

Assessment Policy

1. Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define the principles, processes, and standards for assessment at C3S Business School. As an institution delivering **OTHM** and **Abertay University** programmes, our assessments are designed to be robust, transparent, and aligned with the **Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF)** and the **UK Quality Code for Higher Education**.

2. Core Principles of Assessment

C3S adheres to four fundamental pillars in its assessment strategy:

- **Validity:** Assessments effectively measure the intended Learning Outcomes (LOs) as specified by the awarding bodies.
- **Reliability:** Assessment decisions are consistent across different assessors and over time through rigorous moderation.
- **Transparency:** Students are provided with clear assessment criteria and grading rubrics at the start of each unit.
- **Inclusivity:** We offer "Reasonable Adjustments" for learners with documented needs to ensure equity of opportunity without compromising academic standards.

3. Assessment Design and Planning

Assessments at C3S are primarily assignment-based, focusing on the practical application of business theory.

- **Unit Specifications:** All assessments are mapped to the specific assessment criteria (AC) provided by OTHM or Abertay University.
- **Formative Assessment:** Throughout the semester, students receive developmental feedback on drafts, presentations, or seminar contributions to guide their progress.
- **Summative Assessment:** Final submissions determine the achievement of a unit. These are designed to test higher-order thinking skills—such as critical analysis and synthesis—appropriate to the RQF level (Level 3 to Level 7).
- **Word Counts and Formatting:** Strict adherence to word limits and Harvard Referencing standards is required to prepare students for professional and advanced academic environments.

4. The Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) Process

To maintain absolute parity with UK national standards, C3S operates a multi-stage **Internal Verification (IV)** cycle:

1. **Pre-Delivery Verification:** Every assignment brief is reviewed by an Internal Verifier before being issued to students to ensure the tasks are set at the correct level of challenge.
2. **Standardisation:** Before marking begins, assessors meet to discuss sample work to ensure a unified interpretation of the grading criteria.
3. **Post-Assessment Verification:** Once marking is complete, a sample of work (minimum 10% or as required by the awarding body) is cross-checked by an Internal Verifier. If discrepancies are found, the entire cohort's marks may be adjusted to ensure fairness.

5. External Quality Assurance (EQA)

As an approved centre, C3S is subject to periodic audits by **OTHM** and **Abertay University**.

- **External Moderation:** Awarding body representatives visit the campus (or conduct remote audits) to verify that our internal grading matches their national benchmarks.
- **Certification:** No final certificate is issued to a student until the External Quality Assurer (EQA) has formally "signed off" on the centre's assessment decisions.

6. Academic Integrity and Misconduct

C3S maintains a zero-tolerance approach to academic malpractice.

- **Plagiarism & Collusion:** All summative work must be submitted via **Turnitin**. Any submission showing an unacceptable similarity index or evidence of collusion will be investigated.
- **AI Policy:** While AI tools may be used for preliminary research, the submission of AI-generated text as original work is strictly prohibited and classified as a breach of academic integrity.
- **Sanctions:** Penalties for misconduct range from a formal warning and capped resubmission to expulsion from the programme.

7. Mitigating Circumstances and Appeals

- **Extenuating Circumstances:** Students facing significant, unforeseen hardships (e.g., bereavement or medical emergencies) may apply for an extension or a "Set Aside" of an assessment attempt via the Student Affairs Committee.
- **Appeals Procedure:** Students may appeal a result only on the grounds of procedural irregularity or administrative error. Appeals against "academic judgment" are not permitted.
 - *Level 1:* Formal appeal to the C3S Academic Council.
 - *Level 2:* Final escalation to the Awarding Body (OTHM or Abertay University).

8. Governance and Review

This policy is overseen by the **Academic Council** and the **Risk and Compliance Subcommittee**. It is reviewed bi-annually to ensure ongoing compliance with Spanish legal mandates and UK regulatory changes.