



A F R I C A N  
A C A D E M Y

# Policies and Procedures

**Assessment and  
Moderation**

## **Introduction**

The African Academy straddles both the General and Further Education and the Occupational bands of training and education. The policies and procedures of the Academy for assessment and moderation are therefore applicable to both bands of education and training.

The African Academy views assessment as a fundamental building stone in the learning experience of learners. The Academy strives to ensure that in each learning programme, the sequence and purpose of assessment supports and enhances learning throughout the course of programme delivery.

The Assessment and Moderation Policy and Procedures will ensure that sound assessment principles are implemented and adhered to with the aim of creating an educational environment that is characterized by integrity. The purpose of the African Academy policy is to ensure that all students registered for various programmes within Academy, are assessed fairly, equally and according to the prescribed rules and regulations.

## **Philosophy and Principles**

African Academy adopts principles of Outcomes-Based Education (OBE), which underlie teaching and learning activities African Academy believes in the multi-dimensional and integrated application of assessment principles, which will be achieved through the implementation of these Assessment and Moderation Policies and Procedures.

In the African Academy all assessment are judged against the well-established principles of fairness, validity and reliability. These can be described as follows:

### **Fairness**

An assessment should not in any way hinder or advantage a student. Unfairness could relate to:

- ambiguous or unclear assessment instructions
- irregularities, such as cheating, threats or bribery
- unequal opportunities or resources
- biased assessment (e.g. in relation to ethnicity, gender, age, disability, social class, language).

### **Validity**

A valid assessment measures what it claims to measure. In order to achieve validity in the assessment, assessors/examiners should:

- state clearly what outcome(s) is/are being assessed
- use an appropriate assessment method
- ensure that the evidence is real and up to date, and that there is enough evidence to show competence.

## Reliability

Reliability refers to consistence. Consistency means that comparable judgments are made in the same (or similar) contexts each time a particular assessment for specified intentions is administered. Assessment judgements should also be comparable between different assessors. Assessment results should not be perceived to have been influenced by variables such as:

- assessor bias
- different assessors interpreting the standards or qualifications inconsistently
- different assessors applying different standards
- assessor stress and fatigue
- insufficient evidence gathered
- assessor assumptions about the learner, based on previous performance.

## Definitions

The African Academy differentiates between formative and summative assessment.

- Formative assessment is defined as assessment that is taken at varying intervals throughout a module to provide information and feedback that will help improve the quality of learning and the quality of the programme/module itself. Formative assessment is thus used to provide continuous feedback to both student and facilitator/lecturer about learning progress during instruction.
- In comparison to the above summative assessment is defined as the gathering of data on student learning at the conclusion of a module or programme, as a basis for judging student knowledge and skills. Data thus attained will be used in terms of planning for possible required changes to the curriculum. Further to this, a student's performance on a summative assessment will assist the facilitator/lecturer in determining whether s/he has demonstrated the outcomes required in order to be given credit on the module in question.

## External and Internal Assessments

In some cases, especially in relations to FET programmes, assessments at the African Academy will be of an external nature. This means that the assessment procedures, rules and regulations are set by an external examination body such as a Seta and DHET. In such cases the Academy will strictly adhere to all of the procedures, rules and regulations of the external examination body.

In addition the African Academy will ensure that all examination venues meet the following minimum criteria:

- Secure lock-up facilities to store examination scripts before collections
- Provide secure parking
- Provide enough space to accommodate the registered number of students
- Ensure that the venues are conducive for examinations with the minimum noise levels and disruptions
- Ensure that the appearance of the venue will be neat and clean
- Provide suitable desks, chairs and computers for students
- Ensure that adequate lighting and ventilation is available in all examination venues
- Ensure that emergency exit procedures will be known to the students before examinations starts

In the case of internal assessments, especially in relations to NQF 5 programmes the African Academy will act as the examination body. In such cases the rest of the Assessment and Moderation Policies and Procedures will be applicable.

### The Academic Board as an Examination Board

In the case of internal examinations the Academic Board of the African Academy will fulfill the role of an Examination Board. This means that the Academic Board is responsible for the development of valid, reliable and transparent assessment practices in keeping with academic and professional standards to ensure that graduates possess the knowledge and skills considered relevant to the needs of a developing society, the draughting industry and economy. In general terms the responsibilities of the Academic Board entail overseeing the development of proper assessment procedures whether summative or formative in nature, the provision of feedback to students, the weighting of Year Marks and Examination marks, security procedures, disciplinary and appeals procedures, regulations for marking; and ensuring the integrity of the certification procedure.

