Academic Policy A02

Quality of Learning, Teaching and Assessment

1. Policy Statement

The Quality of Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy:

- Gives primacy to sector best practice in learning and teaching and student outcomes,
- Is founded on principles of scholarship as integral to the development of effective teaching and learning, and
- Promotes self-directed lifelong learning.

2. Purpose

The policy purpose is to provide for high quality learning and teaching processes and assessment outcomes in all courses at SAE Institute applying to SAE centres in UK, South West Europe Region, GSA Region and all Licensed campuses delivering UK validated programmes. In order to achieve this goal, the policy supports four areas for effective learning and teaching,:

1. curriculum design and development;
2. delivery of programmes;
3. assessment of students; and
4. Enhancement and development of student experience.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all modules and courses of SAE Institute including those validated by Middlesex University, and the strategies in this policy will be evident in the planning, procedures, and learning and teaching processes for all courses of study.

4. Associated Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

- A01 Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Policy
- A03 Academic Honesty Policy
- A07 Academic Grievance Policy. Regulations, Policies and Procedures

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5. Curriculum Design and Development

In the design and development of SAE curriculum, SAE Institute instructional design will:

a. Be informed by expert scholarship, industry practices and sector best practice in teaching;
b. Develop capacity and opportunities for self-directed learning and free enquiry for students;
c. Be designed for reasonable and equitable student workloads,
d. Be designed for equitable and timely student assessment and feedback, transparent assessment practices;
e. Ensure comparable and appropriate resources provision;
f. Ensure content, feedback and assessment are constructively aligned and scaffolded;
g. Embrace the learning needs of a diverse student profile to be inclusive and equitable, and
h. Conform to the UK Quality Standards and the Middlesex University Learning Enhancement and Quality Handbook;

6. Delivery of Programmes

In the delivery of programmes, SAE Institute requires that:

a. Students receive study materials, assessment tasks and assessment criteria at the commencement of a programme and module;
b. Systems that are robust and secure are in place to record and track student feedback and achievement;
c. Teaching that serves to enhance creative and transformational learning with timely and effective feedback and a notified and transparent schedule of assessment that is effective in supporting learning and safeguarding academic standards.
d. Embraces the diverse range of backgrounds, experience and learning needs of students;
e. Learning and Teaching technology supports student learning and is accessible and regularly maintained;
f. Faculty teaching is regularly observed and feedback provided by peers and supervisors to support continued professional development;
g. content and assessments are delivered in an authentic industry context to demonstrate current industry practice, support career planning and the development of professional skills;
h. Learning and Teaching technology, including the VLE, is deployed to optimise student enagement, support development of digital literacy and good practice and enhance an expanded and critical scholarship;

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7. Student Induction to Post Secondary

SAE acknowledges the diversity of background and experience of students entering its post-secondary programmes. Students will be inducted into studies at SAE to prepare them for their studies to introduce them to the practices and expectations of post-secondary education. Induction will include:

- General introduction to SAE culture and its history
- Introduction to academic conventions and concepts of scholarship
- Workplace health and safety for campus community
- Orientation to SAE information and support systems
- Expectations of study load, work, life balance; and

8. Assessment of Learning

8.1. SAE Assessment Practices

Assessment practices will:

a. promote, enhance, and improve the quality of student learning through feedback that is clear, informative, effective, timely, constructive and relevant to the needs of the learner,
b. measure and confirm the standard of student achievement in relation to published learning objectives,
c. reward student effort and achievement with an appropriate grade,
d. certify student outcomes and achievement according to approved quality standards,
e. be regularly and systematically reviewed by all stakeholders – student, faculty, industry - to continuously evaluate and enhance the quality of the curriculum and the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process,

8.2. Assessment Requirements

In the assessment of learning, SAE Institute requires that:

a. formative and summative assessment are used;
b. assessments are constructively aligned to learning outcomes
c. assessment titles are authentic
d. assessment descriptors clearly outline expectations and have associated rubrics;
e. all assessment details for a module are provided at the commencement of a module including due date, weighting, descriptor and rubrics
f. summative assessments cannot be amended without the consent of the Programme Committee in terms of weighting, learning outcomes, title and descriptor

