

FRAMEWORK AND REGULATIONS FOR SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY (SQA) ADVANCED AWARDS IN NAUTICAL SCIENCE

Introduction

1. The following paragraphs provide assessment regulations for Advanced Certificate and Advanced Diploma awards delivered by East Coast College in partnership with the University of Suffolk and awarded by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). The two awards covered by these regulations are:

- SQA Advanced Certificate in Nautical Science [Officers in Charge of a Navigational Watch (OOW) Unlimited]
- SQA Advanced Diploma in Nautical Science [Chief Mate Unlimited]

2. East Coast College is a Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) approved centre. In addition to the Advanced Certificate and Advanced Diploma courses, East Coast College provides access to a number of short competency based and skills development courses and associated examinations which are outside the scope of these regulations. Achievement of these, along with attainment of the pass marks required by MCA on SQA units, will enable students to gain MCA Deck Certificates of Competency at Officer of the Watch and Chief Mate/Master levels awarded by the College.

3. The Advanced Certificate and Advanced Diploma courses will be delivered and assessed in accordance with the guidance and regulations set out by SQA, including the Group Award Specification for Nautical Science.

4. Courses are managed in accordance with the *Management of Academic Provision Framework*, which also defines the role and responsibilities of course leaders and unit/module leaders.

5. Course delivery and planning should be undertaken in accordance with the *Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework*.

6. Where work-based or placement learning is an integral part of a course, and unless otherwise stated in the course documentation, the University of Suffolk shall not be responsible for securing a work placement or work-related experience for students. Such arrangements should operate in accordance with the *Work-Based and Placement Learning Framework*.

7. All decisions regarding the ratification of unit grades, resubmission and retake opportunities, and recommendations for the final award as set out in these regulations are made by the relevant assessment board, constituted in accordance with the *Assessment Board Policy*. Schedules for assessment boards will be published to students along with dates for results publication.

Registration

8. All students enrolled on the Advanced Certificate or Advanced Diploma course at East Coast College will be registered by the College for the relevant award with SQA.

9. The expectation is that a student will complete their award within the following maximum periods of registration, with the student being required by the relevant Assessment Board to withdraw from their course if this maximum period of registration is exceeded. A student's period of registration may be extended beyond the maximum by the relevant Assessment Board, in liaison with the Academic Registrar, only in exceptional circumstances and where the currency of learning undertaken up until that point can be adequately assured. Student route visa holders may face additional limits on the maximum period in which they can remain studying in the UK on a student visa, in accordance with current UKVI rules.

Award	Standard duration	Maximum period of registration
Advanced Certificate in Nautical Science	1 year full-time	3 years
Advanced Diploma in Nautical Science	1 year full-time	3 years

Unit selection

10. Within the Advanced Certificate and Advanced Diploma awards, course structures are specified in terms of units. The units that can be taken to achieve each award are set out in the relevant SQA Award Specification. This includes three Graded Units (one in the Advanced Certificate course and two in the Advanced Diploma course) which provide a means of ensuring that students have achieved the overall aims and objectives of the course by assessing the integration of knowledge and skills.

11. The units that will be offered to East Coast College students will be specified within the student course handbook and the Definitive Course Record for that course.

Credit requirements for achievement of awards

12. Specific credit requirements for each award are set out in the SQA Award Specification, with one Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) credit point representing a notional ten hours of learning. The minimum amount and level of credit that must be successfully achieved for an award to be granted is outlined below.

Award	Level of award	Credit requirement
Advanced Certificate in Nautical Science	SCQF Level 7 (equivalent to Level 4 of the English national framework)	To have completed study of 14 SQA credits (112 SCQF credit points)
Advanced Diploma in Nautical Science	SCQF Level 8 (equivalent to Level 5 of the English national framework)	To have completed study of 30 SQA credits (240 SCQF credit points), including 14 SQA credits (112 SCQF credit points) via the Advanced Certificate and 16 SQA credits (128 SCQF credit points) via the Advanced Diploma

In addition to meeting these credit requirements, students are required to pass all units designated as 'Mandatory' within the relevant Award Specification in order to be eligible for the award.

13. Students must not accumulate credit in excess of that required to achieve their intended award, except where required as a consequence of a course change or similar circumstance approved by the Course Leader.

Assessment of individual units

14. Assessment shall be undertaken in accordance with SQA expectations, including the use of SQA-set assignments as specified for each individual course. Course teams should also operate in accordance with the University's *Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework* and related policies (including *Academic Appeals*, *Academic Misconduct*, *Assessment Board*, *Assessment Moderation*, *Extenuating Circumstances*, *Preparation and Conduct of Examinations*, and *Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)*) which shall be amended from time to time.

15. The methods of assessment will be in accordance with demonstrating the achievement of all intended learning outcomes for a unit. Each unit shall normally be assessed by one of the following methods:

- (a) wholly by coursework
- (b) wholly by examination
- (c) by practical demonstration
- (d) by project or by dissertation or by research activity
- (e) by combinations of the above.

Grading of units

16. Each component of summative assessment (i.e. assessment used to indicate the extent of a student's success in achieving the intended learning outcomes of the unit) will be assessed in order to determine whether the student has achieved the combined outcomes as specified in the Group Award Specification. A grade of pass or above is only awarded if students have satisfied **all** the Pass criteria for the learning outcomes, showing coverage of the unit content and therefore attainment at SCQF Level 7 or 8 (equivalent to Level 4 or 5 of the English national framework).

