

Access Briefing 3

May 2007



Exam Boards & RAC Procedures

May 2007

Dear Colleague

It's approaching the time of year when Access students are nearing the end of their courses and centres are gearing up for the final assessment process followed by the award of Access Certificates. So we thought we would send out this reminder about how to proceed with Exam Boards and the completion of RAC (Recommendation for the Award of Credit) forms for this year.

The procedures below will represent a degree of change for all centres this year as we are now all operating under the OCN South East Region Authorised Validating Agency (AVA) procedures. Students Access Certificates will still refer to the former AVAs of OCNs Hampshire Isle of Wight and Sussex and Kent & Medway but they are being issued by OCNSER for 2006-07. Certificates for the Kent & Medway area will be printed at the Canterbury Office and all other areas will have theirs printed at our Addlestone Office.

Please do take the time to read this briefing and pass it on to colleagues within your Access Centre who may need to know about these procedures. We are under an obligation to the QAA to ensure that Access Certificates are issued only to learners who have gained the correct credit achievement for their Access to HE courses, thus we have put in place the procedures below to ensure that this happens.

If you have any queries or questions please use the contact table at the end of this Briefing to help you get in touch with the right person

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DCGittins'.

David Gittins
Director of Access & Business Development
OCN South East Region

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1. Access exam board procedures

The Access Exam Board is the forum in which the final decisions regarding the award of the Access Certificate to each Access student are made. It is vital that they are properly constituted and carried out in accordance with OCNSER's published guidelines. Subsequent appeals by students may require the minutes of these meetings to be used as evidence and they will form part of the quality audit trail for the QAA.¹

The OCNSER publication '**Access to HE Moderation Guidelines**' includes details on how to run Exam Boards in the appendix AQR5 "**Guidelines for the Conduct of Access Examination Boards/Final Assessment Boards**" which also has a draft agenda for the meeting. These documents can be downloaded from www.ocnkm.ac.uk/access/Access%20Page.html

Summary of some key points for Access Exam Boards

- External moderators for each pathway must be present
- The results of each student should be formally confirmed and recorded at the meeting
- Minutes must be taken
- The AVA (i.e. OCNSER) may contact a Centre at short notice to send a representative to attend any Access Exam Board. This forms a part of our quality audit procedures.

Please email the dates and times of your Exam Boards clearly indicating which pathways/courses they are for to Sue Martin our Access to HE Development Administrator at s.martin@ocnser.org.uk

If you have not yet had contact from an external moderator for your Access provision please get in touch with the OCN as a matter of urgency – you can call 01227 827823 (Canterbury Office) or 01932 569894 (Addlestone Office) or email Sue Martin (Access Development Administrator) s.martin@ocnser.org.uk

2. Completing the RAC Form

The Recommendation for the Award of Credit (RAC) Form for Access students is the document on which the formal award of the Access Certificate and credits is based. Its accurate completion is a key part of our quality procedures and safeguards. The RAC Forms should already have been received at your Centre as they are generated when students are registered with us. ***If you haven't yet registered all of your Access students please contact us urgently!***

There may be some variation in the format of RAC Forms but most if not all of the advice below will apply.

¹ Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

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- Ensure the front 'Summary Sheet' is signed by the Tutor/Access Coordinator and the External Moderator.
- Complete the destination codes for the summary table of learners (see key to codes on the summary sheet)
- Initial or sign each individual section of the RAC for each student (Tutor/Coordinator & External Moderator – the current RAC has a space for the EM to sign here but this is optional as long as the 'Summary Sheet' has been signed by the EM and the Exam Board minutes clearly identify each student's result)
- Clearly circle the credits achieved – be sure that you have circled the credits for the unit at the right Level – units are often available at Levels 2 & 3
- Access RAC Forms per individual student, have a statement at the end which states 'Access to HE award – Yes/No'. Indicate clearly by either deleting or circling the appropriate word. This will form a key part of the quality trail to confirm the pass/fail status re a QAA approved Access Certificate.
- Students who do not gain a full Access Certificate can achieve credits for the units they have completed but this will be issued in the format of a Credit Transcript.