More specifically the Academic Board has the following responsibilities:

- Setting the policies, procedures and regulations for assessment.

- Ensuring that the African Academy's regulations and procedures for assessment have been adhered to.
- The assessment strategy for each qualification is valid in terms of curriculum design, knowledge base, exit-level outcomes and relevant generic qualification standard.
- Periodically reviewing the whole assessment process, ensuring inter alia that assessors and moderators are disciplinary/professional experts, and properly appointed according to approved criteria and procedures.
- The marking process is reliable, transparent and authentic, that students are assessed on credible intellectual tasks and that assessment do indeed test for the learning outcomes that were specified for the programmes.
- Arrangements regarding tests, assignments and examinations meet the necessary security levels.
- Students are provided with information and guidance on their rights and responsibilities regarding assessment processes, e.g. definitions of and regulations on plagiarism, penalties, terms of appeal and that they receive proper feedback on their performance.
- Student records are well organised, accurate, reliable and secure.
- Commenting on the overall progression and throughput rates for the programme in relation to its purpose and student intake.
- Making recommendations for the improvement of the programme after evaluation of the assessment results.

The Academic Board acting as the Examination Board will make a final decision if a student meets all of the requirements for the conferral of a qualification.

### **Formative Assessments**

For each module the nature (tests, assignments, portfolios) and the number of formative assessments will be cleared by the Academic Board before the commencement of a module.

Tests, assignments and portfolio work allow students to assess their progress, while feedback indicates where each student may require additional focus before writing their examinations.

Formative assessments will contribute 50% towards the final mark, and the other 50% will be made up from the examination. A high mark in a formative assessment will normally not compensate for a poor mark in the examination.

A student needs to achieve a subminimum of 40% (DP: Due Performance mark) to be admitted to an exam in a particular module, together with an 80% attendance of the module.

A formative mark cannot be carried over to the next academic semester. If a student has not written the exam for that particular module within one academic semester, a new formative mark must be generated.

The criteria for the setting of the formative assessments should not exceed the guidelines provided by the Academic Manager. The assessment format of tests, assignment or portfolio work should be synergistic with the examination paper.

For tests, assignments and portfolio work the maximum marks to be awarded to a question should be clearly indicated and should total to 100 for each test, assignment or portfolio work.

A detailed typed marking memorandum in the specified format will be submitted with the tests, assignments or portfolio indicating how marks should be awarded.

## **Summative Assessments**

In essence summative assessments at the African Academy consist of a final examination per module that is set at the end of a semester.

The date and duration of the examination is set by the Academic Board and this will be published in the academic calendar that is released at the start of each academic year.

For an examination the maximum marks to be awarded to a question should be clearly indicated and should total to 100.

A detailed typed marking memorandum in the specified format will be submitted indicating how marks should be awarded.

The final examination must be written in the year for which the student has enrolled, except where the Academic Board has granted a student permission to write an exam in the following year.

## **Assessors, Moderators and Invigilators**

The African Academy reserves the right to appoint assessors, moderators and invigilators outside of the faculty, although faculty members will in most cases be utilized. The following minimum criteria and undertakings will apply to the

appointment of assessors and moderators for the setting of tests, assignments and examination papers:

- Academic qualification: At least one qualification above the qualification level for which the tests, assignments and examination papers are set.
- Experience: The candidates should have at least three years practical experience in assessment at the level required for the qualification and preferably also have practical experience of the engineering or architectural industry.
- Must have a valid assessor's qualification according to the relevant ETQA.

The appointment of all examiners and moderators must be cleared by the Academic Board. For this purpose the Academic Manager will submit a list of all nominated assessors and moderators to the Academic Board.

In the case of NQF assessments assessors and moderators must be trained in line with the requirements of the relevant SETA, and registered to conduct assessment and moderation only in their area of subject matter expertise.

NQF assessors and moderators must be registered with the relevant SETA as constituent assessors and moderators.

Undertakings to be provided to be appointed as an assessor or moderator:

- To deliver the following documents before or on the dates agreed with the Academic Manager: tests, test memoranda, portfolio briefs, assignments, assignment memoranda, assignment reports, examination papers, examination memoranda, examination report and the moderation report.
- Assessors and moderators will ensure that all documentation pertaining to the setting of assignments and examination papers will be kept under lock and key.
- The assessor will consider changes recommended by the moderator and should they be unable to reach consensus, the Academic Manager will take a final decision after consultation with the chairperson of the Academic Board.

On appointment, all assessors will be provided with copies of previous tests, assignments and examination papers in the subject to familiarise themselves with the standard and style of the questions, the number of questions normally set and the number of questions to be answered.