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g. summative assessment due dates cannot be varied without the consent of all students in a module and the Programme Coordinator[1];

h. formative assessment can be applied at the discretion of the teacher and should not place an unreasonable burden on student learning;

i. assessment must be transparent and fair, and follows approved assessment standards;

j. where appropriate, assessments will permit learner choice;

k. Campus academic leaders and faculty are responsibility for appraising the quality of student assessment practice and reporting this appraisal to the relevant programme committees and the Dean;

l. assessment must be documented accurately and systematically in Campus Online (which is synchronised with Navigate);

m. assessment outcomes and feedback is provided to students in a timely and effective manner to ensure student can monitor their learning through reflection on feedback and engage in dialogue with staff;

n. students can consult faculty to clarify any assessment outcome or commentary

o. Assessment practices are reviewed regularly and systematically by Programme Committees and SAE Academic Governance structures;

p. Feedback from any assessment is clear, timely and effective with the purpose of providing students information on the quality of work and the enhancement of learning ;

q. Assessment will contribute to the achievement of graduate and programme outcomes of digital literacy, enterprise and entrepreneurship, internationalisation and ethical behaviour.

8.3. Enhancement of Learning and Teaching and Student Experience

SAE Institute maintains that the student learning experience depends on high quality teaching and effective and supported student learning, and curricula that is informed by:

● industry and discipline knowledge and practice,
● scholarship and
● professional experience.

Teaching, learning support and the curriculum must therefore be well-informed and subject to continuous reflection, evaluation and review. To achieve this continuous improvement, SAE Institute requires that:

1 All curricula are regularly, systematically and expertly reviewed and reported to the Academic Board;

2 Reviews will include all stakeholders: students, faculty, industry

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[1] If the Programme Coordinator is the teacher of the module, then the consent of the Academic Coordinator and all students must be obtained.

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3 Student feedback and satisfaction data are regularly collected and reported, contribute to continuous improvement in teaching, learning and the curriculum, and SAE responses provided back to students;

4 The enhancement and development of teaching practice is supported by:
- o Regular campus based peer and supervisor observations of teaching
- o Scholarship through publications, conference presentations and industry bodies
- o Professional practice
- o Certificated, formal and informal professional development programmes such as PGC HE (Post Graduate Certificate in Higher Education Teaching and Learning) and Higher Education Academy fellowships.

5 SAE Faculty regularly develop and enhance their teaching praxis

6 Student support systems, including academic skills development and formative guidance on progress associated with assessment tasks are regularly and systematically reviewed;

7 Appointments to faculty will be provided with a copy of this policy and an induction programme on SAE teaching and assessment practices including all relevant technologies;

8 All faculty feedback on learning and teaching enhancement through Boards of Studies, Campus Assessment Panels, Regional Assessment Panels, Programme Committees and directly to the UK DASS team

9 Feedback from stakeholders, including students, employers and professional practitioners, as well as national benchmarks and the provisions of the QAA Quality Code, Middlesex University be taken into account in programme and module reviews.

9. Assessment Board Policy

9.1.   Overview

SAE Institute (SAE) delivers degree programmes validated by Middlesex University (MDX) at approved SAE campuses that are grouped into three regional areas Germany Switzerland and Austria (GSA) Group, United Kingdom (UK) Group, and the South West Europe (SWEu) Group and licensed campuses in Mexico City, Amman and Belgrade. The programmes are taught in English, French, German, Greek, Italian, Spanish and Swedish. Final award and assessment outcomes are processed through a tiered Panel and Board system, aligned with MDX regulations.

Student results are confirmed by second tier Finalist Assessment Board (FAB), having passed through internal and external verification through the first tier Content Specialist Panel (CSP), and Regional Assessment Panels (RAPs for GSA, UK and SWEu), and Campus Assessment Panels (CAPs) pre-boards as set out in this regulation.

Assessment Board framework is intended to ensure fair, consistent, equitable and comparable assessment across all validated programmes for all campuses, and in all

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languages of instruction. Membership of these assessment boards and panels includes External Examiners, MDX University Link Tutors and other nominated staff, SAE Academic Leadership and members of faculty. Membership and terms of reference are provided below.

The SAE EU Learning, Teaching and Curriculum Committee (LTCC) has responsibility for monitoring the consistency of academic quality and comparability of standards across all Regions/campuses. The LTCC has delegated authority from the Navitas Board through the SAE Chief Academic Officer for content and delivery threshold standards of SAE's Middlesex University validated programmes and SAE programmes that have credit recognition towards the validated programmes. The LTCC provides reports to the regional academic governing bodies in the three European regions.

