

Programme Design Monitoring and Assessment Policy



A18

GC Academy Limited

Programme development learning and academic standards

Revision date 9 September 2026

Institutional approval pending

GC Academy connects programme design, teaching and assessment to identified educational and societal needs. This policy defines how staff and external contributors develop and review programmes, assess individual learning, and use evidence to improve academic quality under the Academy's own authority.

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Purpose scope and policy status

This policy governs programme selection, design, approval, delivery monitoring and assessment. It applies to GC Academy's academic staff, tutors, supervisors, assessors, academic partners, relevant administrative staff and institutional academic bodies. Its requirements support academically sound and professionally relevant provision aligned with the intended MQF and EQF qualification level.

Programme scope

Initial application is to the proposed Bachelor of Arts in Media and Communication: MQF Level 6, 180 ECTS, three years and six semesters, fully online in English. The programme application dated 18 June 2026 is the programme specification used for this revision. The BA has not commenced. Institutional licensing, programme accreditation and applicable commencement conditions precede delivery.

The BA comprises 30 compulsory modules, including a 12-ECTS Final Project in semester 6. It does not currently include elective pathways, formal specialisations or a mandatory internship. Practical media work and applied case studies support professional learning within the approved programme. Future electives, delivery routes or placements require their own evidenced design and approval.

Academic principles

Programme and module outcomes determine the learning activities, assessment tasks and criteria needed to demonstrate achievement. Assessment combines formative opportunities with valid, reliable, transparent and fair summative judgements. Student support, accessibility, workload and resources form part of academic design and review.

Programme development uses internal expertise, independent academic input, employer and professional perspectives, and learner feedback appropriate to the stage of delivery. Reviews retain the evidence and reasons for their decisions and check the effect of resulting improvements.

Document control and authority

The Head of Institution owns A18. The Head of Quality Assurance Office coordinates its implementation records and review. The QA and Curriculum Committee reviews proposals; the Academic Board approves academic provisions. Resource and contractual decisions follow A16 and A17.

This revision is prepared for institutional approval. Approval, effective date, version and communication are recorded through Document Control before the revised rules are applied. The policy establishes requirements; completed appointments, approved module changes and actual BA results require separate records.

A16 and A17 govern decision authority; the QA Manual and Annual QA Calendar provide the institutional framework and schedule. This policy supplies the programme and assessment procedures within that framework. It is reviewed annually alongside programme review, and earlier where a material change or quality concern requires revision.

Academic responsibility and programme decisions

GC Academy retains full academic oversight and quality assurance responsibility, including teaching and assessment undertaken by external contributors. Performing a task, reviewing evidence and authorising a decision are separate responsibilities. Combined roles do not permit a person to approve their own conflicted judgement.

Role or body	Responsibility under A18
Academic Board	Approves programme design, academic policy and material changes; confirms academic readiness and award eligibility on validated evidence.
Head of Institution	Leads needs analysis, curriculum and teaching design, tutor allocation, assessment readiness and programme review. Approves routine details within a recorded delegation.
QA and Curriculum Committee	Reviews design evidence, curriculum, assessment quality, external input and proposed improvements; refers material academic decisions to the Academic Board.
Head of Quality Assurance Office	Coordinates the Calendar, evidence checks, review reports, Quality Enhancement Log and verification of actions and their effect.
Board of Examiners	Validates assessment results, progression, reassessment and completion; records corrections and applies authorised misconduct or appeal outcomes.
Allocated academic staff	Prepare and deliver approved teaching and assessment, supervise work, mark and provide feedback, retain evidence and contribute to module review.
Student Management and Administration	Maintain the student and attempt records; coordinate induction, support, scheduling, decisions and communication under the relevant delegated authority.
Director of Operations	Confirms operational resources and capacity. Corporate approval and commencement authorisation follow A16 and A17.

Allocation before delivery

The Head of Institution identifies the responsible educator, tutor, assessor, moderator and supervisor for each relevant module or activity, with the required qualifications, workload, preparation and cover under A7, A8 and A21. Allocation is recorded in existing programme and staff records before the duty begins.

Programme approval follows needs analysis, benchmarking, stakeholder consultation and review by the QA and Curriculum Committee. The Academic Board records the academic decision and conditions. Operational approval confirms capacity and resources; any required external approval is obtained before implementation.

Admissions and recognition decisions follow A17 and the relevant student policies. Validated results and credits support progression and completion; authorised officers issue awards only after the required institutional decision. Administration or an external partner cannot independently change a grade, progression rule or approved curriculum.

Legacy references to Academic Council and Programme Leaders are interpreted through the Academic Board and the Head of Institution's allocated programme functions. A legacy title does not create an additional staffed post or decision-making body.

Needs analysis and programme rationale

Programme selection and development begin with a documented assessment of educational, societal and professional needs. The Head of Institution defines the questions and geographic scope; the Marketing Director and Partnership Manager support evidence collection within their functions. QA checks traceability and limitations before academic review.

Evidence area	Questions and source requirements
Labour market	Which occupations, sectors and professional tasks are relevant? Examine dated employment, skills-demand and industry evidence for Malta and the intended recruitment markets.
Stakeholder needs	What do employers, practitioners, independent academics and prospective learners identify as priorities or gaps? Retain the consultation basis and substantive feedback.
Demographic and access factors	Who is the intended learner population? Consider prior education, age and employment patterns, language, digital access, disability-related needs and barriers to participation.
Societal relevance	Which communities or organisations benefit, and through what educational contribution? Test proposed Maltese and international benefits with relevant stakeholders.
Comparable provision	What do relevant programmes show about content, outcomes, workload, delivery and assessment? Apply the documented benchmarking process.

