

SEQ Assessment (incl. E-Assessment) Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy sets out Swim England Qualifications' (SEQ) approach to the design, delivery, and quality assurance of assessments (including online), ensuring that assessments maintain integrity, reliability, validity, and fairness of with any assessment(s), whilst also considering the manageability of such assessment(s) for those who access our qualifications.
- 1.2 This policy is for use by us and links to other information such as the Swim England (One Swim England) Strategy, qualification specifications, product plans, product development procedure(s) and other qualification/product development guidelines that we may refer to.
- 1.3 SEQ may from time to time, seek support and guidance from external bodies, such as the Federation of Awarding Bodies (FAB), Chartered Institute for the Management of Sports and Physical Activity (CIMPSA) and / or Skills England (Formally known as IfATE) in the development of its qualification(s), self-regulated products or any other educational product, for the purposes of endorsement aligned to a particular professional standard(s) and / or formal recognition of Technical Occupational Qualification (TOQ) approval against a particular occupational standard, whilst maintaining its regulatory obligations.
- 1.4 SEQ designs and develops all of its educational products in line with the guidance set out within the Equalities Act 2010, in which products are subjected to an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA), as well as the guidelines set out under the General/Standard Conditions of Recognition (G/SCofR) for both Ofqual and Qualifications Wales.
- 1.5 This policy also complements SEQ's Product Development Policy, with additional guidance available for its workforce in support of development with any current or future qualification(s).

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to:

- 2.1.1 All regulated SEQ qualifications, where assessments are delivered wholly or partly online, as well as assessments provided in response to any approved assessments subjected to a reasonable Adjustment and/or Special considerations request. For more details on Reasonable Adjustments/Special Considerations please refer to the relevant policy.
- 2.1.2 Other Education products which contains elements subjected to formal assessment(s).
- 2.1.3 To all learners, Approved Training Centres (ATC), Educators (Tutors/Assessors), internal quality assurers (IQAs), External Consultants (e.g.

Markers/Moderators/EVs) and other stakeholders involved in assessment activities.

- 2.1.4 Assessments whereby the delivery and / or marking of an assessment is within the control of SEQ, as outlined within the specific Assessment strategy and / or qualification specification.
- 2.1.5 For qualifications where all or particular components of the qualification are subject to internal assessment (i.e. ATC marked), please refer to the SEQ Approved Training Centre Monitoring Policy (further guidance can also be sought within SEQs Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny Strategy (CASS) policy document)

3. Principles

3.1 SEQ will ensure that all assessments:

- 3.1.1 Comply with Condition A4 (Compliance with Regulatory Documents) and all relevant Ofqual conditions where this is required as part of any particular type of regulated qualification developed by us.
- 3.1.2 Are valid, reliable, comparable, manageable, and minimise bias in line with Condition D1 where this is required as part of any particular type of regulated qualification developed by us.
- 3.1.3 Are accessible to all learners, and where applicable are in accordance with Conditions D2 (Accessibility of qualifications) and E4 (assessments are fit-for-purpose).
- 3.1.4 Are appropriately fair and consistent, and where applicable are in accordance with the conditions set out in the setting of the assessment (Condition G1).
- 3.1.5 Are created and assessed in English, unless subjected to an approved Reasonable Adjustment and / or Special Consideration request.
- 3.1.6 Do not disadvantage or advantage, including those who are subject to protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010, including in circumstances where assessments are subject to an approved Reasonable Adjustment and / or Special Consideration request.
- 3.1.7 Protect the confidentiality, security, and integrity of assessment materials (Conditions G4–G9).
- 3.1.8 Maintain their rigour 'over time', and where appropriate are reviewed in consultation during scheduled review periods (per qualification) and in line with SEQ policy guidance.

