



# **Assessment Policy for Vocational Programmes**

**(Including Complaints and Appeals)**

September 2022

(To be reviewed August 2023)

SupaJam is a post-16 specialist provider, specialising in Music, Maths, English and Life Skills. All staff, volunteers and partners are committed to safeguarding the welfare of every person within SupaJam. Our mission is to help young people to engage and achieve within a safe and inclusive environment.

### **Purpose of this document:**

This policy is to provide guidelines to staff and students around their responsibilities in the process of assessment. This document will help to ensure best practice in assessment and in internal verification and standardisation. This policy also includes a complaints and appeals process.

### **SupaJam operates an assessment policy which:**

1. Aims to provide fair, timely and informed feedback and assessments for all students.
2. Complies with the examination and assessment regulations of accredited awarding bodies and qualifications.
3. Includes a written procedure for appeals against unfair assessment.
4. Entitles all students to an initial diagnostic assessment and appropriate follow-up learning support for Maths, English and Vocational Diplomas.
5. Assesses the support needs of all students upon entry to be provided where needed.
6. Actively promotes SupaJam's Equality and Diversity Policy.

### **Student Assessment Entitlement:**

- All students are entitled, regardless of ethnicity, gender, age, learning difficulty or disability, to receive assessment that is accurate, fair, rigorous, regular and appropriate for the courses and programmes being followed.
- Assessment will be planned and will inform of student progress. It will be sensitive to the needs of each individual student and will reflect the context in which learning takes place. Learning and achievement will be tracked, recorded and accredited.
- SupaJam will ensure that assessment, verification, standardisation and moderation procedures are in accordance with awarding body requirements and national standards.
- Feedback will be clear, timely and transparent to support the progress of each individual.
- SupaJam will ensure that every student is given the appropriate support and education programme to allow them to achieve.

### **Assessment Principles:**

1. Assessments are designed to enable students to demonstrate achievement of the requirements of the units and elements of a programme.
2. Support, where appropriate, is offered to students to enable them to meet the required standards by providing equality of access to assessment, and through additional tutorial or learning support where required, in order to progress with a programme of study.
3. Special arrangements for assessment may be made where appropriate, and where prior agreement has been made with the Internal Verifier and/or the SEND team.

4. Clear guidance is provided for assessors and students in the operation of formative assessment (initial marking) and summative assessment (final marking following any resubmission), in order to enable them to plan and regulate effectiveness of their own learning. This guidance can be found later within this policy.

## **SupaJam's Responsibilities in the Assessment Process**

### **Student support**

1. Communicate all supporting documentation across the teaching, learning and assessment team, for example a student's Educational and Health Care Plan. It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that students are being given the most appropriate support for their needs and that work and assessment are being appropriately differentiated for every individual.
2. Provide all students with an outline of their programme and awarding body assessment requirements alongside details of appeals and malpractice policies/processes.
3. Clear, effective and constructive feedback from all assessments will be provided to all students on a feedback sheet which will include marks and grades, written feedback and action planning.
4. All assessments will be accompanied by an assignment brief where appropriate, which clearly states the criteria for successful completion of the assessment.
5. Learning objectives will be used in order to communicate to students what is expected for success within that lesson.
6. During each lesson, teachers will systematically and effectively check every student's progress in relation to the learning objectives and plan effective intervention where needed.
7. Students will be given an opportunity to complete formal assessment/exams in a timely manner. Where a student is unsuccessful in achieving the formal assessment/exam, they will be given further opportunities to achieve within the academic year, where the examining windows/opportunities exist.
8. Opportunities to be re-assessed, to resubmit work or to appeal against an assessment decision will be made available to all students as appropriate, and in accordance with awarding body and qualification requirements.
9. Regular reviews of individual student progress will be undertaken which will incorporate constructive feedback from all relevant staff involved in assessing a students' progress. These reviews will be held with the SEND department where a student has an Education and Health Care Plan, and by the student's Vocational teacher where they do not have an Education and Health Care Plan. The staff member leading the review will be responsible for reporting progress or improvement issues to the student, and/or parents (if appropriate).