Evidence collection and interpretation

Use credible secondary research and available quantitative data together with documented qualitative consultation. Record the source, publication or consultation date, geographic and population coverage, method and relevant findings. Explain outdated, incomplete, unrepresentative or conflicting evidence. A small consultation sample is not presented as a representative labour-market survey.

Distinguish identified educational demand from recruitment projections and general growth in online learning or the LMS market. Partner sales expectations may inform feasibility but do not establish the academic need for a degree. Evidence from one country or sector is assessed for its relevance before being applied to another.

Decision and review

The programme rationale records how findings support selection of the qualification, target population, subject coverage, outcomes, delivery model and professional relevance. Each significant design decision identifies the evidence used and the reason for adopting, adapting or declining a proposed response.

The QA and Curriculum Committee reviews the rationale and its limitations; the Academic Board approves the academic design. The Director of Operations confirms resources through the existing planning process. Material gaps in need, feasibility or evidence require action before approval.

For the proposed BA, the existing rationale and supporting evidence are consolidated and reviewed before commencement. Annual programme review checks continuing relevance, with renewed analysis when material demographic, professional, market or programme changes occur. Existing design and review records hold the evidence; no separate research policy is required.

Systematic benchmarking

Benchmarking tests the Academy's programme against relevant comparable provision and informs academic judgement. It is undertaken before programme approval, consolidated for the proposed BA before commencement, and refreshed through annual review or when a material change requires new comparison.

Select and document comparisons

The Head of Institution defines the purpose and selects identifiable programmes comparable in qualification level, subject and intended outcomes. Credit volume, duration, delivery mode and learner context inform suitability. Record the institution, exact programme and award, relevant version, source, access date and reason for inclusion. Institution names alone do not establish a programme comparison.

Use programme specifications, module descriptions, published assessment information and other reliable academic sources. Marketing descriptions can supplement the evidence but do not replace it. Record unavailable information and differences in qualification, credit or delivery systems that limit direct comparison.

Common comparison area	Academic question
Curriculum and workload	How do subject sequence, credit distribution, practical work and research preparation support progression?
Learning outcomes	How are knowledge, analytical and practical skills, autonomy and professional judgement expressed at the relevant level?
Teaching and online learning	How do teaching methods, interaction, tutor support and active learning support the outcomes?
Assessment	Which outputs, criteria and approaches demonstrate individual attainment, research, analysis and application?
Professional and societal relevance	How are employer needs, current practice, community relevance and transferable skills reflected?

Analyse and use findings

The comparison identifies similarities, gaps and useful alternatives, then evaluates their suitability for GC Academy's academic and operational context. Retaining an existing design is a valid outcome when supported by reasons. External practice does not automatically justify a change or demonstrate compliance.

Record each material finding, the affected curriculum element, learning outcome, teaching approach or assessment practice, and the decision to adopt, adapt, retain or reject. Identify the rationale, responsible role, approval route and any implementation or follow-up requirement. Link the comparison to the resulting programme decision and controlled version.

The QA and Curriculum Committee examines the analysis; Academic Board approves material changes. QA follows agreed actions through the Quality Enhancement Log. Subsequent review checks whether the change improves the issue identified. Existing programme-design and review records contain the comparison; a separate benchmarking matrix or policy is not required.

Stakeholder engagement and Maltese needs

Programme development draws on academic and administrative staff, QA and student-support functions, independent external academic experts, employers and professional representatives. Prospective learners contribute before enrolment; enrolled students and graduates contribute when those populations exist. Recruitment partners are one source of input within this wider range.

Participation and records

The Head of Institution identifies the expertise and questions required. The Partnership Manager coordinates relevant external engagement, including Maltese employers, professional and community representatives. Independent academic contributors bring relevant higher education and communication or media expertise; an Academy educator is not independent solely because they also work elsewhere.

Consultations, focus groups and programme reviews state their purpose and participants' expected contribution. Record the date, participants and affiliations, method, substantive feedback, affected programme element and any limitations. Sensitive information remains in protected records. Formal committee participation follows A16 and A17 membership, conflict and student-representation rules.

Academic staff analyse the implications for curriculum, outcomes, assessment, delivery, professional relevance or other institutional decisions. Record whether feedback is accepted, adapted or declined, with reasons, action owner, deadline and approval. Contributors receive an appropriate account of the response. QA checks follow-up and brings unresolved matters to the review process.

Maltese societal contribution

The Academy's intended local contribution includes access to international learning and professional networks for Maltese students and communication professionals. Learning alongside international participants can support cross-cultural understanding, communication with diverse audiences and relationships useful to Maltese organisations and communities.

The Partnership Manager undertakes outreach to Maltese chambers of commerce and relevant bodies supporting cooperation across borders, as well as professional and community representatives. The Academy has not yet established the professional-organisation contacts envisaged by this outreach. Contact, agreement, participation and demonstrated benefit are recorded as distinct stages.

Consultation explores skills priorities, barriers to participation and suitable themes for joint learning or projects, including collaboration with Asian and other international learners. Relevant proposals feed into A20 and A15 and the programme review process. A societal objective does not itself introduce a new compulsory module or assessment; any curriculum change follows academic approval.

Engagement through the programme cycle

Independent academic and employer input informs preparation before commencement. Annual review includes employer focus-group or equivalent structured consultation and student feedback; graduate input is added when available. Alumni communication and continued learning supported by the LMS can maintain relationships and generate feedback, but platform capability alone does not constitute a completed consultation, advisory board or graduate-outcome study.