3. RAC Form to OCNSER with exam board minutes

For the first time this year we are requiring Centres to return the minutes of their Exam Boards with the RACs. If we do not receive the Exam Board minutes then a delay in certificating the students will occur

Take copy of the RAC Forms for your own records

- Once completed please send this form to:

For Access courses in Kent & Medway :

OCN South East Region
Access RACs
Keynes College
University of Kent
Canterbury
CT2 7NP

01227 827823
k.sutton@ocnser.org.uk

For Access courses elsewhere in the region:

OCN South East Region
Access RACs
The Runnymede Centre
Chertsey Road
Addlestone
KT15 2EP

01932 578243
a.eales@ocnser.org.uk

4. Requesting certificate production from OCNSER

IMPORTANT

If you require Access Certificates for presentation to students by particular date then please let the relevant office know (see above) this must be done as soon as possible. If you do require Access Certificates for a presentation then we must have 3 weeks notice i.e. 3 weeks from the receipt in our office of the completed RAC Forms.

We will prioritise all Access certification but the volume of certification for Access and OCN courses in June/July is such that we will require you to alert us to presentation deadlines etc.

Access certification for each student is comprised of:

- An Access to HE Certificate for those successfully achieving a QAA approved Access pass plus a credit transcript listing all units achieved by the student.
- For those not achieving a pass a credit transcript only listing all units achieved

Certificates and credit transcripts are sent to the named exams officer/contact at each Access centre for onward despatch to students.

For Kent & Medway Access courses please contact the Canterbury Office and for all other Centres please contact the Addlestone Office (see above for main office contacts)

5. Access pages on our website

A new website is currently under construction and will be in place ready for 2007-08. Our existing website has a dedicated page for Access centres where you can download key documents. Please take a look so that you know where to go to find any of our documentation when you need it.

This can be reached via our OCNSER web pages, click on 'Access Info' and follow link to Access downloads at: www.srocn.nocn.org.uk/Access%20Info.htm or www.ocnser.org.uk/Access%20Info.htm

Alternatively you can direct to the Access key documents download page housed on our old OCNKM web pages at: www.ocnkm.ac.uk/access/Access%20Page.html

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OCNSER Contacts for Access

To contact your Development Manager please consult the list below

Role	Name	Email	Tel	Office	Serving ²
Director of Access & Business	David Gittins	d.gittins@ocnser.org.uk	01227 824018	Canterbury	SE Region
Lead Development Manager for Access	Jan Mulreany	j.mulreany@ocnser.org.uk	07900 265802	Brighton	SE Region
Access Development Administrator	Sue Martin	s.martin@ocnser.org.uk	01227 827823	Canterbury	SE Region
Development Manager	Sue Benn	s.benn@ocnser.org.uk	07867 501663	Brighton	Sussex, Hants, Isle of Wight
Development Manager	Gill Carter	g.carter@ocnser.org.uk	01932 569894	Addlestone	Surrey, Berks, N Hants
Development Manager	Peter James	peterjamesocn@yahoo.com	07771 667797	Addlestone & Home	Thames Valley
Development Manager	Jon Miles	j.miles@ocnser.org.uk	01932 569894	Addlestone	Surrey, Berks & W Sussex & IoW
Development Manager	Jo Oliphant	j.oliphant@ocnser.org.uk	01932 569894	Addlestone	Surrey, Berks, N Hants
Development Manager	Jos Thomas	j.thomas@ocnser.org.uk	01227 823458	Canterbury	Kent, Medway, E Sussex
Development Manager	Jelena Timotijevic	j.timotijevic@ocnser.org.uk	07917 156802	Brighton	Sussex, E Hants
Development Manager	Juliet Ward	j.ward@ocnser.org.uk	01227 827371	Canterbury	Kent, Medway, E Sussex
Outline of OCNSER Staff Roles					
Development Administrators (DA) Various staff – each of our DMs is supported by one or more named DAs		Our customer support staff based in the OCN offices. They will field any questions you may have about learner registrations, RAC Forms, certificates etc. They can also deal with other enquiries or refer you on to a development manager. Contact the main office numbers above.			
Access Development Administrator (ADA) Sue Martin based in the Canterbury Office		This role is dedicated to supporting Access across the region and deals with central issues such as validation panels, practitioner forums, marketing, moderation reports and Access Annual reports from Centres. Call Sue if you have any queries re these issues or other general Access issues.			
Development Managers (DM) Various staff (see above based across the SE Region)		Our curriculum development staff with extensive Access experience of working. Contact them for support in the preparation of Access submission documents as well as offering detailed advice on the design of Access courses.			
Lead Development Manager Access Jan Mulreany based in the Brighton Office		A Development Manager with extensive Access experience who coordinates our work with Access providers across the SE Region and helps to develop the AVA's Access strategies and operational policies.			
Director of Access & Business Development David Gittins based in the Canterbury Office		A senior manager with overall responsibility for the AVA's Access work, managing the team and the strategic development of the AVA's Access work.			

² Indicative guide only to geographical coverage