking of the assessment based on the key solution or the marking rubrics provided by the instructor.
5. The committee must make a decision to raise the grade, lower the grade or keep the student

grade unchanged, based on the evidence and information obtained during the review.

6. The committee must submit a summary report including its final decision to the Dean of the college within one month of the date that the student submitted the Challenge of Result of a Major Assessment Form.
7. The result of the Challenge of Result of a Major Assessment Grade must be entered in ADREG system and the student's record must be updated by the Dean in collaboration with the relevant chairperson.
8. The Dean must inform the student about the committee's final decision

Procedure for Appeal of Final Grade Award not based on a Mitigating Circumstance

1. The student must submit a completed Challenge of Final Grade Award Form to the Directorate of Admission and Registration and pay any stipulated fees – this date is the start of the process.
2. Directorate of Admission and Registration must forward the Challenge of Final Grade Award Form to the Dean of the relevant college.
3. The College Dean, in coordination with the relevant department, must appoint an ad hoc Challenge of Final Grade Award Committee consisting of three faculty members who may include the instructor of the course to review the challenged grade.
4. The Challenge of Final Grade Award Committee must review the student's answers and the marking of the final exam based on the key solution or the marking rubrics provided by the instructor.
5. The committee must make a decision to raise the grade, lower the grade or keep the student grade unchanged, based on the evidence and information obtained during the review.
6. The committee must submit a summary report including its final decision to the Dean of the college within one month of the date that the student submitted the Challenge of Final Grade Award Form.
7. The result of the Challenge of Final Grade Award must be entered in ADREG system and the student's record must be updated by the Dean in collaboration with the relevant chairperson.
8. The Dean must inform the student about the committee's final decision

Procedure for Appeal of a Major Assessment or Final Grade based on a Mitigating Circumstance

1. The student must submit a completed Challenge of Grade based on Mitigating Circumstance Form to the Directorate of Admission and Registration and pay any stipulated fees – this date is the start of the process.
2. Directorate of Admission and Registration must forward the Challenge of Grade based on Mitigating Circumstance Form to the Dean of the relevant college.
3. The College Dean, in coordination with the relevant department, must appoint an ad hoc Challenge of Grade based on Mitigating Circumstance Committee consisting of three faculty members, including the Dean himself or herself (or a delegate thereof from the Deanship of Student Affairs appointed by himself/herself) plus the Student Counselor and the student's Academic Advisor.
4. The Challenge of Grade based on Mitigating Circumstance Committee must review the student's answers and the marking of the relevant assessment based on the key solution or the marking rubrics provided by the instructor in light of the gravity of the mitigating circumstance(s) asking themselves to what extent would the performance of an average person on the assessment have been adversely impacted by the circumstance(s) described by the student after the veracity of the alleged circumstances has been ascertained through investigation by the Committee
5. The committee must make a decision to raise the grade, lower the grade or keep the student grade unchanged, based on the evidence and information obtained during the review. The Committee may also recommend that the student be afforded the opportunity to sit a make-up assessment in lieu of the previous assessment. A decision to keep the grade the same or lower the grade may be made with or without prejudice: without prejudice means that the veracity of the student's account is not denied but that the Committee finds no basis for mitigation but with prejudice means that the Committee finds the student's account to be spurious or mendacious, in which case the Committee must refer the matter to the Discipline Committee for action to be taken against the student.
6. The committee must submit a summary report including its final decision to the Dean of the college within one month of the date that the student submitted the Challenge of Grade

based on Mitigating Circumstance Form.

7. The result of the Challenge of Grade based on Mitigating Circumstance must be entered in ADREG system and the student's record must be updated by the Dean in collaboration with the relevant chairperson.
8. The Dean must inform the student about the committee's final decision

Student Assessment Appeals

Policy

It is the policy of Ahlia University to ensure that all students have access to a fair and efficient mechanism through which they can address their concerns regarding course performance. The Challenge of Grade Procedure is the first stage in addressing such concerns and the Student Assessment Appeals policy and associated procedure provide a clear approach for handling appeals against decisions made in that Procedure. Appeals may be made either with respect to the outcome of the Challenge of Result of a Major Assessment or the Challenge of Final Grade Award. For both, the process is identical.

The deadline for such appeals is no later than 30 days from the day in which the student was notified of the decision and for purposes of this deadline the summer session does not count, so that appeal against decisions made at the end of the second semester or during the summer session may be submitted within 30 days of the beginning of the first semester. It is the sole responsibility of the student to state clearly the reasons for his/her appeal and to ensure that the appeal is submitted by the deadline.

Student appeals will be investigated thoroughly by the University *Student Appeals Committee (SAC)* which is formed by the President whenever required and consists of the following members

1. Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA; Chairperson)/ Senior Advisor for Academic Affairs.
2. The Dean of Student Affairs
3. Three faculty members appointed by the Chair to meet the requirements that they
    - Are not from the college which offers the course, and which is the subject of the

appeal

- Have not advised or assisted the student with the appeal
- Have no conflict of interest with regard to the student, the course or the college

4. A student representative appointed by the Dean of Student Affairs.

As part of its commitment to fair and transparent assessment, this policy requires that the investigation and decision made by SAC is governed by the following principles:

- The investigation should be based on mutual respect and procedural fairness for all students, faculty members and any others who may be involved.
- The committee should conduct its meetings or hearings in closed sessions and treat the appeal in strict confidentiality.
- The committee should investigate the matter on the basis of all evidence presented and obtained by the student and/or the University;
- The committee's investigation may require inspecting other documentation related to the appeal and conducting interviews with students, faculty and staff. In particular, the committee may decide to review some or all of the assessments taken by the student.
- The committee should investigate whether the university policies, processes, procedures, regulations and guidelines were implemented correctly;
- The committee should give the student a reasonable opportunity to make a case in either writing or orally in person through for example special briefings or meetings.
- The committee may allow the student to see or inspect some or all of the related documentations;
- The committee should deal with the appeal as efficiently and as fairly as possible;
- The committee's decision should be evidence-based, transparent and made within at most one month from the time of the initiation of the appeal.
- The decision made by the committee is final and binding.

Procedure

1. The student must submit a completed Appeal Form to the Office of the Deanship of Students Affairs and pay any required fees – this date is the start of the process.
2. The Appeal Form must be forwarded to the Chairperson of the Student Appeals Committee (SAC).
3. The Chairperson of SAC checks that the Appeal Form meets the requirement for statement of reasons and for timely submission. If it does, the Chairperson must appoint three faculty members to SAC according to the criteria stated in the University Policy on Students Assessment Appeals and request the Dean of Students Affairs to nominate the student representative.
4. Once members are appointed, the Chairperson convenes the SAC meeting to consider the appeal and start the investigation. SAC may inspect other related documents and conduct briefings and interviews with students, faculty and staff. In particular, SAC may decide to review some or all of the assessments taken by the student.
5. The SAC must make a clear decision, which will final and binding, and will be either to dismiss the appeal or to uphold the appeal and make a change to the grade.
6. The SAC Chairperson must enter a summarized report of its findings and decision in the ADREG System and notify the Deanship of Students Affairs that the student and the relevant College/Department may be informed.
7. The office of the Deanship of Students Affairs must notify the student of the outcome and also notify the College/Department the result of the appeal for implementation of any necessary modifications or actions.

Academic misconduct

Policy

In a small number of cases there are students who are tempted to gain an unfair advantage on their undergraduate projects. This behavior is considered unacceptable. There are at least six types of academic misconduct, which Ahlia University acknowledges and wishes to

prevent: (1) plagiarism; (2) data falsification; (3) use of third-parties (tacit personation) or cheat-ware sites; (4) free-riding collusion; (5) recyling collusion; and (6) active personation.

1. **Plagiarism** includes the practice of presenting ideas, words, data, diagrams, illustrations or other output as original pieces of work or without proper acknowledgment (including appropriate identification and referencing) of the source.

2. **Data Falsification** is an act involving willful creation of false data as in students in the project filling out questionnaires themselves rather than distributing them and soliciting legimate feedback from the population or changing data collected on received questionnaires

3. **Use of third parties (tacit personation) or cheat ware sites** which, typically for a fee, write all or part of a manuscript or design a model that students in the project then present as their own original work. (However, cohorts may use a professional proofreading service provided that they declare use of such a service.) When third parties prepare academic work-product for one (or more) cohort members, a form of tacit **personation** results.

4. **Free riding collusion** involves one student (or more) in the project cohort doing work on behalf of another who in fact makes no contribution to the project. In free riding collusion both the student(s) not doing any work as well as the other(s) doing work at the behest of the former, who passes such work off as his/her own are liable.

5. **Recycling collusion** involves one student (or more) in the project cohort enlisting outside-the cohort support of one student (or more) whose previously submitted academic work product is fobbed off as being the unique intellectual work product of those concerned conspiring project cohort members.

6. **Active Personation** occurs when one (or more) students outside the cohort subsitute for one (or more) students in the project cohort proffering false identities at the time of project defense (in the admittedly unlikely scenario of the project supervisor not remembering the physical appearance of each member of the cohort).