Curriculum and learning outcome alignment

Each programme specifies its qualification level, purpose, intended population, credit volume, duration, structure, learning outcomes and progression requirements. Each module identifies its contribution to the programme outcomes, subject content, workload, teaching approach and assessment. The Head of Institution checks coherence across the whole programme before approval.

Design for the qualification level

For the BA, the curriculum develops subject knowledge together with analysis, critical judgement, research, problem solving, professional application, digital literacy and independent learning appropriate to MQF Level 6. These capabilities are expressed as assessable outcomes and developed through the module sequence, culminating in the Final Project.

The programme retains the 180-ECTS, six-semester structure in the June 2026 application. Credit and workload calculations are reconciled across programme and module records. Core, elective or practical elements in other proposals are identified according to their approved structure; elective routes are not assumed for the current compulsory BA curriculum.

Trace outcomes to evidence

Within existing programme and module records, link each programme learning outcome to the relevant module outcomes, learning activities, assessment tasks and criteria. Identify where the outcome is introduced, developed and directly assessed and where independent or integrated performance is expected. The record must make every programme outcome's assessment coverage traceable.

For each task, specify the student output and criterion-level evidence demonstrating the intended knowledge, skill or competence. Check both the method and the actual demand of the questions or brief. An assessment title, overall mark or participation record does not by itself demonstrate that all intended outcomes are assessed.

The Head of Institution and allocated academics check for gaps, unnecessary repetition, excessive workload and inconsistent expectations across modules. They reconcile the assessment map with the published specification and existing rubrics. QA checks completeness; the QA and Curriculum Committee reviews academic coherence and Academic Board approves material changes.

Applied learning and progression

Case analysis, media production, research-based work and presentations connect theory with realistic communication practice. Where professional or community input informs a task, retain the academic rationale, appropriate permissions and the individual learning evidence. Such activities do not establish a mandatory work placement or internship.

Before an assessment is released, the applicable outcome criteria and interpretation of attainment are approved. The programme review identifies how evidence across modules supports the programme-level judgement and where further analysis is needed. Any unresolved gap in an essential outcome's assessment coverage requires correction before the relevant design is approved for use.

Online learning and student interaction

Module design connects digital tools to purposeful learning activities. The documented BA model combines structured asynchronous learning with normally at least one live session per active teaching week in each module, supported by group tutorials and individual consultations by appointment. Partner-specific schedules and tutor allocations must give effect to this design.

Plan the activity and learning sequence

For each module, the educator specifies the intended outcomes, preparatory materials, synchronous and asynchronous tasks, expected student outputs, tutor facilitation and formative feedback. The sequence explains how preparation, discussion, application and feedback support the later assessment. Forums, chat or webinars are selected for that purpose; their availability alone is not evidence of learning design.

Preserve the programme's concrete approaches: Media Writing uses applied seminars, case discussion and peer/tutor feedback; Social Media Management and Media Production include guided technical workshops, practical activity and feedback. Other appropriate activities include scenario analysis, reasoned discussion, peer review and independent research, matched to the module outcomes.

Collaborative and authentic learning

Educators review where collaboration and realistic professional tasks add value. Guidance identifies the purpose, roles, expected contributions, communication arrangements and tutor support. Formative peer feedback helps students refine their work. Group learning does not automatically make the summative assessment a group submission.

Where an approved assessment uses group work, its brief and rubric distinguish the shared output from individual achievement. Identifiable contributions, individual explanations or reflection, and academic questioning provide appropriate evidence of each student's knowledge and judgement. Activity counts, peer ratings or a common product alone are insufficient. Staff retain responsibility for grading and moderation.

An existing individual essay or case study remains individual unless a module change is approved. Generic rubric options do not override the programme specification. Suitable group tasks are developed selectively; the policy does not require the same group assignment in every module.

Participation and equitable access

Sessions involving required learning outcomes, practical demonstrations, assessed presentations or collaborative activities follow the attendance requirements in the approved specification. For a justified absence, the academic lead approves an equivalent activity that demonstrates the same outcomes. A recording or generic essay is not automatically an adequate substitute for practical or interactive performance.

Teaching materials, instructions and support accommodate identified access needs through the existing reasonable-adjustment arrangements and Individual Learning Support Plans (ILSPs). Module review examines actual student work, interaction quality, tutor feedback and participation barriers. LMS analytics inform support and review; outcome attainment is established through assessment evidence.

Assessment design and method selection

Assessment uses formative and summative methods appropriate to the outcomes and workload. Direct tasks require students to demonstrate what they know and can do. The design provides sufficient evidence of analysis, critical thinking, research, problem solving and theoretical application at MQF Level 6, with clear criteria and accountable academic judgement.

Method	Evidence to design and assess
Examination	Knowledge and relevant analytical reasoning through suitable questions and responses. Review actual items, mark allocation and automated versus academic marking.
Essay or research assignment	A reasoned argument, critical use of sources, evaluation of evidence, method where relevant and justified conclusions.
Case study	Application of concepts to a situation, analysis of evidence and alternatives, professional judgement and supported recommendations.
Practical media project	A purposeful output with explanation of theoretical basis, production choices, limitations and evaluation against the brief.
Presentation or defence	Substantive understanding, structured reasoning and explanation or defence of decisions, alongside appropriate communication.
Final Project	Integrated independent application of knowledge, research and practical skills through the approved case study with presentation.

Review the existing BA assessment mix

The June 2026 application provides essays, research-based work, cases, projects and/or presentations in 21 modules; nine modules specify examinations combining multiple-choice and short-answer questions. This is a count of module designs, not a percentage of automated questions, marks or credits. Existing assignment and case-study rubrics already include analytical and critical criteria.

