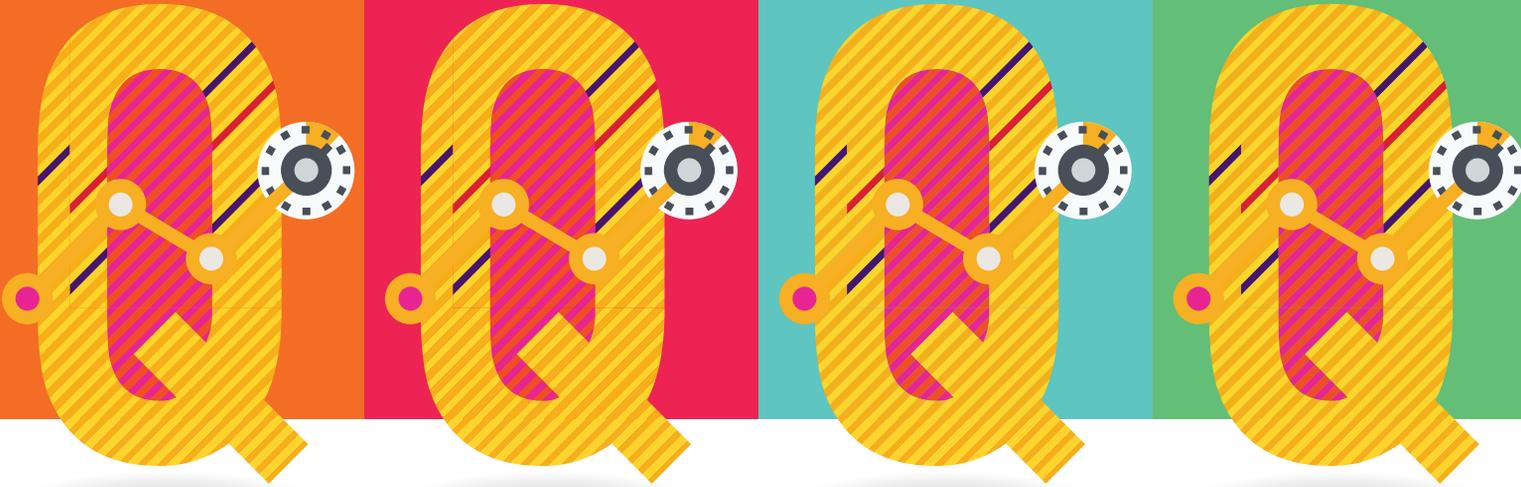


QUALITY ASSURING LEARNER ASSESSMENT

ETB SECTOR ASSESSMENT REFERENCE DOCUMENTS



etbi
Education and Training
Boards Ireland
*Boird Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Éireann*



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act 2012 sets out the responsibilities that apply to the Education and Training Boards (ETBs) for quality assuring their programmes of education and training and related services.
- 1.2 Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) has established Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines¹ for providers, and Sector Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for the Education and Training Boards.² These quality assurance guidelines require a provider to establish an assessment framework which establishes the provider's philosophy on, and approach to, the assessment of learners and the administration of assessment by the provider.
- 1.3 ETBs are working collaboratively towards achieving the common goal of consistent high-quality standards in Further Education and Training (FET) across the sector, and the development of an **ETB Sector Quality Assurance Framework**.
- 1.4 The **ETB Sector Quality Assurance Framework** will be developed based on the principle of subsidiarity, recognising that one-size does not fit all. ETBs are independent statutory providers and therefore each ETB must make decisions to reflect their own responsibilities and circumstances.
- 1.5 The **ETB Sector Quality Assurance Framework** will be compiled of a series of reference frameworks, with agreed principles and definitions, supported by a suite of reference documents. These reference documents provide a common backplane for consistency, collaboration, sharing, and reuse; and can be adapted by individual ETBs in establishing their own quality assurance systems.
- 1.6 The **ETB Assessment Reference Framework** is part of the overarching Quality Assurance Framework within the sector in development.

¹<http://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Core%20Statutory%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines.pdf>

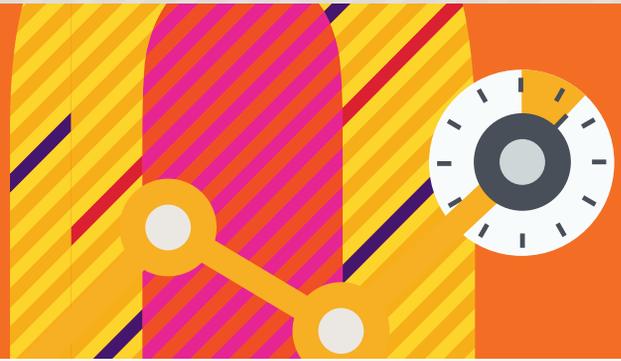
²<https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Sector%20specific%20QA%20Guidelines%20for%20ETBs.pdf>

2. ASSESSMENT REFERENCE FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 This suite of Reference Documents for quality assuring the assessment of learners has been developed by a Sectoral Assessment Working Group in collaboration with the Further Education Support Service (FESS), and following a detailed consultative process. These Reference Documents have been developed to assist ETBs in developing and documenting policies and procedures for quality assuring learner assessment, in line with best practice.
- 2.2 These **Reference Documents** may be adopted in whole or adapted as appropriate to an ETB's own policies and procedures for quality assuring the assessment of learners.
- 2.3 The **Reference Document** for each assessment policy area identifies specific roles and corresponding responsibilities. These roles have been defined within the glossary of terms. They are an indicative guide to determining responsibility levels. Titles, roles and responsibilities vary greatly throughout the sector and will be defined by individual ETBs.
- 2.4 All staff involved in the assessment process have a responsibility for ensuring the integrity and validity of the ETB assessment system. Additionally, all staff involved in the assessment process must ensure that the assessment process is conducted in line with the ETB's own quality assurance policies and procedures.

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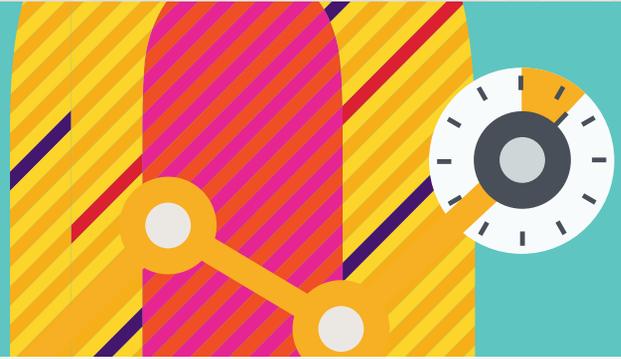
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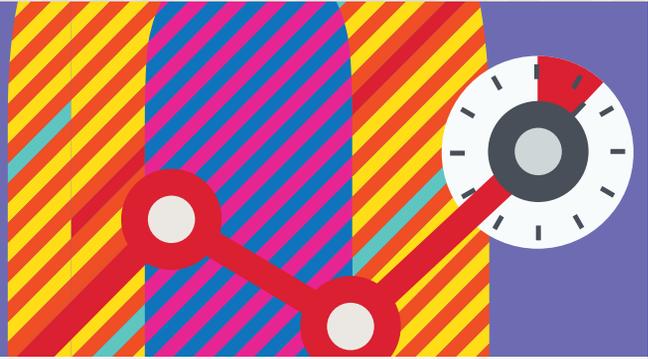
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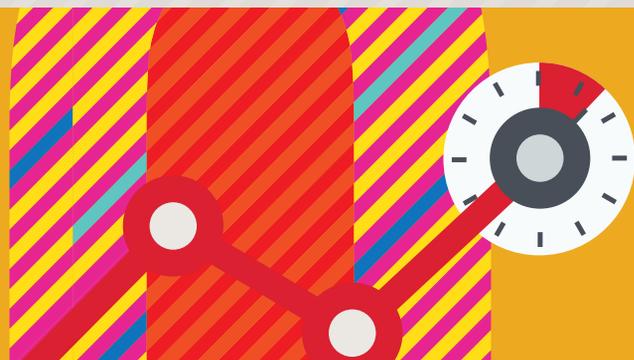
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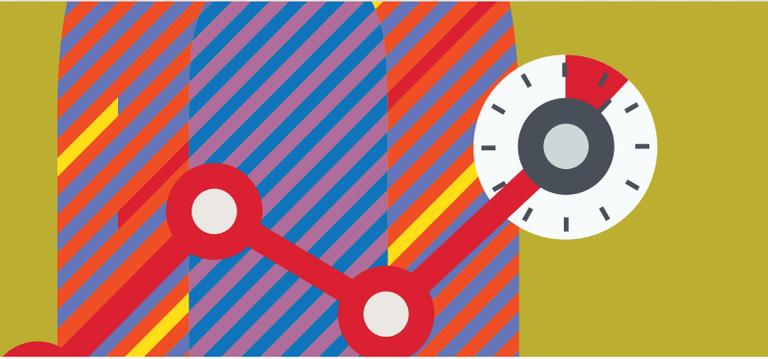
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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Appeals Examiner	<p>The Appeals Examiner refers to the individual who examines the learner assessment appeal evidence and makes a decision on the appeal. An Appeals Examiner is appointed by the ETB and is a person who MUST be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A subject-matter expert ■ External to the original assessment process ■ Has no conflict of interest with the learner or Learning Practitioner(s) ■ External to the provider or to the original assessment process <p>Ideally, the Appeals Examiner should be an External Authenticator</p>
Assessment Appeals Facilitator	<p>The Assessment Appeals Facilitator or designated person, refers to the individual who facilitates the learner assessment appeal. The Assessment Appeals Facilitator must have a working knowledge of assessment and quality assurance procedures; ensure that no conflict of interest exists; and have had no prior involvement in the assessment processes relating to the particular piece of assessment.</p>
Centre	<p>The Centre refers to any ETB College or ETB Education/Training Centre.</p>
Centre Manager	<p>The Centre Manager refers to the Centre Manager, Centre Director, Principal or the manager of any ETB College or ETB Education/Training Centre. In the event of the absence of a Centre Manager, an appropriate designated person should be assigned.</p>
ETB	<p>Education and Training Board</p>
ETB Manager	<p>The ETB Manager refers to any manager within the ETB.</p>
Independent Appeals Committee	<p>The Independent Appeals Committee refers to the committee which examines the assessment process appeals. The committee is appointed by the ETB and MUST:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consists of a minimum of two ETB senior personnel who are external to the Centre ■ Have knowledge of QA procedures <p>The Independent Appeals Committee should be supported by internal QA personnel. Depending on the nature of the appeal, personnel from outside the ETB may be required. This is at the discretion of the ETB.</p>
Invigilator	<p>The Invigilator refers to the individual who supervises an examination.</p> <p>Ideally, an alternative invigilator other than the Learning Practitioner should supervise an examination. The Invigilator (appointed by the Programme Co-ordinator) must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ sign a declaration of impartiality ■ be appointed in line with the specific guidelines of the awarding body, if such guidelines exist.
Learning Practitioner	<p>The Learning Practitioner refers to any teacher, tutor, instructor or assessor.</p>
Programme Co-ordinator	<p>The Programme Co-ordinator refers to Programme Co-ordinator, Programme Manager or other relevant manager of course or programme. In the event of the absence of a Programme Manager, an appropriate designated person should be assigned.</p>
RPL Mentor/Facilitator	<p>The RPL Mentor/Facilitator refers to an individual who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ is familiar with RPL policies ■ has received training in RPL ■ is a subject matter expert

ASSESSMENT MALPRACTICE





LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

FIGURE 1.1

Suspected Learner
Malpractice (Plagiarism)
Procedure

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FIGURE 1.2

Learner Malpractice
Investigation
Procedure

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TABLE 1.1

Reliability of Learner
Evidence

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Assessment System Irregularity and Assessment Malpractice

It is important to distinguish between **assessment system irregularity** and **assessment system malpractice**. The decision on whether an issue is deemed to be considered an assessment system alleged irregularity or malpractice will relate to the intent, scale or fraudulent nature of the incident by the offender. An issue that may initially be adjudged to be an assessment system irregularity could, after preliminary investigation, be determined to be an alleged malpractice issue. Where such an issue is deemed to be an alleged malpractice, the procedures outlined in this document must be utilised.

Definition of Assessment System Irregularity

Assessment system irregularities are typically accidental omissions or mistakes which are detected by mechanisms within the assessment system, are corrected, and which do not impact on the validity of the assessment. These could include test administration errors, missing assessment data, errors in transcription, etc., which are detected and rectified. All instances of irregularities should be documented and addressed in line with this process.

Definition of Assessment Malpractice

An assessment system malpractice is any act or practice which brings into question the validity or integrity of the assessment process and which normally arises due to one or more non-accidental factors.

Two categories of malpractice exist:

- Learner Malpractice
- Staff Malpractice

This document relates to Learner Malpractice only.

Learner Malpractice

Learner Malpractice is defined as malpractice committed by a learner during the course of the assessment process.

Examples of learner malpractice include but are not limited to:

Plagiarism

Learner plagiarism is defined as the practice of learners submitting any work for assessment that is not their own original work. This could be any percentage of work that has not been referenced and has been copied from published work, the internet, other learners' work and/or other sources.

Plagiarism in assessment may include but is not limited to:

- Representing work completed by and/or authored by another person (including other learners, family, work colleagues and friends) as their own
- Procuring work from a company or external source including the internet
- Copying work from any source or medium without reference (i.e. website, book, journal article, etc.)
- Taking a passage of text, or an idea, and summarising it without acknowledging the original source
- Passing off collaborative work as one's own
- Piecing together sections of others' work into a new whole
- Submitting another learner's work with or without their knowledge

The submission of such plagiarised materials for assessment purposes is fraudulent and all suspected cases will

DEFINITIONS

be investigated and dealt with appropriately using the procedures outlined in this document.

Suspected cases of plagiarism will only be investigated when there is a declaration of authenticity which has been signed by the learner. Any electronic assessment submitted is deemed as having been declared as authentic by the learner.

Unacceptable Behaviour

Unacceptable behaviour in assessment may include but is not limited to:

- Unauthorised removal of assessment material from the assessment location
- Deliberate damage to or destroying of assessment related materials
- Use of electronic communication device/technology or other unauthorised materials during the assessment
- Assisting other learners during the assessment
- Any form of communication with other learners (written, verbal, gestures, expressions, pointing, etc.) in an assessment event (e.g. examination)
- Collusion by working collaboratively with other learners, beyond what is allowed
- Copying from another learner (both parties involved in the investigation)
- Fabrication of results and/or evidence
- Falsification (faulty data collection methods)

- Behaving in such a way as to undermine the integrity of the assessment event or process
- Impersonation, by pretending to be someone else, in order to produce the work for another or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment
- Engaging in unsafe practices in assessment
- Disruptive, violent and offensive behaviour in relation to assessment
- Tampering or interfering with assessment materials or another learner's work
- Submission for assessment of a piece of work that has been purchased/procured from another source, where the work is not the learner's own work

This list is not exhaustive.



PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT IN RELATION TO ASSESSMENT MALPRACTICE

Quality assured assessment ensures that, in criterion referenced assessment, “learners are assessed and the assessment judgment is made based on whether the learner has reached the required national standards of knowledge, skill and competence for the award” (QQI, 2013 p.5). Central to quality assured assessment is the assumption that learners are assessed in a fair and consistent manner in line with the award standard. Quality assured assessment ensures adherence to the principles of assessment.

The following sets forth the principles of assessment which apply to this document: these principles are based on the QQI (2013) principles for assessment.

Principles of Assessments

1 Validity

Validity is a fundamental assessment principle ensuring that an assessment measures what it is designed to measure: the relevant standard of knowledge, skill or competence required for an award should be assessed.

Validity in assessment occurs when:

- Assessment is fit for purpose (i.e. a practical assessment assesses a practical skill)
- Learners can produce evidence which can be measured against the award standard
- Assessors can make accurate assessment decisions
- Assessment is accessible to all candidates who are potentially able to achieve it

2 Reliability

Reliability in assessment ensures that assessment measurement is accurate: the knowledge, skills and competence which the assessment measures should produce reliable and accurate results. Reliability in assessment ensures that results are consistent under similar conditions.

Reliability in assessment occurs when:

- The assessment is based on valid assessment techniques
- Assessment conditions are consistent
- Learner evidence is reliable
- Results are consistent over time across various assessors, contexts, conditions and learners

3 Fair

Fairness in assessment supports the validity and reliability principles and provides equal opportunity to all learners. Fairness in assessment ensures: learners have access to appropriate resources/equipment in assessment; assessment design and implementation are fair to all learners; and policies and procedures exist to ensure fair assessment of learners.

4 Quality

Quality in assessment ensures that all assessment processes are quality assured.

5 Transparency

Transparency in assessment ensures that assessment policy and procedures provide clarity to all relevant stakeholders.

In order to ensure the fair and consistent assessment of learners, the following procedure should be followed in relation to any suspected malpractice cases. The provider's Quality Assurance System overarches these principles and ensures learner achievement is assessed in a fair and consistent way in line with the national standards for the award.

MALPRACTICE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All Staff

All staff involved in the assessment process have a responsibility for ensuring the integrity and validity of the Educational Training Board (ETB) assessment system. All staff must ensure that they are aware of policies and procedure in relation to:

- Planning assessment
- Conducting assessment
- Concluding assessment

A person making an allegation of malpractice invoking the Protected Disclosures Act 2014 must follow the ETB's Protected Disclosures policy and procedures.

Additionally, all staff involved in the assessment process must ensure that the assessment process is conducted in line with quality assurance policies and procedures and that any variances in assessment system practices are investigated appropriately, as outlined in this process.

The Manager

The Centre Manager is required to adhere to the role and responsibility outlined above for all staff.

The Programme Coordinator

The Programme Coordinator is required to adhere to the role and responsibility outlined above for all staff. Additionally, the Programme Coordinator must also ensure that all Learning Practitioners are made aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the assessment process. The Programme Coordinator must also ensure that Learning Practitioners are made aware of the policies and procedure in relation to the assessment process and the process of investigation of any suspected malpractice.

The Learning Practitioner

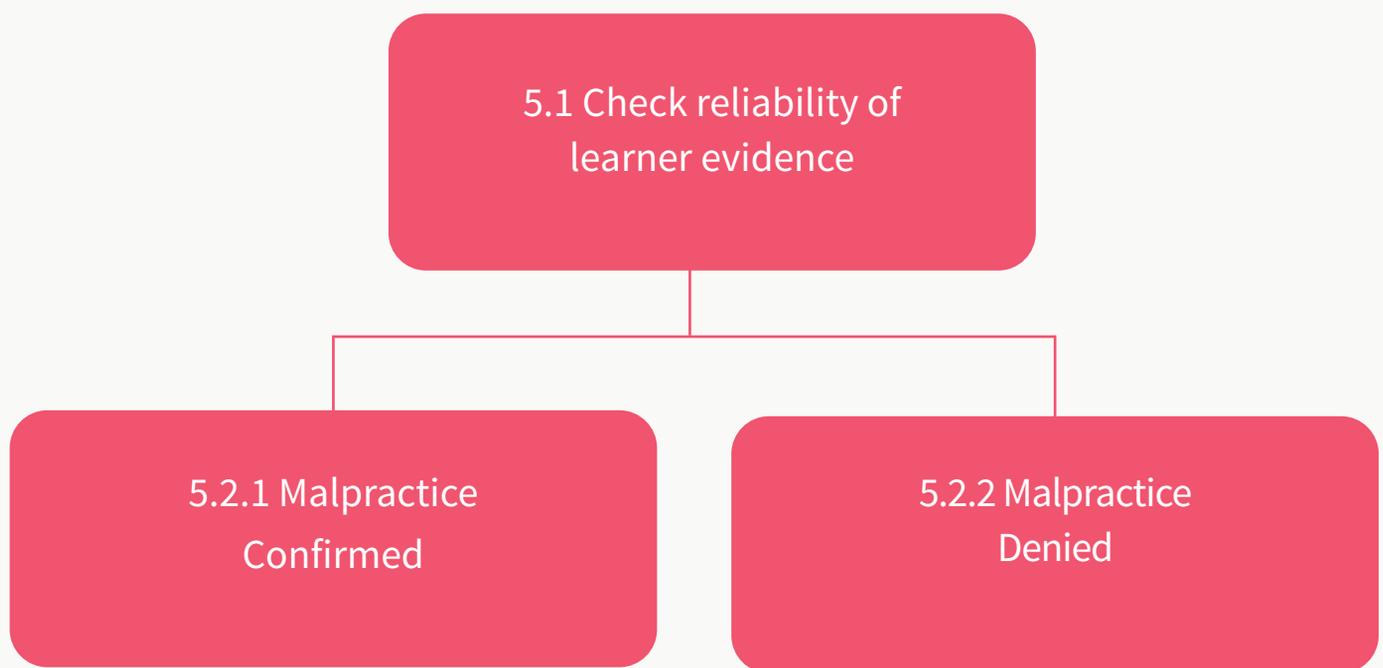
The Learning Practitioner is required to adhere to the role and responsibility outlined above for all staff. Additionally, the Learning Practitioner must be aware of the policies and procedures in relation to the assessment.



SUSPECTED LEARNER MALPRACTICE PROCEDURE PROCESS

Figure 1.1 Suspected Learner Malpractice Process

Any suspected learner malpractice should follow the process outlined in Figure 1.1.



5.1 Check Reliability of Learner Evidence

In the event of suspected learner malpractice, the Learning Practitioner must check the learner assessment evidence for reliability using plagiarism software and/or questioning (as outlined in Table 1 below) and meet with the learner to discuss the assessment evidence.

Table 1.1 Reliability of Learner Evidence

Reliability of Learner Evidence	
<p>Where the <u>Learning Practitioner</u> is not in a direct position to observe the learner carrying out the assessment activity or collecting the evidence first hand, e.g. when a portfolio or project is used, s/he must be confident that the evidence was actually produced by the learner i.e. it is reliable learner evidence. This is particularly important when group assessment is used. The following are ways in which the <u>Learning Practitioner</u> may ascertain that the learner evidence produced is reliable and genuine. The <u>Learning Practitioner</u> should, where appropriate, implement a range of these.</p>	
Questioning:	<p>This involves asking the learner to explain and describe part of the evidence. It is important to concentrate on how the evidence was produced as this will enable the learner to show that s/he was responsible for producing the evidence and will also give the learner the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills required. Questioning may be based on the following methods outlined below:</p>
Authorship Statement:	<p>An authorship statement from the learner testifying the evidence as being his/her original work. An authorship statement should be provided with regard to all evidence submitted.</p>
Personal Log:	<p>A personal log is a record of how the learner planned and developed the evidence. A personal log should identify problems and how they were overcome by the learner.</p>
Personal Statements:	<p>A personal statement may be used to explain the actions of the learner in carrying out activities or producing the evidence. Personal statements should be clear and explain the learner's role and the context in which the evidence was produced. Personal statements can provide evidence of knowledge and understanding.</p>
Peer Reports:	<p>Peer reports are especially suitable for group work. Peer reports are reports drafted by all group members which can help explain individual involvement in a task or project.</p>
Independent Testimony:	<p>An independent testimony is a statement produced by an individual, other than the <u>Learning Practitioner</u>, which confirms that the learner has carried out a series of tasks or produced a product. It should record what the learner has demonstrated and corroborated the learner evidence submitted. The identity and role of the individual to provide the testimony for the learner should be agreed in advance between the <u>Learning Practitioner</u> and the learner. The use of independent testimony is not intended as a mechanism for assessing learner evidence but as a tool to corroborate the reliability of that evidence.</p>

5.2 Malpractice Confirmed/Denied



5.2.1 Malpractice Confirmed

On completion of the checking of learner evidence and meeting with the learner, the learner may **acknowledge** that his/her assessment evidence has been plagiarised either by poor academic honesty or dishonestly. In this case, the Programme Coordinator issues a written warning, if this is the learner's first offence within the Centre, and learner evidence for that element of module is disallowed. The learner is not allowed to resubmit the evidence. Where this is a second offence, more serious sanctions will be applied (see Section 7: sanctions).



