

Accreditation and assessment for the academic year 21/22

The Royal Society of Chemistry's Committee for Accreditation and Validation (CAV) recognises that conditions relating to the coronavirus are still impacting university education and will continue to affect processes such as assessment at least for this academic year. With this in mind, the Committee provides the following updated advice for maintaining accreditation with particular reference to online assessment:

Departments should ensure that their portfolio of assessments is varied and appropriate and tests the full range of intended learning outcomes for the modules. Online, open book exams are acceptable: however, all assessment methods should be inclusive and accessible, and supportive of student wellbeing (particularly with respect to the possibility of additional stress caused by any new assessment methods). Students should be made aware of, and given opportunities to prepare for and practice, any assessment methods that are new or significantly different from their previous experience. Assessment should be rigorous such that academic standards are maintained, and outcomes must be authentic and not the result of collusion or other forms of academic malpractice. To the latter, departments should ensure that the work is the student's own either through the design of the assessment or by putting in place other appropriate mechanisms. For example, departments should consider carefully the duration of timed assessments, recognising that shorter, timed assessments can reduce the opportunities for collusion and academic malpractice, but that students will need extra time to scan in and upload handwritten answers. It is expected that departments will liaise with their external examiners to ensure that a rigorous rationale for the chosen methods of assessment and time limits can be given. Online, open book types of examinations are generally appropriate for problem solving and testing the application of knowledge but using this method for questions based on factual recall should be avoided.

Please note this advice does not replace Key Requirement 12 in the [accreditation of degree programmes criteria](#) that states: *Assessment should be varied, appropriate and rigorous, and require students to apply their knowledge and solve problems.*

This advice is provided to support you to meet this requirement in view of the unusual circumstances. It is for the 21/22 academic year and will be revised as the situation changes. We hope this updated advice is helpful, if you have queries or comments please contact us at accreditation@rsc.org.

Kim Smith, Accreditation and Chartered Chemist Programme Manager, December 2021