The University acknowledges its role in the development of the students including academic integrity and in this regard the University is committed to providing on-going education to students regarding the importance of academic integrity and at the same time enforcing a zero-tolerance policy towards such behaviour. The regulations related to academic misconduct including application of fair and proportionate penalties - have been developed from those at the University of Bahrain as per the requirements of the HEC.

Procedures

1. High ethical and moral standards as well as academic integrity are core values of the University and communicated to students, along with the consequences of infringement(s), by means of University-wide, and College Induction programmes.
2. Academic integrity and ethics in research are covered in the syllabi of the ethics and the research methods courses which are mandatory for all degree programmes.
3. The University has formal and transparent procedures for reporting and managing cases of plagiarism and academic misconduct and these are provided to students in Guidelines for the Undergraduate Project (XXXX499), and Guidelines for the Supervision of the Master's Degree Dissertation, the Invigilation and Final Examination Administration Regulations as well as the Student Guide all of which are available on the University website. In this regard the students are provided with specific details about what is/are considered unacceptable practice(s).

Processes for Deterrence of Academic Misconduct

a. With respect to non-test/exam based assessments

Latest versions of all textbooks should be used. Answers to questions can be downloaded using "cheatware" on a fee basis. The longer the question is in the market, the greater the risk that the question has been compromised by "cheatware." As a matter of good practice, any questions appearing at the end of chapters should be modified to frustrate the downloading of answers using "cheatware" especially, in those limited cases, when the latest textbook version is not being used. In the employment of cases, instructors, as a matter of best practice, ought to recognize that the answers may likewise be

compromised and ought to formulate new questions to frustrate students tapping into answers through "cheatware."

b. With respect to in-class tests

Best practice mandates that instructors use multiple test versions to deter copying with minor changes in the content of questions to render difficult ability of students to identify the test version they have. Alternately, tests can be broken down into separate test components with different components being distributed in phases. Thus, a three- question test with questions A, B and C would be administered in three phases with the students getting one of the three questions with a mix of each of the three distributed in the same phase. The limitation of this technique is that each question need be formulated to require the same completion time.

c. With respect to final examinations

In terms of increasing the risk of being caught cheating borne by students prone to academic misconduct, deterrence can be maximized by following the rules and regulations appertaining to invigilation (in which, inter alia, the ratio of students to invigilators should be no higher than 15:1 and in no instance should there be less than two invigilators) and by denying such students access to technologies that can misemployed in the service of cheating. In this respect, rules and regulations appertaining to final examination administration bar student access to mobile phones at all times during the period in which the final examination takes place. It is advisable that for any objective test component using multiple choice format that two sets of question sets be developed using the same questions in random order and randomizing the answer choices such that what appears as (a) on one set appears as (b) on another set. (See Invigilation and Final Examination Administration Regulations.)

D. With regard to Assignments and Written projects:

All assignments and written projects should be submitted electronically through Moodle, a plagiarism detection software Turnitin™ is linked to Moodle and provide the percentage of similarity to the faculty members by generating a detailed report highlighting the phrases and references. Course Instructors and Supervisors are required to check the student's

submitted work and as per the report generated from Turnitin™ to judge the percentage of similarity and assure it is within university allowed norms.

C. With respect to Design Studio and Visual:

All Interior Design Projects and Portfolios should be checked against academic misconduct through the application of "Visual Plagiarism policy and procedure" which covers the guidelines to understand the visual Plagiarism and various levels of verification. The policy is applicable for all In-lab work, sketchbook, portfolios, and any other student work which involves visual application. Faculty members must check the student work against Visual Plagiarism and verify its content by using "level of verification checklist".

Processes for Detection of Academic Misconduct

a. Process for Detection Misconduct of Assignments and Written Projects

All students, course instructors and project/dissertation supervisors have access to the plagiarism detection software Turnitin™. To educate students and to facilitate detection of plagiarism, course Instructors and project supervisors require students across all levels within the University to submit essay type assignments, individual or group project reports (be they research- or non-research based), as well as undergraduate projects/post-graduate dissertation through Turnitin™ Maximum levels of similarity are as follows:

Undergraduate assessments (all)	30%
Post-graduate assessments (other than dissertation)	20%
Post-graduate dissertations	15%

Even if similarity falls at or below the above-referenced prescribed limits, all text indicated by TurnitinTM to be "similar" must be verified to been correctly attributed by source. A student who does not indicate the source or indicates a false source is likewise deemed to have plagiarized and subject to sanction for the offense as detailed below.

Signs of illegitimate use of paraphrasing software, either to facilitate collusion or plagiarism, can be augured from obvious lack of idiomatic expression combined with inapt synonyms being used e.g. a case involving a CEO Jimmy Diamond, whose name in one instance is changed to Jimmy Gem and in another to Jimmy Ruby! Any case should be laced with several markers, the changing of which would be indicative of improper use of paraphrasing software. An example of a marker would be to change the name of a person from Mr. Esposito (whose name would not generate a synonym through paraphrasing software) to Mr. Smart (whose name would be changed, though the application of the paraphrasing software, to Mr. Intelligent, Mr. Clever, etc.). Typically, minor cases result in the student being required to repeat the assessment under **scrutiny through to award of an F grade for the assessment concerned.**

C. Process for Detection Misconduct of Design Studio and Visual:

Visual plagiarism can be tackled, although not with the accuracy of Turn-it-in with respect to textual plagiarism, through digitalizing artwork and scanning using reverse image search engines: Google/Yandex/Bing/TinEye. Photos can be assessed with even greater rigor both through the same and through an analysis of meta-data generated by the camera. Student-snapped photos without meta-data should be removed portfolio as should any copyrighted photos, collected not snapped by the student, absent permission from the copyright holder. Best practices with respect to digital plagiarism are encapsulated in https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/7d48/5012fda313b1b4a9132d8055096e0b6ffeee.pdf (accessed on 25/10/2019) as well as the application of "*Visual Plagiarism policy and procedure"*

In this regard it is important to note that the University has a zero tolerance approach to plagiarism. Suspected cases of plagiarism will normally be referred by the Disciplinary Committee of the University, and penalties imposed if the allegations are upheld. These penalties range from requirement to repeat the work, **award of an F grade through to more serious administration actions in the case of repeat offences as detailed in the Student Guide.**

C. Process for Detection Misconduct of Course Work:

As regards course work, cases of unacceptable learner practice (e.g. collusion, plagiarism or personation) are handled by the College concerned and only referred to the Dean of Student Affairs (for disciplinary hearing) if considered serious or treated as a repeat offence. Typically, minor cases result in the student being required to repeat the assessment under **scrutiny through to award of an F grade for the assessment concerned.** In the instance of individual major assignments/projects, in this instance applicable where accounting for 20% or more of course grade, it is vital that Turnitin™ is

used to detect collusion in which identical Turnitin™ scores are obtained with identical similar text being identified by Turnitin™ indicative of collusion. **The typical penalty for collusion is the award of F grades for all in collusion in the instance of a first-time offence.** All instances of collusion must be reported to the Dean of Students. Repeat offenders will be subject to a hearing before the Disciplinary Committee of the University.

D. Process for Detection Misconduct of Final Examination:

Exam offences and the corresponding penalties are dealt with according to the Invigilation and Final Examination Administration Regulations under the aegis of the Deanship of Student Affairs and in conjunction with an appointed disciplinary committee. In this respect, the Deanship of Student Affairs keeps a centralized record of all cases of exam violations in order to determine areas for enhancement in the examination and disciplinary procedures. The same penalties applicable to infraction of rules and regulations apply equally to in-class tests. Where feasible, tests applicable to multi-section courses should be conducted in single chamber according to the same rules and regulations applicable to those appertaining to final examination.

The University's Teaching and Learning Centre in coordination with Centre for Accreditation & Quality Assurance monitors procedures related to academic misconduct insofar as it checks that the suite of processes related to supervision of undergraduate projects and Master's level dissertation – including use of Turnitin™ – have been executed as mandated. All the policies and procedures regarding penalties and violations are communicated to students through the student handbook.

Form: Nomination of External Assessor/Examiner Form

Department		**College**	
Program under Review		**Name of Program Coordinator**	

Nominate up to three External Assessor/Examiners (attach a short CV as justification of suitability)

External Assessor/Examiner Name#1		**Academic Rank**	**Affiliation**	
Approved: (delete as appropriate)	**Department Council**	**Yes**	**No**	**Decision Number**
	College Council:	**Yes**	**No**	**Decision Number**

External Assessor/Examiner Name#2		**Academic Rank**	**Affiliation**	
Approved: (delete as appropriate)	**Department Council**	**Yes**	**No**	**Decision Number**
	College Council:	**Yes**	**No**	**Decision Number**

External Assessor/Examiner Name#3		**Academic Rank**	**Affiliation**	
Approved: (delete as appropriate)	**Department Council**	**Yes**	**No**	**Decision Number**
	College Council:	**Yes**	**No**	**Decision Number**

This form to be completed and forwarded to University Council for Appointment for the nominated external assessor/examiner.

