



Student Internal Quality Assurance Policy 2024–25 (in accordance with ATHE policies)

Introduction

This policy sets out the requirements for the verification and quality control of all qualifications approved by Oxfordian College, in alignment with the guidelines from the Awarding Organisation, ATHE. There are no exceptions to this policy.

The role of the Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) is critical in ensuring the quality and consistency of assessment decisions, and the reliability of learner outcomes at Oxfordian College.

Lead Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) Requirements

- The Lead IQA must be occupationally knowledgeable in the competencies they oversee and quality assure, in alignment with ATHE qualification requirements. It is essential that Lead IQAs understand both the context of the Assessor's work and the learners' needs due to the critical nature of the assessment process and the implications for legal and regulatory compliance.
- The Lead IQA must have the authority to coordinate the work of IQAs and Assessors, including providing support, facilitating training and development, conducting meetings, observing assessments, and ensuring all IQA roles adhere to ATHE standards.
- IQA Qualification: Lead IQAs must hold, or be working towards, an IQA qualification, recognized by ATHE.
- Experience: Lead IQAs should typically have at least three years of relevant experience in a quality assurance or assessment capacity.
- Assessor Experience: Ideally, IQAs should have at least two years of experience as an Assessor before undertaking the IQA role. This ensures they understand the quality assurance requirements of each ATHE qualification.

Operating and Evaluating Internal Quality Assurance

The Lead IQA is responsible for:

- Supporting the team of IQAs and Assessors.
- Regularly monitoring and moderating IQA performance and decisions to ensure compliance with ATHE requirements.
- Liaising with External Quality Assurers (EQAs) to ensure that ATHE standards are met and followed.

The Internal Quality Assurers are responsible for:

- Operating and evaluating internal assessment and quality assurance systems in line with ATHE guidelines.
- Supporting Assessors in managing resources, caseloads, and adapting to ATHE updates.
Monitoring the quality of Assessor performance through standardization, observation, and learner feedback.
- Ensuring compliance with ATHE's External Quality Assurance (EQA) requirements.
- Overseeing assessment resources, candidate progress, and any special assessment arrangements.
- Managing timely registration and certification claims in compliance with ATHE procedures.

Oxfordian College Sampling Strategy

In line with ATHE guidelines, each IQA will:

- Sample all Assessors across all units, qualifications, and levels they assess, ensuring comprehensive and systematic coverage.
- Maintain a sampling plan that tracks all IQA activity electronically, providing an accurate overview of assessment performance.
- Ensure sampling is not "end-loaded" and is proportionally planned based on risk and need.

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Sampling Schedule

Date of Sampling	Assessor Name	Learner/Unit Sampled	Sampling Purpose	Comments/Findings	Action Required

Sampling Criteria

The IQA will sample learner portfolios based on the following criteria:

- **Assessment Validity:** Ensures assessment decisions align with the learning outcomes and performance criteria.
- **Authenticity:** Confirms that all work submitted by learners is their own.
- **Reliability:** Confirms that the learner's work accurately reflects their level of performance and is consistent with grading standards.
- **Currency:** Ensures evidence reflects current knowledge and competencies relevant to the qualification.
- **Sufficiency:** Confirms that the evidence meets all qualification standards.

Supporting Assessors

Internal Quality Assurers will ensure that all Assessors have access to:

- **National Occupational Standards** for the qualifications they assess, as required by ATHE.
- ATHE's **Guide to Assessment Practices** and assessment tools.
- Clear contact information for advice on ATHE-specific qualification guidelines.
- Annual Assessor meetings to discuss learner progress and updates from ATHE.
- Feedback from ATHE **External Verifier** (EQA) visits to improve assessment practices.

Internal Quality Assurance/Centre Managers Will Ensure

- All new Assessors are inducted into Oxfordian College's assessment and verification procedures in compliance with ATHE standards.
- Assessors maintain Continuing Professional Development (CPD), with updates on occupational developments aligned with ATHE qualifications.
- Trainee Assessors have assessments countersigned by qualified Assessors as per ATHE requirements.
- All decisions made by trainee IQAs are checked and countersigned by an experienced IQA, as required by ATHE's TAQA framework.

The Centre Contact Will Ensure

- Up-to-date occupational CVs for each Assessor working at Oxfordian College, as required by ATHE.
- Original certificates for Assessor qualifications are inspected and authenticated.

Verifying Assessments

IQAs will, through the internal verification sample, ensure:

- Each Assessor makes valid, consistent, and fair decisions in accordance with ATHE's qualification framework.
- Assessors make equitable decisions based on the same evidence across learners.
- All learners are assessed fairly and in accordance with ATHE's standards of assessment.