### **Quality Assurance**

10. Assessors and Internal Verifiers (IVs) will meet the awarding body requirements. Assessors/IVs in training will have their decisions countersigned by an approved Assessor/IV. Internal assessment will not be completed by an Internal Verifier on their own work, to ensure VACSR standards are met.
11. Sufficient internal assessments will be sampled through Internal Verification, to meet awarding body requirements. Samples will consist of 4 students or 20% of students per level of study (whichever is the lesser amount), ensuring that: a) every student has work internally verified at least once within the academic year, b) all vocational modules delivered in the academic year are sampled and, c) each individual assessor has their grading internally verified within the sample.

Where IV samples produce reports of significant error or inaccurate grading responses, the sample will then be increased to a 50% or 100% sample; whichever the IV feels is more appropriate in that instance.

12. Standardisation activities will be undertaken throughout the academic year to ensure consistency in assessment and to improve best practice.

### **Record Keeping**

13. All processes of informal assessment relating to awarding body requirements will be supervised by the Education Manager, who will maintain records of entries, individual achievements by students, and claim all unit certification. They may utilise the Administration department within this process.

14. An overview of SupaJam assessment outcomes will be posted on the SupaJam website [[semmuk.com](http://semmuk.com)] for anyone to access. Individual outcomes will not be posted, and assessment results will be shared with the student directly and privately.

### **Training and resources**

15. All SupaJam staff involved within a process of assessment will be provided with sufficient information, training, and up-to-date qualifications in order to fully implement SupaJam's policy and guidelines regarding assessment.

16. Equipment and resources will be supplied to support assessment and a lack of equipment and resources will not hinder a student's access to learning.

### **The Students' Responsibilities in the Assessment Process**

1. Only submit work that is their own. Where they have quoted others, or made use of the material of others (either published or unpublished) they must make appropriate reference to this work using the Harvard referencing system or similar. Students who fail to reference the work of others may fail part or all of the assessment on the grounds of plagiarism, and this may need to be reported to the awarding body.

2. Attend all classes punctually.

3. Complete work to the deadline given by the programme teacher.

4. Make the teacher or assessor aware of any reason as to why they may need additional support for a learning programme or assessment, if they feel the teacher or assessor is not already aware.

5. Undertake work experience placement as required by course guidelines.

6. Attend examinations and assessments, or provide the teacher with an acceptable reason as to why they are not able to attend, for example sickness.

7. Resubmit work if required, to the given deadline.

8. If the student fails to submit or resubmit work, they may fail the assessment which could impact their qualification and progression within SupaJam.

9. If the student is found to have misled or attempted to gain unfair advantage, assessors have the authority to deem the student to have failed part or all of the assessment and to determine whether or not the student will be permitted to be reassessed.

### **The Submission Process**

Regardless of the outcome of first marking, all students are given one further opportunity to resubmit their module work in order to improve their grade. This opportunity allows students to take on board teacher feedback and make changes to their work, engaging with the feedback process and developing as reflective learners.

#### Submitting work:

Students must submit their work by the module deadline, outlined in the assignment briefs or as agreed by their teacher. Teachers will then endeavour to return student work within seven days, with a grade and feedback.

#### Grading Work:

The grade will be decided by the teacher against awarding body marking criteria. For RSL Diplomas, feedback will be provided within Google Classroom as both a numerical grade (awarded out of 100 possible marks) and as a written grade within written feedback. This will be provided in the comments section of a student's work within Google Classroom and can be accessed by the student directly.

For Achieve Diplomas, feedback will be provided via a feedback sheet and students will be made aware if they have achieved a Pass. Students will be encouraged to give their own feedback underneath their teacher's comments.

#### Improving Grades:

Following the first submission and marking process, students will then have seven days in which to make changes and resubmit their work.

Within RSL, students are able to achieve Pass, Merit or Distinction when submitting work to be second marked. Within Achieve, students are working towards a Pass.

Teachers may take longer than one week to second mark work and return feedback and grades to the students. At this point, students must not make any further changes to their module work unless directed by their teacher (only in the event that they have not passed). As long as the student has achieved a Pass, their second marking grade is final and cannot be improved upon.

In the event that a student resubmits their work, it is second marked by their teacher and they have still not provided sufficient work to pass all learning outcomes, a further deadline will be agreed by their teacher and additional support may be offered. This may come in the form of additional tutorials which the student will be required to attend. The maximum grade achievable at this stage for any learning outcome is now a Pass.