Before commencement, the Head of Institution coordinates a task-level review of the examination-based modules against all their outcomes. Record the actual role and weighting of automated items, the intellectual demands of short answers and the evidence of applied or analytical achievement. Where evidence is insufficient, revise the tasks or balance of methods through academic approval and reduce reliance on automated items accordingly.

Module reviews address identified gaps rather than impose a universal multiple-choice cap or replace every examination. Appropriate direct assessment may involve evidence evaluation, comparison of alternatives, reasoned argument or practical application. Merely renaming a task does not resolve a gap.

Approved formats, weights, criteria and marking responsibilities are reconciled in the programme application, module description, brief and rubric before use. Changes remain proportionate to credit and workload. This policy does not itself assign new module weightings or replace the existing rubric collection.

Assessment release integrity and access

The allocated educator prepares the brief, assessment task and marking guidance. A suitably qualified second academic reviews the design wherever possible. The Head of Institution checks readiness and records approval within the approved specification; material changes follow Academic Board approval. QA verifies that the required evidence and student information are complete.

Information provided before assessment

Students receive the method, required output, individual or group format, deadline, submission or examination arrangements, criteria, performance descriptors, component weights and pass requirements in clear language before undertaking the assessment. Guidance explains permitted resources and collaboration, AI-use and declaration requirements, feedback, reassessment, mitigating circumstances and the appeal route.

The brief and rubric make analytical, research and applied expectations explicit. Criteria assess the quality of evidence and reasoning rather than relying on presentation style or superficial compliance. Any change after release is formally reviewed for its academic need and effect on fairness, approved by the appropriate authority and communicated with adequate notice.

Identity and academic integrity

Online assessments apply the approved identity-verification and integrity procedures. The technical and academic leads confirm the applicable access, camera or proctoring settings, evidence handling, student instructions and technical support before use. A demonstration in an affiliated academy supports readiness assessment but does not replace checks for the proposed programme.

The existing AI and Generative AI Guidance for Staff and Students governs permitted and prohibited assistance and declarations, alongside the applicable academic-integrity rules. Each brief states the relevant AI-use conditions. Staff and partner personnel receive the current approved guidance before assessment duties; students receive it through induction and the LMS.

Plagiarism or AI-detection outputs are indicators for human review, not determinations of misconduct. Assessors examine the work and relevant evidence and follow A4 for any concern, giving the student the required opportunity to respond. Formal findings and appeals follow the independent arrangements in A16 and A17; a detector threshold alone does not change a grade.

Reasonable adjustments and disruption

Students can request adjustments through existing support channels. Academic staff agree suitable arrangements with Student Management that preserve the assessed outcomes and record the approved action confidentially. Accessibility features and individual adaptations are checked for the actual task. A general claim about the LMS does not establish suitability for every student.

Before release, staff specify how students report access failures or assessment disruption. The Head of Institution ensures the evidence is reviewed through the applicable mitigating-circumstances route. A verified technical incident is not treated automatically as an academic failure or proof of misconduct.

Marking feedback and internal moderation

Qualified assessors apply the approved criteria to the student's submitted evidence. Marks and comments show the basis of the judgement, including analytical and applied achievement. Automated marking is used only for appropriate items with checked scoring rules; academic staff remain responsible for the validity of the task, interpretation of results and correction of errors.

Feedback and second marking

Feedback is provided within 10 working days of submission, retaining the existing A18 standard. It explains performance against the criteria, strengths and areas for improvement and supports the student's next learning task. Any provisional status pending moderation or validation is clearly identified. The Head of Institution monitors the deadline and arranges cover or corrective action where necessary.

Final summative assessments undergo moderation and second marking by a suitably qualified academic other than the first marker. The second marker records an independent judgement against the rubric; moderation examines consistency, standards, evidence, feedback and the correct application of the approved scheme. Staff workload and scheduling include these duties under A8.

The record retains the original marks, criterion-level comments, second-marker judgement, issues identified and agreed outcome. Differences are resolved through discussion of the evidence and criteria, with reasons. Unresolved differences go to an additional qualified, unconflicted academic designated by the Head of Institution and then to the Board of Examiners for validation. Marks are not changed through undocumented compromise.

Validity and fairness checks

Moderation considers performance across grade bands, assessors, groups, cohorts and delivery arrangements as relevant. Unexpected distributions, a defective item, inconsistent interpretation, group-marking concerns or weak evidence for an outcome trigger review. Any correction affecting a wider group is considered consistently for all affected students and recorded before results are finalised.

Reasonable adjustments and approved mitigating circumstances are applied consistently without altering the intended academic standard. A conflict of interest is declared and an alternative assessor or moderator is assigned where required. External moderation and formal appeals remain separate processes.

Validation and communication

The Board of Examiners validates results using the assessment, moderation, attempt and relevant case records. Administration records the authorised result and communication. Any subsequent grade amendment preserves the prior result, evidence, reason, authority and date. Students receive the outcome and the applicable route for academic appeal.

Assessment briefs, work, marks, feedback, moderation and validation records are retained securely under A25. Module review uses the academic findings to improve teaching and assessment; an overall pass rate alone does not establish outcome attainment or assessment quality.

Evidence of learning outcome achievement

Programme evaluation uses diverse direct and indirect evidence, interpreted against the intended outcomes. The Head of Institution leads the academic judgement; assessors retain the evidence, QA coordinates the review and the Academic Board considers material findings and improvement decisions.