Department Council	Chairperson Signature	**Date**
College Council	Dean's signature	**Date**

Form: Internal Verification of Course Syllabus-Specification

Course Code		**Course Title**	
Department		**College**	
Number of sections		**Academic Year**	
Name of Coordinator or Course Instructor (as appropriate)		**Semester (please Tick)**	

	First		**Second**		**Summer**

Verification	**Yes**	**No**	**Changes suggested/Remarks**
1. *Is the Course Syllabus-Specification complete in terms of content and assessments?*			
2. *Is the Course Syllabus-Specification clearly written and free from typographical errors?*			
3. *Are the ILOs derived from the programme specification and aligned to NQF level descriptors?*			
4. *Are the ILOs appropriate for the type of course (e.g. theory based or practical)?*			
5. *Are the ILOs mapped to the appropriate NQF level and reflect the complexity of outcomes expected from the student?*			
6. *The course is supplemented with appropriate course materials that fit with its delivery method*			
7. *Are there appropriate methods of assessment for the course ILOs?*			
8. *Is the weightage given to each assessment method appropriate?*			
9. *Is the weightage for continuous evaluation and for final examination as per University Policy?*			

10. *Are the dates or schedule for each assessment clearly stated and appropriately spaced across the semester?*			
11. *In case of assessments contain Turn-in-it in checking the (%) of similarity is clearly indicated*			
12. *The course is supported with formative and summative assessment to support student progression*			

By signing below the verifier also confirms that the recommended changes have been made by the Instructor

The changes suggested have been incorporated					
Name of Internal Verifier		**Signature**		**Date**	
Name of Programme Coordinator/ Chairperson		**Signature**		**Date**	

Form: Internal Verification of the Major individual group Piece of course work *(cross out that which is inapplicable)*

Course Code		**Course Title**	
Department		**College**	
Number of sections		**Academic Year**	
Name of Coordinator or Course Instructor (as appropriate)		**Semester (please Tick)**	

	First		**Second**		**Summer**

Verification	Yes	No	Changes suggested/Remarks
1. *Is the assessment clearly written and free from typographical errors?*			
2. *Are the questions/practical tasks unambiguous in their meaning?*			
3. *Are the question(s)/practical tasks of a suitable type of assessment for the difficulty of the course?*			
4. *Are the task/question(s)/practical task and their content suitable for the level of the programme?*			
5. *Are the choices of question(s)/practical tasks suitable for the course/topic ILOs?*			
6. *Are the assessment questions assessing the complexity level in line with the mapped NQF mapped level?*			
7. *Does the assessment cover all the ILOs that is expected to be assessed in line with the verified course syllabus ?*			
8. *Will the assessment allow students with differing abilities to demonstrate their capabilities*			
9. *Is the allocation of marks transparent and are the marks appropriately apportioned?*			
10. *Are the instructions on the front page adequate and clearly expressed?*			
11. *Is there a marking rubric, solutions or model answers?*			
12. *Is there a Marking criteria or rubric for the Practical component of the courses (if applicable)*			
13. 11. *Does the mix of questions conform to the University guidelines for assessment methods?*			

14. *Are tasks in group work able to be distributed in a way that mitigates the risk of free-riding i.e. the group work is split table into subroutines that can be allocated among group members without free-riding?*			
15. *Does the assessment include process of detecting misconduct as per AU Assessment Manual which includes (%) of similarity allowed (if applicable)*			

By signing below the verifier also confirms that the recommended changes have been made by the Instructor

The suggested changes are made					
Name of Verifier		**Signature**		**Date**	
Name of Programme Coordinator/ Chairperson		**Signature**		**Date**	

Form: Internal Verification of Final Examination

Course Code		**Course Title**						
Department		**College**						
Number of sections		**Academic Year**						
Name of Coordinator or Course Instructor (as appropriate)		**Semester (please Tick)**						
			First		**Second**		**Summer**	

Verification	Yes	No	Changes suggested/Remarks
1. *Is the assessment clearly written and free from typographical errors?*			
2. *Are the questions/practical tasks unambiguous in their meaning?*			
3. *Are the question(s)/practical tasks of a suitable type of assessment for the difficulty of the course?*			
4. *Are the question(s)/practical task and their content suitable for the level of the programme?*			
5. *Are the choices of question(s)/practical tasks suitable for the course/topic ILOs?*			
6. *Are the questions clearly marked with the corresponding ILO's that is being addressed?*			
7. *Are the assessment questions assessing the complexity level in line with the mapped NQF mapped level?*			
8. *Does the assessment cover all the ILOs that is expected to be assessed in line with the verified course syllabus?*			
9. *Will the assessment allow students with differing abilities to demonstrate their capabilities*			
10. *Is the allocation of marks transparent and are the marks appropriately apportioned?*			
11. *Are the instructions on the front page adequate and clearly expressed?*			
12. *Is there a marking rubric, solutions or model answers?*			
13. *Is there a Marking criteria or rubric for the Practical component of the courses (if applicable)*			
14. *Does the mix of questions conform to the*			

University guidelines for assessment methods?			
15. Is the final exam comprehensive (i.e. does it cover the majority ILOs)			
16. The amount of the questions is appropriate for the duration of final exam?			

By signing below the verifier also confirms that the recommended changes have been made by the Instructor

The suggested changes are made					
Name of Internal Verifier		**Signature**		**Date**	
Name of the Chairperson/ Programme Coordinator		**Signature**		**Date**	

Form: Internal Moderation of the Major Piece of Course Work

(cross out that which is inapplicable)

individual	***group***

Major Piece of Work:

Course Code		**Course Title**	
Department		**College**	
Number of sections		**Academic Year**	
Name of Coordinator or Course Instructor (as appropriate)		**Semester (please Tick)**	

	First		**Second**		**Summer**

Type of examination (e.g. written or practical)	

Sample of major piece of course scripts for moderation				
Student I.D		**Selection Criteria (i.e. highest, average, lowest)**	**Mark Awarded**	**Moderator Comments (If any)**
1.				
2.				
3.				

Moderation of major piece of course work	**Yes**	**No**	**Remarks**
1. ILOs achievement matrix (CAW) states marks awarded to all students for the major piece of course work			
2. Does the marking conform to the marking scheme (based on the sample course work)?			
3. Does the marking conform to the verified assessment criteria (based on the sample course work)?			
4. Are the marking decisions consistent (based on the sample course work)?			
5. In case of written work that is based on critical analysis, grading was found fair and consistent?			
6. The student samples indicated the complexity required in line with NQF mapped level?			
7. Is there any ILOs did not attain 60% out			

of the assessment?			
8. In case of any ILO is unattained is there any action taken to support attainment the ILO prior to the end of the course?			
9. Is there clear evidence, in group projects, that each team member contributed to the assessment in a meaningful way i.e. no evidence of free riding by one or more members of the group tasked with the project? (A table with task distribution and participants contribution is group project is submitted as evidence)			
10. Is there an evidence of feedback provided on the overall assessment to inform student progression?			

Have any concerns been resolved with the Course Coordinator/Instructor?	
If yes, what actions have been taken?	

Name of Chairperson of Internal Moderation Committee		**Signature**		**Date**	

Form: Internal Moderation of Final Examination and Overall

Course Code		**Course Title**					
Department		**College**					
Number of sections		**Academic Year**					
Name of Coordinator or Course Instructor (as appropriate)		**Semester (please Tick)**					
			First		**Second**		**Summer**

Sample of Final Examination scripts for moderation				
Student I.D		**Selection Criteria (i.e. highest, average, lowest)**	**Mark Awarded**	**Moderator Comments (If any)**
1.				
2.				
3.				

Moderation of Final Examination Results	**Yes**	**No**	**Remarks**
1. ILOs achievement matrix (CAW) states marks awarded to all students for the final examination			
2. Does the marking conform to the marking scheme (based on the sample scripts)?			
3. Does the marking conform to the verified assessment criteria (based on the sample scripts)?			
4. Are the marking decisions consistent (based on the sample scripts)?			
5. Are there any recurring themes, patterns, discrepancies (based on the sample scripts)?			
6. In case of written work that is based on critical analysis, grading was found fair and consistent?			
7. The student samples indicated the complexity required in line with NQF mapped level?			
8. Is there any ILOs did not attain 60% out of the assessment?			

9. *In case of any ILO is unattained is there any action taken to support attainment the ILO in the upcoming courses to be offered?*			
10. *There is an appropriate distribution of grades across the class size*			
11. *Average class marks are within the norms for the level of the course within the College and the University as a whole*			

Have any concerns been resolved with the Course Coordinator/Instructor?	
If yes, what actions have been taken?	