5.2.2 Malpractice Denied

On completion of the checking of learner evidence and meeting with the learner, the learner may **deny** that his/her assessment evidence has been plagiarised either by poor academic honesty or dishonestly. In this case, an investigation must take place (see Section 5).

SUSPECTED LEARNER MALPRACTICE PROCESS

Learner malpractice investigation should be completed as outlined in Figure 1.2

6.1 Initial Notification

In the event of suspected learner malpractice in an assessment event (e.g. examination), this should be dealt with promptly by the Assessment Invigilator and in accordance with **Examinations: Planning, Conducting and Concluding**. These instances must be recorded by the **Invigilators Report**.

In all cases where an alleged malpractice is identified, it must be notified to the Programme Coordinator and/or other personnel with responsibility for the operation of the programme. Notification must be in writing.

Learner malpractice investigation should be completed as outlined in Figure 1.2.

6.2 Appointment of Investigators

The Centre Manager will decide who should undertake the investigation in consultation with his/her senior management team. It is recommended that at least two staff members are involved in the investigation and should include the Programme Coordinator and a Learning Practitioner with assessment experience (unless there is a making of judgements (see Section 6.2.1). The Centre Manager (or designated appropriate personnel) is required to co-ordinate the investigation. In certain cases, if required, and in conjunction with the Centre Manager, an investigation may be undertaken by:

- An external investigator
- Internal audit

Figure 1.2 Learner Malpractice Investigation Process



The Centre Manager must complete the ***Alleged Assessment System Malpractice Report*** (see Appendix 1). It is important that only one report per learner is completed. If the alleged assessment system malpractice is suspected for more than one learner, separate forms must be used.

Any person who has a possible conflict of interest should not be involved in any investigation or subsequent making of judgments (see 6.2.1: Conflict of Interest).

6.2.1 Conflict of Interest

Conflict of interest means any issue that might unfairly influence, or appear to influence, the outcome of an investigation. Possible Conflict of Interest relates to situations where personnel:

- Have a personal relationship or family relationship with the learner being investigated
- Have a professional relationship with the learner being investigated that may be perceived to unfairly influence the investigation process

The Centre Manager shall be responsible for ensuring that a conflict of interest does not arise and that all members of an investigation panel sign a declaration to that effect (see Appendix 2). In cases where conflict of interest is identified, alternative arrangements must be put in place.

6.2.2 Natural Justice

Those responsible for conducting an investigation shall establish the full facts and circumstances of any alleged assessment system malpractice. It should not be assumed that an allegation equates to proof of a malpractice.

Any investigation into an alleged malpractice shall have due regard to the principles of natural justice. As such, it is necessary that those responsible for managing the conduct of any investigation must ensure adherence to these principles. This includes ensuring that:

- All investigations do not disadvantage the person against whom the allegation is made and are concluded within a reasonable timeframe (it is expected that this should be completed as promptly and as efficiently as possible except in exceptional circumstances which may take a maximum of **forty (40) working days** from the date of the notification to the Centre Manager of the alleged malpractice)
- The learners in question are made aware of the allegation and are given the opportunity to respond
- Care is taken to avoid conflict of interest (see Section 6.2.1)

The learner/learners against whom an allegation is made should therefore:

- Know what evidence exists to support that allegation
- Know the possible consequences should an assessment system malpractice be proven
- Have the opportunity to consider their response to the allegations (if required)
- Have an opportunity to submit a written statement
- Have an opportunity to seek advice (as necessary) and to provide a supplementary statement (if required)
- Be informed of the applicable appeals procedure, should a decision be made against him or her
- Be informed of the possibility that information relating to a particular malpractice may be shared with other relevant parties

6.3 Investigation

All notified alleged assessment system malpractices must be investigated.

It is expected that the investigation should be completed as promptly and as efficiently as possible, **except in exceptional circumstances** which may take up to a **defined timeframe maximum of forty (40) working days** from the date of the notification to the Centre Manager of the alleged malpractice.

6.3.1 Communication with Learner/Learners to be Investigated

The Centre Manager shall be responsible for communicating, in writing, to the learner to be investigated, in relation to the alleged assessment system malpractice(s).

The initial communication shall:

- Provide notification that an allegation of an assessment system malpractice has been received
- Advise that the Centre Procedures for Managing Assessment System Malpractices provide full details of how the investigation will be conducted
- Emphasise that the investigation will be carried out in a discreet and confidential manner, except in exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances cannot guarantee this confidentiality as identity may need to be disclosed to:
 - An Garda Síochána, fraud prevention agencies or other law enforcement agencies (to investigate or prevent crime including fraud)
 - The courts (in connection with court proceedings)
 - Other person(s) to whom ETB and/or awarding bodies are required by law to disclose identity

- Avoid implying or suggesting that conclusions have already been determined or that decisions have been made in respect of the application of corrective actions

Note: **Notification of Investigation Letter Template** (see Appendix 3)

6.3.2 Establishing the Facts within the Investigation

The investigating team should endeavour to obtain all the relevant facts about the alleged assessment system malpractice. This may be done through some or all of the steps outlined below:

- Review of allegation details
- Interview with the learner being investigated
- Interview with personnel and or/ management connected to the course, project or alleged malpractice
- Interview with learners connected to the course, project or alleged malpractice
- Interview with the other relevant parties
- Written statement(s) from the learner being investigated
- Written statement(s) from learners connected to the course, project or alleged malpractice
- Written statement(s) from personnel connected to the course, project or alleged malpractice
- Written statement(s) from other relevant parties
- Review of related assessment reports
- Review of previous learner record, to seek to establish whether there has been any previous malpractice investigations for this learner/learners
- Other related records

6.3.3 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a key aspect in the conduct of an investigation into an alleged malpractice, due to the risk of reputational damage to learners involved. In order to ensure confidentiality is maintained before, during and after an investigation, the following conditions should apply:

- Material relating to any allegations, findings or conclusions must not be made known to any parties, either internally or external to the Centre, beyond those key to the investigation
- It is not necessary to inform all learners being interviewed of the details of meetings with other parties, unless there is a specific relevant matter to be raised
- The name or other details of the learner making the malpractice allegation should not be divulged to the learner/learners to be investigated without consent
- All material relating to the investigation must be held and stored in a secure manner. Material relating to a given investigation should be stored together on a single file. Each file should have a unique code to identify the investigation. Copies of electronic material should also be held with this file

6.4 Results of Investigation

6.4.1 The Investigation Report

The results from the investigation of an assessment system malpractice, typically the **Investigation Report** (see Appendix 1), shall contain the following:

- Number of learners affected and/or implicated
- How the alleged malpractice was identified and notified to the Centre Manager/Assessment Coordinator
- The nature of the malpractice and the specific assessment procedure(s) or assessment rule(s) or assessment regulation(s) that has/have allegedly been breached, as well as the award details
- Details of the scope of the investigation carried out
- The findings:
 - details of the procedure, rule and/or regulation that is alleged to have been breached
 - a statement of the facts as described by all parties
 - details of any mitigating factors
- Any recommendations based on the findings
- Conclusion (whether the malpractice allegation is substantiated or unsubstantiated)

While the investigating team are required to make recommendations based on the findings, the team should not adjudicate on the report findings.

The report will be signed and dated by the investigating team. Any written statements, notes of interviews or other relevant documentation reviewed or obtained as part of the investigation must be filed separately and securely as part of the investigation process.

6.4.2 Report Findings Adjudication

The Investigation Report is submitted to the Centre Manager. The Centre Manager adjudicates on the report findings and notifies the person(s) involved in writing as to whether the allegation has been substantiated or not. Where the allegation is substantiated, the notification will include details of the appeal process in regard to the findings and the sanctions/consequences. The Centre Manager must complete the ***Findings Adjudication*** and ***Communication of Findings*** (see Appendix 1).

6.4.3 Communicating the Results

The Centre Manager is responsible for ensuring that the notification of the alleged assessment system malpractice investigation finding is communicated to the relevant learners within a **defined timeframe ten (10) working days** from the date of receipt of the investigator's report).

The finding of an investigation into an alleged assessment system malpractice may be:

- Unsubstantiated Assessment System Malpractice
- Substantiated Assessment System Malpractice.

Note: ***Letter Template*** for this communication (see Appendix 4).

6.4.4 Unsubstantiated Assessment System Malpractice

If the assessment system malpractice is found to be unsubstantiated, the Centre Manager will convey the findings of the investigation, in writing, and within the timeline specified, to the learners(s) involved. A record of the investigation is kept on file.

6.4.5 Substantiated Assessment System Malpractice

Where the allegation is substantiated, the Centre Manager will convey the findings of the investigation, in writing and within the timeline specified, to the learners(s) involved, and should include details of the sanctions/consequences of the assessment system malpractice.

In addition, the notification to the person must also outline the Assessment System Malpractice Appeal process and the timeline in regard to appealing the findings.

6.4.6 Communicating the Findings to Other Persons

In addition, the relevant Centre Manager will convey, as appropriate, the outcome of the assessment system malpractice investigation in writing to the ETB Manager.

SANCTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT SYSTEM MALPRACTICE

Depending on the findings of an investigation and the outcome adjudicated, further steps, such as **sanctions** or **disciplinary action**, may be required.

7.1 Sanctions

SANCTIONS

Sanctions are dependent on:

- The severity of the malpractice
- History of substantiated assessment malpractice by learner in the centre (if, for example, findings from a previous investigation have evidence of substantiated assessment malpractice against the learner in the Centre)
- Nature of assessment activity

Examples of sanctions which may be taken (this list is not exhaustive):

1. Written warning and assignment is marked as zero and submitted

When might this happen?

It is envisaged that this will occur in the following instances (**this list is not exhaustive**):

- The learner has not submitted draft material for feedback earlier in the assessment process which may have highlighted the issue
- The learner has submitted assessment evidence which has been plagiarised
- The learner has plagiarised an element of a module (e.g. research element of a project (10%))
- The learner has used another learner's work

What happens?

- The learner is issued with a written warning by the Programme Coordinator
- The assignment is marked as zero and submitted
- The learner is also notified that if the offence is repeated once within the Centre, further sanctions will be applied

Examples of sanctions which may be taken (this list is not exhaustive):

<p>2. Evidence for the entire module marked as zero and submitted</p>	<p>When might this happen?</p> <p>It is envisaged that this will occur in the following instances (this list is not exhaustive):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Unacceptable behaviour (see Section 3.2.2) ■ Large element of assessment evidence is not the original work of the learner (copied from another learner, poor academic honesty in assessment evidence, etc.) <p>What happens?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Evidence from the learner is marked as zero and submitted
<p>3. Results will not be submitted or will be cancelled (exceptional case)</p>	<p>When might this happen?</p> <p>It is envisaged that this will occur in the following instances (this list is not exhaustive):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Unacceptable behaviour (see Section 3.2.2) <p>What happens?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The ETB may withhold or cancel results and/or certificates if there is evidence to prove, or on the balance of probabilities it is found, that the results/certificate(s) issued to the learner are invalid

7.2 Disciplinary Action

About DISCIPLINARY ACTION

<p>Disciplinary Action is dependent on:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The severity of the malpractice ■ History of substantiated assessment malpractice by learner in the centre (if, for example, findings from a previous investigation have evidence of substantiated assessment malpractice against the learner in the Centre) ■ Nature of assessment activity
--	--

Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary Action will be in line with the relevant Centre and ETB policy guidelines.

7.3 Communication of Sanctions to the Learner



If no appeal has been lodged, the Centre Manager can proceed to notify the learner, in writing, of any sanctions being imposed.

The notification will include details of the Assessment System Malpractice Sanction Appeal process, including the timeline for an appeal of a sanction.

7.4 Implementation of Sanctions on Learners

If no appeal has been lodged, the Centre Manager can proceed to implement the sanctions.

APPEALS OF ASSESSMENT SYSTEM MALPRACTICE FINDING

Appeals can be made in relation to the malpractice finding. Appeals must be made within a **defined timeframe** **five (5) working days** of the decision.

In exceptional circumstances the Programme Coordinator may extend the defined timeframe. All appeals must be made in writing using the **Appeals Assessment System Malpractice Application Form** (see Appendix 5). The Appeals process is processed in line with the ETB appeals policy.

The grounds on which the appeal process can be activated are as follows:

- The alleged malpractice was not dealt with in accordance with fair procedures
- The regulations did not adequately cover the circumstances relating to the malpractice
- New information has become available that was not available to the investigation
- Decision was wrong and not supported by evidence

Decisions on appeals are final.

REFERENCES

QQI (2013) Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers. Available at: <http://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Quality%20Assuring%20Assessment%20-%20Guidelines%20for%20Providers%2C%20Revised%202013.pdf> [Accessed 28/02/2018]

APPENDIX 1: ALLEGED ASSESSMENT MALPRACTICE REPORT TEMPLATE

APPEALS APPLICATION FORM Alleged Assessment System Malpractice Report STRICTLY PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1: GENERAL	
Provider Details	
Centre Name:	
Address:	
Course Reference Number/Contract Number/Course Code (as applicable):	
Contact Name:	Position:
Email Address:	Contact No:
Assessment Details	
Award Details (Type/Level/Title): <i>e.g. Level 5 Minor Computer Applications</i>	
Title of Assessment:	
Assessment Location:	
Alleged Malpractice Details	
Date of Alleged Malpractice:	Time of Alleged Malpractice:

Description of Alleged Malpractice *(Specify the assessment procedure/rule that has allegedly been breached. Include details of mitigating factors, if any):*

Number of Learners Impacted (if any):

Nature of Impact on Learners:

Certification Status at time of Allegation Notification (tick as appropriate)

Certificates not requested and will not be progressed until process is concluded

Certificates have been issued and are to be retrieved and held pending outcome of process

Certificates have not been issued and will be held until the process is concluded

Certification will not be impacted upon

Notification of Malpractice Allegation

Name of relevant Centre Manager:

Notified by (name):

Date of Notification:

Learner to be investigated notified in writing Yes No

Name(s) of Investigator(s):

Contact Number:

Email Address:

Comment:

SECTION 2: INVESTIGATION REPORT

If this section is not applicable, please tick

Investigation

Name(s) of person(s) spoken to:

Documents reviewed:

Evidence reviewed:

Investigation Findings

Investigation Findings:

Supporting Documents/
Evidence/Testimony:

Allegation substantiated

Yes No

Investigation Report submitted to
relevant Centre Manager:

Date:

Signed (Investigator):

Date:

Print Name:

SECTION 3: FINDINGS ADJUDICATION AND COMMUNICATION OF FINDINGS

If this section is not applicable, please tick

Findings Adjudication by Centre Manager		
Malpractice Allegation Findings:	Substantiated	Not Substantiated
Comment:		
Signed (Centre Manager):		Date:

Communication of Adjudicated Findings				
Adjudicated Findings:	Communicated to (as relevant):	Please tick	Date:	Informed by:
	Investigated Learner			
	Relevant Manager			
	Other			

SECTION 4: SANCTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT SYSTEM MALPRACTICE (LEARNER ONLY)

If this section is not applicable, please tick

Sanction			
The sanction(s) recommended:			
Approved and Signed (Centre Manager):		Date:	

Communication of the Sanction				
Sanction being imposed:	Communicated to (as relevant):	Please tick	Date:	Informed by:
	Relevant Learner(s)			
	<u>Manager</u>			
Other party informed (specify):				

APPENDIX 2: DECLARATION REGARDING CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Declaration regarding Conflict of Interest:

For Persons involved in the Investigation of an Alleged Malpractice with the ETB Centre Assessment System

Conflict of interest means any issue that might unfairly influence, or appear to influence, the outcome of an investigation. A conflict of interest for a person investigating an alleged malpractice with the ETB Centre assessment system shall be deemed to exist if the personnel:

- *Are/were engaged in any aspect of the assessment process (including quality assurance functions)*
- *Have a personal relationship or family relationship with the party being investigated*
- *Are perceived to have a professional relationship with the party being investigated that may unfairly influence the investigation process*

Where a conflict of interest exists, there can be no involvement in the investigation of the alleged malpractice, or in the decision-making surrounding the outcome of the alleged malpractice.

Centre:

This is to certify that, as far as I am aware, no conflict of interest exists in relation to my participation in the investigation of the above-mentioned Alleged Assessment System Malpractice.

Name (Block Capitals):

Signature:

Position:

Date:

APPENDIX 4: NOTIFICATION OF ASSESSMENT SYSTEM MALPRACTICE FINDING LETTER TEMPLATE

NAME

ADDRESS 1

ADDRESS 2

ADDRESS 3

Reference Number: NUMBER

Date: DD/MM/YYYY

Subject: Finding of the Alleged Malpractice Investigation

Dear Mr/Ms Name,

I am writing to tell you about the finding of our investigation into the malpractice allegation. We have **upheld / not upheld** (*delete as appropriate*) the allegation.

(In the case of an allegation that has been upheld)

If you want to appeal this finding, you must complete the attached application form and return it to me within **ten (10) working days** from the date of this letter.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me. Please **keep this letter** as you will need the above reference number to complete the appeal form (if you are making one) and when you contact us on this matter.

Yours sincerely

Name

Manager

APPENDIX 5: APPEALS OF ASSESSMENT SYSTEM MALPRACTICE APPLICATION FORM

Appeal of Assessment System Malpractice Application Form Instructions

Please complete **all** parts of this form in BLOCK letters. Send it to the relevant Centre Manager who wrote to tell you about the assessment system malpractice finding. Please do this within a **defined timeframe** five (5) working days from the date of their letter.

Part A:

This section must be completed by the Learner

Nature of Appeal:

Appeal on Findings

Appeal on Sanctions

(please tick one box)

Name:

Address:

Reference Number *(you will find this on your letter):*

Contact Name:

Email Address:

Reason for your appeal *(please tick one box only)*

- Malpractice was not dealt with in line with the Centre procedures
- Regulations did not adequately cover the circumstances around the malpractice
- New information is now available that was not available to the investigation

Please explain your reason for this appeal application:

Print Name:

Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX 5: APPEALS OF ASSESSMENT SYSTEM MALPRACTICE APPLICATION FORM

Part B: This section must be completed by the relevant ETB Manager

Name:

Receipt date of application:

Application:

I can confirm that a review of the Application has been completed and that the Appeal is:

Granted Declined

Reason:

Signature:

Date:

**ASSESSMENT
DEADLINES:
COMPASSIONATE
CONSIDERATION**
IN EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES





LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1.1

Compassionate
Consideration
Procedure
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DEFINITIONS

Compassionate Consideration

The Programme Coordinator can enable learners who:

- **have been prevented from undertaking a specific assessment activity** because of extenuating circumstances, to apply to defer the assessment i.e. to be allowed to complete the assessment activity on another occasion.

or

- **felt their performance has been seriously impaired** because of extenuating circumstances to apply to repeat the assessment i.e. to be allowed to sit the assessment activity at an alternative sitting. In extenuating circumstances a learner may feel that his/her performance has been seriously impaired and may apply for compassionate consideration due to extenuating circumstances. In such cases supporting relevant evidence/documentation must accompany the application (see Section 3.3). The application is then processed and either granted or declined. Where the application has been declined the original result of the assessment will apply. Learners have the right to appeal this decision (see Section 6).

Examples of Extenuating Circumstances (Compassionate Consideration)

Extenuating Circumstances are situations or events which unexpectedly interfere with a learner's ability to complete or sit an element of

assessment. Extenuating circumstances which **may be considered** include, but are not limited to:

- recent physical injury or emotional trauma
- physical disability or chronic/disabling condition such as epilepsy, glandular fever, severe effects of pregnancy or other incapacitating illness of the learner
- recent bereavement of close family member or close friend
- personal injury certified by a medical practitioner
- domestic crisis
- certified mental health issue
- serious illness of a close family member
- serious illness of child or other family member for whom the learner is primary carer
- other extenuating circumstances

Examples of circumstances which are **unlikely to be considered** include, but are not limited to:

- typical symptoms associated with exam stress
- minor illnesses such as a common cold
- holidays
- IT and/or computer failure (excluding in an examination)
- English is not the first language of the learner

Any application in relation to compassionate consideration requires the learner to provide supporting relevant evidence/documentation (see Section 3.3) of the extenuating circumstances.

DEFINITIONS

Supporting Relevant Evidence/Documentation

Supporting relevant evidence/documentation refers to a:

- **Statement from a qualified professional practitioner.** Examples of statements from a qualified professional practitioner necessary for consideration of compassionate consideration include, but are not limited to:
 - Statement from medical practitioner (e.g. doctor, psychologist, etc.)
 - Statement from An Garda Síochána/legal professional
 - Statement from Programme Coordinator or Centre Manager (in extenuating cases, the Programme Coordinator or Centre Manager may be aware of circumstances whereby the learner may be unable to obtain a statement from another qualified professional (e.g. due to financial constraints) and may complete a statement for the learner while maintaining confidentiality (see Appendix 1)).or
- **RIP.ie or other source** (if requested)

**All evidence must be on headed paper and must be legible, stamped and dated.
All evidence must relate to the specific application for extenuating circumstances being made.**

PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT IN RELATION TO ASSESSMENT DEADLINES: COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION IN EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES



Quality assured assessment ensures that, in criterion referenced assessment, “learners are assessed and the assessment judgment is made based on whether the learner has reached the required national standards of knowledge, skill and competence for the award” (QQI, 2013 p.5). Central to quality assured assessment is the assumption that learners are assessed in a fair and consistent manner in line with the award standard. Quality assured assessment ensures adherence to the principles of assessment.

The following sets forth the principles of assessment which apply to this document: these principles are based on the QQI (2013) principles for assessment.

Principles of Assessments

1 Validity

Validity is a fundamental assessment principle ensuring that an assessment measures what it is designed to measure: the relevant standard of knowledge, skill or competence required for an award should be assessed.

Validity in assessment occurs when:

- Assessment is fit for purpose (i.e. a practical assessment assesses a practical skill)
- Learners can produce evidence which can be measured against the award standard
- Assessors can make accurate assessment decisions
- Assessment is accessible to all candidates who are potentially able to achieve it

2 Reliability

Reliability in assessment ensures that assessment measurement is accurate: the knowledge, skills and competence which the assessment measures should produce reliable and accurate results. Reliability in assessment ensures that results are consistent under similar conditions.

Reliability in assessment occurs when:

- The assessment is based on valid assessment techniques
- Assessment conditions are consistent
- Learner evidence is reliable
- Results are consistent over time across various assessors, contexts, conditions and learners



PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT IN RELATION TO ASSESSMENT DEADLINES: COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION IN EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

3 Fair

Fairness in assessment supports the validity and reliability principles and provides equal opportunity to all learners. Fairness in assessment ensures: learners have access to appropriate resources/equipment in assessment; assessment design and implementation are fair to all learners; and policies and procedures exist to ensure fair assessment of learners.

4 Quality

Quality in assessment ensures that all assessment processes are quality assured.