Evidence type	Use and limitation
Direct assessment evidence	Marked examination responses, essays, cases, projects, presentations and Final Projects, with criterion results and moderation. These demonstrate the individual's assessed achievement.
Indirect learning evidence	Student self-assessment, feedback, tutor observations and, when available, graduate or employer views. These help explain learning experiences and perceived development but do not establish attainment alone.
Engagement and progression context	Logins, time, attendance, activity, submissions, completion and progression patterns. These identify participation or support concerns and inform interpretation; they do not by themselves demonstrate learning.
Evidence held in the LMS	The content and assessment of actual student work can provide direct evidence. Its storage in the LMS does not make it equivalent to an activity indicator.

Record and interpret attainment

Before assessment release, the academic team identifies the criteria and evidence used to judge each relevant outcome and how results contribute to programme-level review. Criterion-level marks or judgements, the applicable performance descriptors, representative work and moderation records support the analysis. No unapproved universal numerical threshold is substituted for the programme's academic judgement.

A module pass does not automatically prove that every programme outcome is achieved. Staff examine the relevant criteria and work across the planned assessment coverage, including integrated and independent performance. Group assessments retain identifiable evidence of each student's achievement. Programme-level analysis explains its basis and any missing evidence.

Module and semester reviews compare intended and demonstrated outcomes and examine differences across tasks, assessors or groups. An unexpected gap, inconsistency between methods, or discrepancy between confidence and assessed performance prompts academic investigation. Small cohorts, missing work and survey response bias are reported when interpreting findings.

Use the findings

The academic review determines whether the issue concerns learning support, teaching, the task, criteria, marking, resources or outcome design. Actions can include targeted support, clearer guidance, revised activities, staff development or an approved assessment change. The decision identifies an owner, deadline and evidence of effect through the Quality Enhancement Log.

The framework and assessment coverage are established before commencement. Actual attainment reports begin when genuine BA work is assessed. Mock exercises, another institution's student results and anticipated performance are distinguished from the Academy's own delivery evidence.

Assessment attempts and mitigating circumstances

The BA follows the assessment-attempt limit in the programme application dated 18 June 2026: a maximum of three total opportunities for each assessment. This means the initial attempt and up to two further resit or resubmission opportunities. It does not mean three additional retakes after an initial attempt.

Pass requirements and records

The application specifies a minimum pass mark of 51% for each assessment component. The approved module description and brief identify the components, weights and requirements. A high mark in another component does not remove the requirement to pass each component under this rule. No alternative compensation or mark-capping rule is introduced by A18.

Administration maintains the assessment identifier, module registration, submission or examination dates, attempt number, result, moderation, validation and any authorised deferral or case decision. Students receive their result, remaining opportunities and applicable next steps. Practice quizzes and formative exercises are distinguished from assessments that consume an attempt.

Reassessment examines the same intended outcomes at the same academic standard through an approved equivalent task. Staff specify the required work, criteria, date, feedback and marking arrangements before the reassessment. Repeating or returning to a module does not automatically reset an exhausted attempt allowance.

Mitigating circumstances

Students report circumstances affecting attendance, submission or assessment through the published student-support and assessment channels and provide the evidence required by the applicable procedure. Student Management coordinates contact; the Head of Institution arranges academic consideration by the appropriate unconflicted authority. Personal information is restricted to those who need it.

The decision records the circumstances considered, evidence, applicable rule, outcome and effect on deadlines, attempt counting or progression. Any deferral, extension or alternative activity requires an authorised decision under the applicable rules; neither an LMS flag nor a request alone changes the assessment record. Students receive the reasons and available appeal route.

Exhausted attempts and progression

After an unsuccessful final permitted attempt, the Board of Examiners reviews the validated record, any unresolved mitigating or appeal matter and the applicable progression requirements. Administration communicates the reasoned outcome and consequences for the module and programme. A fourth attempt is not implied by this policy.

Attempt exhaustion, expiry of an individual module's completion period and termination of enrolment are distinct matters. None is automatically recorded as failure to complete the entire three-year BA within twelve months. Any progression or status decision follows the relevant academic and student procedures and preserves the authorised audit trail.

Module completion and continuity of study

The twelve-month completion rule applies to an individual BA module, measured from the recorded registration date for that module. It is not measured from the student's initial registration as a deadline for the entire degree. Administration records the module start and applicable completion deadline and communicates them clearly to the student.

Module deadlines and results

The twelve-month rule and the maximum three assessment attempts are applied together. A module with an exhausted attempt allowance does not gain new attempts simply because its completion period remains open. An interruption or return also does not silently restart either record.

Where a module remains incomplete at the end of its applicable completion period, the Board of Examiners reviews the module record and any authorised mitigation or pending appeal before a decision is implemented. Any lapse of incomplete module results or requirement to repeat relates to that module. It does not, on that basis alone, invalidate results or credits from other completed modules or require a full restart of the degree.

The decision states the affected module and results, the applicable rule, any approved treatment of the deadline, the academic consequence and the student's appeal route. This policy does not introduce an unlimited extension, indefinite credit validity or an unapproved overall maximum study duration.

Return in the following semester

A student who interrupts studies can rejoin the programme in the following semester with academic and administrative support. Student Management coordinates the contact and existing student record; the Head of Institution confirms the academic continuation arrangements. This is managed within the existing support and progression procedures.

Before return, staff explain the outstanding modules and assessments, available teaching and reassessment dates, applicable deadlines, remaining attempts and support arrangements. The agreed continuation information and any academic decision are retained in the existing record and communicated to the student. The timetable identifies any consequence for the expected completion date.

Return to the programme, attendance at a missed session, reassessment and repetition of module teaching are distinguished. The next-semester return arrangement does not imply immediate re-delivery of every missed module or guarantee the original graduation date. Staff use the actual timetable and suitable approved alternatives to minimise avoidable delay.

