Accreditation and assessment - moving forward into 22/23 and beyond

The Royal Society of Chemistry’s Committee for Accreditation and Validation (CAV) recognises that faculties, schools and departments are planning for returning to pre-COVID conditions for their degree programmes. Whilst CAV did approve temporary changes to assessments, teaching methods and practical delivery during the pandemic, it is expected that from the start of academic year 2022-23 a return should be made to programme structures, curricula, and teaching and assessment methods as described in approved accreditation paperwork, including any pre-requisites or requirements.

CAV also recognises that many universities are inviting schools and departments to review their assessment methods in the light of experience using online assessments during the pandemic. The committee welcomes the evaluation of these methods for use as part of a balanced portfolio of varied, appropriate, and rigorous assessment, as described by Key Requirement 12:

‘Assessment should be varied, appropriate and rigorous, and require students to apply their knowledge and solve problems’

More detail can be found here:

However, the committee wishes to remind providers of RSC-accredited programmes that a fundamental condition of their existing accreditation is that CAV is informed of any changes to an accredited course, including any changes to assessment methods. CAV would expect any assessment, especially if delivered online without invigilation, to be rationalised such that the requirements of KR12 are met, academic standards are maintained, and outcomes are authentic and not the result of collusion or other forms of academic malpractice. It is also expected that departments would liaise with their external examiners as part of a documented quality assurance process for the chosen methods of assessment. Schools and departments wishing to change assessments from those described in their approved accreditation paperwork must therefore make a written submission to CAV to seek approval. Failure to do so may result in the withdrawal of accreditation.

The committee also wishes to emphasise that the choice of assessment method for any activity within an RSC-accredited degree programme should be a reasoned, appropriate choice made by subject experts within the discipline, tested with external examiners and in accordance with RSC accreditation requirements. This reflects the broad range of types of assessment that are appropriate and applicable within the disciplines encompassed by the chemical sciences.

We hope this advice is helpful, if you have queries or comments please contact us at accreditation@rsc.org.