



## Access to HE Final Awards Board Policy

### Who is this policy for?

This policy is for centres, learners, AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group staff regarding the conduct of Final Award Boards (FABs) to verify Access to HE learners' achievements.

<b>Owner</b>	Compliance Director
<b>Date of next review:</b>	September 2027

## Version control

Version number	Date	Description
1	April 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document created</li> </ul>
1.1	March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corrected typographical error in Section 1.</li> <li>Section 2.3 updated to clarify FAB membership and removal of requirement for one FAB to be held at the centre's premises.</li> <li>Section 2.6.2 updated to provide process for uploading RACs to Quartzweb</li> <li>Section 2.7.1 and 2.7.2 updated to refer to completion of incident report template instead of certificate amendment form, and submission to <a href="mailto:accesstohe@aimgroup.org.uk">accesstohe@aimgroup.org.uk</a> rather than uploading to MIA portal.</li> <li>Section 2.8 link to website updated to provide direct link to Charges and Fees page and added reference to additional FAB charges</li> </ul>
2	June 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 2.5 updated to identify reasons why a Final Award Board may be postponed by the AVA and to clarify that charges for postponement will apply for when the AVA or the provider postpones.</li> <li>Section 2.5 updated to clarify that the rearranged date is agreed between the provider and AVA representative, and that once confirmed the latter will send confirmation of the date and who the Chair will be to provider.</li> </ul>

## Contents

<b>Version control .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Section 1 – Scope .....</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 Scope .....	4
1.2 About us .....	4
<b>Section 2 – Final Awards Boards .....</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1 Definition .....	5
2.1.1 Definitions .....	5
2.2 Responsibilities.....	5
2.2.1 AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group responsibilities .....	5
2.2.2 Centre responsibilities.....	5
2.2.3 Centre staff responsibilities .....	5
2.2.4 Learner responsibilities .....	6
2.3 FAB Membership.....	6
2.4 Responsibility of the FAB.....	6
2.5 Postponed FABs.....	7
2.6 FAB process .....	7
2.6.1 Prior to the awards board (by final moderation) .....	7
2.6.2 At the conclusion of final moderation and prior to the awards board.....	8
2.7 Amendments to the award of credit.....	8
2.7.1 Amendments to award of credit after awards board .....	8
2.7.2 Amendments to award of credit after certification.....	9
2.8 Fees .....	9
<b>Section 3 - Regulatory References .....</b>	<b>10</b>
Conditions and licencing criteria .....	10
<b>Section 4 - Appendix .....</b>	<b>11</b>

## Section 1 – Scope

### 1.1 Scope

This Final Awards Board Policy applies to AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group Access to HE provision delivered within the UK. We aim to operate a standard procedure for the award of Access to HE diplomas that is consistent with QAA requirements. This policy provides Access to HE centres and external moderators with full guidance on the function, process and membership of the awards board.

#### This policy is intended for:

- centres and their staff delivering AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group approved Access to HE Diplomas
- learners registered on AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group approved Access to HE Diplomas
- AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group staff to ensure that requirements are met in terms of the function and membership of Access to HE Final Awards Boards (FABs)

#### The purpose of this policy is to:

- outline the requirements in terms of the function and membership of Final Awards Boards (FABs).
- ensure that Final Awards Boards are completed in a timely and efficient manner following completion of courses
- ensure the required process is followed so learners are awarded credit and, where appropriate, grades for all units achieved and an Access to HE Diploma if the appropriate rules of combination have been achieved
- detail the responsibilities AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group, centres, centre staff and learners have
- provide the regulatory references which apply
- provide useful contacts of both AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group and the various regulators

### 1.2 About us

AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group is a leading **Awarding Organisation** and one of the UK's largest **Access Validating Agencies (AVA)**. We work in partnership with colleges, independent training providers, universities, employers and voluntary organisations to develop accredited and regulated vocational qualifications. Our qualifications cover a range of academic levels from Entry Level to Level 6 across a wide range of subject areas. As an AVA we are licensed by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) to develop and award nationally recognised Access to Higher Education Diplomas. AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group is also an independent, government recognised, **End-Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO)** responsible for an apprentice's final assessment to ensure they can do the job for which they've trained.

## Section 2 – Final Awards Boards

### 2.1 Definition

#### 2.1.1 Definitions

The final awards board (FAB) is a formal meeting held with a centre shortly after final moderation. All business is confidential and formally recorded. The formal authority for the award of the Access to HE diploma within AIM Qualification and Assessment Group Access Validating Agency (AVA) is conferred for operational purposes by the Board of Trustees (BoT) (the AVA's governing body) to the awards board.