10. Related policies and documents:

- SAE A02 Learning Teaching and Assessment Policy 160324
- WW_3_A_POL_LTCC_Europe_151125
- [EU_3_A_GDE_ABTiersGraphic_160310](#) - See Appendix pg. 10
- MDX LQE Handbook - Section 4, The External Examiner's System (http://www.mdx.ac.uk/about-us/policies/academic-quality/handbook/lqe-handbook-section-4)
- MDX Assessment and progression regulations for taught programmes (Undergraduate Section E)

1. Finalist Assessment Board (FAB) – Second Tier Board

1.1. FAB Membership

a) MDX Nominee (Chair)
b) Chief External Examiner (CEE)
c) University Link Tutors (ULT)
d) Regional Dean, or nominee
e) Regional Academic Managers
f) SAE Programme Leaders
g) Institutional Link Tutor (ILT)

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1.2. FAB Terms of Reference

a) To award, in the light of recommendations from the first tier boards, qualifications on behalf of the Academic Board.
b) To consider the implementation of assessment policy and related matters.
c) To consider any matters brought forward from Content Specialist Panels or the Chief External Examiner.

The FAB will normally meet 3 times each year to consider finalists from all validated programmes.

Documentation for the FAB will be provided by Directorate of Academic and Student Services (DASS) team.

The FAB will be supported by an Executive Assistant appointed by SAE DASS team to support the business of the Board.

Other guests and observers may attend the meeting subject to prior approval by the Chair.

2. Content Specialist Panels (CSPs) – First Tier Board

A CSP is formed for three cognate areas of SAE provision, as follows:

2.1. Audio and Music Business:

(BA/BSc (Hons) Audio Production, BA/BSc (Hons) Music Business and nested Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) and Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) awards)

2.2. Film, Media and Animation:

(BA/BSc (Hons) Digital Film Making, BA/BSc (Hons) Digital Film Production, BA/BSc (Hons) Interactive Animation, BA/BSc (Hons) Game Art Animation, BA/BSc (Hons) Visual Effects Animation, and BA/BSc (Hons) Media Production and Publishing, BA/BSc (Hons) Cross Media and Communication, and nested Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) and Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) awards)

2.3. Interactive Media (Web and Games):

BA/BSc (Hons) Web Development, BA/BSc (Hons), BSc (Hons) Games Programming and nested Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) and Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) awards)

2.4. CSP Membership (Audio and Music Business)

a) Regional Dean or nominee (Chair)
b) External Examiner(s) for Audio and Music Business

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c) University Link Tutor(s) for Audio and Music Business
d) Programme Leader(s) for Audio and Music Business
e) Academic Manager
f) Head of Quality and Student Experience
g) A Secretary

2.5.   CSP Membership (Film, Media and Animation)

a) Regional Dean or nominee (Chair)
b) External Examiner(s) for Film, Media and Animation
c) University Link Tutor(s) for Film, Media and Animation
d) Programme Leader(s) for Film, Media and Animation
e) Academic Manager
f) Head of Quality and Student Experience
g) A Secretary

2.6.   CSP Membership (Interactive Media)

a) Regional Dean or nominee (Chair)
b) External Examiner(s) for Web and Games Programming
c) University Link Tutor(s) for Web and Games Programming
d) Programme Leader(s) for Web and Games Programming
e) Academic Manager
f) Head of Quality and Student Experience
g) A Secretary

2.7.   CSP Terms of Reference

a) To determine the grade awarded to each student in respect of all modules.
b) To make recommendations to the programme progression committee, where appropriate, on the progression of all continuing students.
c) To discuss and monitor academic standards of all programmes across all campuses where they are taught, across all languages of teaching and assessment, and to make any recommendations arising to the Finalist Assessment Board via the Chief External Examiner.
d) To undertake a comparative analysis of student achievement and grade distributions.
e) To recommend to the LTCC, within the approved regulations, the form and nature of assessment and reassessment for all modules which comprise a programme.
f) To make recommendations to the Finalist Assessment Board on the classification of final qualifications awarded.
g) To make recommendations to Middlesex University on changes to the regulations and procedures governing the academic standing of students.

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h) To consider any matters brought forward from regional assessment panels by External Examiners, University Link Tutors and SAE Programme Leaders

Each CSP will normally meet 3 times each year to consider candidates from all validated programmes.

Documentation for the CSP will be provided by the DASS team in liaison with the Chair of each RAP (from GSA, SWEu, and UKS).

Each CSP will be supported by a Secretary appointed by SAE DASS to support the business of the Panel.