Inactivity and early support

LMS alerts trigger contact and support under the Student Engagement Monitoring Procedure. The confirmed inactivity threshold for enrolment-status review is 90 calendar days, following the required contact and warning process. It is distinct from the twelve-month module rule and the assessment-attempt limit; it does not authorise automatic termination without the institutional procedure.

Academic or support interventions and their follow-up are documented in the student's central record. Programme review considers recurring barriers and whether support and return arrangements improve progression, using actual evidence once delivery begins.

Final Project preparation and supervision

The BA Final Project is the 12-ECTS capstone in semester 6. It integrates knowledge, research and practical skills and requires the student to present and defend independent work. The approved module specification, applicable assessment criteria and the following procedures govern its preparation and supervision.

Allocation and preparation

The Head of Institution assigns a suitably qualified supervisor with relevant subject and research or professional expertise and sufficient workload capacity. A7, the Qualification Requirements document, A8 and A21 govern eligibility, allocation and preparation. The second assessor is identified separately; external-review readiness follows the programme timetable.

Before supervision begins, the Head of Institution confirms access to the applicable controlled Thesis Supervision Guide and communicates duties, consultation expectations, feedback timelines and escalation routes. Availability and staff preparation are recorded. A reference to the guide is not evidence of its actual distribution.

The supervisor supports topic selection and scoping, reviews and approves the proposal within the module requirements, and checks feasibility, outcomes, intended method or creative approach, sources, ethical considerations and the assessment schedule. Proposals requiring additional ethical consideration follow the applicable institutional route before the relevant work begins.

Consultation and developmental feedback

Supervision includes a minimum of three scheduled consultations, consistent with the documented supervision expectations. These are dedicated project consultations and do not replace the module's scheduled teaching and learning provision. The student and supervisor record the milestones, meeting dates, advice and agreed next actions in existing project records.

The supervisor gives structured feedback at the agreed milestones, supports sound academic practice and draws attention to risks affecting progress or integrity. The feedback schedule is communicated at the start and monitored under the Academy's assessment and workload arrangements. Feedback assists the student's independent work and does not become authorship by the supervisor.

Concerns about persistent non-engagement, an unworkable scope, methods, ethics, integrity or capacity are referred to the Head of Institution and the relevant support or case procedure. The concern, contact, decision and follow-up are recorded. Suitable alternative supervision is arranged where absence, conflict or workload makes it necessary.

Submission readiness

Before assessed project work begins, the student receives the final approved requirements for the project output, presentation and defence, criteria, timetable, format and integrity declarations. The supervisor provides the required final commentary and contributes to assessment under the dual-assessor procedure. Supervision advice does not guarantee a pass or replace independent assessment of the submitted work.

Final Project presentation and assessment

The June 2026 Final Project descriptor specifies “Case study with presentation: 100%”. This is the combined assessment entry for the module. It does not establish separate project and presentation weights, a presentation-only mark or a six-minute defence. The module-level assessment design specifies these details through academic approval before use.

Approve and publish the assessment requirements

The Head of Institution coordinates the final project brief and relevant existing rubrics with the supervisor, second assessor and external academic input. The brief defines the required written, research or creative output; presentation mode; duration; questioning arrangements; assessable components and weights; criteria; submission requirements and the recording arrangements needed for moderation.

The criteria address research or creative depth, methodological reasoning, evidence and theoretical application, originality, structure, critical reflection, professional judgement and the explanation and defence of decisions. Communication and delivery are assessed in an appropriate balance with academic substance. Generic presentation visuals or timing criteria do not constitute the complete capstone standard.

The QA and Curriculum Committee reviews the design; Academic Board approves material assessment specifications and any programme amendment. The approved descriptor, brief and rubric agree and are given to students before assessed work begins. Component definitions apply the programme's pass requirements consistently; no unapproved weighting is inferred from another module.

Presentation and questioning

The supervisor and second qualified academic assessor assess the project and presentation against the same published criteria. Before the session, students receive the schedule, access instructions, permitted materials, identity requirements, questioning format, technical support and approved adjustments. Questioning tests understanding, ownership, methodology, interpretation and justification of decisions fairly.

The assessment record identifies participants, the submitted version, attendance, material questions and answers, academic observations and any technical incident or adjustment. A recording, where authorised under the applicable privacy rules, supports review; otherwise sufficient documented presentation evidence is retained. A disruption follows the mitigating-circumstances procedure.

Marking moderation and result

The supervisor and second assessor record their judgements and criterion-based reasons separately. They compare the evidence, explain differences and document the resulting moderated recommendation. An unresolved disagreement is referred to an additional qualified, unconflicted academic designated by the Head of Institution; the Board of Examiners validates the result on the full record.

External moderation is completed within the agreed scope before the affected result is validated. Students receive the validated outcome, detailed feedback and the academic appeal route. Retain the project, presentation evidence, individual marks, moderation, external input and decision under A25. External advice informs the judgement; GC Academy retains final academic responsibility.

External academic review of Final Projects

External expertise contributes to assessment-design review, moderation of student work and programme enhancement. These functions have a defined scope and documented institutional response. They do not transfer GC Academy's authority for assessment standards, validation, progression or awards.

Selection appointment and independence

The Head of Institution identifies the required communication or media expertise and recommends reviewers for Academic Board approval. Relevant academic qualifications, higher education assessment experience, subject expertise, availability and independence are assessed against the assigned function. Professional experts contribute relevant practice knowledge; academic assessment duties require suitable academic competence.