Name of Chairperson of Internal Moderation Committee		**Signature**		**Date**	

Form: Internal Verification and Moderation Summary Report

(To be submitted to the Dean of the College by the Chairperson/Programme Coordinator)

Department		**College**					
Name of the program		**Academic Year**					
Number of Courses		**Semester (please Tick)**					
			First		**Second**		**Summer**

In case of more than one major piece of work, please indicate the number of assessments conducted

Course Code	Course Syllabus verified?	Major Piece of work verified?	Final Exam verified?	Internal Moderation Conducted	External Moderation Conducted	Remarks

Name of Chairperson/Programme Coordinator		**Signature**		**Date**	
Name of the Dean		**Signature**		**Date**	

External Assessor Form (1)

Report on Verification and Overall Matters

Course Code		**Course Title**	
Department		**College**	
Number of sections		**Academic Year**	
Name of Coordinator or Course Instructor		**Semester (please Tick)**	
		☐ **First** ☐ **Second** ☐ **Summer**	
Type of examination (e.g. written or practical)			

Comments of External Assessor/Examiner	
Verification of Assessment	
Specific questions	**Remarks**
Major piece of course work	
1. *Is there a clear link between the proposed major piece of course work and the programme aims/intended learning outcomes (ILOs)?*	
2. *Are the allocated ILOs within the course syllabus and specifications clearly demonstrated within the questions of the proposed major piece of course work?*	
3. *Are the assessment methods and criteria used fair and valid to assess the level of the course?*	
4. *Was the time allocated for this course work appropriate for the answers required*	
5. *Does the assessment assess the complexity required in line with NQF mapped level?*	
Final examination	
6. *Is there a clear link between the final examination and the programme aims/intended learning outcomes (ILOs)?*	
7. *Are the allocated ILOs within the course syllabus and specifications clearly demonstrated within the proposed final examination questions?*	

External Assessor Form (1)

Report on Verification and Overall Matters

Course Code		**Course Title**	
Department		**College**	
Number of sections		**Academic Year**	
Name of Coordinator or Course Instructor		**Semester (please Tick)**	
		First	**Second**	**Summer**
Type of examination (e.g. written or practical)			
Comments of External Assessor/Examiner			
Verification of Assessment			

Final examination (CONT'D)	
8. Are the assessment methods and criteria used fair and valid to assess the level of the course?	
9. Does the final examination cover all the required areas	
10. Was the duration of the exam fair for the areas to be assessed?	
11. The final exam assessed the complexity required to the mapped NQF level?	
1b Other comments on verification of assessment	
2 General Comments	

Name of External Examiner/Assessor		**Signature**		**Date**	

Please return this form to the Chairperson – thank you

External Assessor Form (2) Moderation of Final Examination and Overall Grade Distribution

Course Code		**Course Title**					
Department		**College**					
Number of sections		**Academic Year**					
Name of Coordinator or Course Instructor		**Semester (please Tick)**					
			First		**Second**		**Summer**
Type of examination (e.g. written or practical)							

Moderation of overall course grades			
The external assessor/examiner will make a random selection of assessed/marked student scripts, being at least three from each performance band (high, average, low).			
Number of scripts moderated *(please include details in grid on final page)*			
1 Specific questions	**Yes**	**No**	**Remarks**
Major piece of course work			
1. There is a full list of marks awarded to all students for the major piece of course work			
2. Does the internal marking conform to the marking scheme (based on the sample scripts)?			
3. Does the internal marking conform to the verified assessment criteria (based on the sample scripts)?			
4. Are the internal marking decisions consistent and fair (based on the sample scripts)?			
5. Are there any recurring themes, patterns, discrepancies (based on the sample scripts)?			
6. Feedback on the assessment was provided and was found sufficient to inform student progression			
Final examination			
There is a full list of marks awarded to all students for the final examination			

External Assessor Form (2) Moderation of Final Examination and Overall Grade Distribution

Course Code		**Course Title**	
Department		**College**	
Number of sections		**Academic Year**	
Name of Coordinator or Course Instructor		**Semester (please Tick)**	
		☐ **First** ☐	☐ **Second** ☐ **Summer**
Type of examination (e.g. written or practical)			

Moderation of overall course grades			
The external assessor/examiner will make a random selection of assessed/marked student scripts, being at least three from each performance band (high, average, low).			
Number of scripts moderated *(please include details in grid on final page)*			
	Yes	**No**	**Remarks**
Final examination (CONT'D)			
6. There is a full list of marks awarded to all student assessments for the course			
7. Does the internal marking conform to the marking scheme (based on the sample scripts)?			
8. Does the internal marking conform to the verified assessment criteria (based on the sample scripts)?			
9. Are the internal marking decisions consistent and fair (based on the sample scripts)?			
10. Are there any recurring themes, patterns, discrepancies (based on the sample scripts)?			
Overall Grade Distribution			
11. The ILOs achievement matrix reflected a fair distribution of grades and overall ILOs attainment rate?			
12. There is a fair distribution of the grades within the overall class			
2 General comments			

External Assessor Form (2) Moderation of Final Examination and Overall Grade Distribution

Course Code		**Course Title**	
Department		**College**	
Number of sections		**Academic Year**	
Name of Coordinator or Course Instructor		**Semester (please Tick)**	
		☐ **First** ☐ **Second** ☐ **Summer**	
Type of examination (e.g. written or practical)			
Moderation of overall course grades			
The external assessor/examiner will make a random selection of assessed/marked student scripts, being at least three from each performance band (high, average, low).			
Number of scripts moderated *(please include details in grid on final page)*			

Concerns	
Have any concerns been resolved with the chairperson and Course Coordinator/Instructor	
If yes, what actions have been taken?	

External Assessor Form (2) Moderation of Final Examination and Overall Grade Distribution

Course Code		**Course Title**	
Department		**College**	
Number of sections		**Academic Year**	
Name of Coordinator or Course Instructor		**Semester (please Tick)**	
		☐ **First** ☐ **Second** ☐ **Summer**	
Type of examination (e.g. written or practical)			
Moderation of overall course grades			
The external assessor/examiner will make a random selection of assessed/marked student scripts, being at least three from each performance band (high, average, low).			
Number of scripts moderated *(please include details in grid on final page)*			

Name of External Examiner/Assessor	
Signature	
Date	

Record of final examination and Major Piece of work scripts moderated				
Student ID		**Grade band (high, average, low)**	**Mark awarded**	**Comments/suggestion for change (if any)**
First Major Piece of Work				
1				
2				
3				

Record of final examination and Major Piece of work scripts moderated				
Student ID		**Grade band (high, average, low)**	**Mark awarded**	**Comments/suggestion for change (if any)**
Second Major Piece of Work (if applicable)**				
1				
2				
3				

Record of final examination and Major Piece of work scripts moderated				
Student ID		**Grade band (high, average, low)**	**Mark awarded**	**Comments/suggestion for change (if any)**
Third Major Piece of Work (** if applicable)				
1				
2				
3				

Record of final examination and Major Piece of work scripts moderated				
Student ID		**Grade band (high, average, low)**	**Mark awarded**	**Comments/suggestion for change (if any)**
Final Examination				
1				
2				
3				

Generic rubric for Class/Oral Participation

Element	Fail (<59%) to D (60-66%)	C (67-76%) to B (77-	A (87-100%)
Attendance	Has missed >15% of classes but less than threshold for "W" grade.	Has missed 5-15% of classes	Near perfect attendance record
Frequency of participation	Does not participate in, or alternatively dominates class discussions	Occasionally participates in class discussions or practical/clinical sessions.	Regularly participates in class discussions or practical/clinical sessions. Initiates questions.
Respect	Disrespectful to, or talks over, fellow students, clients/patients or Instructor. Disregards feedback.	Respects and listens to fellow students, clients/patients or Instructor. Does not apply feedback	Respects and listens to fellow students, clients/patients or Instructor. Considers and applies feedback
Inclusiveness	Does not mention contribution of others, or fails to further develop ideas previously discussed.	Implies contribution of others; bases argument on his/her previous assumptions and contributions.	Builds on other students‟ ideas, synthesizing across readings, practical/clinical work and class discussions; expands the class‟ perspective, and appropriately challenges professional norms, assumptions, and perspectives.
Relevance and insight	Misses the „big picture‟. Makes marginal or irrelevant contributions to the discussion.	Misses the „big picture‟. Makes contributions to parts of the discussion.	Awareness of the „big picture‟. Raises relevant and insightful comments or questions. Adds important facts or perspectives.
Terminology and vocabulary	Little or no attempt to use terminology and/or vocabulary in conversation.	Mispronounced, misused and/or sporadic use of terminology	Relevant and fluent terminology and/or vocabulary and pronunciation.
Critical thinking	Demonstrates little or no understanding of the specific issues being discussed.	Demonstrates some understanding of the specific issues being discussed.	Demonstrates a clear understanding of the specific issues being discussed.

The College, Department or Instructors concerned can choose which of the elements to include in the assessment of class participation.

Glossary

Aims are the broad orientation and intentions of a course or degree programme (i.e. what the programme/course offers the student).

Assessment describes any processes that evaluate the outcomes of student learning in terms of knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and abilities.

Assignments can take a variety of formats including, but not limited to: essays, portfolios, projects, take-home tests, or other types of coursework.

Case studies are student-centered activities based on topics that demonstrate theoretical concepts in an applied setting. Case studies encourage learning of course content, analysis and key skills such as time-management. Students may be required to summarise the activity in a written report or oral presentation. Assessment may be formative or summative.

Constructive alignment is the process of linking ILOs, teaching and learning, to the method(s) of assessment.