5 Transparency

Transparency in assessment ensures that assessment policy and process provide clarity to all relevant stakeholders.

In order to ensure the fair and consistent assessment of learners, the following procedure should be followed in relation to compassionate consideration in extenuating circumstances. The provider's Quality Assurance System overarches these principles and ensures learner achievement is assessed in a fair and consistent way in line with the national standards for the award.

In order to ensure fairness and consistency across all assessment activities, learners may apply for compassionate consideration in relation to their assessment. Such compassionate consideration could include deferring an assessment activity or providing an extension to an assessment deadline, and will only be granted in extenuating circumstances with supporting relevant evidence/documentation (see Section 3.3). In these circumstances, the learner must not be unfairly disadvantaged as a result of extenuating circumstances. Furthermore, the learner must not gain significant advantage when compared with other learners.

COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4

The Programme Coordinator

The Programme Coordinator is required to ensure all Learning Practitioners are made aware of their roles in relation to planning, conducting and concluding assessment (*Learning Practitioner Handbook*¹). In the request for compassionate consideration, the Programme Coordinator, or designated person, is responsible for the management of the application process.

The Learning Practitioner

The Learning Practitioner is required to inform learners of assessment deadlines in advance (*Learning Practitioner Handbook*¹, notice boards, etc.). Where a learner misses an assessment deadline, the Learning Practitioner should **not** accept assessment evidence after that date and should inform the learner of the compassionate consideration process in which s/he can engage.

In the request for compassionate consideration, the Learning Practitioner is required to inform and meet² with the Programme Coordinator in order to process the learner application.

The Learner

The learner is required to keep up-to-date with relevant assessment deadlines and consequences for missing same (*Learning Practitioner Handbook*¹, notice boards, etc.).

In the event of extenuating circumstances, the learner is required to complete the application for Compassionate Consideration using the guidelines in this document and ***Compassionate Consideration Application Form*** (see Appendix 2).

The learner is required to provide relevant supporting evidence/documentation (see Section 3.3) of the extenuating circumstances which they felt:

may have prevented or may prevent him/her from either:

- **completing** an assessment activity (Learner Record, Collection of Work, Project, Assignment or Skills Demonstration), or
 - **missing** a practical assessment (Examination or Skills Demonstration)
- or

seriously impaired or may seriously impair his/her performance in:

- a practical assessment (Examination or Skills Demonstration).

This supporting evidence/documentation must be provided within a reasonable **defined timeframe** after the assessment deadline date of application, **within two (2) days and no more than two (2) weeks,**³ after date of application

¹ The *Learning Practitioner Handbook* is currently under development

² In the case of Outreach or Distance Learning Programmes, the Learning Practitioner may be unable to meet with the Programme Coordinator and as such may communicate via phone and/or email.

³ In exceptional cases, the Programme Coordinator or Centre Manager may extend this date due to the specific circumstances which may prevent the learner from obtaining the relevant evidence/documentation within the allowed timeframe.

COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION PROCESS

Where a learner requires compassionate consideration in relation to an assessment deadline the process outlined in Figure 1.1. should be followed

Figure 1.1 Compassionate Consideration Process



⁴In exceptional circumstances, the Programme Coordinator may extend this.

a) **Granted:**■ **Revised schedule for assessment activity:**

If the decision is that the compassionate consideration application has been granted, a revised schedule for the assessment activity is agreed between the Learning Practitioner and the learner. Every attempt to facilitate this in the current assessment period will be made. However, due to time constraints, the nature of the assessment activity, and/or resources, this revised schedule may roll into a subsequent certification period

- **Examinations:** Where a compassionate consideration application has been granted, in the event that the assessment activity is an examination, a new examination paper, marking scheme and set of solutions must be devised: the original examination paper will not be used

- **Learner Evidence (Assignment, Project, Learner Record, Collection of Work and Skills Demonstration):** Where a

compassionate consideration application has been granted, the learner evidence is accepted by the Programme Coordinator or Learning Practitioner and **should be marked and graded in accordance with the standards for the award**. The actual marks and grade awarded are determined solely on the basis of the evidence submitted in accordance with the standards for the award. **There is no mark/grade penalty under this procedure**

b) **Declined:**

- If the decision is that the compassionate consideration application has been **declined**, the Programme Coordinator or Learning Practitioner will refuse to accept the assessment evidence from the learner (Levels 4-6). The learner has the right to appeal this (see Section 6)

COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION APPEALS

The learner has the right to appeal the decision in relation to compassionate consideration application decision. Appeals must be made within a **defined timeframe** one (1) working day of the decision (in exceptional circumstances the Programme Coordinator may extend this). All appeals must be made in writing using the **Appeals Application Form** (see Appendix 3).

REFERENCES

QQI (2013) Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers. Available at: <http://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Quality%20Assuring%20Assessment%20-%20Guidelines%20for%20Providers%2C%20Revised%202013.pdf> [Accessed 28/02/2018]

APPENDIX 1: STATEMENT FROM PROGRAMME COORDINATOR OR CENTRE MANAGER

In exceptional cases, the Programme Coordinator or Centre Manager may be aware of circumstances whereby the learner may be unable to obtain a statement from another qualified professional (e.g. due to financial constraints) and may complete a statement for the learner while maintaining confidentiality.

STATEMENT

FROM PROGRAMMME COORDINATOR or CENTRE MANAGER

Re APPLICATION for COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION

To be completed by the Programme Coordinator or Centre Manager

<u>Programme Coordinator or Centre Manager Name:</u>		
Learner Name:		
Course/Programme:		
Module(s):		
Declaration:		
<p>I can confirm that there are confidential extenuating circumstances which pertain to this learner which have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ prevented him/her from undertaking a specific assessment activity <li style="padding-left: 20px;">or ■ seriously impaired his/her performance⁵ 		
<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%; border: none;">Signed:</td> <td style="width: 40%; border: none;">Date:</td> </tr> </table>	Signed:	Date:
Signed:	Date:	

⁵In extenuating circumstances, a learner may feel that their performance has been seriously impaired and may apply for compassionate consideration due to extenuating circumstances. In such cases, relevant evidence/documentation must support the application (see 3.3) and the application for same must be granted. Where the application has not been granted, the original result of the assessment will apply.

APPENDIX 2: COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION APPLICATION FORM

APPLICATION FORM COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION in extenuating circumstances

Part A: This section must be completed by the Learner

Centre Name:

Learner Name:

Learner Address:

PPS Number (only necessary if requested for identification purposes):

Course/Programme:

Module(s):

Learning Practitioner:

Types of Assessment:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Examination | <input type="checkbox"/> Project |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Skills Demonstration | <input type="checkbox"/> Learner Record |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assignment | <input type="checkbox"/> Collection of Work |

Assessment Due Date(s):

Reasons for requiring the extension:

COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION in extenuating circumstances

Part A (continued): This section must be completed by the Learner

**Relevant supporting
evidence/documentation included (see 3.3)**

*Relevant supporting evidence/documentation
must be included in your application*

Yes No

Details of supporting relevant evidence/documentation:

Empty text area for providing details of supporting relevant evidence/documentation.

Signed:

Date:

**This application form must be submitted to the
Programme Coordinator or designated person**

COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION in extenuating circumstances

Part B (Office Use): This section must be completed by the Programme Coordinator

<u>Programme Coordinator Name:</u>	
Receipt date of application:	
<u>Learning Practitioner Name(s):</u>	
Application prior to or after the assessment activity/deadline: Prior to <input type="checkbox"/> After <input type="checkbox"/>	
Criteria:	Details:
Details of extenuating circumstances	
Severity of circumstances	
Application from learner	
Relevant supporting evidence/documentation	
Nature of the assessment activity	
Application:	Granted <input type="checkbox"/> Declined <input type="checkbox"/>
Declaration:	
I can confirm that:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A meeting with the <u>Learning Practitioner</u> to discuss the Compassionate Consideration application has taken place ■ There is sound evidence to grant or decline the application for Compassionate Consideration based on criteria above ■ If granted, the granting of Compassionate Consideration will not give the learner in question an unfair assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the assessment ■ I will inform the learner in writing of the decision regarding Compassionate Consideration 	
Signed:	Date:

COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION in extenuating circumstances

Part C (Office Use): This section must be completed by the Programme Coordinator
and returned to the Learner

This section should accompany relevant assessment material when submitted.

Learner Name:

Date of Decision:

Outcome:

Granted Declined

If granted, details of extended deadline etc.



APPENDIX 3: APPEALS APPLICATION FORM

(ASSESSMENT DEADLINES: SHORT-TERM EXTENSION/COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION)

APPEALS APPLICATION FORM

(Assessment Deadlines: Short-term Extension/Compassionate Consideration)

Part A: This section must be completed by the Learner

Nature of Appeal:

- Assessment Deadlines: Compassionate Consideration
 Assessment Deadlines: Short-term Extension

Centre Name:

Learner Name:

Date of Application:

Reason for Appeal:

Reason why decision was declined:

Details of supporting evidence provided:

Date of Application:

Part B: (Office Use) This section must be completed by the relevant ETB Manager

Name:

Receipt date of application:

Application:

I can confirm that a review of the Application has been completed and that the Appeal is:

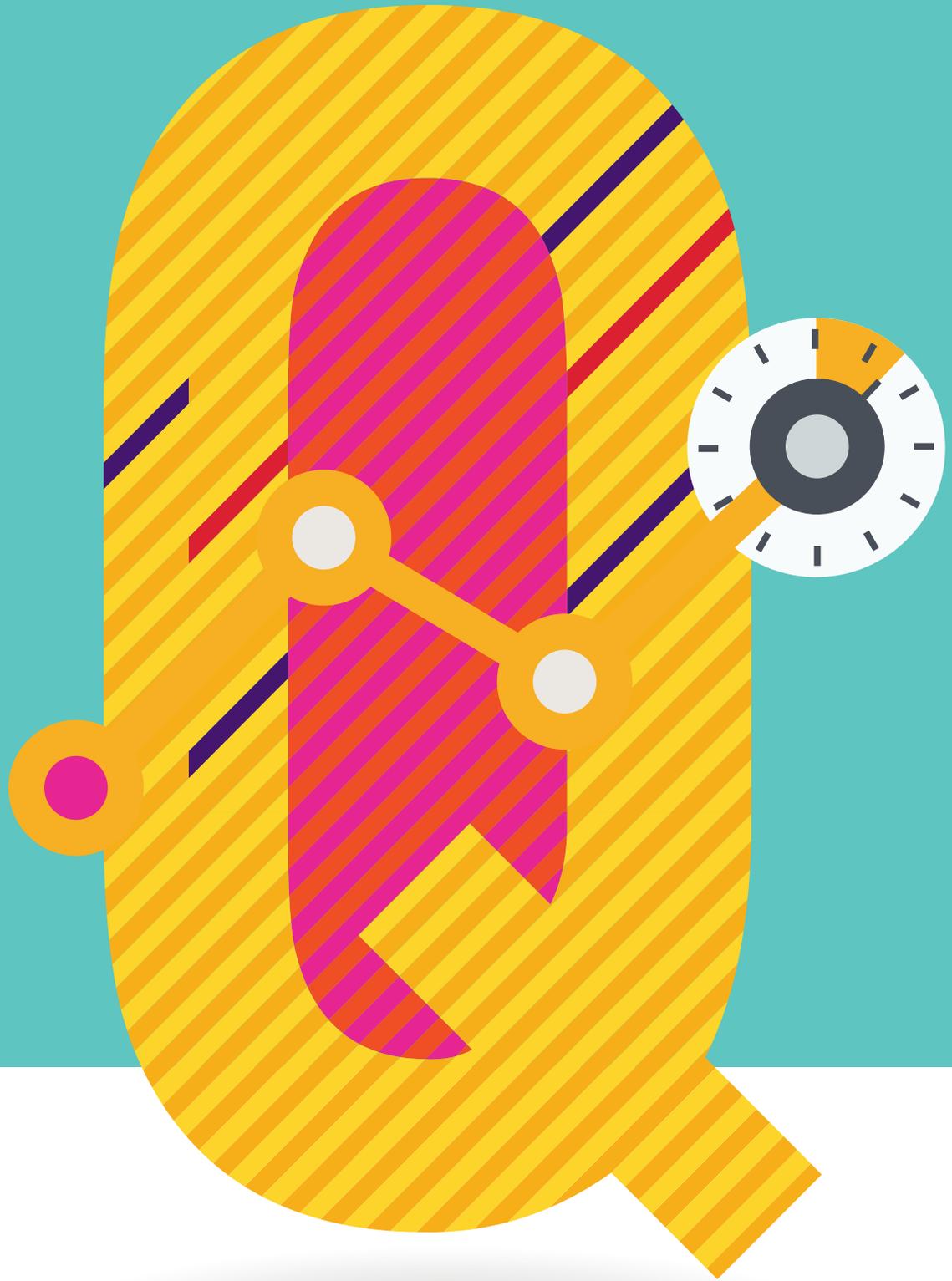
- Granted Declined

Reason:

Signature:

Date:

ASSESSMENT DEADLINES: SHORT-TERM EXTENSION





LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1.1

Expected Missed
Assessment Deadline
Procedure

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FIGURE 1.2

Unexpected Missed
Assessment
Deadlines Procedure

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FIGURE 1.3

Assessment Extension
Application Procedure

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DEFINITIONS

Assessment Deadlines

Assessment deadlines are planned in advance of assessment and adhere to the assessment plan for the programme or module. Learners **must** be made aware of assessment deadlines including submission dates for assessment evidence and dates of practical assessments (e.g. examination, skills demonstration, etc.) prior to, or as soon as is feasibly possible, in the programme or module (e.g. assessment plan, notice boards, etc.). These assessment deadlines should allow the learner adequate time in which to fully complete the assessment tasks.

Missed Assessment Deadline

The term “missed assessment deadline” refers to:

- Failure to submit assessment evidence on, or in advance, of agreed assessment deadline and/or
- Failure to attend a practical assessment (e.g. Examination, Skills Demonstration, etc.)

Missed assessment deadlines can be categorised as “Expected” (see Section 5) or “Unexpected” (see Section 6)

Short-term Extension

The term “short-term extension” refers to a **defined timeframe**: an assessment deadline will be extended within this timeframe in the case of extenuating circumstances (see 3.4).

The recommended maximum acceptable extension is **two (2) working days**. If the circumstances are expected to extend beyond a short-term extension, the process for *Assessment Deadlines: Compassionate Consideration in Extenuating Circumstances* should be followed.

Examples of Extenuating Circumstances (Short-term Extension)

Extenuating circumstances are situations or events which unexpectedly interfere with a learner’s ability to complete or sit an element of assessment. Extenuating circumstances which **may** be considered include, but are not limited to:

- Personal illness (with medical certificate)
- Illness/care of child or dependent relative (with medical certificate)
- Extreme bad weather
- Other extenuating circumstances may be considered under compassionate consideration application, see *Assessment Deadlines: Compassionate Consideration in Extenuating Circumstances*

Relevant evidence/documentation from a qualified professional practitioner (e.g. medical practitioner) should support an application, but will not guarantee an assessment extension.



PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT IN RELATION TO ASSESSMENT DEADLINES: SHORT-TERM EXTENSION

Quality assured assessment ensures that, in criterion referenced assessment, “learners are assessed and the assessment judgment is made based on whether the learner has reached the required national standards of knowledge, skill and competence for the award” (QQI, 2013 p.5). Central to quality assured assessment is the assumption that learners are assessed in a fair and consistent manner in line with the award standard. Quality assured assessment ensures adherence to the principles of assessment.

The following sets forth the principles of assessment which apply to this document: these principles are based on the QQI (2013) principles for assessment.

Principles of Assessments

1 Validity

Validity is a fundamental assessment principle ensuring that an assessment measures what it is designed to measure: the relevant standard of knowledge, skill or competence required for an award should be assessed.

Validity in assessment occurs when:

- Assessment is fit for purpose (i.e. a practical assessment assesses a practical skill)
- Learners can produce evidence which can be measured against the award standard
- Assessors can make accurate assessment decisions
- Assessment is accessible to all candidates who are potentially able to achieve it

2 Reliability

Reliability in assessment ensures that assessment measurement is accurate: the knowledge, skills and competence which the assessment measures should produce reliable and accurate results. Reliability in assessment ensures that results are consistent under similar conditions.

Reliability in assessment occurs when:

- The assessment is based on valid assessment techniques
- Assessment conditions are consistent
- Learner evidence is reliable
- Results are consistent over time across various assessors, contexts, conditions and learners



3 Fair

Fairness in assessment supports the validity and reliability principles and provides equal opportunity to all learners.

Fairness in assessment ensures: learners have access to appropriate resources/equipment in assessment; assessment design and implementation are fair to all learners; and policies and procedures exist to ensure fair assessment of learners.

4 Quality

Quality in assessment ensures that all assessment processes are quality assured.

5 Transparency

Transparency in assessment ensures that assessment policy and procedures provide clarity to all relevant stakeholders.

Assessment deadlines are dates that are planned in advance of assessment and should be adhered to. In order to ensure the fair and consistent assessment of learners, the following process should be followed in relation to the deadlines for submission of learner evidence. The provider's Quality Assurance System overarches these principles and ensures learner achievement is assessed in a fair and consistent way in line with the national standards for the award.

In order to ensure fairness and consistency across all assessment activities, learners may be granted an extension to an assessment deadline under extenuating circumstances. In these circumstances, the learner must not be unfairly disadvantaged as a result of extenuating circumstances. Furthermore, the learner must not gain significant advantage when compared with other learners.

ASSESSMENT DEADLINES ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Programme Coordinator

The Programme Coordinator must ensure that the Learning Practitioner and the learner are made aware of their responsibilities in relation to assessment deadlines (e.g. Learner Handbook¹, Notices, etc.).

In the event of a missed assessment deadline, the Programme Coordinator is responsible for the management of the application to extend the deadline.

The Learning Practitioner

Assessment deadlines are identified by the Learning Practitioner and communicated to learners in advance of assessment (notice boards, etc.) and included in the programme assessment plan (Quality Assurance (QA) requirement), which is also made available to the learners. Learners are expected to present assessment evidence on, or in advance of, the deadline identified by the Learning Practitioner, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

Where a learner attempts to submit assessment evidence after a deadline, the Learning Practitioner **must not** accept the assessment evidence unless there are **proven** extenuating circumstances and either a short-term extension application or compassionate circumstances application have been granted. Both the short term extension application and compassionate consideration application must be processed by the Programme Coordinator.

The Learner

Assessment deadlines are communicated to learners in advance of the actual deadline (assessment plan, notice boards, etc.).

At the commencement of the programme, all learners should sign a Learner Contract (where possible) which declares their responsibility in relation to meeting assessment deadlines and consequences for same (Learner Handbook)¹.

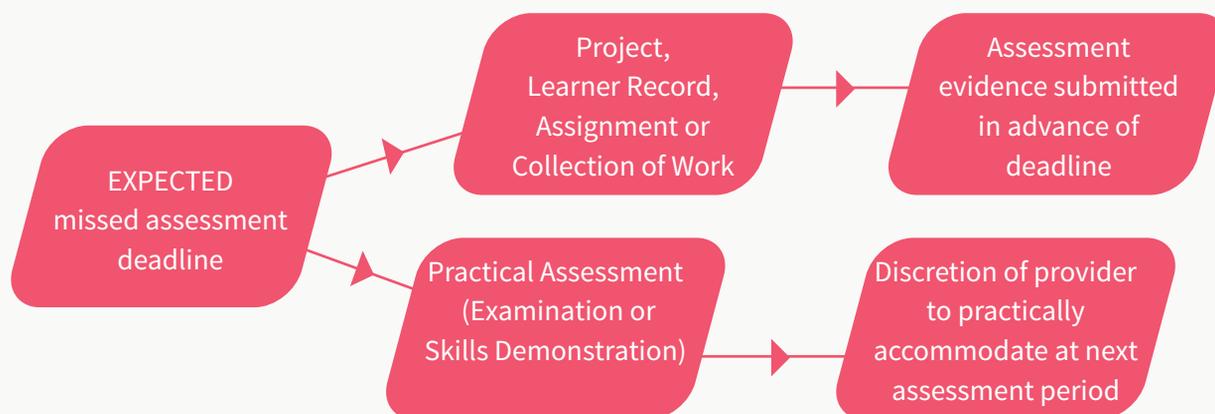
Important: The learner is responsible for the submission of assessment evidence for an assessment activity within the deadline specified (**on** or **in advance** of the deadline).

¹ The *Learner Handbook* is currently under development

“EXPECTED” MISSED ASSESSMENT DEADLINE PROCESS

Any expected missed assessment deadlines should follow the process outlined in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1 Expected Missed Assessment Deadline Process



“Expected” Missed Assessment Deadline include, but are not limited to: court appearance, job interview, medical appointment, wedding, graduation, family event, pre-planned event, etc.

Assessment deadlines are planned in advance of a programme or module and assessment deadlines are detailed on the Assessment Plan (quality assurance requirement) for the programme and/or module.

On occasion, prior to the commencement of the course/programme or once the assessment plan has been distributed to learners, the learner may discover that there is a planned assessment deadline which s/he is unable to meet (for example, due to a clash of dates, where an appointment/arrangement had been made prior to the publication of an assessment deadline). The following process should be followed in relation to an expected missed assessment deadline (see Figure 1.1).

5.1 Submission of Learner Assessment Evidence with a Specific Assessment Deadline (e.g. Project, Learner Record, Assignment or Collection of Work)

In the case of an expected missed assessment deadline, the learner is responsible for submitting assessment evidence (Project, Learner Record, Assignment or Collection of Work) in advance of the assessment deadline, unless there are extenuating circumstances. In such cases, the learner may apply for compassionate consideration due to extenuating circumstances (see *Assessment Deadlines: Compassionate Consideration in Extenuating Circumstances*).

5.2 Practical Assessment (e.g. Examination or Skills Demonstration) on a Specific Date

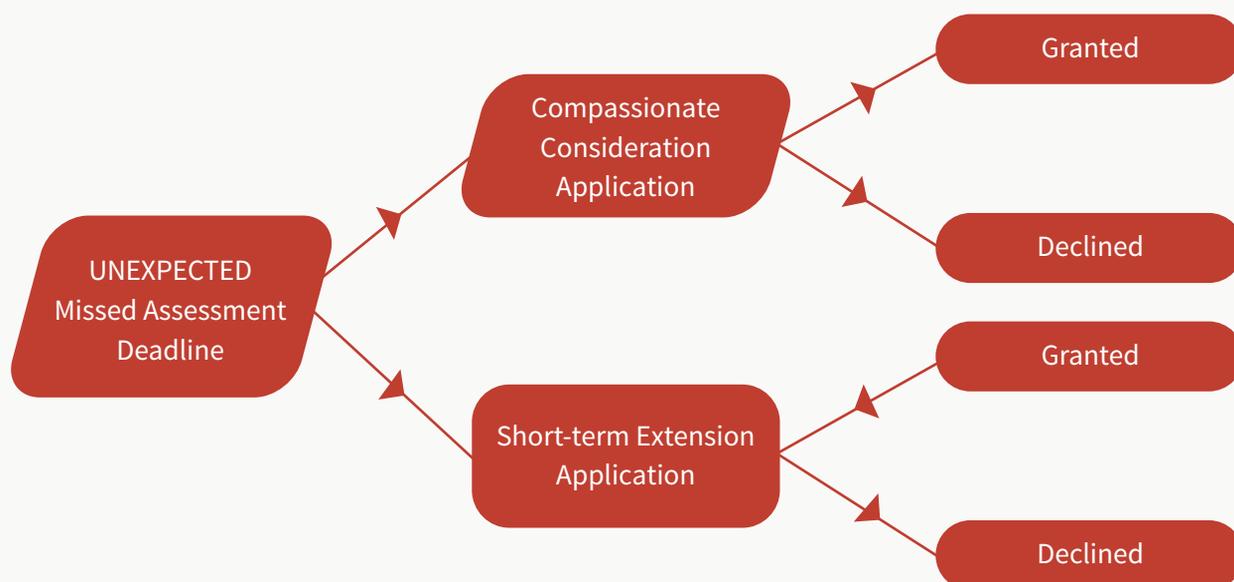
In the case of an expected missed practical assessment on a specific date, (e.g. Examination or Skills Demonstration), it is at the discretion of the provider as to whether the provider can practically accommodate the learner at an alternative sitting at the next assessment period.