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Monitoring Assessor Performance

IQAs will:

- Ensure national standards of assessment, as defined by ATHE, are adhered to.
- Identify areas where Assessors require further training or development.
- Conduct regular observations of Assessors to ensure they follow ATHE’s guidelines for quality assessment.
- Ensure Assessors use a variety of assessment methods and assess evidence that meets ATHE’s validity, authenticity, reliability, currency, and sufficiency criteria.

RAG Grading System for Risk Assessing Assessors

Oxfordian College uses a RAG grading system to manage risk in assessing and verifying work, ensuring compliance with ATHE standards.

Category	Criteria	Sampling Frequency
RED	Over 40% of portfolios rejected or consistent untimely submissions (more than 28 days late)	100% of portfolios sampled. Increased support and guidance provided.
AMBER	21–39% of portfolios rejected or untimely submissions (up to 28 days late)	30–50% of portfolios sampled. Specific actions for improvement provided.
GREEN	Less than 20% of portfolios rejected or timely submissions (within 14 days)	20% of portfolios sampled. May be rubber-stamped at discretion.
PURPLE	New tutor or qualification	A minimum of 20% sampled for 3 months. Additional support provided.

Guidance for Sampling

- Sampling decisions will be based on the risk level of the Assessor, as outlined by the RAG grading system.
- All sampling will be conducted in line with ATHE requirements and ensure timely, effective, and fair assessment practices.

Observation and Standardization

- Observation Dates: [List scheduled dates to observe assessors in action]
- Standardization Meetings: [List dates for standardization meetings to ensure consistency in assessments]
- Frequency of Meetings: [Specify frequency, e.g., quarterly, bi-annually]

Assessor Feedback and Follow-Up

Assessor Name	Date of Feedback	Feedback Summary	Actions Taken	Follow-Up Date
[Name]	[Date]	[Feedback]	[Actions]	[Follow-Up]

Reporting and Monitoring

- Monthly IQA Review: IQA team will review sampling results, assessor performance, and learner feedback to identify any quality issues.
- Quarterly Assessment Audit: A comprehensive review to ensure continuous improvement and identify trends across all assessments.
- External Quality Assurance (EQA) Liaison: Regular meetings with EQA for feedback, ensuring that all recommendations are implemented and documented.

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Malpractice Policy Policy Statement

Oxfordian College maintains a zero-tolerance stance towards all forms of malpractice. Upholding academic integrity is fundamental to our institution, and any attempt or engagement in malpractice is regarded as a severe breach of our academic and ethical standards. This policy outlines what constitutes malpractice, the procedure for investigating suspected instances, and the consequences for those found in breach.

Definition of Malpractice

Malpractice is defined as any action by learners, staff, or other individuals involved with Oxfordian College that results in an unfair advantage in an assessment or the distortion of assessment results. Examples of malpractice include, but are not limited to:

- **Plagiarism:** Presenting the work of another person as one's own, whether through copying text, images, or data, without proper acknowledgment of the source. This includes using others' work in whole or in part, with or without permission from the originator.
- **Collusion:** Working with others to produce work that is submitted as an individual's own effort. While collaborative work is encouraged for certain projects, any work submitted as an individual assessment must reflect the individual learner's understanding and effort.
- **Impersonation:** Submitting work on behalf of another person or arranging for someone else to take an examination or assessment in one's place.
- **Fabrication of Results:** Falsifying or inventing data or results in any form, including creating fictitious sources, data, or citations.
- **Non-compliance with Examination Conditions:** Failing to follow instructions from an assessor, supervisor, or invigilator during an assessment or examination.
- **Misuse of Materials:** Using unauthorized materials, such as personal notes, guides, or electronic devices, contrary to examination or assessment rules.
- **Cheating:** Engaging in any form of dishonest conduct to gain an unfair advantage, including sharing answers or information during exams or assessments.
- **Alteration of Documentation:** Tampering with assessment-related documents or results, including altering certificates, official scores, or grades.

Preventive Measures

Oxfordian College has established robust procedures to prevent and address malpractice:

- **Awareness and Training:** Regular training for staff and students on academic integrity, including specific guidance on what constitutes malpractice.
- **Clear Instructions:** Assessors and invigilators provide clear guidelines for assessments and examinations to minimize misunderstandings regarding acceptable conduct.
- **Random Checks:** Regular audits of assessment submissions, particularly for suspected cases of collusion or plagiarism.
- **Monitoring:** All assessments are monitored in line with regulatory requirements to maintain the integrity of examination conditions.