Examinations are a type of summative assessment, typically longer than a test, and use to measure for example: knowledge, skills, aptitude, analysis and synthesis. It may be written, practical and/or oral. The final examination covers the majority of the ILOs and topics for a course.

Formative assessment provides a means to enhance student learning - also referred to as **'assessment for learning'.** Formative assessments generally have low or no point value. Examples of formative assessments include quizzes, tests, asking students to submit a research proposal for early feedback or submitting a short paragraph summarising the main points of a lecture.

Intended learning outcomes describe what the student should be able to do or demonstrate, with respect to particular knowledge, skills and attitudes, by the end of the course or programme. In addition they help determine appropriate methods of assessment.

Oral examinations consist of an Assessor posing questions to the student in a spoken format. The student is expected to answer questions rapidly and to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the topic. It is a core part of the examination for the undergraduate final year project and the Master‟s dissertation.

Practical skills test (or exam) is typically, but not exclusively an assessment of the ability to integrate and apply specific technical skills, professional behaviors and communication skills to address a question or solve a problem in the laboratory, or other practice setting, as appropriate. For example a clinical practical exam is an assessment of student in health professional's ability to integrate and apply clinical, professional communication and practical skills appropriate for their respective specialization.

Projects can take the form of a small independent, directed piece of research to address a particular problem/question and resulting in the production of a written report and/or oral presentation. In the case of the final year undergraduate project or the Master‟s dissertation this may involve actual laboratory of field work.

Quizzes are typically brief, informal written or oral test used to assess knowledge (e.g. multiple- choice, true/false or short-answer questions), but can also take the form of short numerical/analytical problems.

Tests are a longer form of a quiz, typically formal and written, and can also include essay-type questions.

Assignments are takeaway/homework tests, generally used to test higher abilities such as analytical skills, synthesis and creativity.

Reliable assessment methods would be expected to give the same results if repeated under the same conditions.

Summative assessment provides a means by which to judge and certify student achievements – also known as **'assessment of learning'.** Summative assessments generally have a high point value. Examples of summative assessments include a mid-semester exam, a laboratory manual or a final examination.

Valid assessment methods measure most appropriately, achievement of the particular ILO/ set of ILOs.

Generic ILO-Teaching & Learning-Assessment-NQF descriptor linkage matrix

	ILO	Description	Teaching & learning Strategy options	Assessment Method options	*Probable Mapping to NQF
Knowledge &Understanding	A1	Theory and concepts	Lecturing, Class discussions, Independent Learning, E-learning	Closed book examinations (mid-terms, finals), quizzes, oral enquiry, graded homework	Knowledge: Theoretical Understanding
	A2	Trends, problems and research	Seminars, Independent Learning, E-learning	On-line research, research projects, writing literature reviews and research, book, article reviews	Knowledge: Theoretical Understanding
	A3	Professional responsibility	Lecturing, Class discussions, Independent Learning, E-learning, worked based learning	Practical training exercise (external), simulations/role-play, external visit/ visitor reportage	Knowledge: Theoretical Understanding Competence: Autonomy, responsibility and Context
Subject Specific Skills	B1	Problem solving skills	Demonstrations (by faculty member showing how to solve a problem), In class/lab or practice-based supervised work	problem sets, graded homework, in-lab exercises, examinations	Knowledge: Practical Application Skills: Communication, ICT & Numeracy
	B2	Modeling and design	In class /lab supervised work, computer aided design/modeling, simulation	projects, in-lab exercises	Knowledge: Practical Application
	B3	Application of tools and methods	In lab exercises using software, simulation, practical skills laboratory, clinical tool/machine usage (in- lab/on work site)	in-lab exercises (involving software), projects	Knowledge: Practical Application Skills: Communication, ICT & Numeracy
Critical Thinking Skills	C1	Analytical skills	In class supervised work, in-class (group) work, Independent Learning, Class participation including socratic method	Case studies, exams (closed book or open), oral inquiry	Generic Problem Solving & Analytical skills

	C2	Synthetic skills**	In class supervised work, Independent learning, in-lab or practice-based skills sessions	(open or closed) book examinations, case analysis	Generic Problem Solving & Analytical skills
		Strategic thinking skills**	In class supervised work, Independent learning simulation	(open or closed) book examinations, case analysis simulations	Generic Problem Solving & Analytical skills
	C3	Creative thinking and innovation	In class supervised work, Independent Learning, Laboratory or practice-based skills sessions, Work- based learning, Class discussions	(open or closed) book examinations, simulations, multi-task projects, graded homework	Generic Problem Solving & Analytical skills Competence: Autonomy, responsibility and Context
General Transferable Skills	D1	Communications skills	Oral presentation/participation, In-class or out-of-class writing practice, debate, role-play, Dissertation supervision	Oral participation/inquiry, debate, essay-based exams (closed-book or open) involving essays, essay, (project) report writing, oral presentation,	Skills: Communication, ICT & Numeracy
	D2	Teamwork and leadership	In-class group work/ role-play, group (research) projects	Group projects, group discussions, group in-class/lab work	Competence: Autonomy, responsibility and Context
	D3	Organizational and developmental skills	Demonstration, Independent learning; in-class supervised work, dissertation supervision	Assignments (involving techniques or organizing information or involving progressive skill development); research project (involving extraction of relevant data); reflective practice record,	Competence: Autonomy, responsibility and Context
	D4	Ethics and social responsibility	Lectures, In-class (group) work, Class participation/debate, Independent learning, E-Learning, work-based learning	Case studies, examinations (closed book), lab or work-based observation, essay	Competence: Autonomy, responsibility and Context

**Probably Mapping to NQF sub strands but additional sub strands may apply. ** For ILO C2, strategic thinking is more appropriate for master's level courses, whilst synthetic skills are more appropriate for undergraduate level*

Appendix 1 – Course Syllabus/ Specification Template – Merged with NQF Mapping

COLLEGE OF ----------

DEPARTMENT OF ……

COURSE SYLLABUS/ SPECIFICATION

Course Code & Title:

Weight:

Prerequisite:

NQF Level Allocated: **NQF Notional Hours / Credits:**

Description:

Objective:

Semester:

Instructor (s):

Office Telephone: **Email (s):**

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs):

A. Knowledge and Understanding		NQF Descriptor/ Level
A1	Concepts and Theories:	
A2	Contemporary Trends, Problems and Research:	
A3	Professional Responsibility:	

B. Subject-specific Skills		NQF Descriptor/ Level
B1	Problem Solving:	
B2	Modeling and Design:	
B3	Application of Methods and Tools:	

C. Critical-Thinking Skills		NQF Descriptor/ Level
C1	Analytic skills:	
C2	Synthetic:	
C3	Creative Thinking and innovation:	

D. General and Transferable Skills (other skills relevant to employability and personal development)		NQF Descriptor/ Level
D1	Communication	
D2	Teamwork and Leadership:	
D3	Organizational and Developmental Skills:	
D4	Ethics and Social Responsibility:	

Course Structure (Outline)

Week	Hours	ILOs	Topics	Teaching Method	Assessment Method
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					

* Formative assessment

Teaching Materials:

Textbook(s):	
Handout(s):	
Reference(s):	

Assessment

Method of Assessment	Description	Learning Outcomes	Weighting
Overall:			**100 %**

Admissions	
Pre-requisites	
Minimum number of students	
Maximum number of students	

Appendix 2 – National Qualification Framework Level Descriptors

Using the NQF Level Descriptors

NQF *Level Descriptors* are used along with other sources of information to place qualifications on the NQF. Other sources, which will become more widely available as qualifications are placed on the NQF, include subject benchmarks, qualifications at the same level, and comparable qualifications on other frameworks.

NQF *Level Descriptors* are not qualification specifications. On the contrary, while *Level Descriptors* confirm learning outcomes for a series of predefined characteristics, qualification specifications (descriptors) set out:

- what the learner is expected to do on successful completion of the qualification
- the qualification structure i.e. level and number of units
- the minimum number and level of credits required at each level.

The NQF *Level Descriptors* are generic and equally applicable to academic, vocational and work-based qualifications. There will be qualifications with units that comprise learning outcomes at different levels, and it may also be that one or more of the sub-strands does not appear in particular units. A best-fit approach is used to determine the level of the units of a qualification on the NQF.

Professional judgement can be assisted by reading and becoming familiar with the *Level Descriptors* in order to make an informed determination as to where a qualification sits and to provide supporting rationales that can be understood by others who may not be expert in the subject/discipline area.

Although *Level Descriptors* can act as a useful guide when designing qualifications, it is not recommended that the design of a qualification be based solely on these descriptors. It is important that qualifications are designed to meet the needs of learners and other stakeholders such as employers, universities and training institutions.

In this respect, if a particular unit does not have learning outcomes relevant to one or more sub-strands, the qualification should not be adapted purely to meet this need. That said, it is equally important that qualifications development is not based on one or two sub-strands alone.