SHORT-TERM EXTENSION APPLICATION PROCESS

Any expected missed assessment deadlines should follow the process outlined in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.2 Unexpected Missed Assessment Deadline Process

“Unexpected” missed assessment deadlines **include**, but are not limited to: illness (with medical certificate), involvement in an accident (see Section 3.4), etc.



Assessment deadlines are planned in advance of a programme or module and are detailed in the Assessment Plan for the programme and/or module.

In the event that, due to unforeseen circumstances, a learner may have missed an assessment deadline or may be aware that s/he will miss an impending assessment deadline, the learner may apply for one of the following (see Figure 1.2):

1. Assessment Deadlines: Short-term extensions (see Section 6.1)

or

2. Assessment Deadlines: Compassionate consideration in extenuating circumstances (see *Assessment Deadlines: Compassionate Consideration in extenuating circumstances*) using the appropriate application forms.

Figure 1.3 Assessment Extension Application Process

Assessment extension applications should follow the process outlined in Figure 1.3



In the event that a learner may be aware that s/he will miss an impending assessment deadline or has missed an assessment deadline, the following process must take place within a **defined timeframe** maximum of two (2) working days (see Figure 1.3). If there are extenuating circumstances, which will extend beyond the defined timeframe, the learner should proceed to the *Assessment Deadlines: Compassionate Consideration in Extenuating Circumstances*.

1. Learner notifies Programme Coordinator immediately (by phone or email)

In the event that a learner **may miss an impending assessment deadline** or **has missed an assessment deadline**, the learner must notify the Programme Coordinator immediately (by phone or email). The Programme Coordinator will give due consideration to the learner.

In **some** cases (where assessment evidence is required in hard copy), the learner **may** be eligible to submit the assessment evidence via email or other electronic method and subsequently submit the hard copy evidence (Assignment, Project, Collection of Work or Learner Record). If the Programme Coordinator

and Learning Practitioner agree that the assessment evidence sent via email or other electronic method is acceptable, the learner does **not** need to proceed with the missed assessment deadline application.

2. Learner completes Assessment Extension Application Form

The learner must complete an **Assessment Extension Application Form, Part A** (see Appendix 1). Where relevant evidence/documentation is available, the learner must submit the evidence to the Programme Coordinator.

3. Programme Coordinator processes Assessment Extension Application

The Programme Coordinator must complete **Assessment Extension Application Form, Part B** (see Appendix 1) and process the application based on the circumstances and evidence (if any). The Programme Coordinator must either grant or decline the application for an extension of assessment deadline. It is at the discretion of the Programme Coordinator to grant or refuse an extension. A learner can appeal the outcome (see Section 7).

4. If granted, the maximum acceptable extension is as per the defined timeframe (two (2) working days).

If an Assessment Extension is granted:

Where the application is successful, the learner evidence (Project, Learner Record, Assignment or Collection of Work) is accepted by the Programme Coordinator/Learning Practitioner and **should be marked and graded in accordance with the standards for the award.**

The actual marks and grade awarded are determined solely on the basis of the evidence submitted in accordance with the standards for the award. **There is no mark/grade penalty under this procedure.**

In the case of unexpected missed assessment of a practical assessment (Skills Demonstration/Practical Examination), it is at the discretion of the provider as to whether the provider can practically accommodate the learner at a re-sit within the next assessment period.

ASSESSMENT EXTENSION APPEALS

The learner has the right to appeal the decision in relation to assessment deadlines application decision. Appeals must be made within a defined timeframe (one (1) working day) of the decision. All appeals must be made in writing using the **Appeals Application Form** (see Appendix 2). The appeals process is processed in line with ETB appeals procedures.

REFERENCES

QQI (2013) Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers. Available at: <http://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Quality%20Assuring%20Assessment%20-%20Guidelines%20for%20Providers%2C%20Revised%202013.pdf> [Accessed 28/02/2018]

APPENDIX 1: ASSESSMENT DEADLINE: SHORT-TERM EXTENSION APPLICATION FORM

APPLICATION FORM ASSESSMENT DEADLINE: SHORT-TERM EXTENSION

Part B: (Office Use) This section must be completed by the Programme Coordinator

Programme Coordinator Name:

Assessment Due Date:

Date notified by Learner:

Notified by: Telephone Email

Receipt date of application:

Learning Practitioner Name(s):

Criteria: **Details:**

Details of extenuating circumstances:

Application: Granted Declined

Declaration:

I can confirm that:

- > There is sound evidence to grant or decline the application for an Assessment Extension
- > If granted, the granting of an assessment extension will not give the learner in question an unfair assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the assessment
- > I will inform the learner immediately of the decision regarding the Assessment Extension decision

Signature: **Date:**

APPENDIX 2: APPEALS APPLICATION FORM ASSESSMENT DEADLINES: SHORT-TERM EXTENSION/COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION

APPEALS APPLICATION FORM

(Assessment Deadlines: Short-term Extension/Compassionate Consideration)

Part A: This section must be completed by the Learner

Nature of Appeal:

- Assessment Deadlines: Compassionate Consideration
- Assessment Deadlines: Short-term Extension

Centre Name:

Learner Name:

Date of Appeals Application:

Reason for Appeal:

Reason why decision was declined:

Details of supporting evidence provided:

Part B: (Office Use)

This section must be completed by the relevant ETB Manager

Name:

Receipt date of application:

Application:

I can confirm that a review of the Application has been completed and that the Appeal is:

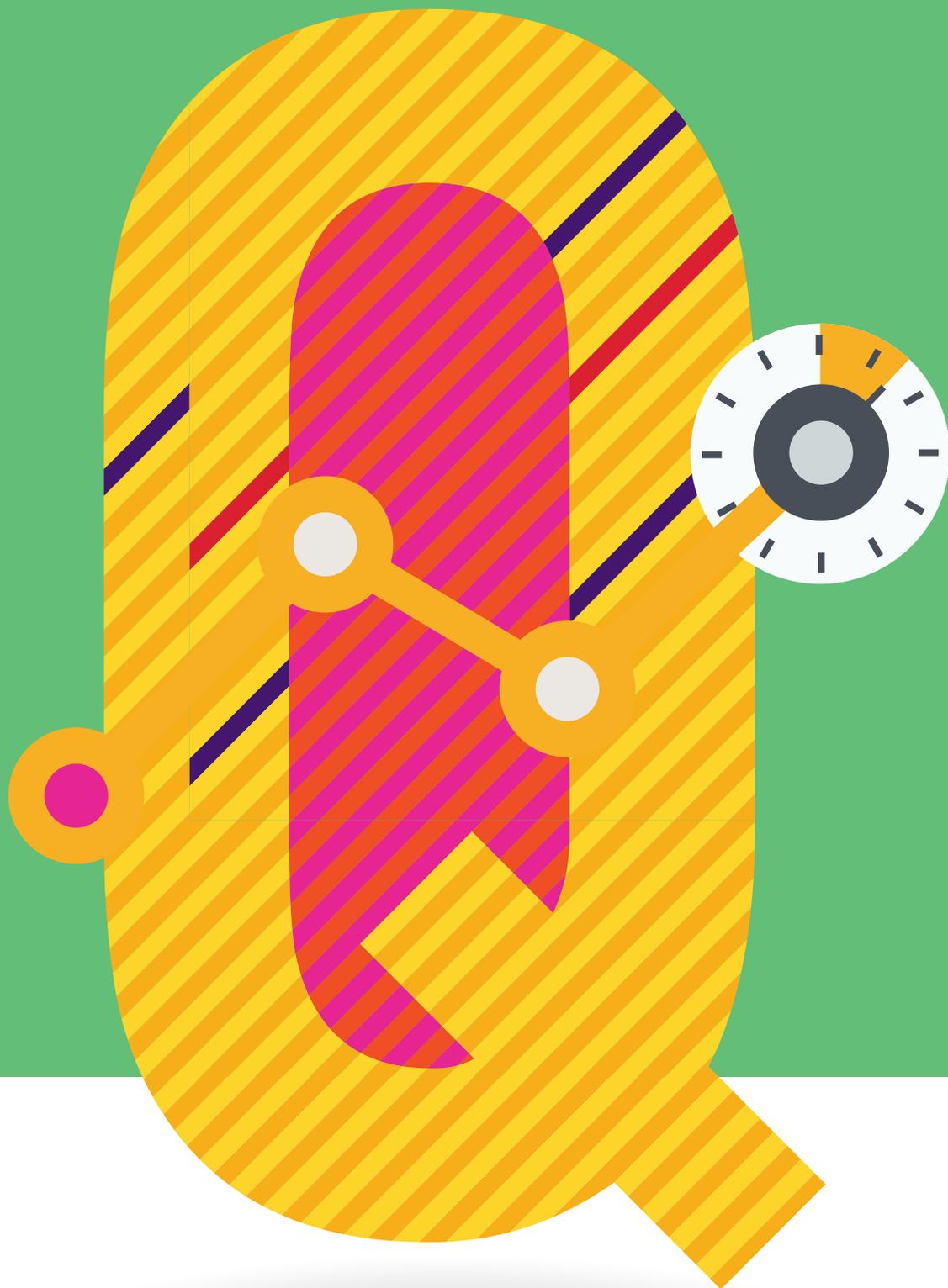
- Granted
- Declined

Reason:

Signature:

Date:

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION IN ASSESSMENT





LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1.1

Reasonable
Accommodation in
Assessment Procedure

Page **80**

DEFINITIONS

Reasonable Accommodation in Assessment

The Equal Status Act 2000 (Section 4) requires education and training establishments to provide reasonable accommodation to meet the needs of learners who have a disability (Government of Ireland, 2000).

In the context of assessment, reasonable accommodation is the term for the adaptation of assessment as necessary to cater for the needs of learners whose personal situation means that the assessment would otherwise be unfair, e.g. learners with a disability, and/or other learners covered by equality legislation. The grounds include: learning difficulty; deaf or having a hearing impairment; blind or visually impaired; physical difficulty (including mental health and/or behavioural difficulties along with physical difficulties); and any grounds covered by current legislation.

Reasonable accommodation guidelines for other awarding bodies supersede guidelines in this document.

Any adaptation of the assessment should facilitate the learner to demonstrate his/her achievement of the standards without altering the standard.

Special assessment arrangements/ adaptations are not intended to, and should not reduce, the validity and reliability of the assessment or compromise the standard.

Reasonable accommodation in assessment will only be accommodated when a learner can demonstrate with appropriate evidence/documentation that, because of a specific need, s/he cannot compete on equal terms, under standard assessment conditions, with his/her peers.

Adaptations of assessment for a learner may be implemented by the provider without having to request permission from QQI. Other awarding bodies may have different requirements and, in such cases, the provider, must adhere to the specific awarding body guidelines.

The adaptations may include the following and/or other reasonable adaptation:

- modified presentation of assignments/examination papers, e.g. enlargements
- scribes/readers
- sign language interpreter
- rest breaks
- adaptive equipment/software
- use of assistive technology
- additional time
- separate room/space

The implementation of these adaptations will ensure that all learners are assessed on an equitable basis. A provider is responsible for their implementation and any associated costs incurred¹.

¹ Note from Working Group: Additional cost and resource implications including reading of educational psychologist reports

DEFINITIONS

Relevant Evidence/Documentation for Reasonable Accommodation in Assessment

Examples of relevant evidence/ documentation necessary for application for reasonable accommodation in assessment include but are not limited to:

- Medical Report
- Educational Psychologist Report
- Occupational Therapist Report
- Guidance Counsellor Report²

Examples of relevant evidence/ documentation which **do not** qualify for application for reasonable accommodation in assessment application include:

- English is not the first language of the learner
- Literacy ability
- Injuries/disabilities that do not have an impact on the learner's ability to demonstrate the required standard of knowledge, skill and competence

² Note from Working Group: The cost of an educational psychologist's report can be prohibitive for many learners. Further investigation into other options needs to be investigated and added to this list at a later date, e.g. online testing.



PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT IN RELATION TO REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION IN ASSESSMENT

Quality assured assessment ensures that, in criterion referenced assessment, “learners are assessed and the assessment judgment is made based on whether the learner has reached the required national standards of knowledge, skill and competence for the award” (QQI, 2013 p.5). Central to quality assured assessment is the assumption that learners are assessed in a fair and consistent manner in line with the award standard. Quality assured assessment ensures adherence to the principles of assessment.

The following sets forth the principles of assessment which apply to this document: these principles are based on the QQI (2013) principles for assessment.

Principles of Assessments

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Validity is a fundamental assessment principle ensuring that an assessment measures what it is designed to measure: the relevant standard of knowledge, skill or competence required for an award should be assessed.

Validity in assessment occurs when:

- Assessment is fit for purpose (i.e. a practical assessment assesses a practical skill)
- Learners can produce evidence which can be measured against the award standard
- Assessors can make accurate assessment decisions
- Assessment is accessible to all candidates who are potentially able to achieve it

2 Reliability

Reliability in assessment ensures that assessment measurement is accurate: the knowledge, skills and competence which the assessment measures should produce reliable and accurate results. Reliability in assessment ensures that results are consistent under similar conditions.

Reliability in assessment occurs when:

- The assessment is based on valid assessment techniques
- Assessment conditions are consistent
- Learner evidence is reliable
- Results are consistent over time across various assessors, contexts, conditions and learners



PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT IN RELATION TO REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION IN ASSESSMENT

3 Fair

Fairness in assessment supports the validity and reliability principles and provides equal opportunity to all learners. Fairness in assessment ensures: learners have access to appropriate resources/equipment in assessment; assessment design and implementation are fair to all learners; and policies and procedures exist to ensure fair assessment of learners.

4 Quality

Quality in assessment ensures that all assessment processes are quality assured.

5 Transparency

Transparency in assessment ensures that assessment policy and procedures provide clarity to all relevant stakeholders.

In order to ensure the fair and consistent assessment of learners, the following process should be followed in relation to the provision of reasonable accommodation in assessment. The provider's Quality Assurance System overarches these principles and ensures learner achievement is assessed in a fair and consistent way in line with the national standards for the award.

In order to ensure fairness and consistency across all assessment activities, learners can apply for reasonable accommodation in relation to their assessment while at the same time ensuring that the assessment remains valid and reliable.

Special assessment arrangements/ adaptations are not intended to and should not reduce the validity and reliability of the assessment or compromise the standard. The adaptation should seek to amend the aspects of the assessment technique or instrument which prevent a learner's participation in the

assessment. It should be used where the particular assessment technique(s) or instruments disadvantage the learner in assessment. In essence, reasonable accommodations are put in place to facilitate the learner in demonstrating their knowledge, skill and competence to the standard required by the award. Making/providing reasonable accommodation is Not intended to make the assessment easier or more achievable. In implementing reasonable accommodations the learner should neither be advantaged or disadvantaged. The required standard must still be achieved and demonstrated, albeit in a slightly different way.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION IN ASSESSMENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Programme Coordinator

The Programme Coordinator must coordinate and assess the application for Reasonable Accommodation. The Programme Coordinator must also inform the learner of the outcome of his/her application. If an application is successful, the Programme Coordinator must work with the Learning Practitioner (and other relevant persons if required) to accommodate the learner, while **strictly adhering** to the assessment principles above and the standard of knowledge, skill and competence required for certification.

The Learning Practitioner

Once an application for Reasonable Accommodation is approved, the Learning Practitioner together with the Programme Coordinator (and other relevant persons if required) are required to plan and implement an alternative/adapted assessment in order to accommodate the learner, while **strictly adhering** to the assessment principles above and to the standard of knowledge, skill and competence required for certification.

The Learner

4.3.1 Specific Needs

The learner is required to inform the Centre, by identifying themselves as a person with **specific needs** and requesting the provision of alternative assessments and/or other support services that best meet their needs, prior to the commencement of the course **or (within four (4) weeks prior to the assessment event)**. This may allow reasonable accommodation to be facilitated. This application must be in writing using the Reasonable Accommodation in Assessment Application Form (see Appendix 1).

4.3.2 Temporary Circumstances

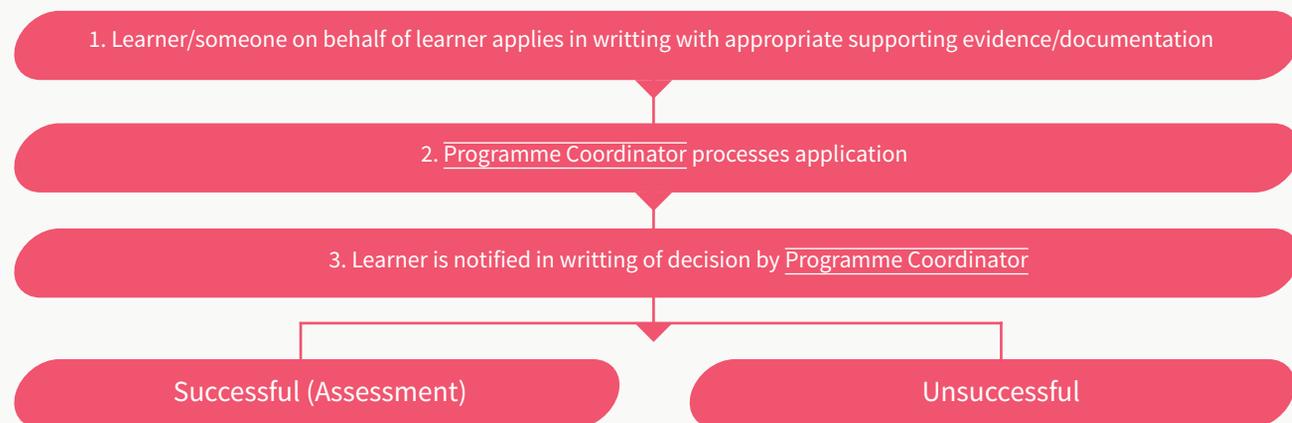
The learner is required to inform the Centre by identifying themselves, due to **temporary circumstances** (e.g. temporary injury), a person requesting the provision of alternative/adapted assessments and/or other support services that best meet their needs as soon as possible. This may allow reasonable accommodation to be facilitated. This application must be in writing using the *Reasonable Accommodation in Assessment Application Form* (see Appendix 1).

The learner is required to submit relevant evidence/documentation (see Section 3.2).

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION IN ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Any application for reasonable accommodation in assessment should follow the process outlined in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1 Reasonable Accommodation in Assessment Process



1. The learner (or someone on behalf of the learner) applies in writing for reasonable accommodation in assessment to the Programme Coordinator, using the ***Reasonable Accommodation in Assessment Application Form*** (see Appendix 1).

- **Specific Needs:** The application must be complete prior to the course commencement or within a **defined timeframe (four (4) weeks) prior to the assessment event**.

- **Temporary Injury:** The application must be complete as soon as possible.

2. The application **MUST** be supported with **all** relevant evidence/documentation (see Section 3.2). A dialogue between the Programme Coordinator and learner must take place in order to determine the needs of the learner and ways to support and facilitate the learner in the assessment process, while adhering to the principles of assessment.

3. The Programme Coordinator must decide whether there is sufficient evidence (see 3.2) to proceed with the application. Additional information may be sought through

dialogue between the Programme Coordinator and the learner.

The Programme Coordinator informs the learner in writing of the decision.

■ **Successful:**

If the application is **successful** (i.e. there is sufficient evidence to proceed with the application), the Programme Coordinator will inform the learner of the outcome **within two (2) weeks** from receipt of all evidence/documentation. The Programme Coordinator will work with the Learning - (and other relevant persons if required) to adapt the assessment process, while strictly adhering to the principles of assessment in relation to reasonable accommodation (see Appendix 2).

■ **Unsuccessful:**

If the application is **unsuccessful** (i.e. there is insufficient evidence to proceed with the application), the Programme Coordinator will inform the learner. The learner may appeal this decision.



REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION IN ASSESSMENT APPEALS

The learner has the right to appeal the decision in relation to the reasonable accommodation in an assessment application decision. Appeals must be made within a **defined timeframe one (1) working day of the decision** (in exceptional circumstances the Programme Coordinator may extend this). All appeals must be made in writing using the **Appeals Application Form** (see Appendix 3). The appeals process is processed in line with Educational Training Board (ETB) appeals procedures.

REFERENCES

Government of Ireland (2000) *Equal Status Act 2000*. Dublin: The Stationery Office. QCI (2013) Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers. Available at: <http://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Quality%20Assuring%20Assessment%20-%20Guidelines%20for%20Providers%2C%20Revised%202013.pdf> [Accessed 28/02/2018]

APPENDIX 1: REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION IN ASSESSMENT APPLICATION FORM

APPLICATION FORM REASONABLE ACCOMODATION IN ASSESSMENT

This request must be completed at the start of the academic year and be submitted along with relevant evidence/documentation to the Programme Coordinator for approval.

Part A: This section must be completed by the learner

Centre Name:

Learner Name:

Award/Course:

Module(s):

Learning Practitioner(s):

Assessment Techniques:

<input type="radio"/> Examination	<input type="radio"/> Project
<input type="radio"/> Skills Demonstration	<input type="radio"/> Learner Record
<input type="radio"/> Assignment	<input type="radio"/> Collection of Work

Details of reasonable accommodation being requested:

Supporting relevant evidence/documentation included: Yes No

Details of supporting relevant evidence/documentation:

Learner Signature:

Date:

Part B: (Office Use)

This section must be completed by the Programme Coordinator

Programme Coordinator Name:

Receipt date of application:

Details of relevant evidence/documentation:

Application:

Successful

Unsuccessful

Adaptation of assessment details:

Signature:

Date:

Part C: (Office Use)

This section must be completed by the Programme Coordinator

Learner Name:

Date of Decision:

Outcome:

Successful

Unsuccessful

If granted, details of assessment adaptation:

APPENDIX 2: ADAPTATIONS OF ASSESSMENT

Individualisation

As a general rule, an adaptation to the form of delivery, which makes learning possible, will also assist in making assessment possible. The learner is usually the best authority on what form of delivery is the most effective and the same method(s) may then be possible during any assessment. However, **it is important that the standard of work required by the assessment is not compromised. Only the method(s) by which the learner demonstrates his/her attainment of the standard can be adjusted.**

Rest Breaks

Supervised rest breaks either inside or outside the assessment area should be allowed as is appropriate. A rest break can be flexible according to individual needs, e.g. ten minutes every hour as opposed to one twenty minute period during a three-hour assessment. The time so used should not be deducted from the time allowed (where specified) to complete the assessment. Rest breaks should not exceed 20 minutes per examination.