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Malpractice Investigation Procedure

1. Reporting and Initial Investigation

- **Responsibility:** It is the responsibility of the Head of College or a designated representative to initiate an investigation upon suspicion of malpractice.
- **Notification:** The accused individual will be informed at the earliest possible opportunity about the alleged malpractice and the potential consequences if proven guilty.
- **Initial Review:** A preliminary review will be conducted by the Senior Academic Manager to assess the validity of the allegation. The individual involved will have the chance to respond to the allegation at this stage.

2. Formal Investigation

- **Evidence Collection:** If a more thorough investigation is deemed necessary, evidence will be collected, which may include examination scripts, witness statements, invigilation reports, and any other relevant materials.
- **Interview:** The accused individual will be interviewed to present their case and provide additional context if necessary.
- **Review by Academic Panel:** If the allegation involves significant breaches or if initial attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful, the case will be escalated to the Academic Panel, comprising academic staff, the Senior Academic Manager, and Directors if required.

3. Decision and Communication

- **Outcome:** After reviewing all evidence, the Academic Panel will decide if malpractice is confirmed and determine the appropriate penalty.
- **Notification:** The accused individual will receive written notification of the decision, including any penalties applied. They will also be informed of their right to appeal the decision.

4. Appeals Process

- **Right to Appeal:** The accused individual has the right to appeal the Academic Panel's decision. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Director within 14 days of the initial decision.
- **Final Review:** The appeal will be reviewed by the Director, whose decision will be final. The Director will provide written communication to the individual with the outcome of the appeal.

Penalties and Sanctions

Penalties for confirmed cases of malpractice depend on the nature and severity of the offense and may include, but are not limited to:

- **Warning and Re-Submission:** For minor infractions, the individual may be allowed to re-submit an assignment with corrective guidance on proper academic conduct.
- **Partial or Full Re-Submission:** The individual may be required to partially or completely re-submit the assignment or assessment.
- **Cancellation of Assessment Result:** The result of the examination or assignment may be annulled.
- **Suspension of Examination Privileges:** The individual may be suspended from further assessments or exams for a specified period.
- **Expulsion:** In cases of serious or repeated malpractice, expulsion from Oxfordian College may be warranted. In such cases, any relevant authorities, such as accrediting bodies, will also be informed of the transgression.
- **Notification of Accrediting Bodies:** In severe or repeated cases, Oxfordian College reserves the right to notify accrediting or awarding bodies of the malpractice incident.

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Record-Keeping and Monitoring

- **Documentation:** All reports, evidence, investigation records, and decisions related to malpractice cases will be securely stored as part of the College's quality assurance records.
- **Review and Improvement:** Malpractice incidents are reviewed periodically to identify trends or areas for improvement in preventive measures.
- **Policy Review:** This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with best practices and regulatory standards, and any updates will be communicated across the institution.

Effective Date: [Insert date here]

Review Date: [Insert one year from the effective date]

This policy reflects Oxfordian College's commitment to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and fairness in all assessments. It ensures that both learners and staff understand the seriousness of malpractice and the processes in place to prevent and address it, thereby maintaining the credibility and value of qualifications awarded by the College.

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism Policy

Oxfordian College is committed to fostering academic integrity and upholding the highest standards of ethical conduct. Plagiarism, the act of presenting another's work or ideas as one's own without appropriate credit, is a form of academic dishonesty that undermines these standards. Plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, is treated as a serious offense at Oxfordian College and is contrary to the principles of academic study and intellectual honesty.

Definition of Plagiarism

Plagiarism at Oxfordian College encompasses various acts of misrepresentation and dishonesty, including but not limited to:

- **Direct Copying:** Reproducing parts of another's work verbatim without using quotation marks and without acknowledging the original source, whether it is a book, research paper, web content, another student's work, staff notes, or images.
- **Paraphrasing Without Citation:** Rewording or summarizing another person's work without proper citation, giving the impression that the ideas or findings are original to the student.
- **Unacknowledged Assistance:** Utilizing someone else's ideas or help without giving due credit. This may include receiving help in data analysis, accessing unique resources, or receiving feedback on one's work from someone not acknowledged in the submission.
- **Unauthorized Collaboration:** Working with others on assignments or projects intended to be completed individually. While teamwork is encouraged for certain tasks, all work submitted individually must be independently completed.
- **Copying Another Student's Work:** Presenting work produced by a peer as one's own, with or without the peer's knowledge or permission.
- **Electronic Copy-Pasting Without Acknowledgment:** Cutting and pasting material from online sources without proper citation, including text, data, and visual aids, and presenting it as original work. Including large amounts of quoted or copied material, even if cited, may raise concerns about the originality of the work.