### 2.2 Responsibilities

The following represent the key responsibilities of AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group, centres, centre staff and learners.

#### 2.2.1 AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group responsibilities

Overseen by the Compliance Director, AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group will:

- offer centres up to three FABs per year to facilitate progression to university each term.
- work closely with roll-on-roll-off providers or those with multiple starts to ensure that FABs are made available in a timely manner to facilitate progression to university.

#### 2.2.2 Centre responsibilities

All centres delivering AIM Qualifications must:

- make arrangements for the Final Award Board (FAB) as requested by AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group and in line with QAA and AVA requirements.
- discuss with their AVA representative at the Interim Monitoring visit their plans for the forthcoming year and identify potential dates for FABs to take place.
- Ensure that all learner destination information is added to the RAC summary sheet prior to uploading to Quartzweb

#### 2.2.3 Centre staff responsibilities

All centre staff involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group qualifications must:

- be fully aware of this policy and the possible implications of failing to comply with any requirements specified by AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group or the regulatory authorities ([Sanctions Policy](#)).
- implement assessment and quality assurance activities which fully comply with the requirements of AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group.

- implement corrective actions imposed by AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group to maintain compliance with AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group's centre approval criteria.

### 2.2.4 Learner responsibilities

**Any learner undertaking an AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group qualification must:**

- declare any illnesses or conditions, for the purposes of reasonable adjustments being made, prior to course commencement.
- declare any illnesses or conditions, for the purposes of special consideration being given, prior to the assessment.
- always behave in a professional and courteous manner towards centre staff and other learners.
- maintain the integrity and security of the learner assessment process.
- cooperate fully with any compliance investigation.

### 2.3 FAB Membership

In order for the FAB to proceed, the following three members must be present, either in person or virtually.

- Chair (this will be an AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group AVA representative).
- Minute taker (this will be an AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group AVA representative).
- Centre representative.

### 2.4 Responsibility of the FAB

The main responsibility of the FAB is the approval of the award of credits, grades and Access to HE Diplomas.

The AVA representative is responsible for confirming the process and moderation and providing feedback on the same. Further guidance is provided in the FAB CR Processes document.

The Chair of the FAB is responsible for ensuring that due process is followed.

The FAB will proceed following the agenda issued by the AVA and shall confirm that, for each student for whom the award of the Access to HE Diploma is approved, the rules of combination for the named Access to HE Diploma have been met and the credit and grade profiles are accurate and complete.

The FAB must not receive any information about offers for progression to higher education which may have been made to any student, and such information must not play any part in its considerations. The meeting of the FAB will be formally closed before any such information is shared.

The FAB also takes decisions about:

- Referrals

- Extenuating circumstances and extensions to complete programmes
- Aegrotat and Posthumous Awards
- Cases of Academic Misconduct
- Appeals

Refer to [QAA Grading Scheme Handbook Section E](#) for further details for further details  
Approval for the award of credit following a successful referral or extension to programme is given by the AVA representative.

Appeals that arise as a consequence of FAB's decision are dealt with in accordance with the [AIM Enquiries and Appeals Policy](#).

Complaints relating to the FAB will be dealt with in line with the [AIM Complaints Policy](#)

### 2.5 Postponed FABs

Where the AVA and QAA procedures are not followed, FABs will not be able to go ahead. Reasons for postponement of Final Award Boards include but are not limited to:

- Failure to upload RACs four working days prior to the Final Award Board, preventing the AVA Representative from carrying out their sampling of RACs.
- Failure to provide the required information for the AVA representative to carry out the sampling of RACs.
- Ongoing issues raised from moderation that have not been resolved before the Final Award Board.

In such instances, AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group reserve the right to charge for postponed FABs or those that are cancelled by providers with less than 24 hours' notice in line with the [AIM Fees and Charges Policy](#).

Where FABs are postponed, a new date is to be agreed between the provider and AVA representative, following which the AVA representative will send confirmation of the date and Chair to the provider.

### 2.6 FAB process

#### 2.6.1 Prior to the awards board (by final moderation)

Using the AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group Gradetraka™ system

You must check and verify the profile page for each student you wish to make a claim for, ensuring:

- pass, merit or distinction grades have been entered for all graded units the student has achieved.

- 'achieved' has been entered for all ungraded and level two units the student has achieved.
- the grades have been checked for accuracy of entry.
- there is absolute compliance with the rules of combination for the discrete diploma.

### **2.6.2 At the conclusion of final moderation and prior to the awards board Using the AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group Gradetraka™ system**

- No amendments to grades can be made without agreement from the AVA representative.
- Centres will need to export the Recommendations for the Award of Credit (RACs) that are to be presented at the Final Awards Board.