Split Sessions

Splitting the assessment into two or more sessions may be an appropriate alternative for some learners.

Extra Time

In the case of assessments that are based on an time, additional time of **ten (10) minutes per hour**, or part thereof, is allowed for learners with a visual impairment; for learners where a scribe has been sanctioned; or for learners who meet the eligibility criteria for the use of a recording device or a word processor but who are unable to make use of these aids under examination conditions.

Readers

A reader is a person provided to assist a learner with a disability by reading assessment questions aloud without suggesting the answer. A reader is a person who, on request, will read to the learner:

- a. The entire or any part of the assessment
- b. Any part of the learner's answers (exactly, as they are 'spoken')

Readers are typically used by people with visual impairments, people who tire easily, people who have extreme muscle weakness, and people with learning difficulties.

Only one reader per learner is permissible and the assessment should take place in a separate room or area. Such provision may give rise to the need for extra assessment supervision personnel.

Writers/Scribes

A writer is a person who will, on request, write the answers exactly as given or dictated by a learner. A writer may also act as a reader and is often used in similar circumstances to a reader. As in the case of a reader, only one writer per learner is permissible and the assessment should take place in a separate room or area. Such provision may give rise to the need for extra assessment supervision personnel.

Sign Language Interpreters

Sign Language Interpreters must be qualified to interpret Sign or other similar types of language. Only one Sign Language Interpreter per learner should be used. The assessment for learners (usually those who are deaf or hard of hearing) should take place in a separate room or area. Such provision may give rise to the need for extra assessment supervision personnel.

For extra transparency, it may be necessary to video-tape the assessment for translation later. Similarly, some learners may prefer to sign their answers directly to video. A signed response should be transcribed to print by someone proficient in sign language. Any words or phrases re-interpreted for the learner should be underlined and noted in the question paper.

Overwriting

Overwriting involves rewriting a question on an examination paper in such a way as to make it as explicit as possible. Overwriting should be in pen on the answer paper. This is done by assessment supervision personnel *in situ*. Where extensive modifications are necessary, a separate sheet of paper with the questions written in full should be attached by staple to the original answer paper. Technical terminology should not be overwritten. In case of doubt about technical terminology a subject matter expert can be consulted. Care must be taken to retain the original emphasis of the question.

Computers

The use of computers by learners with a disability may be necessary as their primary means of communication, e.g. for learners with physical impairments for whom writing is difficult, for learners with visual impairments or blindness, and for learners with learning disabilities such as dyslexia.

The definition of a 'computer' generally refers to hardware and/or software which facilitate/s effective communication for people for whom this may not otherwise be possible. It may be standard equipment e.g. the use of word-processing software by someone with motor

difficulties which impede handwriting, or may be specially adapted e.g. speech synthesisers and text enlargement software/hardware for people with visual impairments.

Where voice-activated software is used, the assessment should take place in a separate room or area. Such provision may give rise to the need for extra assessment supervision personnel. It is the responsibility of the assessment/training location to supply the appropriate hardware/software.

Audio-recording

Audio-recording assessments and responses are useful in some cases, e.g. visual impairment or motor difficulties. The centre should supply the assessment recording and a blank recording device/tape to learners at the same time as other learners. However, in order to minimise disruption to learners, the person should either use headphones or complete their assessment in a separate room or area. Such provision may give rise to the need for extra assessment supervision personnel.

Braille, Braille-mate, Braille 'n speak, Braille 'n print, etc.

Braille is generally, though not exclusively, used by learners who are blind or visually impaired. It is generally advised that the Braille machine is attached and adapted to a printer which will produce a printed text. The responses of the learner should not be printed until after the end of the assessment time, as the noise levels may be too high for other learners. The assessment/training location should supply the printer, braille paper and/or the computer print-out paper.

APPENDIX 2: ADAPTATIONS OF ASSESSMENT

The Use of CCTV (closed circuit television)

This is a technological aid that magnifies print. It is usually used for learners with visual impairments. The learner can read the assessment paper as well as his/her answers from a TV screen. The learner uses the base under the screen to write and this is simultaneously magnified on the screen.

Enlarge print i.e. A3 size

Some learners, usually those with visual impairments, may simply require their assessment papers in enlarged print, i.e. A3 size paper.

Examination Papers in Colour

Some learners, especially those who have dyslexia, may require their assessment paper in a colour other than Black and white e.g. black on yellow, or black on grey. A gloss/high-sheen coated paper may also be unsuitable. The learners themselves should be consulted.

Other Technologies

The whole area of new technologies and access to information is rapidly changing. The opportunities for learners to demonstrate their abilities are increasing with the advent of assistive devices like the 'true-type talking microphone', a device which, with practice, can type onto a computer screen a person's spoken word. Such technologies are also becoming more accessible in terms of general availability and price.

Separate Room

Many learners experience recognised mental health illness at the time of examinations such as stress, insomnia, and anxiety. Learners should be able to access a separate room from the examination hall/skills demonstration room, via extra time/space/supervision, to ensure that the learner is not disadvantaged by their mental health condition.

APPENDIX 3: APPEALS APPLICATION FORM (REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION)

APPEALS APPLICATION FORM (Reasonable Accommodation)

Part A: This section must be completed by the Learner

Centre Name:

Learner Name:

Date of Application:

Reason for Appeal:

Reason why decision was declined:

Date of Appeal Application:

Part B: This section must be completed by the relevant ETB Manager

Name:

Receipt date of application:

Application:

I can confirm that a review of the Application has been completed and that the Appeal is:

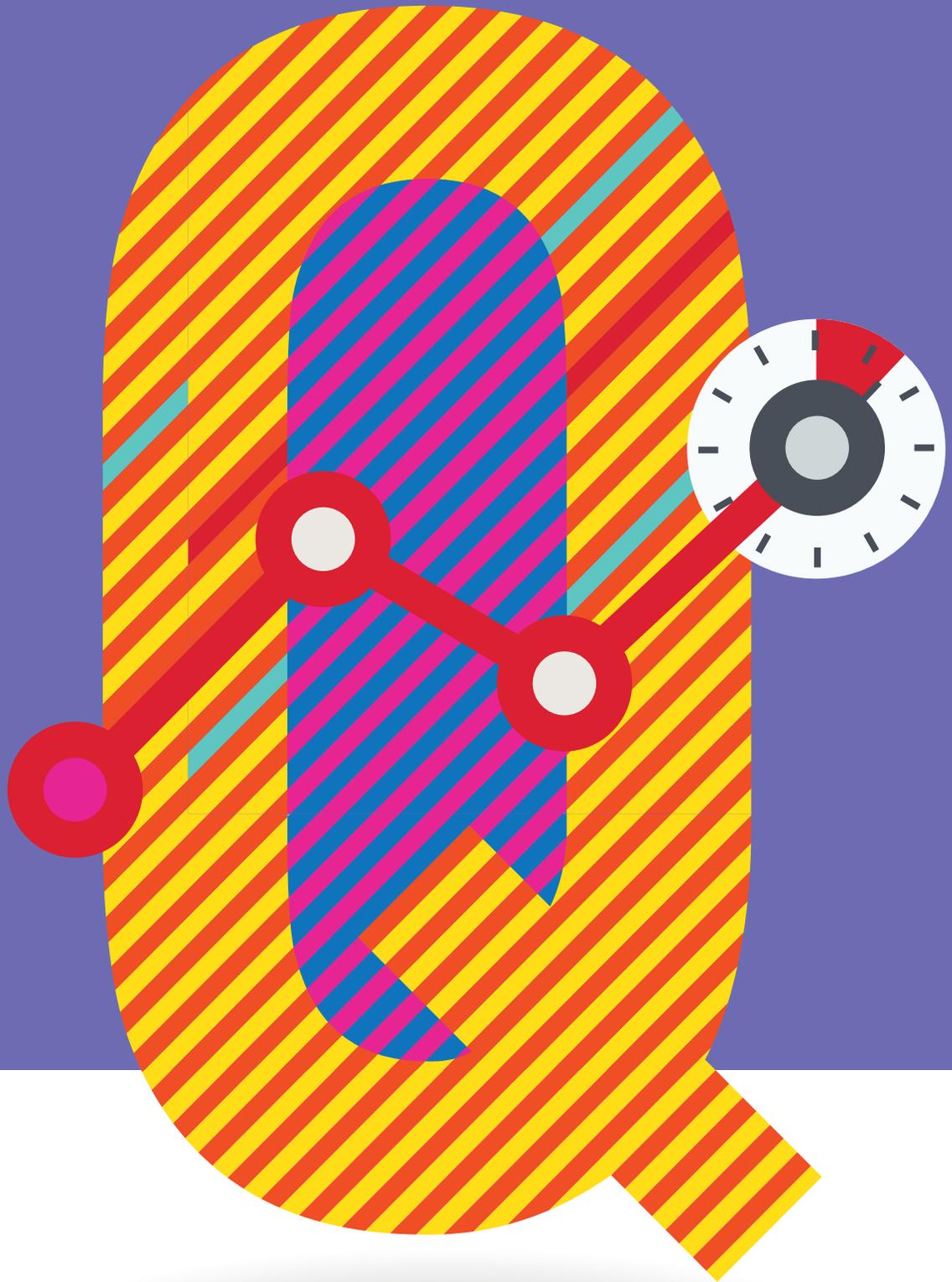
Granted Declined

Reason:

Signature:

Date:

EXAMINATIONS: PLANNING, CONDUCTING AND CONCLUDING



DEFINITIONS

Examination

Examination refers to any theory based, oral, aural, online or practical examination **which occurs on a specific date and for a specific duration**. All other assessment techniques, including assignment, collection of work, learner record, project and skills demonstration, are not informed by this document.

Assessment Resources

Assessment resources refer to any **permitted** resources which learners require in an examination as informed by the programme. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Dictionaries
- Maths formulae and log tables
- Art materials
- Non-programmable calculators (see Appendix 1)

Additionally some learners may require specific resources. These should be considered and approved under the *Reasonable Accommodation in Assessment*.

Invigilator Pack

The Invigilator pack refers to the following documentation which should be used by all Invigilators in an examination:

- Examination Learner Instructions (Short Version) (Appendix 2)
- *Examinations: Planning, Conducting and Concluding* and any other relevant Centre and specific awarding body assessment procedures
- *Learner Assessment Malpractice* guidelines (guidelines on what to do if a serious incident occurs)
- Examination documentation (e.g. examination papers, etc.)
- Sign-in sheet and Invigilator Report (can be a combined document). This document should list all learners sitting the examination along with a space for learners to sign. Additionally, the report should allow the Invigilator to record any incidents which occurred during the examination
- Seating Plan
- Any specific resources needed for the assessment (e.g. printer paper, working computers, pens, papers, USB keys) and checked prior to the examination
- Door sign (Exam in progress: No unauthorised access)

The Invigilator pack is prepared by the Learning Practitioner or other person designated by the Programme Co-ordinator.

PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT IN RELATION TO EXAMINATIONS

Quality assured assessment ensures that, in criterion referenced assessment, “learners are assessed and the assessment judgment is made based on whether the learner has reached the required national standards of knowledge, skill and competence for the award” (QQI, 2013 p.5). Central to quality assured assessment is the assumption that learners are assessed in a fair and consistent manner in line with the award standard. Quality assured assessment ensures adherence to the principles of assessment.

The following sets forth the principles of assessment which apply to this document: these principles are based on the QQI (2013) principles for assessment.

Principles of Assessments

1 Validity

Validity is a fundamental assessment principle ensuring that an assessment measures what it is designed to measure: the relevant standard of knowledge, skill or competence required for an award should be assessed.

Validity in assessment occurs when:

- Assessment is fit for purpose (i.e. a practical assessment assesses a practical skill)
- Learners can produce evidence which can be measured against the award standard
- Assessors can make accurate assessment decisions
- Assessment is accessible to all candidates who are potentially able to achieve it

2 Reliability

Reliability in assessment ensures that assessment measurement is accurate: the knowledge, skills and competence which the assessment measures should produce reliable and accurate results. Reliability in assessment ensures that results are consistent under similar conditions.

Reliability in assessment occurs when:

- The assessment is based on valid assessment techniques
- Assessment conditions are consistent
- Learner evidence is reliable
- Results are consistent over time across various assessors, contexts, conditions and learners

3 Fair

Fairness in assessment supports the validity and reliability principles and provides equal opportunity to all learners. Fairness in assessment ensures: learners have access to appropriate resources/equipment in assessment; assessment design and implementation are fair to all learners; and policies and procedures exist to ensure fair assessment of learners.

4 Quality

Quality in assessment ensures that all assessment processes are quality assured.

5 Transparency

Transparency in assessment ensures that assessment policy and procedures provide clarity to all relevant stakeholders.

In order to ensure that assessment is fair for all learners along with being reliable and consistent across ETBs, programmes and modules, the following process should be followed in relation to planning, conducting and concluding examinations.



EXAMINATION: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Invigilator

The Invigilator must:

- Be in attendance **recommended timeframe (minimum timeframe: at least thirty (30) minutes)** prior to the commencement of the examination
- Distribute examination papers and any other specific assessment instructions
- Note the actual start, duration and finish time on a white board/flipchart/other, and read aloud same to learners
- Actively monitor the learners for the entire duration of the examination, thus ensuring the proper conduct of the examination. The Invigilator is required to give their **entire attention** to the work of invigilating

The use of mobile phones or personal music appliances; reading of newspapers, or books; personal/work related activities; or engaging in any occupation other than invigilating, during the examinations, is strictly forbidden. The Invigilator should not bring in to the Examination Centre any items (including newspapers, books, other personal/work related materials) other than those which relate to the examination

- Deal with any problems which may arise. It is recommended that there is another member of staff available on site (or within close proximity) in the case of any emergency
- Adhere to the guidelines in this document for when commencing, conducting and concluding an examination (see Section 4)
- Adhere to any other specific guidelines as specified by the awarding body

The Programme Co-ordinator

The Programme Co-ordinator must:

- Assign examination locations (e.g. rooms) and designate the Invigilator (ensuring no conflict of interest exists)
- Ensure that the room layout and relevant facilities are fit for purpose (see Section 4.1.4 and Section 4.1.5)
- Assign the role of Invigilator Pack compilation to the Learning Practitioner or other designated person
- Ensure that all Learning Practitioners have submitted dates for examinations in advance of the programme commencing and that learners have been given sufficient notice of an examination taking place
- Ensure that the Invigilator is aware of any reasonable accommodation in assessment pertaining to the specific examination

The Learning Practitioner

The Learning Practitioner must:

- Ensure secure storage of assessment materials (examination papers, outline solutions and marking schemes, etc.) in line with the *Secure Storage policy*
- Distribute the assessment plan, including examination dates, to learners at the earliest opportunity
- Prepare the Invigilator pack (if requested by Programme Co-ordinator)

Where possible the Learning Practitioner or person responsible for the paper, will ensure that s/he or a person capable of handling queries shall be available at the examination or by telephone when the event is underway.

The Learner

The learner must:

- Take responsibility to note carefully the assessment: date/time; duration; and examination location, as fixed on the timetable, for the examination in the modules in which the learner intends to present himself/herself
- Be responsible for making their own arrangements to ensure timely attendance at the examination
- **Be in attendance within a specific timeframe (recommended timeframe: at least fifteen (15) minutes) before the hour stated in the timetable**
- **Not enter the examination after a specific timeframe (recommended timeframe: thirty (30) minutes) from the time at which the examination began (recommended time for 2 hour examination). Access to a learner will be denied after the specified time has elapsed**
- **Not leave the examination until a specific timeframe has elapsed (recommended timeframe: at least thirty (30) minutes) from the time at which the examination began (recommended time for 2 hour examination). Permission to the learner will be denied until after the specified time has elapsed**
- Present a valid photo ID (passport, drivers licence, college ID or public services card) for inspection by the Invigilator, where the learners are unknown (e.g. larger Centres)



- Not bring into the room or have in his/her possession or under his/her control or within his/her reach whilst s/he is in such room:
 - Any resource, memorandum, notes, etc., except those as permitted under the particular examination
 - Any electronic equipment including iWatch or equivalent, etc.
- Be responsible for their personal property. Where small bags (e.g. handbags) are permitted in the examination, learners are responsible for their own property. As small bags should be placed away from the learners on the floor: not accessible during the examination. Phones must be switched off. Bags must be placed on the floor and out of the reach of each learner
- Sit the examination/practical assessment at the published time
- Adhere to the guidelines in this document
- Be aware of the implications of any malpractice
- Sign and submit all assessment materials after the examination
- No learner shall be permitted to leave the examination **in the final ten (10) minutes** of the examination time (**recommended time for 2 hour examination**)



EXAMINATION: GUIDELINES FOR STAFF

4.1 Planning an examination

4.1.1 Reasonable accommodation in assessment

The Invigilator should be notified by the Programme Coordinator of any reasonable accommodation assessment pertaining to the specific examination (see ***Reasonable Accommodation in Assessment***).

4.1.2 Keeping assessment materials secure

All Learning Practitioners are responsible for the secure storage of assessment materials (examination papers, outline solutions and marking schemes, etc.) in line with *Secure Storage* policy. They should make the assessment materials available for the Invigilator in line with the Centre policy.

4.1.3 Examination Timetable/Examination Learner Instructions

Sufficient notice of examination timetables should be given to the learners.

While the assessment plan should be made available at the commencement of the programme, the examination dates should be published using Centre's communication system (e.g. notice board, moodle, email, etc.) within a **specific timeframe (recommended timeframe: at least one (1) month)** prior to the examination.

A copy of the Examination Learner Instructions (Short Version) (See Appendix 2) should be distributed to the learner in advance of the assessment.

4.1.4 Room Layout/Facilities

The room layout and relevant facilities need to be checked so that they are fit for purpose. Sufficient space around learners must be available in order to maintain assessment integrity.

All posters/diagrams/wall materials/etc. (which may impact the validity of the specific assessment) should be removed prior to the examination.

A working clock should be available and visible.

4.1.5 Examination Resources (Centre)

Any examination resources needed for the assessment (e.g. printer paper, working computers, internet access, pens, papers, USB keys) should be provided and checked prior to the assessment.

All examination resources provided by the Centre need to be checked to ensure the integrity of the examination.

4.1.6 Prearranged Seating Plan

In some instances (e.g. awarding body requirement), a seating plan may be required prior to the examination.



4.2 Conducting an Examination

4.2.1 On the day of the Examination

4.2.1.1 Invigilator Check

The Invigilator should sign out the Examination materials from the secure storage location and this should be co-signed by the Programme Co-ordinator or designated person.

The Invigilator should take the Invigilator Pack to the Examination.

The Invigilator must report on any issues which may arise using the materials/reporting template located in the Invigilator Pack.

4.2.1.2 Learner Identification

In some examinations, where the learners are not known to the Invigilator, learners may need to verify identity. Examples of learner identification include but are not limited to:

- Photo ID (Passport, Drivers Licence or Public Services Card).
- Learning Practitioner verification (or Centre Manager, Programme Coordinator).

The Invigilator should confirm the identification of the each learner.

4.2.1.3 Examination Equipment/Resources (Learner)

All examination resources provided by the learner (e.g. dictionaries) must to be submitted to the Invigilator by the learner: these resources are checked by the Invigilator to ensure the integrity of the examination.

4.2.1.4 Reasonable Accommodation

If reasonable accommodation is provided to a learner, care must be taken to ensure that the integrity of the assessment and adherence to the standards is maintained at all times.

4.2.1.5 Seating Plan

All learners are required to sit in the designated seat according to the pre-arranged seating plan, if a pre-planned seating plan is required.

4.2.1.6 Mobile Phones/Internet Enabled Devices/Bags

Mobile phones and/or internet enabled devices must be switched off and placed on the floor. If a learner is found to have a mobile phone and/or internet enabled device, that is switched on, in his/her possession i.e. not on the floor, it will be confiscated and reported as a breach of the examination.

Bags must be placed out of the reach of each learner.

4.2.2 Commencing the examination

4.2.2.1 Attendance/Sign-in

The Invigilator will distribute the attendance/sign-in sheet and ensure that all learners in attendance have signed. This will be done in conjunction with the learner identification check (see Section 4.2.1.2).

4.2.2.2 Examination Papers

The opening of the examination papers is witnessed and signed by a learner: the Invigilator co-signs.

The examination papers and answer books (if required) will be distributed face down by the invigilator at the commencement of the examination. Learners are not permitted to commence reading the instructions until permitted by the invigilator. If required, computers and other equipment may need to be switched on or learners logged in prior to the commencement of the assessment.

4.2.2.3 Commencement of Assessment

The salient points from the Examination Learner Instructions (Short Version) (see Appendix 2) should be **read aloud** to all learners before the time for the examination commences.

The specified examination start time, duration and end time will also be **read aloud** to learners and **written on** whiteboard/flipchart/other.

Learners may then commence the assessment. The assessment starting time will be noted on the Invigilator Report.

4.2.3 Conducting assessment

4.2.3.1 Guidelines on conducting assessment

- Only learners sitting the examination and authorised personnel can be present in the room
- No learner may be authorised **to enter the examination after a specified timeframe (recommended timeframe: thirty (30) minutes)** from the time at which the examination began (recommended time for 2 hour examination)
- No learner may be authorised **to leave the examination until after a specified timeframe (recommended timeframe: at least thirty (30) minutes)** from the time at which the examination began (recommended time for 2 hour examination). Permission to the learner will be denied until after the specified time has elapsed
- Strict silence must be observed in the examination. (Due to the nature of some assessments (for example oral assessment and some practical assessments) this guideline may not apply)
- Each learner should check that they have the correct examination instructions (e.g. examination paper, task list)



- A learner should raise his/her hand if he/she wishes to attract the attention of the Invigilator during the examination
- A learner shall not, while in the examination:
 - Use, or attempt to use, any book¹, memorandum, notes or paper (save the examination paper and such answer books, etc., as shall have been supplied to him/her by the Invigilator); or
 - Aid, or attempt to aid, another learner; or
 - Obtain, or attempt to obtain, aid from another learner, or Invigilator; or
 - Communicate, or attempt to communicate, in any way, with another learner within the Centre or by electronic means with a person outside the Centre
- A learner shall:
 - Not take out, or attempt to take out, of the examination, any answer books, whether used or unused,
 - Not take out examination paper (if applicable)
 - Shall not damage the examination premises or its furniture

4.2.3.2 Learners leaving the examination

A learner may not be permitted to leave the examination and return during the examination period unless the Invigilator is satisfied that the learner's need to leave the examination is genuine (e.g. because of illness, urgent need to visit the toilet, etc.). A learner who leaves the examination during any period of said examination shall not be re-admitted during the period, unless the learner has been in the care of a representative of the Centre. The learner must hand the examination material/documentation to the Invigilator on leaving the examination. In the event of a practical assessment, computers and other equipment may need to be switched off. The Invigilator should record, on the cover of the answer book, the time of departure from and return to the examination and the reason for the absence; the time lost by the learner may not be compensated for at the close of the assessment period. Particulars of any such occurrence should be reported on the appropriate Invigilator Report.

4.2.3.3 Erratum notice

Where an error in the examination has been noted, the Invigilator will seek clarification from the Learning Practitioner (or other subject matter expert, if the Learning Practitioner is unavailable) who should be available to clarify the query. This amendment will be communicated to all learners and noted on the Invigilator Report. **The integrity of the examination must be maintained at all times.**

¹ Exceptions include resources specifically required for the assessment event (e.g. dictionary, log books etc.)