Other guests and observers, including staff involved in the delivery and assessment of the programmes may attend the meeting subject to prior confirmation with the Chair.

3. Progression Committees

There is a progression committee for each of the three cognate areas as outlined in Section 2.

3.1. Membership

a) The Dean or nominee (Chair)
b) Programme Leaders (for each cognate group)
c) Academic Manager
d) Head of Quality and Student Experience

3.2. CSP Terms of Reference

 a) To receive all module grades determined by the Content Specialist Panel for those students on programmes aligned to this committee who are not being considered for an exit qualification, and to decide on the academic standing of those students.
b) To make recommendations on changes to the regulations and procedures governing the academic standing of students.

Documentation for the Progression Committees will be provided by Secretary of each CSP, after the CSP has confirmed all grades and recommendations for progression.

Each Progression Committee will be supported by a Secretary appointed the chair to support the business of the Panel.

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Other guests and observers, including staff involved in the delivery and assessment of the programmes may attend the meeting subject to prior confirmation with the Chair.

4. Regional Assessment Panel (RAP) – Pre-Board

Each RAP has an assigned set of campuses that may include multiple languages of instruction. Its primary objective is to review all the grades presented, ensuring that they are true and accurate, and make provisional recommendations for progressing students and all finalists. As agreed with the Chief External Examiner, the RAP provides samples for to the External Examiners (EE) for review, covering the range of language and programmes.

4.1. Membership

a) Dean Uk (Chair)
b) Head of Quality and Student Experience
c) Regional Programme Chairs
d) Regional campus Academic Coordinators
e) Members of faculty covering all cognate (programme) areas within the region

4.2. Terms of Reference

a) To review all module grades for all campuses in the Region. The RAP may refer to any assessment material for a module including but not limited to scripts, coursework materials, project reports, design, artefact or similar material relating to an assessment, industrial training requirements, workplace experience or similar reports. The Panel may review selected sample of scripts for assessment at final or key intermediate stages where assessment by coursework or continuous assessment forms part of the approved examination arrangements.
b) To recommend to the CSP, within the approved regulations, the form and nature of assessment and reassessment for all modules which comprise a programme
c) To undertake a comparative analysis of student achievement and grade distributions.
d) To review and recommend to the progression board student's eligibility for progression from between Levels (4, 5, and 6), as well as into modules with specific pre-requisites.
e) To make provisional recommendations for finalists to the CSP.
f) To make recommendations on changes to the regulations and procedures governing the academic standing of students.

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Each RAP will normally meet 3 times each year to consider finalists from all validated programmes.

Documentation for the RAP (GSA, SWEu, and UK) will be provided by regional Academic Manager in liaison with the Chair of each CAP within the region.

Each RAP will be supported by a Secretary appointed the academic manager to support the business of the Panel.

Other guests and observers, including staff involved in the delivery and assessment of the programmes may attend the meeting subject to prior confirmation with the Chair.

5. Campus Assessment Panel (CAP)

The campus assessment panel ensures that all student assessment is undertaken in a timely manner, and that all student grade profiles are checked for completeness and accuracy, and relevant commentary and documentation is gathered for any candidates that have any special circumstances that require consideration by the first or second tier board.

5.1. Membership

a) Campus Academic Coordinator (Chair)
b) Programme Coordinators
c) Members of faculty covering all cognate (programme) areas taught at the campus

5.2. Terms of Reference

a) To collate all results for all modules for all programmes delivered at the campus
b) To ensure that all results are complete
c) To provide explanation for any anomalies or circumstances which may have had an impact on the conduct of campus assessments
d) To make recommendations on changes to the regulations and procedures governing the academic standing of students.

Each CAP will normally meet 3 times each year to consider candidates from all programmes.

Documentation for the CAP will be provided by regional campus Academic Coordinator in liaison with the Chair of each CAP within the region.

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Each CAP will be supported by a Secretary appointed the campus Academic Coordinator to support the business of the Panel.

Other guests and observers, including staff involved in the delivery and assessment of the programmes may attend the meeting subject to prior confirmation with the Chair.

6.   Record of Proceedings (all boards and panels)

A record shall be made of the proceedings of the meetings of the FAB, CSP, RAP, and CAP, made available to its respective members.