#### **Using Quartzweb**

- Centres to upload their RACs to Quartzweb ensuring that the destination column on the RAC's summary sheet has been completed.
- Any RACs received where no destination has been received will be returned to the centre for the information to be added.
- The inclusion of destination information on the summary sheet will also need to be checked at the FAB by the AVA representatives.

Centres will be required to check the end date for all learners to be presented at the Final Awards Board to identify if any learner is achieving outside of the reporting year suggested by the class run end date. Where this occurs, centres are to have the correct end date ready to provide to the AVA on request prior to the FAB.

## **2.7 Amendments to the award of credit**

### **2.7.1 Amendments to award of credit after awards board**

Amendments to the award of credit after the awards board will be made in exceptional circumstances only and only on receipt of evidence.

Requests for changes after the awards board must be submitted using the provided Incident Report template, completed by a senior manager/named quality contact for AIM's consideration. Completed forms must be emailed to [accesstohe@aimgroup.org.uk](mailto:accesstohe@aimgroup.org.uk) along with supporting evidence for the change being requested (for example assessed student work, assessment and internal verification records).

We will consider your application and give you a decision within 14 working days. We will inform you if we are unable to reach a decision within this timescale.

The AVA representative must approve any changes to the awarded grades. If changes are not agreed, the original Award of Credit will remain.

There will be a charge per student for amendments following the awards board. Please refer to the [AIM fees and policy](#).

### 2.7.2 Amendments to award of credit after certification

The AVA will issue an Access to HE Diploma certificate to all students who have been awarded the Access to HE Diploma including a transcript of unit achievement. Where partial achievement has been claimed, students will receive a transcript of unit achievement showing all units completed. For full details on the issue of certificates including timescales, please refer to the [AIM Registration and Certification Policy](#) available on the AIM website.

The centre must check all certificates on receipt, any amendments to the award of credit requiring a certificate reissue will be made in exceptional circumstances only and will incur a charge.

Requests for changes after the certification must be submitted using the provided Incident Report template, completed by a senior manager/named quality contact for AIM consideration. Requests will not be considered from tutors/assessors, internal verifiers. Completed forms must be emailed to [acesstohe@aimgroup.org.uk](mailto:acesstohe@aimgroup.org.uk) and include supporting evidence for the change being requested (eg assessed student work, assessment and internal verification records).

The original certificate(s) must be returned to AIM before a replacement can be issued. You must also provide details of:

- any internal investigations that have taken place to establish why the situation occurred.
- measures that have been put in place as a result to ensure that similar instances do not occur in the future.

We will consider your application and give you a decision within 14 working days. We will inform you if we will be unable to reach a decision in this timescale.

The AVA representative must approve any changes to the awarded grades. The amended certificate(s) will be reissued within 10 working days of AVA representative authorisation and receipt of payment. If changes are not agreed the original Award of Credit will remain.

There will be a charge per student for a replacement certificate.

## 2.8 Fees

In instances where a provider exceeds three FABs within an academic year, an additional fee will be charged per FAB as per the [AIM Fees and Charges Policy](#).

AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group publishes its charges annually. These run from 1 August to 31 July each year. A copy of the [AIM fees and charges policy](#) is available from [www.aimgroup.org.uk](http://www.aimgroup.org.uk).

## Section 3 - Regulatory References

### Conditions and licencing criteria

This policy is intended to meet the regulatory requirements of the QAA. In particular:

QAA AVA Licensing Criteria - Criteria for the licensing of Access Validating Agencies	
The AVA’s procedure and criteria for provider approval ensure that a provider makes an explicit commitment to cooperate with QAA requirements and the AVA’s moderation, standardisation and monitoring procedures.	Licensing Criteria 51
The AVA operates standard documented procedures for the award of Access to HE Diplomas that are consistent with QAA requirements.	Licensing Criteria 112

### Section 4 - Appendix

#### Appendix 1 – Useful contacts

The following provides contact details for AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group and its regulators.

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##### AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group Contact details

If you have any queries about the contents of the policy, please contact us.

Telephone: [0844 2253377](tel:0844 2253377)

Email: [enquiries@aimgroup.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@aimgroup.org.uk)

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##### The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)

Telephone: [01452 557 000](tel:01452 557 000)

Email: [enquiries@qaa.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@qaa.ac.uk)

**Disclaimer:** Please note that any downloaded version of our policies may not be the most current iteration. For the latest updates and accurate information, kindly refer to the version available on our official website.