From one level to the next there are small increments in the levels of learning. When using a descriptor at a particular level it is assumed that the requirements of the predecessor levels have also been met - they are not repeated at each level. For example, under *Knowledge: Practical Application*, it states:

- relate to some of the main theories and concepts (Level 4)
- relate to the main theories and concepts (Level 5)
- relate to the main and core theories and concepts (Level 7)

At Level 4, learners would not cover all the theories of the subject/discipline, only some of them, with a decision on the eventual number being covered left to those designing the qualification. At Level 5, learners would cover more of the main theories. Theories are not directly referenced in Level 6, being already covered in Levels 4 and 5, but this does not prevent the continuance of activity relating to core theories at Level 6. At Level 7, learners would study more in-depth theories that are central to the subject/discipline.

To become familiar with the progressive nature of the language being used, it can be useful to consider and compare key words used within the *Level Descriptors*. In the table below, examples are provided for Level 1, Level 5 and Level 10 of the NQF (using sub-strands 1, 3 and 5) in which key words are highlighted with a view to demonstrating progression.

NQF Level	1. Knowledge - Theoretical Understanding
Level 1	In a subject/discipline, demonstrate **elementary** knowledge of: **some simple facts**.
Level 5	Associated with a subject/discipline, demonstrate **generalised** knowledge and understanding of: **a wide range** of facts and ideas; processes, materials, properties, practices, techniques and/or terminology; the **main** theories and concepts.
Level 10	At the **forefront** of a subject/discipline, demonstrate **detailed critical knowledge** and understanding of: processes, materials, properties, techniques, features, conventions and terminology; **leading** principal and specialised theories, principles and concepts. Have **extensive detailed** and **often leading** knowledge of: one or more specialisations generated through personal research or investigative work that makes a **significant contribution** to existing knowledge and practice.

NQF Level	3. Skills - Generic Problem Solving and Analytical Skills
Level 1	With **encouragement and support**: use **well-defined** stages to solve simple uncomplicated problems; take some account of the identified consequences of actions or inaction.
Level 5	With **some guidance**: obtain, organise and use information; solve problems; draw conclusions and **suggest** solutions; make generalisations and predictions in defined situations.
Level 10	**Improvise** and use a combination of approaches to: **critically** analyse, evaluate and/or synthesise complex ideas and information to develop **creative and original** responses to problems and issues; deal with **very complex** and/or new situations, issues and/or problems; make informed judgements in situations where data/information is very limited and/or inconsistent.

NQF Level	5. Competence: Autonomy, Responsibility and Context
Level 1	Operate **under supervision** in **everyday** contexts; in **highly organised** and **well-defined** contexts.
Level 5	Operate with **some guidance** in **familiar and unfamiliar** contexts; in carrying out **defined** tasks with **independence** taking **responsibility** for the nature and quality of outputs.
Level 10	Operate at an **expert l**evel; in variable contexts that are **complex, unpredictable** and **not clearly defined**; with sole responsibility and accountability for the outcome of individuals, groups and projects. Originate and lead complex activities/projects/work. Taking strategic decisions.

To help with interpretation of the *Level Descriptors*, a glossary of words and terms has been developed in which the meaning is provided specifically in relation to the NQF. Additionally, in Levels 2 to 10, a *key to progression* is provided with a view to exemplifying progression from one level to the next. In most cases text is minimal, for example under *Knowledge: Practical Application: Subject/Discipline Specific*, it reads:

- complete familiar, uncomplicated, pre-planned tasks (Level 2)
- complete familiar, straightforward tasks that are routine (Level 3).

As with *uncomplicated* at Level 2, *straightforward* at Level 3 still describes tasks that are undemanding but may involve processes that require greater thinking, for example sequencing. In this respect, and for the purpose of the NQF *Level Descriptors*, *straightforward* represents a small progression from *uncomplicated*.

At Level 3 it can also be seen that tasks, although *familiar,* are not *pre-planned*. Thus, *routine* at Level 3 represents a small progression from *pre-planned* at Level 2.

In another example, under *Knowledge: Theoretical Understanding*, we see the statement:

- demonstrate mainly factual knowledge and understanding (Level 3).

For some subjects/disciplines at this level it may be beneficial to include some fundamental theories in specific qualifications; in other qualifications this might be less important. As long as the outcome is mainly factual knowledge of simple facts and ideas and some basic processes, the inclusion of some fundamental theories will not alter the level of this sub-strand.

In the sub-strand Skills: *Communication, ICT and Numeracy* a number of example activity types are given. These should, however, only be used as a guide and not as a boundary or inhibitor.

At lower levels of the NQF it is recognised that very young children will conduct research or investigation for projects at school or for pleasure. This level of research is not specifically mentioned in the descriptors, with such activities at lower levels covered by statements such as *basic processes*, *materials* and *terminology*.

At the other end of the scale, at NQF Level 7 it is expected that the learner will have knowledge and understanding of some research methods and/or other investigative techniques relevant to the subject/discipline. For example, in psychology this might be knowledge of experiential, descriptive or correlational research methods. In vocational areas this might include exploration of the types of materials for use in specific manufacturing products or processes. In hospitality this could involve investigating new trends in food consumption or ingredients. In this respect it is extremely important that subject experts are involved in the mapping of qualifications to the NQF, providing the required sector and subject-specific insight in into the requirements of relevant qualifications.

In all cases, it is important not to read a single word or phrase in isolation, with descriptors read holistically across the strands to determine the best-fit. Similarly, the level of the unit should be considered holistically, taking into consideration the level of all of the composite sub-strands: where for the majority of sub-strands the best-fit for learning outcomes is at NQF Level 3, the unit should also be at NQF Level 3.

Across the *Level Descriptors* the terms: *everyday, familiar, unfamiliar, routine and non-routine* are used. In this respect *everyday* tasks or contexts include those that are simple and commonplace. A *familiar* task or context is well known to the learner but is not as commonplace, and may not be as simple or *everyday*. An *unfamiliar* task or context is one that is known, or has been experienced, by the learner but is not well-known. *Routine* is something that is customary, normal or scheduled, whereas *non-routine* is something that does not occur on a regular basis and is out of the ordinary.

Occasionally, these terms are used together and/or within the same level. In order to help clarify the meaning of these terms, some examples are provided below:

TERMS	EXPLANATION	EXAMPLE
Routine and familiar	That which is carried out or experienced regularly and is well-known.	Making a meal (routine) using a recipe that is used often (familiar).
Routine and unfamiliar	That which is carried out or experienced regularly and is not well known.	Making a meal (routine) using a recipe that is only used on special occasions once or twice a year (unfamiliar).
Routine and new	That which is carried out or experienced regularly but has not been done/experienced before.	Making a meal (routine) using a recipe that the individual has not used before (new).
Non-routine and familiar	That which is not carried out often but is well-known.	Changing a light bulb.
Non-routine and unfamiliar	That which is not carried out or experienced often and is not well known.	Changing a tyre.

When placing qualifications on the NQF it is necessary to consider both context and the target group. For example, changing a tyre may be non-routine and unfamiliar to many but for a car mechanic it is likely to be routine and familiar.

Glossary of Terms

To help with interpretation of the *Level Descriptors*, a short glossary of words and terms has been developed providing a specific definition relevant for use within the NQF.

WORD / PHRASE	DEFINITION / MEANING
A range of…	A number of…
Associated with a subject/discipline	Refers to knowledge that is not specific to (but associated with) a subject/discipline, yet it is required for its understanding.
Common	Normal; unexceptional or conventional.
Complexity	Being made up of interconnected parts; not simple; involved.
Deal with	Sort out.
Defining features of…	The nature and essential qualities of…
Elementary	Fundamental, introductory, simple facts or activities that must be learned or carried out (initially) in order to understand, or be able to do, that which follows.
Encouragement and support	Prompt.
Everyday	Commonplace; normal; expected.
Familiar	Frequent; known but not as frequent as every day.
Forefront	Leading' in a position of great importance or advancement.
Guidance	Advice; direction; instruction.
In a subject/discipline	Refers to key facts specific to a subject or discipline.
Independence	Not controlled by others; autonomous.
Insight	Comprehension; perception; judgement.
Limited range	Small number but greater than narrow range.
Little supervision	Little instruction or guidance.
Narrow range	Small number.
Operate	Perform; work; function.
Process	Action to achieve results; deal with, prepare or make ready.
Professional level	Trained; specialised; qualified; proficient.

WORD / PHRASE	DEFINITION / MEANING
Relate	Apply; utilise.
Routine	Predictable; unchanging; repetitive.
Simple	Easy to understand; not complicated.
Some	A small amount.
Straightforward	Undemanding but may require some thinking or planning.
Support	Encouragement; advocacy.
Synthesise	Integrate; blend; fuse.
Uncomplicated	Simple; not complex.
Understanding	Comprehension.
Very simple	Exceedingly easy.
Well-defined	Clearly defined structure or organisation; clearly stated.