- 3.1.9 Provide a suitable standard setting methodology and assessment difficulty ensuring a minimum score or mark achieved in order to meet the required standard for a particular grade or outcome per qualification.
- 3.1.10 Aligns to the particular designed qualification structure (e.g. aligned with Learning Outcomes), ensure the design of assessment(s) are created using a 'best fit' approach.
- 3.1.11 Provides guidance to particular users relating to the delivery (e.g. assessment conditions such as proctored assessments) and outcomes (e.g. grades or marks) applicable to each qualification.
- 3.1.12 Have a strategy demonstrating the rationale for the approach to ensure the assessments are fit-for-purpose and provide coverage across the qualification structure contained within the specification.
- 3.1.13 Have access to SEQs appeals process for users to follow. For more details, please see SEQs Pre-Appeal Enquiries and Appeals Policy.
- 3.1.14 Are developed in accordance with the objectives set out within Ofqual's approach to regulating the use of artificial intelligence in the qualifications sector¹ policy and the latest JCQ guidance on the use of AI within assessments².
- 3.1.15 Meet CIMSPA endorsement for particular Professional Standard(s) where specific assessment(s) guidelines have been applied.
- 3.1.16 Are developed in conjunction with SEQ's Plagiarism Policy.
- 3.1.17 Are subject to quality assurance.

4. Design and Development of Assessments

4.1 SEQ will:

- 4.1.1 Ensure that all assessments (including online) are designed to meet the stated learning outcomes and assessment criteria.
- 4.1.2 Use valid assessment methods appropriate for online delivery and those used for the purposes for approved use under Reasonable Adjustments/Special Considerations (please see SEQs Reasonable Adjustments/Special Considerations policy for more details).
- 4.1.3 Pilot and review assessments (where applicable) to confirm fairness, accessibility, and technical robustness before implementation.

¹ Ofqual's approach to regulating the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the qualifications sector – Apr 2024

² AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications

- 4.1.4 Apply consistent standards per qualification across both online, face-to-face or any other assessment(s) as well as over time through the qualifications life-cycle.
- 4.1.5 That authors designing assessments are suitably trained and supported in the development of items, of which are subject to robust Quality Assurance standards.
- 4.1.6 Will quality assure the effective of assessment(s) upon design and over time, including management of performing specific items and / or whole assessments during periodic reviews and make changes where appropriate to ensure assessment remain fit-for-purpose.

5. Delivery of Assessments

5.1 For assessments marked by SEQ, we will:

- 5.1.1 Provide learners with clear instructions and technical requirements in advance.
- 5.1.2 Ensure that assessments are invigilated and/or proctored in line with SEQ requirements using appointed invigilated staff (if applicable), which may include remote invigilation software, live online invigilators, or recorded sessions.
- 5.1.3 Verify learner identity before assessment begins.
- 5.1.4 Ensure learners undertake assessments independently and without unauthorised support.
- 5.1.5 Provide reasonable adjustments or special considerations where required, without compromising assessment integrity.
- 5.1.6 Consider any other guidance as stated in the particular qualifications assessment requirements contained within the Specification / Assessment strategy.

5.2 For assessments delivered/marked by the ATC, they will:

- 5.2.1 Use only SE Educators Licensed to deliver/mark assessments, that are also approved for use by SEQ.
- 5.2.2 Use only online/E-Assessment platforms that are approved for use by SEQ for those products to which this applies to.
- 5.2.3 Provide learners with clear instructions and technical requirements in advance as per any guidance issued (or agreed) by SEQ.
- 5.2.4 Ensure that assessments are invigilated and/or proctored in line with SEQ requirements, which may include remote invigilation software, live online invigilators, or recorded sessions (see specific qualification specification guidance for details).

- 5.2.5 Verify learner identity before assessment begins (where applicable).
- 5.2.6 Ensure learners undertake assessments independently and without unauthorised support.
- 5.2.7 Provide reasonable adjustments where required, without compromising assessment integrity or unfairness (please see SEQs Reasonable Adjustments/Special Considerations policy for more details).
- 5.2.8 Consider and / or apply any other guidance as stated in the particular qualifications assessment requirements contained within the Specification / Assessment strategy.

6. Security of Assessments

- 6.1 To comply with the arrangements for the Security of Assessments (Conditions G4–G9), SEQ and ATCs must:
 - 6.1.1 Protect assessment materials from unauthorised access before, during, and after the assessment.
 - 6.1.2 Ensure secure storage and transmission of digital assessment materials.
 - 6.1.3 Investigate and report any suspected malpractice, including plagiarism, collusion, or impersonation, in line with the SEQ Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.
 - 6.1.4 Retain assessment evidence securely for the required regulatory period, in line with SEQs retention of Records Policy.