These records are confidential to SAE and Middlesex University.

a) The record of the Campus Assessment Panel must consist of:
    i. The complete set of results for all modules taught in the teaching period
    ii. Any recommendations made in respect of specific candidates
    iii. Explanation for any anomalies or circumstances which may have had an impact on the conduct of campus assessments
    iv. Comments on the academic standards of all programmes across at the campus

b) The record of the Regional Assessment Panel must include:
    i. Grades for all candidates for all modules
    ii. Academic standing for each progressing candidate who is not a finalist
    iii. Provisional recommendations for each finalist candidate to the Content Specialist Panel
    iv. Recommendation on any claim for extenuating circumstances made by a progressing or finalist candidate
    v. Comments on the academic standards of all programmes and languages of instruction across the region

c) The Record of the Content Specialist Panel
    i. Grades for all candidates for all modules
    ii. Confirmed academic standing for each progressing candidate who is not a finalist
    iii. External Examiners reports for all programmes and languages of instruction
    iv. Recommendations for each finalist candidate to the Finalist Assessment Board
    v. Recommendation on any claim for extenuating circumstances made by a finalist candidate
    vi. Comments on the academic standards of all programmes and languages of instruction across SAE validated provision

d) The record of the SAE Finalist Assessment Board must include:
    i. Grades for all finalist candidates for modules

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  ii. Chief External Examiners report
  iii. Award for each finalist candidate (Conferment List)
  iv. Decision on any claim for extenuating circumstances made by a candidate

 e) Any student who has been considered by the Finalist Assessment Board is entitled to their own records by request to the Chair, no later than three years after the date the Board.

7. Timeline and frequency of Boards and Panels

There are three assessment board/panel cycles in each year aligned with the European trimester calendar.

Campus Assessment Panels are held two weeks after the end of each study period.

Regional Assessment Panels (for GSA, UK and SWEu) are held three weeks after the end of each study period

A representative sample covering all programmes (cognate areas) and languages of instruction are distributed to External Examiners for review after the RAP.

Content Specialist Panels (for the three cognate areas) are held six weeks after the end of each study period.

The Finalist Assessment Board is held six weeks after the end of each study period.

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Addendum: Applicable Middlesex University Regulations

The assessment boards will apply the principles as detailed in: Section D: D1: C of the University's academic regulations

B Authority of the Finalist Assessment Board, Specialist Panels and Progression Committee

Section D: D2 of the University Regulations applies

C Delegation of functions

Section D4 of the University Regulations applies

D Record of proceedings

Section D5 of the University Regulations applies

E General discretion

Section D6 of the University Regulations applies

F Interpretation of assessment regulations for programmes of study

Section D7 of the University Regulations applies

G Extenuating Circumstances

Section D8 of the University regulations applies (other than for School Assessment Boards read Finalist Assessment Board) and the role of the Assessment Officer will be undertaken by the CAC

H Appointment of External Examiners

Principles

a) External Examiners will be suitably qualified individuals, nominated by recommendation of the Dean and appointed by Middlesex University.
b) For programmes delivered at more than one centre, measures shall be put in place to ensure that standards can be monitored and assured across all provision, regardless of location and language of teaching and assessment.
c) External examiners shall have responsibility for and oversight over a number of predetermined provisions as agreed with and approved by Middlesex University.

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d) Further, external examiners shall be required to attend Content Specialist Panels where they represent previously assigned campuses and programmes and discuss academic standards across all centres and programmes under the guidance of the Chief External Examiner together with SAE Programme Leaders.

Appointment of External Examiners

External Examiners will be appointed according to Middlesex University's guidance section 4 of the Learning and Quality Enhancement Handbook balancing the consideration of the following features:

a) Language of teaching and assessment
b) Student numbers. Note where programmes are delivered in the same language of teaching and assessment across multiple campuses and countries, External Examiners shall be appointed to cover a cognate group of programmes across those campuses and countries.

I Rights and responsibilities of external examination assessors
Section D10 of the University Regulations applies

J Rights and responsibilities of external examination auditors
Section D11 of the University Regulations applies

K Procedures for when external examination assessors or auditors refuse to consent to the decisions of an Assessment Board
Section D12 of the University Regulations applies

L Responsibilities of internal examiners
Section D13 of the University Regulations applies

M Assessment responsibilities
SAE should ensure it has appropriate processes in place to meet the spirit of this section D14 in the academic regulations

N Code of Assessment Practice minimum requirements

Section M Section of the University Regulations applies

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11.   Policy History

Review prepared	Review Approved	Date
Craig Ruddock and Kate Corbin	Raf Marcellino	March 2016
Raf Marcellino	ISQC EU Subcommittee	July 2017

Policy Review Date: July 2018

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