4.2.3.4 Unexpected event during an examination

When an unexpected event occurs during an examination (fire alarm, medical emergency, etc.), the Invigilator must ensure that integrity of the examination is maintained.

Any unexpected events should be noted in the Invigilator Report.

In some instances (e.g. critical illness, fire, etc.) the examination may need to be abandoned.

4.2.3.5 Learners who have completed at least ten (10) minutes before the concluding time

No learner shall be permitted to leave the examination in the final ten (10) minutes of the examination.

4.3 Concluding Assessment

- The Invigilator will remind learners that there are **ten (10) minutes** remaining and that all learners should remain in the room until the assessment concludes.
- At the end of the examination:
 - Learners are reminded to ensure that all scripts are signed
 - Learners must remain in their seats until all assessment material has been collected by the Invigilator.
- Once all assessment materials have been collected, learners are permitted to leave.
- The Invigilator is responsible for the collection and packaging of all examination material in the manner required by the Centre and transporting it to the designated member of staff for safe and secure storage

REFERENCES

QQI (2013) Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers. Available at:
<http://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Quality%20Assuring%20Assessment%20-%20Guidelines%20for%20Providers%2C%20Revised%202013.pdf> [Accessed 28/02/2018]

APPENDIX 1: NON-PROGRAMMABLE CALCULATORS

- *Programmable calculators are **prohibited**. The term “programmable” includes any calculator that is capable of storing a sequence of keystrokes that can be retrieved after the calculator is turned off or powers itself off. Note that the capacity to recall, edit and replay previously executed calculations does not render a calculator programmable, provided that this replay memory is automatically cleared when the calculator is powered off. Also, the facility to store numbers in one or more memory locations does not render a calculator programmable.*

- *Calculators with any of the following mathematical features are prohibited:*
 - *graph plotting*
 - *equation solving*
 - *symbolic algebraic manipulation*
 - *numerical integration*
 - *numerical differentiation*
 - *matrix calculations*

- *Calculators with any of the following general features are prohibited:*
 - *data banks*
 - *dictionaries*
 - *language translators*
 - *text retrieval*
 - *capability of remote communication*

(State Examinations Commission, 2017¹)

See www.examinations.ie for full list of calculators which are allowed and disallowed in State Examinations Commission (SEC) examinations. This is a useful guide.

APPENDIX 2: EXAMINATION LEARNER INSTRUCTIONS (SHORT VERSION)

1. Mobile phones and/or internet enabled devices must be switched off and placed on the floor. If a learner is found to have a mobile phone and/or internet enabled device, that is switched on, in his/her possession i.e. not on the floor, it will be confiscated and reported as a breach of the examination.
2. Bags must be placed out of the reach of each learner.
3. No learner may be authorised **to enter the examination after thirty (30) minutes** from the time at which the examination began (recommended time for 2 hour examination).
4. No learner may be authorised **to leave the examination until thirty (30) minutes** from time at which the examination began (recommended time for 2 hour examination).
5. Strict silence must be observed in the examination. (Due to the nature of some specific events (for example, oral assessments, some practical assessments), this guideline may not apply).
6. Each learner should check that they have the correct examination instructions (e.g. examination paper, task list)
7. A learner should raise his/her hand if he/she wishes to attract the attention of the Invigilator during the examination.
8. A learner shall not, while in the examination
 - Use, or attempt to use, any book², memorandum, notes or paper (save the examination paper and such answer books, etc., as shall have been supplied to him/her by the Invigilator); or
 - Aid, or attempt to aid, another learner; or
 - Obtain, or attempt to obtain, aid from another learner, or Invigilator; or
 - Communicate, or attempt to communicate, in any way, with another learner within the Centre or by electronic means with a person outside the Centre
9. A learner shall:
 - Not take out, or attempt to take out, of the examination, any answer books, whether used or unused,
 - Not take out the examination paper (if applicable)
 - Not damage the examination premises or its furniture

² Exceptions include resources specifically required for the assessment event (e.g. dictionary, maths formulae and log table etc.)

10. No learner shall be permitted to leave the examination in the **final ten (10) minutes of the examination.**
11. At the end of the examination:
 - Learners will be reminded to ensure that all scripts are signed
 - Learners must remain in their seats until all assessment material has been collected by the Invigilator.
12. Once all assessment materials have been collected, learners are permitted to leave.
13. A learner may be expelled from the examination if his/her behaviour is such as to jeopardise the successful conduct of the examination

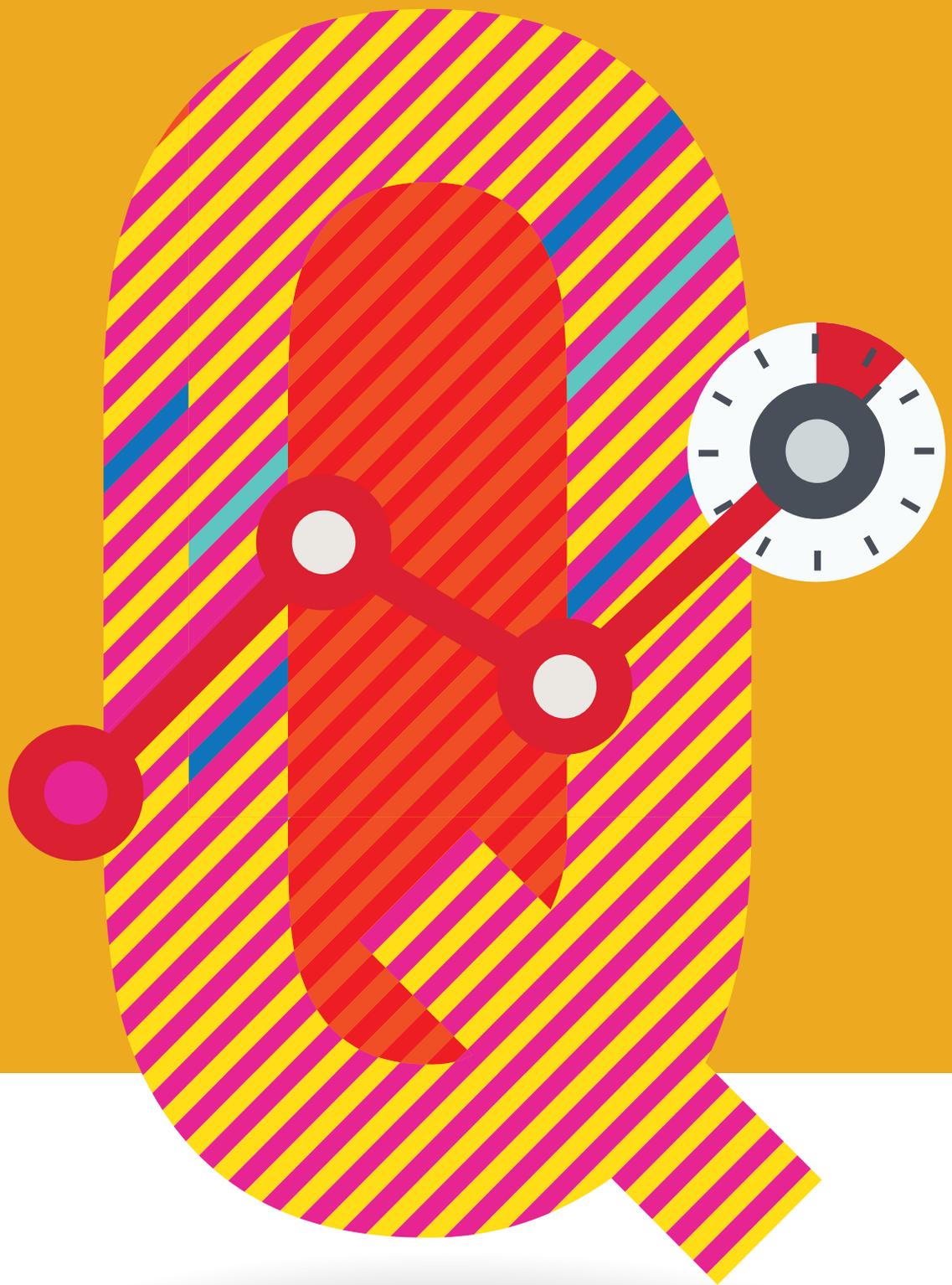
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State Examinations Commission (2017) *Candidate Information Booklet Leaving Certificate 2017*. Available at: <https://www.examinations.ie/misc-doc/BI-CA-96791328.pdf>. [Accessed 6th December 2017].

QQI (2013) *Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers*. Available at: <http://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Quality%20Assuring%20Assessment%20-%20Guidelines%20for%20Providers%2C%20Revised%202013.pdf> [Accessed 28th February 2018]

SECURE STORAGE

OF ASSESSMENT MATERIALS,
RECORDS AND LEARNER
ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE





DEFINITIONS

Assessment Materials

This refers to any documentation associated with the planning of an assessment (pre-assessment).

Examples of assessment material include (but are not limited to):

- Assessment briefs¹
- Examination papers
- Solutions/marking schemes/model answers
- Practical/Skills Demonstration instructions
- Assessment related documentation (attendance records, room layout, invigilator's report etc.)

Assessment Records

This refers to any documentation which demonstrates evidence that the assessment has taken place (post-assessment).

Examples of assessment records include (but are not limited to):

- Completed attendance sheets
- Completed Invigilator report
- Completed seating plan
- Tutor verification
- Photo/audio evidence
- Signed assessment submission documentation
- Internal Verification reports
- External Authentication reports
- Appeals documentation (application forms, appeals outcomes, etc.)

Learner Assessment Evidence

This refers to any assessment evidence, created by the learner, which forms part of a module or programme assessment.

Examples of learner assessment evidence include (but are not limited to):

- Learner examination scripts
- Hard/soft copy of assessment evidence
- Artefacts

¹This assessment brief is the set of clear instructions given to the learner outlining the requirements and assessment/performance criteria of each piece of assessment.

PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT IN RELATION TO SECURE STORAGE OF ASSESSMENT MATERIALS, RECORDS AND LEARNER ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE

Quality assured assessment ensures that in criterion referenced assessment “learners are assessed and the assessment judgment is made based on whether the learner has reached the required national standards of knowledge, skill and competence for the award” (QQI, 2013 p.5). Central to quality assured assessment is the assumption that learners are assessed in a fair and consistent manner in line with the award standard. Quality assured assessment ensures adherence to the principles of assessment.

The following sets forth the principles of assessment which apply to this document: these principles are based on the QQI (2013) principles for assessment.

1 Validity

Validity is a fundamental assessment principle ensuring that an assessment measures what it is designed to measure: the relevant standard of knowledge, skill or competence required for an award should be assessed.

Validity in assessment occurs when:

- Assessment is fit for purpose (i.e. a practical assessment assesses a practical skill)
- Learners can produce evidence which can be measured against the award standard
- Assessors can make accurate assessment decisions
- Assessment is accessible to all candidates who are potentially able to achieve it

2 Reliability

Reliability in assessment ensures that assessment measurement is accurate: the knowledge, skills and competence which the assessment measures should produce reliable and accurate results. Reliability in assessment ensures that results are consistent under similar conditions.

Reliability in assessment occurs when:

- The assessment is based on valid assessment techniques
- Assessment conditions are consistent
- Learner evidence is reliable
- Results are consistent across various assessors, contexts, conditions and learners over time.

3 Fair

Fairness in assessment supports the validity and reliability principles and provides equal opportunity to all learners. Fairness in assessment ensures: learners have access to appropriate resources/equipment in assessment; assessment design and implementation are fair to all learners; and policies and procedures exist to ensure fair assessment of learners.

4 Quality

Quality in assessment ensures that all assessment processes are quality assured.

5 Transparency

Transparency in assessment ensures that assessment policy and procedures provide clarity to all relevant stakeholders.

Assessment is underpinned by the **principles of assessment** including the ***fair*** principle (equal opportunity for all learners) and ***consistent*** principle (consistency in approach to assessment across ETBs, programmes and modules). As such, in order to ensure the fair and consistent assessment of learners, the following procedures should be followed in relation to the secure storage of assessment materials, records and learner assessment evidence. The provider's Quality Assurance System overarches these principles and ensures learner achievement is assessed in a fair and consistent way in line with the award standards.



SECURITY AND STORAGE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Centre Manager

The Centre Manager must ensure that the:

- Staff are compliant with the assessment procedures of the provider, which reflects the requirements of the awarding body
- Assessment storage facility is secure with authorised access only
- Puts in place a tracking and storage system which ensures that the location of assessment materials and evidence is known
- Manages the secure storage of assessment evidence and materials

The Programme Co-ordinator

The Programme Co-ordinator must ensure that the:

- Learning Practitioners understand and are compliant with the assessment procedures of the provider (which reflect the requirements the ETB's QA requirements' to 'awarding body')
- Learning Practitioners are made aware of their responsibilities in relation to the secure storage of both assessment material and learner assessment evidence
- Learners are made aware of their responsibilities for their assessment evidence and submission process for same

The Learning Practitioner

The Learning Practitioner is responsible for:

- The understanding of and compliance with the assessment procedures of the provider, which reflects the requirements of the awarding body
- PRE ASSESSMENT:
 - Secure storage and transportation of assessment material (related to programme delivery).
 - Ensuring due care in the secure storage (e.g. USB storage), printing and photocopying of assessment briefs and examination papers (where applicable) so that assessment integrity is not compromised
 - Compliance with provider arrangements for receipting of learner evidence

■ POST ASSESSMENT:

- Compliance with arrangements for the retention and secure storage of assessment materials and learner assessment evidence (see relevant definitions)
- Compliance with provider arrangements on timely return or secure disposal of assessment evidence following certification

The Learner

The learner is responsible for the:

- Submission of assessment evidence in accordance with the assessment deadlines
- Retention of any receipting evidence in line with Centre policies and procedures management of and the security and integrity of their own assessment work in advance of submission. At Levels 1-3, support will be provided by the Learning Practitioner.
- Retention of backup copies of assessment evidence. In the case of original artefacts, it is advisable to ensure photographs are taken as backups are not possible.

It is recommended that learners should keep copies of all work submitted, where appropriate.

SECURE STORAGE OF ASSESSMENT MATERIAL BY STAFF

PRE ASSESSMENT: Assessment material (assessment plan, assessment briefs, examination papers, solutions, marking schemes and model answers) are stored securely by the Learning Practitioner or a designated member of staff for each programme module being taught in advance of the assessment/examination date. Additionally, relevant documentation (invigilator report, seating plan, attendance/sign in register etc), other relevant examination material and the correct number of examination papers are stored securely, with authorised access only.

POST ASSESSMENT: On completion of an examination or proctored assignment all learner assessment evidence together with relevant assessment documentation must be stored securely, with authorised access only. Any breaches to the integrity of assessment evidence (e.g. loss/damage etc.) should be disclosed to the Centre Manager immediately.

SUBMISSION OF LEARNER EVIDENCE

Each centre should ensure that a protocol exists for Learning Practitioners to confirm the submission of work by a learner to a Learning Practitioner: this protocol should be evidence based. For example, once work has been submitted, the learner may sign an assessment submission document which is countersigned in the presence of the Learning Practitioner.

- *Where learner assessment evidence is submitted via email, email receipts should be provided by the Learning Practitioner*
- *Where learner assessment evidence is submitted electronically via an online platform which automatically generates a confirmation email (e.g. Turnitin), the Learning Practitioner is not responsible for receipting of this learner assessment evidence*
- *Where learner assessment evidence is submitted via an online platform which does not automatically generate a confirmation email (e.g. Google docs, cloud etc.), the Learning Practitioner is not responsible for receipting of this learner evidence.*

Records of learners' assessment progress are held individually by each learning practitioner.

SECURE STORAGE OF LEARNER ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE BY STAFF

Learner assessment evidence is the personal data of the learner. Storage arrangements for both hard and soft copy evidence must have regard to the ETB's Data Protection Policy and Procedures. Learners have a right of access to their personal data. Right of access to assessment evidence is in addition to an appeal of an assessment result or assessment process. Learners do not have a right to correct errors in their assessment answers. However they do have the right to have processing errors corrected.

6.1 Learner assessment evidence: hard copy and practical/artefact

In order to ensure best practice exists, providers **must provide a secure room or secure locked facilities, with authorised access**, to facilitate the storage of all hard copy learner assessment evidence over the course of the programme and until after all assessment QA procedures have been carried out. **Learning practitioners must comply with the ETB's Data Protection Policy and Procedures while they are in possession of assessment evidence.**

6.2 Learner assessment evidence: Soft copy

In order to ensure best practice exists, centres **are expected to provide storage for learner assessment evidence on a computer network or online platform (with backup capacity)** which is accessible to the Programme Co-ordinator and Learning Practitioners. The learner assessment evidence is then made available for the Internal

Verifier and the External Authenticator. Appropriate security should be in place for networks and online platforms and login details made available for the IV and EA with live/active accounts that can be accessed even after the programme has ended. Instructions on how to access said accounts may also need to be provided for IV and EA. Assessment evidence stored on mobile devices must comply with the ETB's Data Protection Policy on Use of Mobile Devices.

6.3 Marking and grading

In order to ensure best practice exists, where possible, space should be made available for the Learning Practitioners to mark and grade assessment evidence in a secure location within the Centre. Additionally, each Centre should ensure that a procedure exists for the Learning Practitioners to sign out assessment evidence for marking and grading. The Learning Practitioner is responsible for assessment evidence until the evidence is signed back in.

6.4 Internal Verification/External Authentication

On completion of Internal Verification,

In preparation for the Internal Verification process, the Centre Manager or Programme Coordinator must ensure that learner assessment evidence is tracked using the provider's tracking process (evidence of the signing in and out of assessment evidence).

During the Internal Verification process, all Learning Practitioners must adhere to the tracking system so that learner assessment evidence is stored securely at all times.

On completion of the Internal Verification, learner assessment evidence is moved into the allocated rooms / storage facilities with authorised access (using the provider's tracking processes) for relevant programme in order for External Authentication to take place.

During the External Authentication process, only authorised staff should have access to the allocated rooms / storage facilities.

On completion of External Authentication, learner assessment material should be moved to the appropriate secure storage space using the provider's tracking process, to facilitate ease of access in the event of learner appeals.

On completion of the appeals process and when results can no longer be challenged it is advised that all assessment evidence be safely destroyed¹ unless otherwise agreed between the learner, the provider, and the internal assessor.

¹ Case C-434/16 *Nowak v Data Protection Commissioner* [2017] ECLI:EU:C:2017:582 Opinion of AG Kokott, para 65



DURATION OF STORAGE

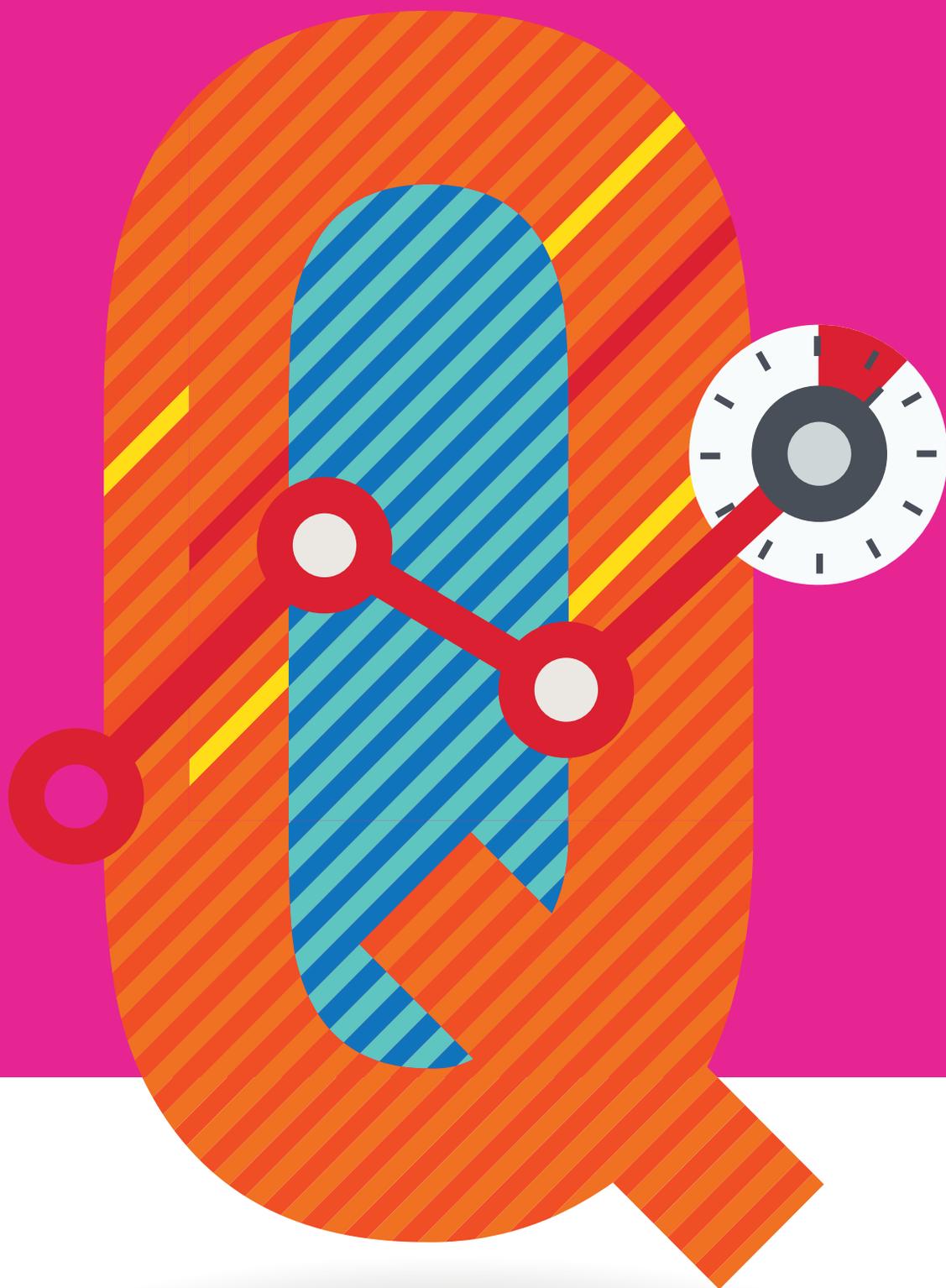
7.1 Duration of storage of learner evidence

All learner evidence will be retained until after the appeals process concludes (unless stated otherwise by the relevant awarding body) after which it will be disposed of securely (e.g. shredded/deleted from the relevant drive) by the Centre or returned to learner (if Centre policy). All learner evidence must be retained for the maximum term in line with current legislation and GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation).

7.2 Duration of storage of assessment material

All assessment material (including application forms, learner contracts, exam sign-in sheets, course evaluations, etc.) will be retained until after the appeals process concludes unless stated otherwise by the awarding body or due to a funding requirement, after which it will be disposed of securely (e.g. shredded/deleted from the relevant drive) by the Centre. All records retained must be retained in line with current legislation and GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation).

ASSESSMENT PROCESS APPEALS





DEFINITIONS

Assessment Process Appeal

An assessment process appeal refers to the appeal by a learner, to the provider, based on the assessment conditions and/or process: the learner believes the assessment conditions and/or process negatively impacted his/her assessment performance.

Timeframe for lodging an assessment process appeal

Assessment process appeals should be made within a defined timeframe recommended timeframe (10 working days) of the issuing of approved results. Learners have the right to appeal the assessment process within a specified timeframe. In order to ensure adherence to the principles of assessment, the following process should be followed in relation to assessment process appeals. This will thus ensure that assessment is fair for all learners along with being reliable and consistent across ETBs, programmes and modules.

PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT IN RELATION TO ASSESSMENT PROCESS APPEALS

Quality assured assessment ensures that, in criterion referenced assessment, “learners are assessed and the assessment judgment is made based on whether the learner has reached the required national standards of knowledge, skill and competence for the award” (QQI, 2013 p.5). Central to quality assured assessment is the assumption that learners are assessed in a fair and consistent manner in line with the award standard. Quality assured assessment ensures adherence to the principles of assessment.

The following sets forth the principles of assessment which apply to this document: these principles are based on the QQI (2013) principles for assessment.

Principles of Assessments

1 Validity

Validity is a fundamental assessment principle ensuring that an assessment measures what it is designed to measure: the relevant standard of knowledge, skill or competence required for an award should be assessed.

Validity in assessment occurs when:

- Assessment is fit for purpose (i.e. a practical assessment assesses a practical skill)
- Learners can produce evidence which can be measured against the award standard
- Assessors can make accurate assessment decisions
- Assessment is accessible to all candidates who are potentially able to achieve it

2 Reliability

Reliability in assessment ensures that assessment measurement is accurate: the knowledge, skills and competence which the assessment measures should produce reliable and accurate results. Reliability in assessment ensures that results are consistent under similar conditions.

Reliability in assessment occurs when:

- The assessment is based on valid assessment techniques
- Assessment conditions are consistent
- Learner evidence is reliable
- Results are consistent over time across various assessors, contexts, conditions and learners

PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT IN RELATION TO ASSESSMENT PROCESS APPEALS

3 Fair

Fairness in assessment supports the validity and reliability principles and provides equal opportunity to all learners. Fairness in assessment ensures: learners have access to appropriate resources/equipment in assessment; assessment design and implementation are fair to all learners; and policies and procedures exist to ensure fair assessment of learners.

4 Quality

Quality in assessment ensures that all assessment processes are quality assured.

5 Transparency

Transparency in assessment ensures that assessment policy and procedures provide clarity to all relevant stakeholders.

Learners have the right to appeal the assessment process within a specified timeframe. In order to ensure adherence to the principles of assessment, the following process should be followed in relation to assessment process appeals. This will thus ensure that assessment is fair for all learners, along with being reliable and consistent across ETBs, programmes and modules.



ASSESSMENT PROCESS APPEALS ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Programme Co-ordinator

The Programme Co-ordinator must:

- Ensure that all learners are made aware of:
 - the grounds for making an appeal (assessment result appeal and assessment process appeal)
 - the maximum time allowed to lodge an appeal
- Communicate the deadline date for requesting an appeal to the learner. Learners may not appeal after this date.
- Communicate the ETB's/Centre's policy on secure storage and disposal of assessment evidence
- Receive the appeal application from the learner
- Submit **Assessment Appeals Application Form** (see Appendix 1) to the Independent Appeals Committee
- Inform the awarding body of the result change (if successful)
- Inform the learner of the outcome of the appeals application

The Learner

If a learner wishes to appeal an assessment process, the learner must:

- Note the grounds for appeal (assessment result appeal or assessment process appeal)
- Note the timeframe for appeal (see Section 2.2)
- Lodge an appeal (with fee if applicable) (see Section 4)

The Independent Appeals Committee

The Independent Appeals Committee must:

- Examine the learner appeal
- Investigate whether relevant assessment procedures were followed
- Make a decision on the appeal

ASSESSMENT PROCESS APPEALS

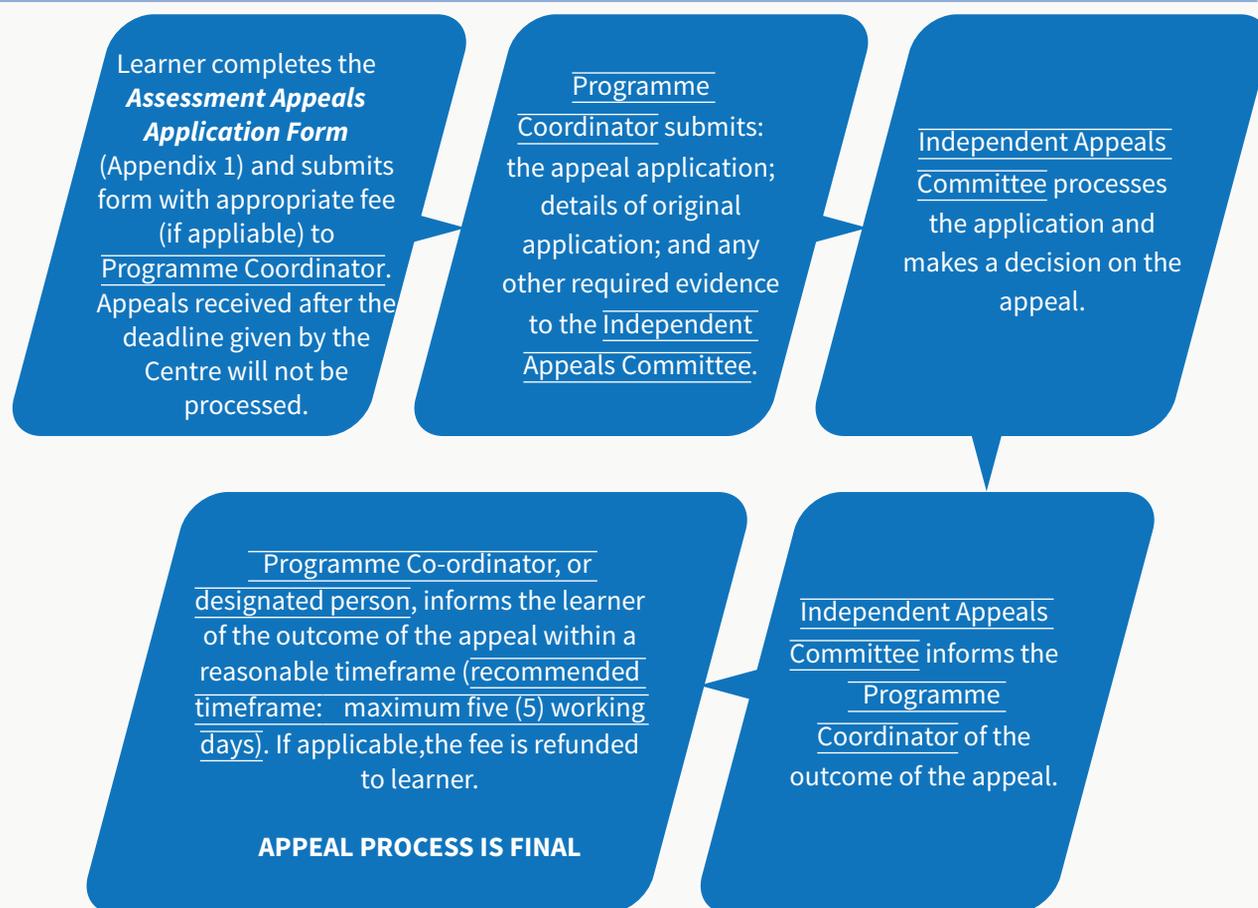
Note:

- The learner is notified by the Centre of the deadline for appeals within the given assessment period.
- The ETB will endeavour to complete all appeals within a reasonable timeframe (recommended timeframe: twenty (20) working days) on receipt of appeal. Every effort should be made to process the application as promptly as possible, especially if CAO/other deadlines may be impacted.

Where possible, the learner discusses the appeal application with the Learning Practitioner and/or Programme Co-ordinator and examines grounds for appeal and timeframe before proceeding.

The following process (Figure 1.1) outlines the steps involved in an assessment process appeal.

Figure 1.1 Assessment Process Appeals



REFERENCES

QQI (2013) Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers. Available at: <http://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Quality%20Assuring%20Assessment%20-%20Guidelines%20for%20Providers%2C%20Revised%202013.pdf> [Accessed 28/02/2018]

APPENDIX 1: ASSESSMENT APPEALS APPLICATION FORM

Part A:

Part A: To be completed by the learner and returned to the Programme Coordinator by a specified deadline

Please tick appropriate appeal type:

Assessment Result Appeal Assessment Process Appeal

Centre Name:

Learner Name:

Learner Address:

PPSN No (if required):

Programme Code/Title:

Are there impending deadlines which may need to be considered with this application: CAO Applicant/Other Applicant:

Yes/No

If yes, please give details:

Details of application:

Module Code	Module Title	Module Level	Original Result		Fee
				Total Fee €	

Candidates wishing to appeal their final result must complete this form and return to the Programme Co-ordinator, **[Insert name and address of centre here]**, on or before xx/xx/xx.

Appeals received after this date will NOT be processed.

There is an administrative fee of €xx per module result that you wish to appeal. This fee must be made payable to **[Insert name of Centre here]**, Fee should be paid by EFT, cheque, postal order or bank draft. NO CASH.

The outcome of the Appeal will be communicated directly to you in xx.
If the outcome of the appeal is successful, the administrative fee of €xx per module will be refunded. Appeals will not be processed without payment of fee.

I can confirm that I have read and understand the appeals procedure, including the grounds for appeal. I can confirm that I have enclosed a total fee of € . This fee is refundable if the appeal is successful.

Learner Signature:

Date:

Programme Co-ordinator Signature:

Date:

Programme Co-ordinator Name:

Office Use:

Total Fee Received: €

Date:

Programme Co-ordinator Signature:

Part B:

To be completed by the Programme Co-ordinator and forwarded to the Assessment Appeals Facilitator

Centre Name:

Centre Contact Name:

Centre Contact Email address:

Learner Name:

PPSN No (if required):

External Authenticator:

Fee Paid:

Yes/No

Assessment Appeals Facilitator Signature:

Date Received:

Appeals Examiner Signature:

Date Received:

Appeal Decision:

Appeal Successful/Unsuccessful

Details of appeal investigation:

Details of designated person to communicate outcome of appeal to learner:

ASSESSMENT RESULT APPEALS





DEFINITIONS

Approved Result

Approved results are results which have been through the internal verification and external authentication process and been approved for distribution to learners by the Results Approval Panel. An appeal can only be made based on approved results.

Assessment Result Appeal

An assessment result appeal refers to the appeal of an approved result. In such cases, the learner is not satisfied with assessment result: the learner believes the marks awarded are not representative of the quality of the work submitted for assessment.

Only **approved results of work submitted** can be formally appealed by the learner. No new assessment evidence can be submitted.

Timeframe for lodging an assessment result appeal

Assessment result appeals should be made within a **defined timeframe** (recommended timeframe (10 working days)) of the issuing of approved results.

PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT IN RELATION TO ASSESSMENT RESULT APPEALS

Quality assured assessment ensures that, in criterion referenced assessment, “learners are assessed and the assessment judgment is made based on whether the learner has reached the required national standards of knowledge, skill and competence for the award” (QQI, 2013 p.5). Central to quality assured assessment is the assumption that learners are assessed in a fair and consistent manner in line with the award standard. Quality assured assessment ensures adherence to the principles of assessment.

The following sets forth the principles of assessment which apply to this document: these principles are based on the QQI (2013) principles for assessment.

Principles of Assessments

1 Validity

Validity is a fundamental assessment principle ensuring that an assessment measures what it is designed to measure: the relevant standard of knowledge, skill or competence required for an award should be assessed.

Validity in assessment occurs when:

- Assessment is fit for purpose (i.e. a practical assessment assesses a practical skill)
- Learners can produce evidence which can be measured against the award standard
- Assessors can make accurate assessment decisions
- Assessment is accessible to all candidates who are potentially able to achieve it

2 Reliability

Reliability in assessment ensures that assessment measurement is accurate: the knowledge, skills and competence which the assessment measures should produce reliable and accurate results. Reliability in assessment ensures that results are consistent under similar conditions.

Reliability in assessment occurs when:

- The assessment is based on valid assessment techniques
- Assessment conditions are consistent
- Learner evidence is reliable
- Results are consistent over time across various assessors, contexts, conditions and learners

PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT IN RELATION TO ASSESSMENT RESULT APPEALS

3 Fair

Fairness in assessment supports the validity and reliability principles and provides equal opportunity to all learners. Fairness in assessment ensures: learners have access to appropriate resources/equipment in assessment; assessment design and implementation are fair to all learners; and policies and procedures exist to ensure fair assessment of learners.

4 Quality

Quality in assessment ensures that all assessment processes are quality assured.

5 Transparency

Transparency in assessment ensures that assessment policy and procedures provide clarity to all relevant stakeholders.

Learners have the right to appeal their approved result within a specified timeframe. In order to ensure adherence to the principles of assessment, the following process should be followed in relation to assessment result appeals. This will thus ensure that assessment is fair for all learners along with being reliable and consistent across ETBs, programmes and modules.



ASSESSMENT RESULT APPEALS ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Programme Co-ordinator

The Programme Co-ordinator must:

- Ensure that all learners are made aware of:
 - the grounds for making an appeal (assessment result appeal and assessment process appeal)
 - the maximum time allowed to lodge an appeal
- Communicate the deadline date for requesting an appeal to the learner. Learners may not appeal after this date
- Communicate the ETB's/Centre's policy on secure storage and disposal of assessment evidence
- Receive the appeal application from the learner
- Submit **Assessment Appeals Application Form** to the Assessment Appeals Facilitator
- Inform the awarding body of the result change¹ (if successful)
- Inform the learner of the outcome of the appeals application

The Learner

If a learner wishes to appeal an assessment result(s), the learner must:

- Note the grounds for appeal (assessment result appeal or assessment process appeal)
- Note the timeframe for appeal (see Section 2.3)
- Lodge an appeal (with fee if applicable) (see Section 4)

Only assessment evidence that has already been submitted as part of the final assessment can be considered as part of an appeal: no new evidence can be submitted

The Assessment Appeals Facilitator

The Assessment Appeals Facilitator must:

- Ensure that all documentation is available for the appeal (completed **Assessment Appeals Application Form**, (see Appendix 1) learner evidence, etc.)

¹ This role may be completed by the Assessment Appeals Facilitator

- Assign an Appeals Examiner
- Receive the decision of Appeals Examiner
- Inform the awarding body of the result change² (if successful)
- Report appeal outcome decision to the Programme Co-ordinator

The Appeals Examiner

An Appeals Examiner must:

- Examine the assessment result appeal application and learner assessment evidence
- Make a decision regarding the appeal

² This role may be completed by the Programme Co-ordinator

ASSESSMENT RESULT APPEALS PROCESS

Note:

- **The learner is notified by the Centre of the deadline for appeals within the given assessment period.**
- **The ETB will endeavour to complete all appeals within a reasonable timeframe (recommended timeframe: twenty(20)working days) on receipt of appeal. Every effort should be made to process the application as promptly as possible, especially if CAO/other deadlines may be impacted.**

Where possible, the learner discusses the appeal application with the Learning Practitioner and/or Programme Co-ordinator and examines grounds for appeal and timeframe before proceeding.

Only **approved results** can be formally appealed: no new assessment evidence can be submitted.

1. Learner completes the Assessment Appeals Application Form and submits form to Programme Co-ordinator together with the Appeals Fee³ (if applicable)

The learner must complete and return the **Assessment Appeals Application Form** (see Appendix 1) and fee (if applicable). Appeals received after the deadline given by the Centre will not be processed.

2. Programme Co-ordinator submits application to Assessment Appeals Facilitator

Application and assessment evidence made available to the Assessment Appeals Facilitator. All assessment evidence, as required by the component specification/validated programme or module, must be available for the appeal. Any evidence not available will be assumed not to have been completed or submitted.

3. Assessment Appeals Facilitator processes the application and assigns an Appeals Examiner

The Assessment Facilitator assigns an Appeals Examiner who will endeavour to complete all appeals within a reasonable timeframe **(recommended timeframe: twenty (20) working days)** on receipt of appeal. **Every effort should be made to process the application as promptly as possible, especially if CAO/other deadlines may be impacted.**

4. Assessment Appeals Examiner makes a decision on the appeal and informs the Assessment Appeals Facilitator

The Assessment Appeals Examiner completes a:

- 1. Totting/recording check** to check for any errors. If an error is found, marks are changed.
- 2. Review** of the assessment evidence and makes a decision as to whether grades are upheld or changed.
- 3. Makes a decision** on the appeal and informs the Assessment Appeals Facilitator of the outcome.

5. The Assessment Appeals Facilitator informs the Programme Co-ordinator of the outcome of the appeal (successful or unsuccessful) within a reasonable timeframe **(recommended timeframe: maximum two (2) working days)**.

6. If successful, the Assessment Appeals Facilitator or Programme Co-ordinator informs the awarding body of change.

7. Programme Co-ordinator informs the learner of the outcome of the appeal application

The Programme Co-ordinator informs the learner of the outcome of the appeal within a reasonable timeframe **(recommended timeframe: maximum five (5) working days)**. Where applicable, the fee is refunded to learner.

8. At the next Results Approval Meeting, all appeal results from previous assessment period are ratified.

The appeal result is final.

³Appeal fee only applicable for appeal of results: this fee is refunded if appeal is successful

REFERENCES

QQI (2013) Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers. Available at: <http://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Quality%20Assuring%20Assessment%20-%20Guidelines%20for%20Providers%2C%20Revised%202013.pdf> [Accessed 28/02/2018]

APPENDIX 1: ASSESSMENT APPEALS APPLICATION FORM

Part A:

Part A: To be completed by the learner and returned to the Programme Coordinator by a specified deadline

Please tick appropriate appeal type:

Assessment Result Appeal Assessment Process Appeal

Centre Name:

Learner Name:

Learner Address:

PPSN No (if required):

Programme Code/Title:

Are there impending deadlines which may need to be considered with this application: CAO Applicant/Other Applicant:

Yes/No

If yes, please give details:

Details of application:

Module Code	Module Title	Module Level	Original Result		Fee
				Total Fee €	

Candidates wishing to Appeal their final result must complete this form and return to the Programme Co-ordinator, [Insert name and address of centre here], on or before xx/xx/xx.

Appeals received after this date will NOT be processed.

There is an administrative fee of €xx per module result that you wish to appeal. This fee must be made payable to [Insert name of Centre here], Fee should be paid by EFT, cheque, postal order or bank draft. NO CASH.

The outcome of the Appeal will be communicated directly to you in xx.

If the outcome of the appeal is successful, the administrative fee of €xx per module will be refunded.

Appeals will not be processed without payment of fee.

I can confirm that I have read and understand the appeals procedure, including the grounds for appeal. I can confirm that I have enclosed a total fee of € . This fee is refundable if the appeal is successful.

Learner Signature:

Date:

Programme Co-ordinator Signature:

Date:

Programme Co-ordinator Name:

Office Use:

Total Fee Received: € Date: Programme Co-ordinator Signature:

Part B:

To be completed by the Programme Co-ordinator and forwarded to the Assessment Appeals Facilitator

Centre Name:

Centre Contact Name:

Centre Contact Email address:

Learner Name:

PPSN No (if required):

External Authenticator:

Fee Paid:

Yes/No

Assessment Appeals Facilitator Signature:

Date Received:

Appeals Examiner Signature:

Date Received:

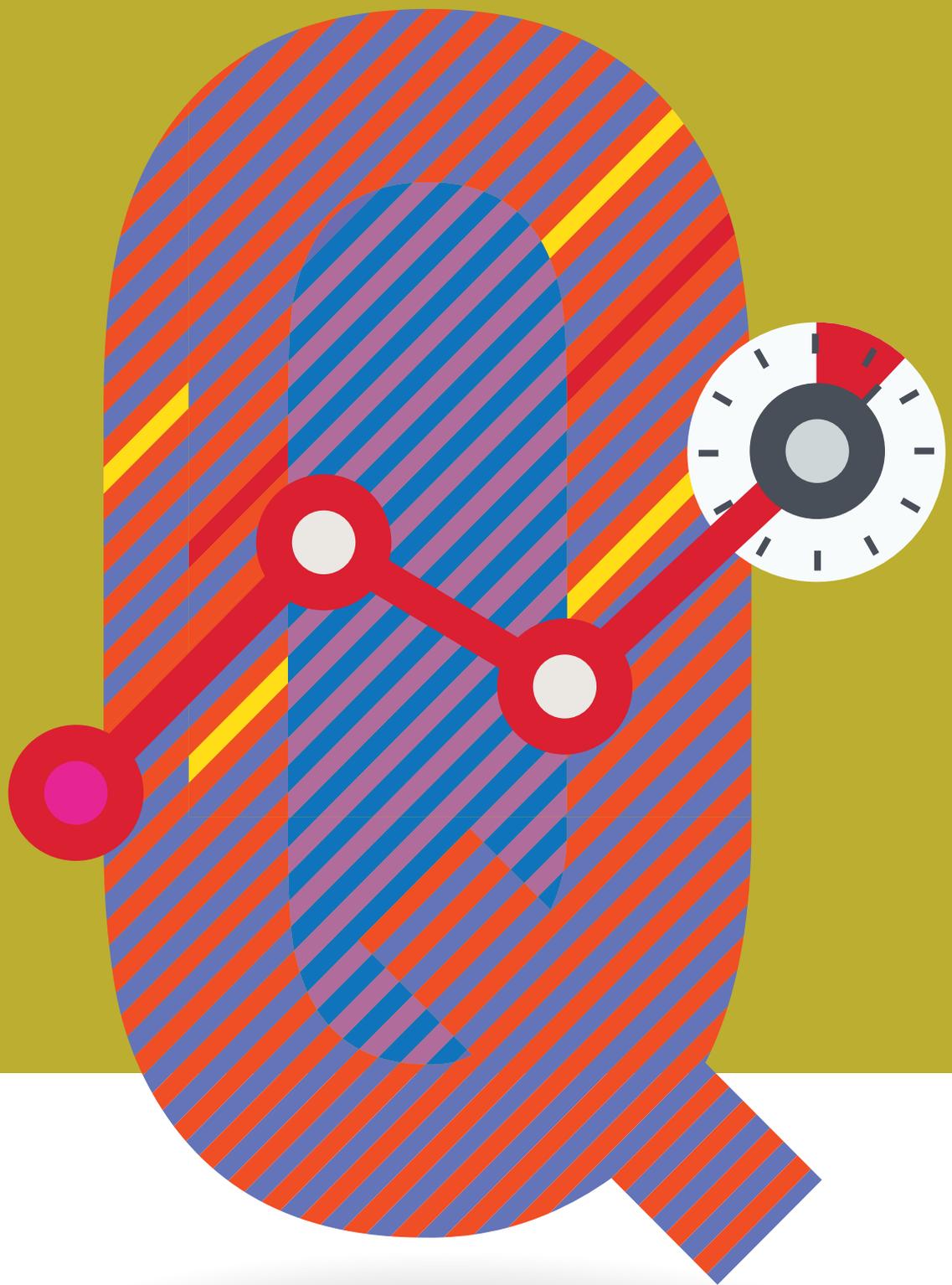
Appeal Decision:

Appeal Successful/Unsuccessful

Details of appeal investigation:

Details of designated person to communicate outcome of appeal to learner:

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)





DEFINITIONS

GLOSSARY

CAS	Common Awards System	CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
EQF	European Qualifications Framework	FETAC	Further Education and Training Awards Council
FET	Further Education and Training	NARIC	National Academic Recognition Awards Centre
NFQ	National Framework of Qualifications	QBS	QQI Business System
RPCL	Recognition of Prior Certified Learning	QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
RPEL	Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning	HEI	Higher Education Institution
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning		

Credit

Credit, in terms of recognition of prior experiential learning (RPEL) (i.e. learning which has not previously been academically accredited) may be granted where there is evidence that the required learning outcomes have been achieved. Where such evidence exists, learners may be entitled to advanced entry to a programme and/or awarded marks/grades for the learning.