17. Graded Units take the form of examinations under supervised conditions, and are marked as grades on the following scale:

Grade A	A mark of 70% or above
Grade B	A mark of between 60% and 69%
Grade C	A mark of between 50 and 59%
Fail	A mark below 50%

18. For all other units, each component of summative assessment will be marked on a percentage scale, with 50% representing the standard pass mark. For specific safety critical units, a higher pass mark of 60% (for all stability and operations related units) and 65% (for all navigation related units) will be required in order to pass the component. The pass mark for each unit will be specified within the student course handbook.

19. There shall be no in-module compensation. All components of assessment are core meaning students must achieve the specified pass mark (50%, 60% or 65%) for each component in order to pass the unit.

20. Students are required to pass each unit at the pass mark outlined in paragraphs 17 and 18 above to achieve the Certificate of Competency from the UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA).

21. Where students have passed a unit, they cannot re-take it in an attempt to achieve a higher grade.

Non-completion of assessment (leading to referral and reassessment)

22. Students must submit all work for summative assessment by the notified deadline. Failure to submit work by the deadline without valid reason (i.e. without having requested and been granted an extension to the deadline or having presented acceptable extenuating circumstances under the terms of the *Extenuating Circumstances Policy*) will result in the term NWS (no work submitted) being recorded for the relevant component of assessment and will result in referral in the unit overall.

23. Where students, in the opinion of the Assessment Board, fail to attend an examination without demonstrating a valid reason in accordance with the terms of the *Extenuating Circumstances Policy*, the term NWS (no work submitted) will be recorded for the relevant component of assessment and will result in referral in the unit overall.

Failure to pass a unit (leading to referral and reassessment)

24. In cases of non-completion of coursework or non-attendance at examinations, the student will have the opportunity to be reassessed in the components not completed. In such cases, for coursework this reassessment will be for the same assignment brief, whilst in the case of examinations this will be for a different examination than employed for the first attempt. The maximum mark attainable upon reassessment will be the pass mark specified for that component (50%, 60% or 65%).

25. Where a student submits work but fails to achieve the combined outcomes as specified in the Group Award Specification, the overall unit outcome will be recorded as a referral and the student will have the opportunity to be reassessed in those component(s) of assessment not passed. The maximum mark attainable upon reassessment will be the pass mark specified for that component (50%, 60% or 65%).

26. If, after the reassessment opportunity, the component mark is still not of the specified pass standard (i.e. 50%, 60% or 65%), the student will be granted a third and final attempt at the component(s) of assessment not yet passed. The maximum mark attainable upon reassessment

will be the pass mark specified for that component (50%, 60% or 65%). Failure at the third attempt will result in the student's withdrawal from the course.

Deferral in a unit

27. Consideration of deferral cases is undertaken in accordance with the *Extenuating Circumstances Policy*.

28. If the Extenuating Circumstances Panel deems that a student has presented acceptable evidence of extenuating circumstances in relation to one or more components of assessment, those components of assessment will be deemed "deferred" and the student will be given the opportunity to present (or re-present) those assessment(s) without penalty (i.e. the same range of grades will be available). The relevant Assessment Board will determine the timescale for presentation/re-presentation of the component(s) in question.

29. If a student is submitting a referred piece of work but extenuating circumstances are presented and accepted by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel, the student will be given a further opportunity to re-present the assessment, under the terms of the original referral.

30. Continuation or repetition of deferral status will be considered only if the relevant Assessment Board is advised by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel that it has received what it deems to be further acceptable evidence of extenuating circumstances.

Notification of results

31. In line with the good practice of providing timely feedback to students, the provisional outcomes of marked and moderated assessment may be given to students before the Assessment Board has formally approved results. Such feedback must be clearly identified as subject to final ratification by the Assessment Board, and therefore subject to potential amendment by the Board.

32. The early release of unratified marks is to facilitate an early opportunity for students to begin to address referred work that will need to be redeemed after the Assessment Board has ratified the result. It is not an opportunity for students to resubmit referred work as a first attempt before the Board ratifies the mark.

33. The results agreed by the Assessment Board will be reported to SQA in a timely manner.

Qualification grade

34. Advanced Certificate and Advanced Diploma awards are made on a pass or fail basis as set out in the SQA Award Specification, with students required to pass all units and meet the credit requirements outlined in paragraph 12 above in order to pass and be eligible for the award.

Academic appeals

35. Students have a right to appeal against decisions of the Assessment Board in relation to the Advanced Certificate or Advanced Diploma in accordance with the *Academic Appeals Policy* which is available, together with appeal forms, on MySuffolk.

36. Any appeal should be made within fifteen working days of the date of written publication of results by the relevant Assessment Board.

37. Appeals in relation to short courses or MCA exams should be made directly to East Coast College.

38. Students cannot appeal to SQA against assessment results, but they are entitled to submit a complaint to the SQA if the University and/or the College does not handle the appeal correctly.

Academic misconduct

39. Allegations of academic misconduct, including cheating and plagiarism, will be dealt with as outlined in the East Coast College SQA Malpractice Policy. In cases where investigations into allegations of academic misconduct are ongoing, Assessment Boards will record a deferred decision (DD) grade in respect of any component grades implicated in the allegations, and in respect of the units which the component(s) form part.