7. Marking and Results

- 7.1 Assessments (e.g. via online) will be marked either automatically (for objective tests) or by trained and standardised assessors (for constructed responses).
- 7.2 Where automated marking is used, SEQ will ensure reliability and accuracy are monitored and validated via a robust Quality Assurance process to ensure marking is accurate and consistently applied over time.
- 7.3 Educators will be subject to ongoing training, standardisation, and External Verification (please see SEQ ATC monitoring Policy for details).
- 7.4 SEQ will issue results only after all applicable Quality Assurance checks have been completed.
- 7.5 SEQ will also ensure that:
 - 7.5.1 Assessments are subject to internal and external quality assurance (Conditions H1–H6). See SEQ ATC monitoring Policy for further guidance.

- 7.5.2 IQAs/IVs review samples of assessments to confirm validity and reliability (please see SEQs guide to Internal Verification for details).
- 7.5.3 Regular evaluation of assessment methods is undertaken to identify risks, improvements, and enhancements from relevant data.
- 7.5.4 Retire particular assessment items in light of performance data
- 7.5.5 Consider in light of results and performance as part of its review processes of such assessments (designed and distributed by SEQ) to establish whether a review in assessment(s) approach is required to improve its fitness for purpose.

8. Application of Reasonable Adjustments/Special Considerations

- 8.1 Learners requiring reasonable adjustments must apply in advance through the SEQ process (Condition E4).
- 8.2 Adjustments will be made to ensure no learner is unfairly disadvantaged.
- 8.3 SEQ will consider special consideration requests for learners affected by adverse circumstances during an online assessment.

9. Application of Malpractice and Maladministration

- 9.1 SEQ has a zero tolerance for malpractice or maladministration in online assessments.
- 9.2 Centres must follow SEQ's Malpractice and Maladministration Policy when dealing with suspected incidents.
- 9.3 Learners found guilty of malpractice (e.g., impersonation, use of unauthorised materials, collusion) may have their results withheld or invalidated.

10. Assessment Strategies for Qualifications

- 10.1 When developing a singular regulated qualification as part of the Product Development Procedure, an Assessment Strategy is created for that product. From a regulatory perspective this supports SEQ's Centre Assessment Scrutiny Strategy (CASS). When reviewing or developing an Assessment Strategy for a qualification and / or suite of qualifications we also take into account the following information.
 - 10.1.1 Whether the qualification already aligns to current Assessment Strategies.
 - 10.1.2 Ensuring that risks in relation to monitoring activities are identified, considered and mitigated to ensure that evidence generated will be appropriate.

- 10.1.3 Endeavour to remove barriers to achievement wherever possible and minimise the need for reasonable adjustments ensuring that the Assessment Strategy is fit for purpose, accessibility and affordability for Learners and users (this is of paramount importance to us).
- 10.1.4 Once the strategy is agreed, and in accordance with any stakeholder requirements, ensure we have sufficient resource, including staff, external consultants and IT capacity to operationalise and quality assure the assessment methods associated with the qualification.
- 10.1.5 Design assessments using specialists (e.g. Subject Matter Experts) who have the appropriate expertise and knowledge and map these Assessments to the qualification structure (specification) and quality assured before release.
- 10.1.6 When devising assessment(s) for a particular qualification with use for a specific Third-Party (such as an Assessment platform service provider), that the terms and conditions are bound by a formal agreement (in addition to the SLA agreements with ATC's).
- 10.1.7 Take a different approach to assessment, quality assurance, centre monitoring activities and the level of attainment that set the standards for the qualification to those already in place with other qualifications for which the standard is potentially less well-established or understood in comparison to that of our other established qualifications to support the conditions as set out by the regulators under D1 (e.g. Validity, reliability, manageability and fairness/bias, whilst also considering comparability during the development).
- 10.1.8 The rationale for the justification for our Assessment Strategy including how that approach meets our requirements includes the following:
- Delivery Model - The typical course of study for the qualification – for example, whether it is roll-on/roll-off and whether there are fixed start or end points for the qualification
 - Anticipated Duration of the Qualification - The typical duration of a course – for example, the expected length of time a Learner may take to complete the qualification
 - Learner demographics and ATC type - The expected type of Learner that may access the qualification and type of ATC delivering it – for example, whether these are large and / or small ATCs, are employees taking qualifications through a training provider or employer. The number of Learners expected to take the qualification
 - Assessment Evidence - The number of LOs/ACs in the qualification and whether these all follow the same Assessment Method. The typical evidence generated by a Learner in assessments for the qualification – for example, a portfolio of evidence, practical assessment or theory questions
 - Assessment Methodology - The Assessment Model (e.g. AO controlled / Centre devised), for example Internal Assessment by ATCs (Internal Assessment and Internal Quality Assurance / Internal Verification by the ATC) External Verification (EV) by us and the level of attainments of pass / refer /