### **Special Considerations**

Special Considerations may be considered if a student has not submitted an assignment due to an event outside of their control. Teachers may request extensions for students under specific circumstances, and the award of additional time will be at the discretion of the Education Manager or Director of Education, Innovation and Operations.

### **Baseline Assessments:**

At point of enrolment, SupaJam will take into consideration prior learning to ascertain the appropriate level of vocational Diploma that each student should undertake. Within the first 6 weeks of study, rates of progress within the first module of each level will be monitored to ensure that each student has been allocated correctly.

All considerations will be taken when placing a student onto a programme, including student interviews with the outreach team and observations of the student in their previous school or during a transition day. However, in the event that SupaJam feels that a student has not been placed on the appropriate level, this may result in a student moving levels to a more appropriate course.

### **Progressing onto the next level of study**

As the programmes increase in level, so do they increase in difficulty. Therefore there are entry requirements that students must achieve before being entered into each level of study to ensure that the qualification is suitable.

Special considerations will be made for students who do not achieve the required entry levels due to exceptional reasons or reasons outside of their control, for example the break up of the family home. If a student and/or their guardian feels that special considerations may need to apply, they should contact the Education Manager and request a meeting to discuss possible alternate outcomes for the student.

Where a student is not able to progress further within SupaJam, either because they have not achieved the requirements to move into the next level of study or because they have reached the natural conclusion of their programme, SupaJam Careers and Transitions team will support the student to transition into an alternative positive outcome.

#### **Level 1 RSL and Achieve entry requirements:**

- Entry Level 3 English and Entry Level 2 Maths
- An interest in the subject

#### **Level 2 RSL and Achieve entry requirements:**

- Level 1 English and Entry Level 3 Maths
- A completed vocational programme at Level 1 to a standard of Merit
- An interest in the subject

#### **Level 3 RSL entry requirements:**

- Level 2 English and Level 1 Maths
- A completed vocational programme at Level 2 to a standard of Merit
- An interest in the subject

### **Complaints:**

Should a student feel that they have not been treated fairly within the assessment process, they should in the first instance speak to their teacher. If they do not feel that this has resolved the issue, or they are not comfortable speaking with their teacher, complaints can be emailed to the Education Manager at [helen.thompson@supajam-education.org](mailto:helen.thompson@supajam-education.org).

The process:

- 1) The Education Manager will arrange a time to discuss the issue with the student.
- 2) They will review the issue carefully, and may need to talk to any members of staff involved.
- 3) When they have completed their review of the issue, they will arrange a further meeting with the student to discuss the outcome. This may involve action in support of the complaint, or it may involve the Education Manager detailing to the student why the action that they are unhappy with was in fact appropriate. They will follow this decision in writing.
- 4) If the student would like to appeal this decision, they must then email the Director of Education,

Innovation and Operations at [becca.walker@supajam-education.org](mailto:becca.walker@supajam-education.org).

- 5) The Director will follow the same process and may come to the same conclusion or a different conclusion, depending on their findings.
- 6) If the student is still unhappy with the outcome, they should contact the Awarding Body directly to follow the Awarding Body's complaints process.

## **Appeals**

Within SupaJam, we practice a robust quality assurance process that ensures a standardised and consistent approach when awarding grades for student work. However, there may occasionally be a time when a student does not feel that their work warrants the grade that they have been given, and they wish to appeal.

The process:

- 1) The student should email their teacher outlining that they wish to appeal the grade given.
- 2) The teacher will send their work to our Internal Verifier who will second mark the work and review the teachers comments and feedback.
- 3) The Internal Verifier will contact the teacher to let them know if they agree or disagree with their decision, advising on the mark that should be awarded to the student.
- 4) The teacher will communicate with the student to let them know if their mark has changed or has stayed the same.
- 5) If the student is still unhappy with the outcome, they should follow the above complaints procedure.

If the student does not feel that the staff of SupaJam have appropriately dealt with their grading concerns, they can go to the awarding body directly and follow their appeals process. Within SupaJam, the Music Diplomas are awarded by RSL and Life Skills and Employability Diplomas are awarded by the Prince's Trust.

The Prince's Trust - <https://www.princes-trust.org.uk>

RSL - <https://www.rslawards.com>

Should you have any further questions or concerns raised when reading this policy, please contact the Director of Education, Innovation and Operations at [becca.walker@supajam-education.org](mailto:becca.walker@supajam-education.org).