Level	Knowledge: Theoretical Understanding	Knowledge: Practical Application	Skills: Generic Problem Solving & Analytical skills	Skills: Communication, ICT, and Numeracy	Competence: Autonomy, Responsibility & Context
1	In a subject/discipline, demonstrate elementary knowledge of: • some simple facts.	With encouragement and support, use simple skills to: • complete every day, simple, uncomplicated tasks; • recognise and use safely and under supervision, the most common basic tools and materials.	With encouragement and support: • use well-defined stages to solve simple uncomplicated problems; • recognise some identified consequences of actions or inaction.	With support, use simple skills to: • develop and respond to very simple written and/or oral communication; • carry out very simple tasks with information and data; • interpret a narrow range of very simple and familiar data.	Operate under supervision: • in everyday contexts; • in highly organised and well-defined contexts.
2	In a subject/discipline, demonstrate elementary knowledge and understanding of: • some simple facts and ideas.	With support, use simple skills to: • complete familiar, uncomplicated, pre-planned tasks; • use safely and under supervision, common basic tools and materials effectively.	With support: • use well-defined stages to identify a process to deal with familiar situations or issues; • recognise identified consequences of actions or inaction.	Use elementary skills to: • develop and respond to simple written and oral communication; • carry out simple tasks to access information and process data; • interpret a limited range of simple and familiar numerical and graphical data	Operate under supervision: • in straightforward familiar and routine contexts; • in an organised and defined contexts.
3	In and associated with a subject/discipline, demonstrate basic, mainly factual knowledge and understanding of: • simple facts and ideas; • some basic processes, materials and/or terminology.	Use simple skills and some basic skills to: • complete familiar, straightforward tasks that are routine; • select and use safely, with little supervision, basic tools and materials effectively.	With little support: • use known stages of a problem solving approach to deal with straightforward situations, issues and/or problems; • identify the consequences of actions or inaction.	Use simple skills to: • develop and respond to simple but detailed written and oral communication; • access features of familiar applications to obtain information and process data; • interpret familiar, uncomplicated numerical and graphical data.	Operate under little supervision: • in, familiar and routine contexts; • with little independence and limited responsibility.
4	Associated with a subject/discipline, demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of: • a range of facts and ideas; • basic processes, materials and/or terminology; • some of the main theories and concepts.	Use basic skills to: • plan and organise familiar tasks; • relate to some of the main theories and concepts; • complete familiar and unfamiliar tasks that have some non-routine elements; • select and use tools and materials safely and effectively with minimal supervision, making adjustments where necessary.	With minimal support: • use problem solving approaches to deal with familiar and unfamiliar situations, issues and/or problems; • make generalisations and draw conclusions in defined situations.	Use basic skills to: • produce and respond to familiar detailed written and oral communication; • access features of standard applications to obtain and combine information and process data; • interpret and use routine, numerical and graphical data that has a little complexity.	Operate with minimal supervision: • in familiar and some unfamiliar contexts; • with some independence and responsibility.

Level	Knowledge: Theoretical Understanding	Knowledge: Practical Application	Skills: Generic Problem Solving & Analytical skills	Skills: Communication, ICT, and Numeracy	Competence: Autonomy, Responsibility & Context
3	In and associated with a subject/discipline, demonstrate basic, mainly factual knowledge and understanding of: • simple facts and ideas; some basic processes, materials and/or terminology.	Use simple skills and some basic skills to: • complete familiar, straightforward tasks that are routine; • select and use safely, with little supervision, basic tools and materials effectively.	With little support: • use known stages of a problem solving approach to deal with straightforward situations, issues and/or problems; • identify the consequences of actions or inaction.	Use simple skills to: • develop and respond to simple but detailed written and oral communication; • access features of familiar applications to obtain information and process data; • interpret familiar, uncomplicated numerical and graphical data.	Operate under little supervision: • in, familiar and routine contexts; • with little independence and limited responsibility.
4	Associated with a subject/discipline, demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of: • a range of facts and ideas; • basic processes, materials and/or terminology; • some of the main theories and concepts.	Use basic skills to: • plan and organise familiar tasks; • relate to some of the main theories and concepts; • complete familiar and unfamiliar tasks that have some non-routine elements; • select and use tools and materials safely and effectively with minimal supervision, making adjustments where necessary.	With minimal support: • use problem solving approaches to deal with familiar and unfamiliar situations, issues and/or problems; • make generalisations and draw conclusions in defined situations.	Use basic skills to: • produce and respond to familiar detailed written and oral communication; • access features of standard applications to obtain and combine information and process data; • interpret and use routine, numerical and graphical data that has a little complexity.	Operate with minimal supervision: • in familiar and some unfamiliar contexts; • with some independence and responsibility.
5	Associated with a subject/discipline, demonstrate generalised knowledge and understanding of: • a wide range of facts and ideas; • processes, materials, properties, practices, techniques and/or terminology; • the main theories and concepts.	Use basic skills to: • plan and organise familiar and new tasks; • relate to the main theories and concepts; • complete routine and non-routine tasks; • adapt, as necessary, processes, practices, techniques tools and/or materials to deal with defined routine situations, issues and/or problems.	With some guidance: • obtain, organise and use information; • solve problems; • draw conclusions and suggest solutions; • make generalisations and predictions in defined situations.	Use basic skills to: • produce and respond to familiar and unfamiliar written and oral communication some of which is detailed; • select and use standard applications to obtain and combine information and process data; • interpret and use routine and non-routine numerical and graphical data that has some complexity.	Operate with some guidance: • in familiar and unfamiliar contexts; • in carrying out defined tasks; • with independence taking responsibility for the nature and quality of output.

Level	Knowledge: Theoretical Understanding	Knowledge: Practical Application	Skills: Generic Problem Solving & Analytical skills	Skills: Communication, ICT, and Numeracy	Competence: Autonomy, Responsibility & Context
4	Associated with a subject/discipline, demonstrate **basic knowledge and understanding** of: • **a range** of facts and ideas; • basic processes, materials and/or terminology; • **some of the main theories and concepts.**	Use **basic** skills to: • **plan** and **organise familiar** tasks; • **relate to some of the main theories and concepts**; • complete **familiar** and **unfamiliar** tasks that have **some non-routine elements**; • select and use tools and materials safely and effectively with minimal supervision, **making adjustments where necessary**.	With **minimal** support: • use **problem solving approaches** to deal with **familiar and unfamiliar situations**, issues and/or problems; • **make generalisations** and **draw conclusions** in **defined** situations.	Use **basic** skills to: • **produce** and respond to familiar detailed written and oral communication; • access features of **standard applications** to obtain and combine information and process data; • interpret and use **routine**, numerical and graphical data that has a **little complexity**.	Operate with **minimal supervision**: • in familiar and **some unfamiliar** contexts; • with **some** independence and responsibility.
5	Associated with a subject/discipline, demonstrate **generalised knowledge and understanding** of: • **a wide range** of facts and ideas; • processes, materials, **properties, practices, techniques** and/or terminology; • **the main theories and concepts**.	Use basic skills to: • plan and organise familiar and **new** tasks; • relate to the **main theories** and concepts; • complete **routine** and **non-routine** tasks; • **adapt, as necessary, processes, practices, techniques tools and/or materials to deal with defined routine situations, issues and/or problems**;	With **some guidance**: • **obtain, organise** and **use information**; • **solve problems**; • **draw conclusions** and suggest solutions; • make generalisations and **predictions** in defined situations.	Use basic skills to: • produce and respond to familiar and **unfamiliar** written and oral communication some of which is detailed; • **select** and **use** standard applications to obtain and combine information and process data; • interpret and use routine and **non-routine** numerical and graphical data that has **some complexity**.	Operate with **some guidance**: • in familiar and **unfamiliar** contexts; • in **carrying out defined tasks**; • with **independence taking responsibility for the nature and quality of output**.
6	Associated with a subject/discipline, demonstrate **detailed knowledge and understanding** which is embedded in the main theories, principles and concepts and includes: • facts and ideas; • processes, materials, properties, techniques and/or terminology; • **the changing nature of knowledge relating to the subject/discipline**; • **the importance between explanations based on evidence and/or research and other forms of explanations**.	Use basic skills and **some advanced skills** to: • plan and organise familiar and new tasks, **some of which are at an advanced level**; • complete routine, non-routine and **some advanced level tasks**; • adapt, as necessary, processes, practices, techniques, tools and/or materials to deal with defined and **some undefined** situations, issues and/or problems.	**Use** and **organise** information to: • **present and evaluate arguments, information and ideas**; • deal with defined and some **undefined situations**, issues and/or problems.	Use basic and **some advanced** skills to: • **communicate clearly in a well-structured manner to convey complex information and ideas**; • select and use standard applications to obtain and combine a **variety** of information and process data; • **combine** numerical and graphical data to **measure progress against targets/goals**.	Operate: • in familiar and unfamiliar contexts; • in **defined areas of work and/or application of resources**; • with independence taking responsibility for the nature and quality of output • with **accountability for determining and achieving personal outcomes**.

