

Examination Policy for Access to HE Diplomas

All LASER validated Access Diploma Titles to include a minimum of 4 'examinations'.

Key features of the examination policy

- All LASER validated Access Diploma Titles must contain at least four opportunities for students to experience appropriate forms of examination.
- At least two examinations should be summative assessments and must generate assessed evidence in terms of Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria.
- The remaining two may be formative assessments and therefore may not be included as evidence in terms of the final assessment of a unit in relation to Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria (this does not preclude a centre choosing to include all four examinations as forms of summative assessment of Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria).

Timescale for implementation

This will be a mandatory requirement within **all** diploma Rules of Combination documents for the academic year 2016-17 and Rules of Combination documents will be amended such that the requirements of the examination policy are met (this will be actioned by the AVA without the need for centres to complete any additional paperwork). Centres will then be supplied with updated Rules of Combination documents with the conditions of the Examination policy included. Compliance with this policy will be a subject for scrutiny for External Moderators.

Further guidance

Where a Diploma contains 4 academic subjects there might be one examination opportunity in each e.g. Nursing; Biology; Sociology and Psychology.

Where Diploma Titles contain 2 academic subject areas e.g. Humanities and Social Science where possible there should be two examinations in each subject area. Where this is not judged appropriate then the Diploma should make alternative arrangements such that 4 examination opportunities are identified across the scope of assessment. This should be approved by the External Moderator for the centre.

In cases where the above cannot be applied as there is not a clear division of subject areas within a Diploma Rules of Combination document, the centre will need to ensure that there are a minimum of four opportunities for assessment by examination.

Units, Credits and Examinations:

An examination may form the total assessment of a unit in terms of the generation of evidence for **all Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria**. However, this is not a requirement. An examination may also legitimately constitute the assessment of one or more of the Learning Outcomes and

Assessment Criteria within the scope of an overall **unit assessment plan**. However, the examination in this instance must be presented as a separate assessment generating distinct grading data (in terms of the QAA Grading Scheme). The scope, range and design of the 'examination' remain at the discretion of the centre although it will be subject to scrutiny by External Moderation. In terms of the overall **Diploma Assessment Plan** there would be requirement for four assessments based upon examinations to be included.

Interpretations of 'Examination':

The AVA proposes a broad based and pragmatic interpretation of 'examination' such that it includes a range of written tests and exercises under formal, controlled conditions. This may be in class as a group or also held in a hall with an entire cohort present. Examinations may be 'seen' papers or 'open book'; they may include practical tests / observations or viva voce examination. For creative studies this may include a range of activities such as the presentation of work, performances and the production of art work within a controlled environment.

The nature of the interpretation of examination shall remain with the centre and should be judged on the norms and requirements of the individual academic disciplines. However, in framing these judgements centres should remember that these decisions will be scrutinized as a facet of the External Moderation System.