Before appointment, reviewers declare teaching, supervisory, employment, commercial, personal and other relationships that could affect impartiality. A person's appointment at another institution does not establish independence from the work being reviewed. The appointing authority records suitability, conflicts, safeguards or replacement, the term and the approved scope.

The assignment specifies access to briefs, rubrics, student work, presentation evidence, marks, moderation and relevant outcomes; confidentiality and secure access; reporting dates; escalation and the Academy's response. A reviewer must have sufficient evidence and time to perform the task. The Year-2 appointment plan precedes the normal semester-6 capstone, with appointments and preparation completed before the relevant external-review duties.

Review scope and sampling

External input examines the Final Project design and criteria before their use, the standard and consistency of assessed work, and the effectiveness of the capstone model. If preparatory design review occurs before the scheduled examiner appointment, the qualified external contributor and that distinct assignment are recorded.

For work moderation, retain the SAR provision for near-fail cases, work relevant to appeals and an annual random sample of 10% of Final Projects. Calculate the random sample from projects assessed in that year, round upward to a whole project and include at least one when projects are available. Record the population, selection method, overlap with other selections and work actually reviewed. Small cohorts may therefore have a higher reviewed percentage.

The Academic Board defines the near-fail range and any additional coverage before the assessment cycle. Risk-based additions address discrepancies, missing evidence or concerns across assessors and formats. Sampling does not replace the supervisor and second-assessor requirement for each project. Where no projects exist, record the review as not yet applicable.

Reports follow up and appeals

The reviewer reports findings and recommendations to the Head of Institution and QA. The Board of Examiners considers result-related matters; the QA and Curriculum Committee and Academic Board consider standards and design improvements. The recorded response states the decision, reason, action and evidence of completion and effect.

External moderation of work associated with an appeal is academic evidence, not independent adjudication of that appeal. A person involved in the original assessment or moderation cannot decide the same case as an independent Appeals Panel member. A1, A16 and A17 govern that separate process.

Programme readiness and academic partners

The pre-commencement review checks programme-specific academic, operational and quality arrangements together. The Head of Institution coordinates academic evidence, QA verifies completeness, and the responsible operational leads confirm resources and services. The existing readiness records and Calendar hold the checks and decisions.

Readiness area	Evidence required before the relevant start
Design and assessment	Approved programme and module specifications; needs and benchmarking analysis; stakeholder decisions; outcome coverage; teaching model and assessment strategy; resolution of material gaps.
Teaching and staff	Allocated qualified educators, tutors, assessors and moderators; workload and cover; induction and LMS preparation; approved materials, activities, briefs and rubrics before their use.
Student and resource access	Induction and support instructions; technical access and assessment integrity arrangements; reasonable adjustments; verified lawful access to all core programme learning resources before commencement.
Governance and records	Academic authority, validation and escalation routes; student and assessment records; review schedule; evidence access and the Quality Enhancement Log.
Partner contribution	Finalised and institutionally approved academic agreement, actual module and duty allocations, reporting and evidence access, oversight and continuity arrangements.

Allocate partner delivery duties

The academic partnership arrangements identify who prepares materials, teaches live sessions, facilitates asynchronous and collaborative activity, provides tutor support, supervises projects, prepares and marks assessments, moderates, gives feedback and reports performance. Personnel supplied by a partner meet the same qualification, workload and preparation requirements as Academy staff.

GC Academy retains programme and curriculum approval, tutor suitability decisions, assessment standards, result validation, progression, awards and quality assurance. The agreement secures access to the academic evidence needed to exercise these powers and defines reporting, review meetings, corrective action, escalation, change control, records custody and continuity if delivery is disrupted or ends.

The Partnership Manager coordinates contractual preparation; academic, QA, legal and resource review and execution follow A16 and A17. The actual parties, accepted tasks and signatories are recorded in the agreement and module allocations. Technical-service or recruitment contracts do not establish an academic delivery partnership.

Authorise and verify readiness

Academic Board confirms academic readiness; the Director of Operations confirms operational readiness; the Board of Directors authorises commencement under A16. Unresolved essential gaps prevent commencement. Later activity-specific details and staff readiness are verified before that activity begins; this does not postpone the pre-commencement design and governance requirements.

A readiness record distinguishes completed checks and approvals from planned actions, demonstrations and future delivery evidence. Subsequent intakes apply A15 and the scalability capacity review, including continuing and returning students and overlapping assessment and support demand.

Programme monitoring and periodic review

Programme review tests whether the approved design is delivered effectively and produces the intended learning. Partner-delivered modules enter the same review cycle. The Head of Institution leads academic analysis; QA coordinates the Calendar, reports and action follow-up. The schedule uses programme stages when actual delivery dates are not yet set.

Review point	Scope and decision route
Before commencement and release	Confirm design, resources, academic partnership and readiness; check each later module and assessment before use. Academic and commencement approvals follow A16 and A17.
During active delivery	Review teaching, interaction, assessment and support issues promptly. Monitor workload and service demand, including overlapping intakes; escalate material concerns immediately.
At module completion	Educators review outcomes, assessed work, criteria, moderation, feedback, participation and student/tutor views. Head of Institution records corrections and programme implications.
At semester end	Consolidate module evidence, progression, reassessment, support, return arrangements, resources and partner performance. Academic Board considers significant findings and changes.
Annually	Review programme relevance, stakeholder feedback, attainment, assessment quality, completion where available and action effectiveness. Academic Board approves the review outcome and material changes.
Every three years	Conduct formal periodic programme review with independent academic and relevant stakeholder input, or earlier following a major change, significant concern or authorisation requirement.