Level	Knowledge: Theoretical Understanding	Knowledge: Practical Application	Skills: Generic Problem Solving & Analytical skills	Skills: Communication, ICT, and Numeracy	Competence: Autonomy, Responsibility & Context
6	Associated with a subject/discipline, demonstrate **detailed knowledge and understanding** which is embedded in the main theories, principles and concepts and includes: • facts and ideas; • processes, materials, properties, techniques and/or terminology; • **the changing nature of knowledge relating to the subject/discipline**; • **the importance between explanations based on evidence and/or research and other forms of explanations**.	Use basic skills and **some advanced skills** to: • plan and organise familiar and new tasks, **some of which are at an advanced level**; • complete routine, non-routine and **some advanced level tasks**; • adapt, as necessary, processes, practices, techniques, tools and/or materials to deal with defined and **some undefined** situations, issues and/or problems.	**Use** and **organise** information to: • **present and evaluate arguments, information and ideas**; • deal with defined and some **undefined situations**, issues and/or problems.	Use basic and **some advanced** skills to: • **communicate clearly in a well-structured manner to convey complex information and ideas**; • select and use standard applications to obtain and combine a **variety** of information and process data; • **combine** numerical and graphical data to **measure progress against targets/goals**.	Operate: • in familiar and unfamiliar contexts; • in **defined areas of work and/or application of resources**; • with independence taking responsibility for the nature and quality of output • with **accountability for determining and achieving personal outcomes**.
7	Associated with a subject/discipline, demonstrate **advanced knowledge and understanding** of: • processes, materials, properties, techniques, **conventions** and/or terminology; • the **core theories, principles and concepts;** • its **specialisations, scope and defining features;** • **some major current issues**. **Knowledge** and **understanding** of **some research methods and/or other investigative techniques.**	Use **advanced level** and **some specialist level** skills to: • plan and organise **advanced level** tasks; • adapt, as necessary, processes, practices, techniques, tools and/or materials to deal with defined and **undefined situations**, issues and/or problems; • **undertake research or investigation into advanced level situations, issues and/or problems**.	Use a **range of approaches** to: • **undertake analysis, evaluation and/or synthesise information and concepts, within the common understanding** of the subject/ discipline; • **critically evaluate evidence**; • **formulate solutions that are evidence-based**.	Use **advanced** skills to: • communicate clearly in a well-structured manner to convey complex information and ideas, **adapting the message to the requirements and level of the target audience**; • select and use standard applications, and **some specialist applications**, to obtain and combine a variety of information and process data; • **interpret and evaluate** numerical and graphical data to measure progress against targets/goals.	Operate at an **advanced level**; • in **variable contexts**; • in defined and **some undefined** areas of work; • with **some responsibility for the work of others**; • with **accountability for determining and achieving personal and group outcomes**.

Level	Knowledge: Theoretical Understanding	Knowledge: Practical Application	Skills: Generic Problem Solving & Analytical skills	Skills: Communication, ICT, and Numeracy	Competence: Autonomy, Responsibility & Context
7	Associated with a subject/discipline, demonstrate **advanced knowledge and understanding** of: • processes, materials, properties, techniques, **conventions** and/or terminology; • the **core theories, principles and concepts;** • its **specialisations, scope and defining features;** • **some major current issues**. **Knowledge** and **understanding** of **some research methods and/or other investigative techniques.**	Use **advanced level** and **some specialist level** skills to: • plan and organise **advanced level** tasks; • adapt, as necessary, processes, practices, techniques, tools and/or materials to deal with defined and **undefined situations**, issues and/or problems; • **undertake research or investigation into advanced level situations, issues and/or problems**.	Use a **range of approaches** to: • **undertake analysis, evaluation and/or synthesise information and concepts, within the common understanding** of the subject/discipline; • **critically evaluate evidence**; • **formulate solutions that are evidence-based**.	Use **advanced** skills to: • communicate clearly in a well-structured manner to convey complex information and ideas, **adapting the message to the requirements and level of the target audience**; • select and use standard applications, and **some specialist applications**, to obtain and combine a variety of information and process data; • **interpret and evaluate** numerical and graphical data to measure progress against targets/goals.	Operate at an **advanced level**; • in **variable contexts**; • in defined and **some undefined** areas of work; • with **some responsibility for the work of others**; • with **accountability for determining and achieving personal and group outcomes**.
8	Associated with a subject/ discipline, demonstrate **critical knowledge and understanding** of • processes, materials, properties, techniques, features, conventions and/or terminology; • **some specialist theories, principles and concepts**; • of **major current issues**; • that integrates the core theories, principles, and concepts. Have **detailed knowledge and understanding** of: • one or **more specialisations** in the subject/discipline; • the established research methods and/or investigative techniques.	Use **specialist level** skills to: • **deal with advanced and some complex situations and/or problems that have an element of unpredictability**; • relate to and adapt main and core theories and concepts; • **apply standard research or investigative methods**; • **plan and undertake defined projects of development, research or investigation into special situations, issues and/or problems;** • **demonstrate creativity in the application of knowledge, understanding and/or practices**.	Use a range of approaches to: • **critically** analyse, evaluate /or synthesise information, concepts, skills and practices in a subject/discipline **to identify and define situations, issues and/or problems**; • **demonstrate insight, interpretation and creativity to complex situations, issues and/or problems**; • **identify and implement relevant solutions**; • **make informed judgements in situations where data/information is limited and/or comes from a variety of sources**.	Use **special** skills to: • communicate **with peers, senior colleagues and specialists**; • make formal **presentations about specialised topics, adapting the message to the audience as appropriate**; • select and use standard and **specialist** applications; • **specify refinements and/or improvements to applications as required**; • interpret and evaluate numerical and graphical data to establish targets and measure progress.	Operate at a **specialist level**; • in variable contexts that have **some unpredictability**; • in defined and **undefined** areas of work; • with **significant responsibility for the work of others**; • **lead multiple groups and projects with decision making responsibilities**.

Level	Knowledge: Theoretical Understanding	Knowledge: Practical Application	Skills: Generic Problem Solving & Analytical skills	Skills: Communication, ICT, and Numeracy	Competence: Autonomy, Responsibility & Context
9	Associated with a subject/discipline, demonstrate **critical knowledge and understanding** of: • processes, materials, properties, techniques, features, conventions and terminology; • **specialist theories, principles and concepts**; • **major current issues in the subject/ discipline and its specialisations** that integrate the core theories, some specialised theories, principles and concepts; • Have **extensive detailed knowledge and understanding** of: • **one or more specialisations in the subject/discipline which is informed by developments at the forefront;** **established and specialised research methods and/or investigative techniques**.	Use **professional** level skills which are at, or **informed by, developments at the forefront of the subject/discipline** to: • deal with **complex**, **unpredictable** situations, issues and/or problems; • apply standard and **specialised** research methods and/or investigative techniques; • plan and undertake **significant projects of development**, research or **investigation into new situations**, issues and/or problems; • demonstrate **creativity or originality** in the application of knowledge, understanding and/or practices.	Use a **combination** of approaches to: • critically analyse, evaluate and/or synthesise information that **extends existing knowledge** and concepts of the subject/discipline; • identify, conceptualise **and define new and abstract problems**; • demonstrate **professional levels** of insight, interpretation, **originality** and creativity to complex situations, issues and/or problems; • **develop original** and creative **responses** to deal with complex situations, issues and/or problems; • make informed judgements in situations where data/information is **limited and/or inconsistent**.	Use **professional** skills to: • select appropriate means to communicate with a **range of audiences with different levels of knowledge/expertise**; • communicate with peers, more senior colleagues and specialists; • **have in-depth knowledge of appropriate applications to support and enhance work at this level**; • specify refinements and/or improvements to applications to **increase effectiveness**; • **undertake critical evaluation of a wide variety of numerical and graphical data**.	Operate at a **professional level**: • in variable contexts that are **often complex**, **unpredictable** and **not clearly defined**; • with **substantial responsibility** for the work of individuals and groups; • **initiate and lead activities/projects/work;** • **taking part in strategic decision making**.
10	At the forefront of a subject/discipline, demonstrate detailed critical knowledge and understanding of: • processes, materials, properties, techniques, features, conventions and terminology; • **leading principal and specialised theories, principles and concepts.** **Have extensive detailed and often leading knowledge of:** • **one or more specialisations generated through personal research or investigative work that makes a significant contribution to existing knowledge and practice**.	Use **highly specialised and expert** skills which are at, or informed by, developments at the forefront of the subject/discipline to: • deal with **new** and unfamiliar complex situations and/or issues that are unpredictable; • apply standard and specialised research methods and/or investigative techniques; • relate to and adapt main, core and specialised core theories and concepts; • plan and undertake an extensive project of development, research or investigations into **new and leading** situations, issues and problems; • demonstrate **creatively and originality** in the development and application of new knowledge understanding and/or practices.	**Improvise** and use a combination of approaches to: • critically analyse, evaluate and/or synthesise complex ideas and information to **develop creative and original responses** to problems and issues; • deal with **very complex** and/or **new situations**, issues and/or problems; • make informed judgements in situations where data/information is **very limited** and/or inconsistent.	Use a **significant range** of professional skills to: communicate at an appropriate level to a range of audiences **and adapt communication to context and purpose**; **communicate results of research and innovation to peers and others**; **engage** in **critical dialogue**; use a **range of applications to support and enhance work**; **critically evaluate** numerical and graphical data.	Operate at an **expert level**: • in variable contexts that are complex, unpredictable and not clearly defined; • **with sole responsibility and accountability for the outcome of individuals, groups and projects;** • **originate and lead complex** activities/projects/work; • **taking strategic decisions**.