fail for assessment outcomes unless there is a clear rationale for an alternative (in support of manageability) whilst also considering SEQ CASS approach more widely across all of its products.

10.2 The above may then influence requirements we put in place as part of our Assessment Strategy for example in relation to:

- The frequency, type and timing of monitoring activities we conduct in respect of our ATCs
- The type, amount, assessment task and number of Learner samples for monitoring activities
- The time period over which all LO/AC for a qualification are sampled
- Whether sample checking involves Learners that have already received results for their qualification or only those that have yet to receive results
- Whether all or some Learners are sampled prior to receiving results
- The intended outcome of activities – for example, whether it would be likely to inform future changes to processes, require reassessment of Learners that have not yet received results, or lead to revocation of certificates that have already been issued

For more details, please see SEQ's overarching CASS document and SEQ's ATC Monitoring Policy.

11. Monitoring and Review

11.1 We have defined timescales for reviewing our policies and guidance in order to ensure that they remain fit for purpose for us, our ATCs as well as Ofqual and Qualifications Wales (the Regulators) requirements. We will however undertake a review and make improvements outside of these timescales as a result of a need. This need may be a change in the Regulators requirements and/or as a result of feedback. This feedback may be from our staff, our External Consultants, our ATC's, the Swim England Educator Training Team, the wider National Governing Body (Swim England), CIMSPA, the Regulators or due to an unexpected situation. We accept informal feedback on an ongoing basis and ask for formal feedback as part of surveys, consultations, training, standardisation and/or annual events.

11.2 We reserve the right to change the format with our Assessment technology systems or process without prior notice in order to ensure we perform our role effectively. However, we will always consider the mitigation of additional burden on both us and our ATCs beforehand. In the event of any planned changes where required in relation to this policy, or subsequent procedures or processes affecting our approach, will be reflected in this policy where necessary and/or appropriate to support our staff, External Consultants and our ATC's. There may be occasional that we may consult proposals in advance to stakeholders in order to fully understand the impact and effect on such changes.

11.3 For details on how each of our products assessments are monitored for standards, please refer to each Qualifications Assessment strategy.

11.4 For details on how monitoring of standards apply to internal led assessments (via ATCs), please refer to the SEQ ATC Monitoring policy.

12. Quality Assurance

12.1 This policy supports regulatory conditions;

Related Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition:	A4; A5; A8; C1; C2; D1; D2; D3; D5; E4; E10; G1; G4; G5; G6; G8; G9; H1; H2; H3; H6; I4
Related Qualifications in Wales Standard Conditions of Recognition:	A4; A5; A8; C1; C2; D1; D2; D3; D5; E4; E10; G1; G4; G5; G6; G8; G9; H1; H2; H3; H6; I4

12.2 This policy is reviewed every 3 years, or earlier in line with any changes to the SEQ Strategy or Regulatory requirements to ensure it continues to meet our needs and those of the Regulators (Ofqual / Qualification Wales).

For office Purposes

Document Version Number	Comments on Amendments and/or Additions	Published Date
1	First Version, New Policy	October 2025