Programme specific evidence

Reviews combine direct learning evidence and moderation with student and staff feedback, progression and completion data, engagement patterns, support cases, technical issues, resource access and employer or external academic input. Each report identifies the population, period, evidence, limitations and its relevance to the proposed action. Future graduate outcomes are not reported before graduates exist.

Online review examines instructional design, the quality of student–tutor and student–student interaction, synchronous and asynchronous activity, equitable access, academic integrity and the suitability of digital assessment. It distinguishes an available platform feature from its actual educational use and effect.

Formal periodic review

The three-year cycle replaces the older five-year A18 provision and aligns with A17, A20 and the QA Calendar. Review considers the continued need for the programme, comparator evidence, curriculum and outcomes, assessment, staffing, resources, student experience and societal and professional relevance. Required external revalidation or authorisation follows its applicable conditions; internal review does not renew accreditation by itself.

The QA and Curriculum Committee examines the evidence and recommendations. Academic Board records the outcome, conditions and approved academic action; operational and resource matters follow the corporate authority. Reviews and corrective actions contribute to the Annual Quality Report and institutional planning.

Decisions improvements and academic records

Review findings are translated into programme-specific decisions through the existing Quality Enhancement Log. A report, meeting or completed action is not sufficient evidence of improvement without examination of the result. QA coordinates the record; accountable academic and operational owners carry out the authorised work.

From finding to verified improvement

For each material issue, record the programme and module where relevant, evidence and date, analysis, decision and reason, action owner, resources, deadline and expected effect. The responsible authority approves the action. A proposal declined or an existing arrangement retained is also recorded with reasons, including the response to external or student input.

The owner provides implementation evidence, such as an approved specification, revised task, communicated guidance, staff preparation or resolved service issue. QA verifies completion and an appropriate academic or operational reviewer checks whether the original concern has been addressed. Independent scrutiny is used where self-review would compromise the judgement.

Effectiveness is checked at the next relevant module, semester or annual review using suitable evidence: criterion achievement, moderation consistency, feedback quality, student experience, access or support outcomes. The record separates implementation from its demonstrated effect. Overdue, ineffective or systemic issues are escalated to the QA and Curriculum Committee, Academic Board or Director of Operations according to their significance.

Approval and control of changes

Routine teaching or administrative detail within approved specifications follows the Head of Institution's recorded authority and the relevant operational delegation. Material changes to outcomes, curriculum, credit, assessment, delivery or progression pass through the QA and Curriculum Committee to Academic Board and obtain any required external approval or notification before implementation.

The change record identifies the reason, evidence, affected programme and cohorts, old and new versions, approval, effective date, resource implications and communication. Staff and students receive the current requirements before they apply. Existing rights and fair assessment conditions are considered when a change affects students already enrolled.

Records and reporting

A25 governs secure custody, access and retention of programme approvals, briefs, work, marks, feedback, moderation, external reports, attempts, progression, support and award decisions. The LMS or central record links the decision to its supporting evidence and authorised history. Personal and sensitive evidence is restricted; programme reports use proportionate aggregate or anonymised information.

Annual Quality Reports identify programme findings, action progress, unresolved risks and evidence of benefit. Academic Board considers academic standards; the Director of Operations and Board of Directors consider resources and institutional planning. Document Control and the Master Audit Evidence Index distinguish prepared revisions, institutional approvals, submissions and genuine delivery records.

Implementation and document alignment

The Head of Institution coordinates implementation of A18 with QA and the responsible academic and operational staff. The controlled revision and its approval are communicated before use. Programme-specific specifications and records are aligned through the existing document owners; a reference in this policy does not itself amend another document.

Existing document or record	Required alignment
Programme Accreditation Application	Sections B, C and D: outcome coverage, online activities, assessment demands, individual/group format, attempts and Final Project requirements. Approve actual task and weighting changes before use.
Existing assessment rubrics	Retain analytical criteria; align task-specific descriptors, individual achievement and capstone criteria with approved module requirements. Do not infer weights or duration from unrelated rubrics.
A16 A17 and staff documents	Apply the same academic powers and role names; connect allocations to A7, the Qualification Requirements document, A8 workload and A21 preparation.
QA Manual and Annual QA Calendar	Reflect programme-specific review, three-year periodic review, external contributions, readiness, assessment evidence and implementation/effectiveness follow-up.
A12 and student guidance	Reconcile three total attempts, component pass requirements, individual-module completion, 90-day inactivity review and next-semester return; communicate the applicable rules clearly.
A25 and engagement records	Retain traceable academic decisions, assessment and attempt evidence, support intervention and authorised progression or status changes.
A20 A15 and Standard 11 records	Connect Maltese needs and stakeholder proposals to agreed objectives, activities, resources and evaluation, without treating proposed contacts or benefits as completed.
Self Assessment Report	Align Standards 6 and 7 and relevant Standards 8 and 11 with approved procedures and actual status. Preserve the historical submitted version.

Staged implementation

Before commencement, complete the needs, benchmarking and stakeholder records, outcome and assessment review, online delivery framework, academic partnership arrangements and essential readiness approvals. Before each later module or assessment starts, verify the applicable materials, tasks, rubrics, staffing and student information. Before Final Project duties, verify supervision guidance, assessor and external-review readiness.

During delivery, collect actual learning and service evidence, validate results, conduct scheduled reviews and follow actions through to their effect. Academic Board monitors unresolved academic conditions; the Director of Operations addresses operational barriers. Evidence of approval, appointment, communication and completed activity is recorded separately from the wording of this policy.

This revision consolidates the A18 work associated with R15–R21, R23 and R32 and the related findings and observations on learning, assessment, student continuity and societal relevance. Detailed module amendments, other source-document revisions and institutional approval remain controlled implementation steps.