Avoiding Plagiarism

To maintain academic integrity, students are expected to adhere to the following practices:

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- **Proper Acknowledgment of Sources:** All external assistance, including feedback, data provision, and collaboration, must be acknowledged in accordance with the recognized citation conventions.
- **Collaborative Work:** When group work is part of the assessment, all contributions must be credited, and individual components must be distinct and clearly marked.
- **Explicit Attribution:** Any part of an assignment completed by others must be clearly marked, and all sources of information must be cited in the required referencing style for the relevant subject.
- **Referencing:** Students should use proper in-text citations and references, following a consistent referencing system, to avoid accidental plagiarism.

Supervisors are available to provide guidance on appropriate practices in each subject area and discipline.

Declaration of Academic Integrity: All students must declare that the work they submit is their own. Assignments submitted without this declaration will not be accepted.

Procedures for Addressing Suspected Plagiarism

Oxfordian College has established an Academic Misconduct Panel, comprising experienced teachers, academic managers, and directors. This panel, along with internal and external examiners, oversees the investigation of plagiarism cases, ranging from minor issues to more serious breaches.

1. Detection and Initial Evaluation

If an internal or external examiner suspects plagiarism, they will evaluate the nature and extent of the plagiarism and take appropriate action.

- **Minor Cases of Poor Scholarship:** Instances where improper citation or referencing is due to poor academic practice, and where the plagiarism is minor in relation to the entire work, may be corrected and flagged as an academic infraction but may not require a formal investigation.
- **Significant Cases:** All cases beyond minor infractions are referred to the Senior Academic Manager for further investigation.

2. Investigation Process

When a case requires formal investigation, the following process will be followed:

- **Interview with the Student:** The Senior Academic Manager will conduct an interview with the student to discuss the suspected plagiarism, consider any mitigating factors, and provide an opportunity for the student to respond. The student may be accompanied by a representative of their choice.
- **Documentation:** Following the interview, the Senior Academic Manager will compile a report that includes evidence of the suspected plagiarism, a summary of the interview, and any information on prior guidance provided to the student about plagiarism avoidance.
- **Referral to Academic Misconduct Panel:** If the case warrants further review, the report will be submitted to the Academic Misconduct Panel for additional action.

Academic Misconduct Panel Review

Upon referral, the Academic Misconduct Panel will:

- **Review All Evidence:** Examine the extent and context of the suspected plagiarism and the student's explanation.
- **Determine Consequences:** Decide on the severity of the offense and determine appropriate disciplinary action in line with College policies.
- **Communication:** Inform the student in writing of the outcome, including any penalties and instructions for re-submission if applicable.

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Penalties for Proven Cases of Plagiarism

If the Academic Misconduct Panel confirms an instance of plagiarism, it may impose one of the following penalties, based on the severity and frequency of the offense:

- **Fail the Work in Question:** The plagiarized work will be marked as a fail, requiring the student to submit new work or resit the assessment as directed.
- **Re-assessment of Edited Work:** The work may be re-assessed after the student removes the plagiarized content. Consequences, such as awarding a reduced grade, may apply if the edited work is insufficient for full credit.
- **Resubmission Requirement:** The student may be required to fully revise and resubmit the work, with inappropriate material removed and the content thoroughly edited to ensure originality. If the revision significantly reduces the scope of the work, the student may only be eligible for a lesser qualification.
- **Reduced Degree or Certification:** Where applicable, the plagiarized work may result in a recommendation that the student receive a reduced qualification, subject to the College's academic standards.

In cases of repeated or severe plagiarism, the student may face more significant disciplinary actions, up to and including expulsion from Oxfordian College.

Record-Keeping and Monitoring

- **Documentation:** All records related to plagiarism investigations and outcomes are securely stored as part of the College's quality assurance records.
- **Policy Review and Improvements:** Plagiarism incidents are regularly reviewed to improve preventive measures, and this policy is updated annually to ensure relevance to academic standards and best practices.

Oxfordian College's Plagiarism Policy aims to safeguard the value of academic achievement, ensuring that all student work reflects genuine effort, original thought, and respect for intellectual property. This policy reinforces the College's commitment to fostering a culture of honesty, fairness, and academic integrity.

Conclusion

Oxfordian College is committed to upholding ATHE's high standards of quality assurance. Through effective internal verification processes, robust Assessor support, and continuous monitoring, we aim to ensure that all learners are fairly assessed and that assessments meet the regulatory and occupational standards set by ATHE.

This policy ensures that Oxfordian College's IQA processes are aligned with ATHE's requirements, fostering consistent and high-quality assessment practices across all qualifications.

The policy will be reviewed on a yearly basis.



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