Should the moderator be satisfied with the assignment or examination paper, he or she needs to sign every page of the document before returning it to the Academic Manager.

The moderator must also complete a report on each subject moderated.

Invigilators will be appointed by the Chief Examination Officer that will ensure that each invigilator is properly informed and trained in assessment procedures at the African Academy.

### **Specific considerations**

Tests, assignments and examination papers and memoranda should be aligned with the prescribed syllabus, be fair, balanced, non-repetitive and reflect the important considerations of the syllabus.

Questions must be unambiguous.

The syllabus (or part thereof for tests and assignments) must be covered in a balanced manner.

A proper academic standard must be maintained.

The marks awarded per question should be realistic, fair and adequate.

Compulsory questions, when used, must relate to basic and fundamental topics of the syllabus in clear easily understandable language.

Utmost care must be taken to ensure the accuracy of figures and formulae.

Assignments and examination papers will be delivered to the Academic Manager in the appropriate electronic format.

The examination paper will be password protected and the Academic Manager will receive the password to the examination paper in a separate communication.

The Academic Manager formats the tests, assignments and examination papers to ensure that it adheres to the prescribed layout and format requirements. Initial proof reading and checking of the relevant mark allocation takes place.

The Academic Manager sends the tests, assignments and examination papers in the appropriate electronic format under password to the moderator, together with the relevant documentation required by the moderators to be moderated according to the criteria specified earlier.

The moderated tests, assignments or examination papers with the relevant reports are returned to the Academic Manager.

Differences in opinions between assessors and moderators will be dealt with and settled by the Academic Manager.

Once agreement is reached on the academic contents of tests, assignments and examination papers, it is quality assured and formatted according to prescribed standards.

Penalties to be applied when marking:

- Too many questions answered: If too many questions are answered, the assessor has the right to mark only the correct number of questions. If he marks more than the correct number of questions, he shall include only the correct number in determining the final mark.
- Misallocation: If the incorrect numbers of questions are answered in a particular section or part of an examination paper, the assessor will mark only the questions as per the instructions provided on the examination paper. For example, if the candidate is asked to attempt two questions from Part A and two from Part B but he answers one from Part A and three from Part B, the Examiner will mark the one Part A answer and only the first two Part B answers as they appear in the script.
- Incorrect Numbering: If an answer has been incorrectly numbered, provided the error is obvious, there will be no penalty. If there is any cause for doubt, then the answer must be marked relative to the question number shown.
- Errors of Style and Language: A high standard of expression, structure, and communication is required. Nevertheless, students with disabilities (e.g. dyslexia resulting in poor spelling) or disadvantages (e.g. second or third language candidates) should be judged on the quality of their knowledge, as they are able to communicate it to the Examiner and not on pedantic expectations of spelling and language.

Assessors should double-check their addition of marks on every script to ensure that final marks are not erroneous.

Assessors are requested to award a percentage per question and script.

After completing the marking/moderation of the scripts, the Assessor/Moderator must complete a report on each subject assessed or moderated.

Moderation and mark adjustment procedures:

- Ten percent of the scripts are identified randomly for moderation, together with borderline cases (within 3% of the pass mark or distinction).
- Moderation of scripts takes place only once and must be commented on in detail in the moderators report.

## **Examination Rules and Regulations**

Smoking, eating or drinking is not allowed in the Examination Venue. No drinks may therefore be brought into the Examination Venue.

All rough work must be done in the Answer Book and must be crossed out before handing in the Answer Book.

Students must keep their stationery only in transparent pencil cases/plastic bags on their desks at the Examination Venue.

Students may not keep their bags, dictionaries or other reference material at their desks while writing exams unless the subject requires such reference material.

Cellular phones must be switched off.

Pocket calculators may be used only if specifically authorised in the examination paper.

Students may not borrow anything from any other student during the course of the examination.

The examinations will be conducted in strict silence. Students who are disruptive will not be allowed to complete the examination. If you require anything, during the course of the examination session, a student should raise his/her hand to gain the attention of the invigilator.

A student should ensure that his/her student number is entered in the appropriate blocks of each answer sheet handed in.

Students may not leave the examination venue within the first hour (including going to the bathroom) or the last fifteen minutes of the examination. Failure to adhere to this rule may result in the student's suspension pending a decision by the Academic Board.

Students who leave the examination venue during the first hour will not be allowed to return to the examination venue.

Students are advised to enter the examination venue at least 30 minutes before the start of the examination session and to be seated 10 minutes prior to the start of the examination.

Students who arrive late will not be granted extra time in which to complete the examination.

No student will be allowed to enter the examination venue should they arrive later than one hour after the commencement of the examination.

Students will not be permitted to temporarily leave the examination venue except in the case of urgent necessity, and then only under supervision. Permission to leave the venue will be granted at the discretion of the invigilator.

No caps/beanies or hoods may be worn during the examination.

Failure to observe the above rules will be considered cheating.

Students who are found cheating or who are suspected of cheating, in the examinations, may be suspended from the African Academy pending a decision from the Academic Board.

## **Supplementary Examinations**

A supplementary examination by virtue of a Learner's performance in the examinations may be granted provided that he/she obtained **50% - 60%**.

A student who qualifies for a supplementary examination in the following examination session, shall receive a notification to that effect together with his/her results.

Students must register for the supplementary examinations granted and pay any prescribed fee applicable.

No further examination opportunities are granted in respect of supplementary examinations. Students who fail their supplementary examinations must reregister for the relevant module/subject.

No supplementary examinations are granted in respect of deferred examinations.

A student has one attempt at writing the final examination and one attempt at the supplementary examination.

All cases of supplementary exams will be reported to the Academic Board.

## **Deferred Examinations**

A deferred examination may be granted to a student that has been prevented from taking the examination or has been unable to complete the examination as a result of

- illness on the day of or immediately before or during the examination; provided that his/her application is accompanied by a medical certificate, issued by a Medical Practitioner registered with the SA Medical and Dental Council or Traditional Healers, specifying the nature, commencement date and duration of the illness and declaring that for health reasons it was impossible or undesirable for the student to sit for the examination on the day concerned and, where applicable, a letter from the invigilator certifying that the Learner left the examination hall due to illness;
- personal circumstances, such as work commitments, the serious illness or death of a relative during the examination period; provided that satisfactory evidence of such circumstances is produced.

Applications for deferred examinations must be accompanied by original documentary evidence giving full details as to why the student was prevented from writing the examination.

The student's application, together with any prescribed fee if applicable must be received by the Academic Manager within ten (10) working days from the date on which he/she should have written the examination in the module concerned.

The Academic Manager has the authority to decide on the merit of each application. In cases of uncertainty the Chairperson of the Academic Board can be consulted and in such cases the decision of the Chairperson will be final.

The deferred examination will be set by the lecturer and administered on a date suitable to the African Academy.

Where an examination is deferred, without the module having been written at the first examination opportunity, such deferred examination will be regarded as the second examination opportunity for that academic year. Only one further supplementary or deferred examination will be granted and students who fail or are absent from such examination will have to reregister for the relevant module/subject during the next academic period.

Where a student qualifies for both a deferred examination as well as a supplementary examination, it should be noted that if the examination dates or times should clash, the supplementary examination would lapse.

All deferred examination cases must be reported to the Academic Board.

## **Requests for Remarks**

Students are never given back their Final Examination or Supplementary Examination scripts.

Students must request a remark within ten (10) working days after marks have been released, should they wish to do so.

The fee of the remark is set by the Academic Management Committee.

Students may view their scripts provided a lecturer/facilitator in that particular module is present and the remark fee has been paid.

Students may never be left alone with their scripts as they may alter their work.

Any remark is at the discretion of African Academy; each case will be addressed individually.

The remark will include rechecking that every question is marked and all marks allocated have been included in the total mark awarded.

The new mark after a remark is the final mark (new mark stands as the final result).

All remark cases will be reported to the Academic Board.

## **Pass Mark and Distinction**

The pass mark in each NQF 4 subject is 70% and distinction 80%.

The pass mark in each NQF 5 subject is 65% and distinction 75%.

## **Release of Results**

All final results must be released within four weeks after the examination week/s.

Students must also be given an updated transcript of results after completing the examinations. A copy of every individual student's transcript must be kept on file, in the individual student's record file.

## **Posting Results onto the System**

Once all the results have been verified and signed off by the Academic Board, it is posted onto the learner's academic record a week prior to the release of the results.

Once the results are entered onto the learner's academic record it cannot be altered.

## Appeals Process

Students may appeal against their marks on the following grounds only:

- Material irregularity or administrative error, or
- If assessment sessions were not conducted following the correct procedures

The appeal must be made in writing and addressed to the Chairperson of the Academic Board. The appeal should be accompanied by documentary proof to substantiate his/her claim.

A student must appeal within ten (10) working days from the release of results.

The appeal and decision made by the Chairperson of the Academic Board will be referred to the Academic Board for verification and review, and will be signed off by the Chairperson of the Academic Board, after which no further correspondence will be entered into.

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