Exemption

Exemptions exist where learners have been awarded accredited certification for learning by an awarding body such as Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) or other recognised universities, colleges/institutes and awarding bodies. In such cases, the accredited certification has already been graded and, when used as (RPL), is grade neutral. Exemptions may allow learners advanced entry to a programme and/or may be used for the achievement of the overall award.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Recent Irish research suggests that a commonly agreed definition of RPL does not currently exist (QQI, 2017). Hence, for the purpose of this document, the following definition will apply: Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can “be used by the learner to gain entry to a programme; gain exemptions within a programme; gain credit towards an award: a learner may gain a credit towards an award using previous certification and/or attain an Award: a learner may be awarded a Major or Minor Award on the basis of previously acquired learning for which they do not have a formal certificate” (CEDEFOP, 2011, p7).

RPL involves awarding the learner recognition in the form of initial or advanced admission to a programme, credits within a programme, exemption(s) from element(s) of a programme, or a full award. RPL cannot be claimed for based on the completion of an element of a module.

The provider shall ensure that all learners are made aware of the potential benefits of RPL. Appropriate supports relating to portfolio preparation shall be made available within the ETBs to interested learners.

RPL can be subdivided into Recognition of Prior Certified Learning (RPCL) and Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL).

Recognition of Prior Certified Learning (RPCL)

Recognition of Prior Certified Learning (RPCL) is learning that has already been accredited by an awarding body such as (QQI) or other recognised universities, colleges/institutes and awarding bodies. Prior certified learning can also include qualifications awarded by bodies abroad, such as the City & Guilds of London Institute.

Prior certified learning may entitle the learner to exemptions on a programme, not credits. As this certified learning has already been awarded credit, the learner does not receive credits for it again, but recognition in the form of exemptions. RPCL may be recognised for exemptions on a programme. Exemptions are grade neutral and do not contribute to the overall calculation of the grade of the major award.

Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL)

Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL) (Non-certified Learning) is: formal, informal and non-formal learning acquired through life or work experience; learning achieved from non-accredited bodies; or certifying bodies outside of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

CEDEFOP (2011, p7) provides the following definitions:

Formal Learning	Learning that occurs in an organised and structured environment (in an education or training institution or on the job) and is explicitly designated as learning (in terms of objectives, time or resources). Formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view. It typically leads to validation and certification.
Informal Learning	Learning resulting from daily activities related to work, family or leisure. It is not organised or structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support. Informal learning is in most cases unintentional from the learner's perspective.
Non-formal Learning	Learning which is embedded in planned activities not explicitly designated as learning (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support). Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view.

PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT IN RELATION TO RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

Quality assured assessment ensures that, in criterion referenced assessment, “learners are assessed and the assessment judgment is made based on whether the learner has reached the required national standards of knowledge, skill and competence for the award” (QOI, 2013 p.5). Central to quality assured assessment is the assumption that learners are assessed in a fair and consistent manner in line with the award standard. Quality assured assessment ensures adherence to the principles of assessment.

The following sets forth the principles of assessment which apply to this document: these principles are based on the QOI (2013) principles for assessment.

1. Validity

Validity is a fundamental assessment principle ensuring that an assessment measures what it is designed to measure: the relevant standard of knowledge, skill or competence required for an award should be assessed.

Validity in assessment occurs when:

- Assessment is fit for purpose (i.e. a practical assessment assesses a practical skill)
- Learners can produce evidence which can be measured against the award standard
- Assessors can make accurate assessment decisions
- Assessment is accessible to all candidates who are potentially able to achieve it

2. Reliability

Reliability in assessment ensures that assessment measurement is accurate: the knowledge, skills and competence which the assessment measures should produce reliable and accurate results. Reliability in assessment ensures that results are consistent under similar conditions.

Reliability in assessment occurs when:

- The assessment is based on valid assessment techniques
- Assessment conditions are consistent
- Learner evidence is reliable
- Results are consistent over time across various assessors, contexts, conditions and learners

3. Fair

Fairness in assessment supports the validity and reliability principles and provides equal opportunity to all learners. Fairness in assessment ensures: learners have access to appropriate resources/equipment in assessment; assessment design and implementation are fair to all learners; and policies and procedures exist to ensure fair assessment of learners.

4. Quality

Quality in assessment ensures that all assessment processes are quality assured.

5. Transparency

Transparency in assessment ensures that assessment policy and procedures provide clarity to all relevant stakeholders.

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 sets out the statutory basis for Quality and Qualifications Ireland's (QQI) engagement with recognition of prior learning (RPL). QQI have responsibility for policy of access, transfer and progression of learners (QQI, 2017). The provider is responsible for having a consistent approach to RPL and implementation must be in accordance with the provider's policy on access, transfer and progression. The provider's Quality Assurance System overarches these principles and ensures learner achievement is assessed in a fair and consistent manner in line with the award standard.

The provider is committed to utilising RPL as an instrument for: (i) determining standard access equivalences; (ii) for the award of credit; (iii) exemptions for learners with qualifications or prior experience in the area.

The complexity of RPL practices in the Further Education and Training (FET) sector is acknowledged (QQI, 2017). This document should thus be viewed as a guiding document for RPL in order to aid Education and Training Boards (ETBs) in developing their own RPL procedures.

RPL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Programme Coordinator

The Programme Coordinator must ensure that all staff and learners are made aware of:

- the existence of an RPL policy and RPL requirements
- the potential benefits of RPL
- the appropriate support relating to portfolio preparation (RPEL only)
- the appropriate support relating to mapping of outcomes to assessment standards (RPCL only)

The Programme Coordinator must inform the learner of the outcome of the RPL decision.

The Programme Coordinator must also submit any appeals application to the Independent Appeals Committee and inform the learner of the outcome of the appeals application.

The Learner

Recognition of Prior Certified Learning (RPCL)

It is the learner's responsibility to apply for the RPCL. Learners must submit their application on the **RPL Application Form** (see Appendix 1) to their Programme Coordinator within a reasonable timeframe **recommended timeframe: ten (10) working days** of the module commencement.

Learners should also include original certificates, results, programme details and, where possible, learning outcomes of certified modules completed. Learners should be advised to participate in the module(s) until a decision has been made (and written confirmation received) on whether to grant the exemption or not (in line with the individual Centre policy).

Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL)

It is the learner's responsibility to apply for the RPEL. Learners must submit their claim on the **RPL Application Form** (Appendix 1) to their Programme Coordinator within a reasonable timeframe **recommended timeframe: ten (10) working days** of the module commencement.

It is the learner's responsibility to gather and present the evidence required for assessment according to the instructions given by the RPL Mentor/Facilitator. Evidence may include, but is not limited to: CV, references, certificates or testimonials, products or samples, job descriptions and/ or evaluations, evidence of attendance at training courses or workplace assessments. Evidence for assessment may be presented in a Portfolio of Evidence and mapped to the requirements of the award for which the exemption is being sought.



The RPL Mentor/Facilitator

The RPL Mentor/Facilitator is responsible for guiding and supporting the learner through the RPL process and facilitating the learner to ensure the evidence is consistent with the award standard.

The RPL Assessor

The RPL assessor will be a suitably qualified, experienced assessor and subject matter expert with ability to assess both Recognition of Prior Certified Learning (RPCL) and Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL). The RPL assessor is appointed by the ETB.

The RPL assessor is responsible for assessing submitted assessment materials/portfolio in accordance with RPL process and the award standard.

Independent Appeals Committee

An Independent Appeals Committee must:

- Examine the learner appeal on RPL application outcome
- Investigate whether relevant assessment procedures were followed
- Make a decision on the appeal

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) PROCESS

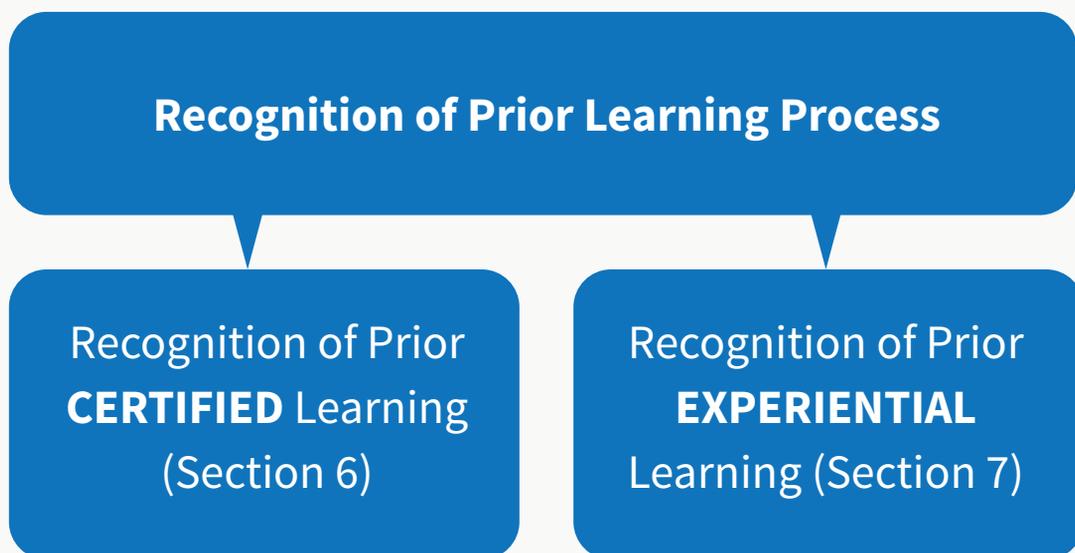
As outlined in Figure 1.1, the RPL process can follow the:

- **Recognition of Prior CERTIFIED Learning (RPCL) process** (See Section 3.4 for definition and Section 6 for process)

and/or

- **Recognition of Prior EXPERIENTIAL Learning (RPEL) process** (See Section 3.5 for definition and Section 7 for process)

Figure 1.1 Recognition of Prior Learning



RECOGNITION OF PRIOR CERTIFIED LEARNING (RPCL) PROCESS

5.1 About RPCL

RPCL is learning that has already been accredited by an awarding body such as QQI or other recognised universities, colleges/institutes and awarding bodies. Prior certified learning can also include qualifications awarded by bodies abroad, such as the City & Guilds of London Institute.

This prior learning can be recognised on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and may entitle the learner to:

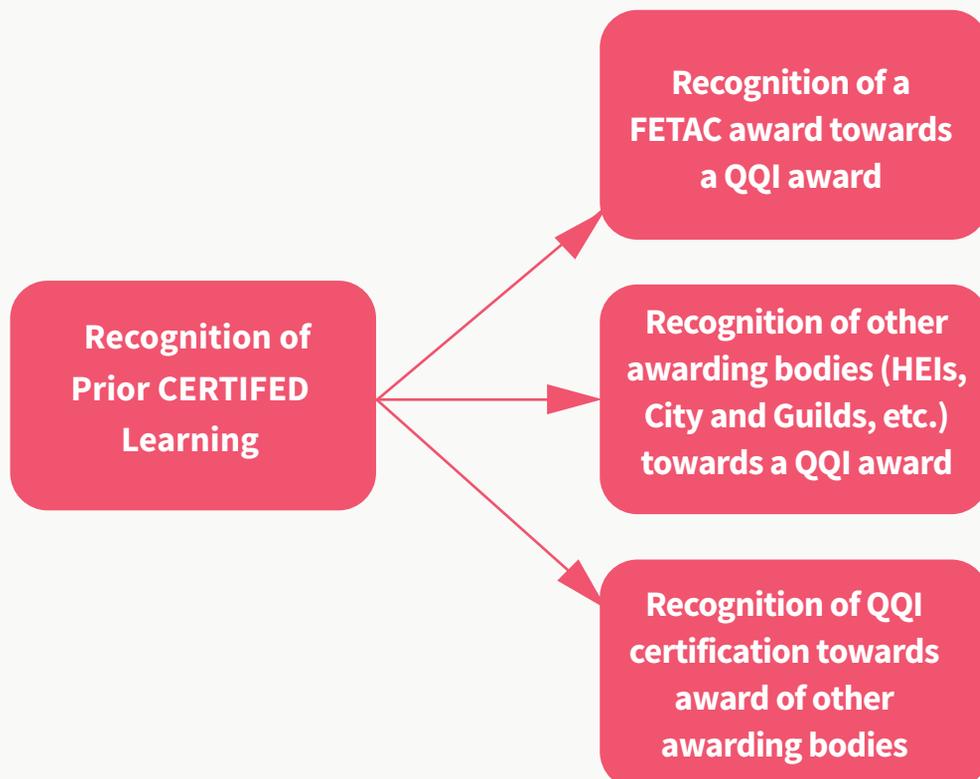
- Admission to a programme or programme of study
- Advanced entry on the programme
- Exemptions from some parts of a programme

QQI (2015) provide details regarding exemptions for the Purpose of a Compound (Major/Special Purpose/Supplemental) Award.

5.2 Types of RPCL

There are 3 types of RPCL considered in this process (see Figure 1.2).

Figure 1.2 Types of RPCL





a) Recognition of a Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) award towards a QQI award

“Where a FETAC component is not mapped to a CAS (Common Award System) component, then direct exemption using that FETAC component is not possible” (QQI, 2015, p.1). In this instance, **RPCL will apply**.

Where a Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) component is mapped to a CAS component, but is more than 5 years old, then an exemption is not possible, and **RPCL will apply**.

Where a FETAC component is mapped to a CAS component and is less than 5 years old, then an exemption is possible, and **RPCL will not apply**.

Where a learner has achieved a CAS award, and has thus met the learning outcomes for that award as currently published on the QQI website, then the learner has achieved that award, regardless of the age of the certificate. In this instance, the 5-year rule does not apply: the learner’s award will be recognised by the QQI Business System (QBS), and it is not necessary to apply for either an exemption or RPCL.

If the learning for which recognition is sought for a QQI award, is certified outside of CAS, **RPCL will apply**.

The following must be considered as part of this process (see Table 1.1).

Comparison of Learning Outcomes	It is recommended that the <u>RPL assessor</u> compares the learning outcomes of the prior certified learning to the learning outcomes of the module(s)/programme in which the learner is seeking the exemption(s): this must be completed in line with the provider’s RPL policy while adhering to the award standard and principles of assessment. Gaps in learning may be identified and supports put in place to address these gaps.
Currency of RPCL	It is recommended that the RPCL must have been achieved in an appropriate timeframe (timeframe dependent on discipline) and in line with the provider’s RPL policy. For example, ICT of ten years ago is of limited benefit today on a current programme, while some culinary training outcomes or communication skills may be more timeless.

Table 1.1 Considerations for RPCL

b) Recognition of other awarding bodies (Higher Education Institution (HEI) City of Guilds, etc.) towards a QQI award

QQI recognises the value of awards made by another awarding body where the awarding body is:

- nationally recognised in its own country
- operating a quality assured awarding process (QQI, 2018)

QQI has identified a listing of awards to which RPCL may be applied (QQI, 2018). Where an award is not on the published list, the learner is required to provide the relevant learning programme and original transcript of results, with their application, in order to apply for RPCL.

Learners seeking *Statements of Equivalence* for foreign qualifications may be referred to National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC) (<http://qsearch.qqi.ie/WebPart/Search?searchtype=recognitions>) to have their qualifications aligned with the appropriate Irish qualification. *Qualifications Recognition* is the QQI body responsible for the recognition of foreign qualifications.

c) Recognition of QQI certification towards award of other awarding bodies

The recognition of QQI certification towards an award of any other awarding body is dealt with in line with the procedures of the specific awarding body.

5.3 RPCL Application Process

In the case of exemption applications, the prior certified learning, which the learner is basing his/her exemption on, should be at the same (or higher) NFQ level than the level the learner is seeking the exemption in. Recognition of other awarding bodies (Higher Education Institution (HEI) City of Guilds, etc.) towards a QQI award

1. Learner reviews **Types of RPCL** and identifies which type applies (see Section 6.2)

WHERE RPCL APPLIES - LEARNER PROCEEDS WITH RPCL APPLICATION

2. Learner completes **RPCL Application Form** (see Appendix 1) and indicates RPCL NFQ level applied for. The Programme Coordinator forwards the application without delay to the ETB Manager
3. The ETB Manager appoints a RPL Mentor/Facilitator
4. The RPL Mentor/Facilitator supports learner in portfolio preparation
5. The ETB Manager nominates two RPL assessors to assess the portfolio. The RPL assessors shall consider the application and agree a decision regarding it within a reasonable timeframe (recommended timeframe: **ten (10) working days**) of receipt of the application in line with the provider's RPL policy (see Table 1.1 for considerations in this process)

see Table 1.1 for considerations in this process.

6. The Programme Coordinator informs the learner of the outcome. The assessment evidence is presented at the next assessment period
7. The learner can appeal the decision (see Section 8).

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (RPEL) PROCESS

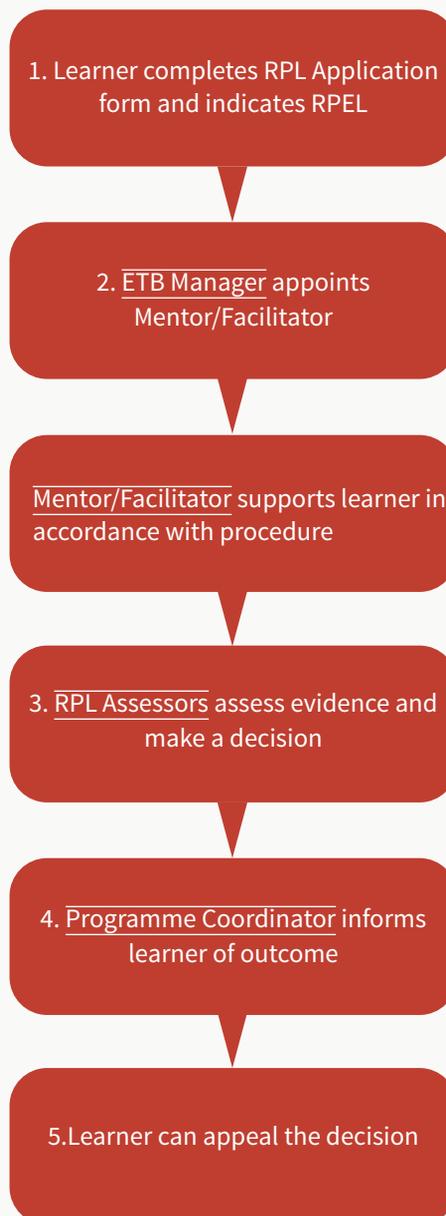
6.1 About RPEL

RPEL is **non-formal and informal learning** acquired through experience or learning achieved from non-accredited bodies e.g. learning acquired in the workplace.

6.2 RPEL Process

The RPEL Application Process follows the steps outlined in Figure 1.3

Figure 1.3 RPEL Process



1. The learner completes an **RPL Application Form** (see Appendix 1) and indicates the RPEL being applied for. This should be in line with the award being applied for/learning outcomes of the award
2. The ETB Manager assigns an RPL Mentor/Facilitator to support the learner through the RPEL process. This involves the awarding of credit for non-formal learning gained from experience. In this case, the learner must demonstrate that the required equivalent learning has been achieved by producing a Portfolio of Evidence to support the claim for access or credit (the provider will have a support service (RPL Mentor/Facilitator) in place to help learners with the production of the portfolio). The Portfolio of Evidence must be presented in such a way that the matching of the knowledge, skills and competencies of the module learning outcomes to the prior learning is clearly demonstrated. Other assessment tools such as examination, assignment, interview or observation can also be used to assess prior experiential learning. The evidence the learner has to submit will be based on the learning outcomes of the module(s)/programme he/she seeks credits for. Evidence may include (but are not limited to):
 - References
 - CV
 - Job descriptions and experiences
 - Personal statements
 - Details of any training completed
 - Certificates for qualifications, training programmes, etc.
 - Sample work (e.g. drawings, minutes from meetings, business plan, etc.)
 - Evidence from the learner's personal life
 - Published work
 - Professional licenses/registrations or membership of professional organisations
 - Acknowledged accomplishments
 - Video/audio recordings
 - Relevant recreational activities or hobbies

The learner may be required to provide verification from previous or current employers that the learning stated has been achieved by the learner.
3. The ETB Manager appoints two RPL assessors to consider the Portfolio of Evidence. The assessors should examine the submitted portfolio and agree a decision within a reasonable timeframe (**recommended timeframe: ten (10) working days**).The portfolio is assessed and an agreed grade is assigned by the assessors.

Learners should receive a grade for their Portfolio of Evidence which carries equal weight to modules taken in the conventional method. Assessors must satisfy themselves that the assessment techniques used to determine the standard of the experiential learning gained be equivalent to assessment methods applied to the module.

Portfolios of Evidence should go through the same quality assurance procedures as other assessment evidence (e.g. examinations/assignments) submitted by learners completing the programme in the conventional manner. Portfolios must demonstrate evidence of the required standard, albeit using an alternative method.

Submission of a portfolio does not guarantee that the learner gains credits

4. The Programme Coordinator informs the learner of the outcome
5. The learner can appeal the decision (see Section 8)

RPL APPEALS

The learner has the right to appeal the decision in relation to RPL (can appeal decision on application or grade awarded). Appeals must be made within a **recommended timeframe (recommended: five (5) days)** of the decision. In exceptional circumstances, the Programme Coordinator may extend this time limit. All appeals must be made in writing using the **Appeals Application Form** (see Appendix 2).

REFERENCES

CEDEFOP (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training) (2011) *Glossary: Quality in Training and Education*. CEDEFOP: Luxembourg.

CEDEFOP (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training) Murphy, I. (2016) *2016 update to the European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning*. CEDEFOP: Greece

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2013) *Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers*. Available at: <http://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Quality%20Assuring%20Assessment%20-%20Guidelines%20for%20Providers%2C%20Revised%202013.pdf> [Accessed February 28, 2018]

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2015) Exemptions for the Purpose of a Compound (Major / Special Purpose) Award. Available at: https://qhelp.qqi.ie/providers/certification-queries/common-award-system-cas-exemptions/Exemptions_Update_December_2015.docx [Accessed March 14, 2018]

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2017) *Recognition of Prior Learning in Irish Further Education and Training (FET)* Available at: <https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Prior%20Learning%20Report.pdf> [Accessed February 28, 2018]

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2018) *Exemptions*. Available at: <http://qsearch.qqi.ie/WebPart/Search?searchtype=exemptions> [Accessed January 12, 2017]

APPENDIX 1: RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING APPLICATION FORM

Please complete all sections of the application form

PART A	
Centre Name:	
Learner Name:	
Learner Address:	
Learner Contact Number:	
Learner Email Address:	
Programme Code/Title:	
Award Code/Title:	
Date of Application:	

PART B	
Recognition for Prior CERTIFIED Learning (RPCL) If yes, please indicate which RPCL you are applying for:	Yes/No
Recognition of FETAC award towards a QQI award	Yes/No
Recognition other awarding bodies (HEIs, City and Guilds, etc.) towards a QQI award	Yes/No
Recognition of QQI certificate towards award of other awarding bodies	<i>Please see specific awarding body procedures</i>
Recognition for Prior EXPERIENTIAL Learning (RPEL)	Yes/No

PART C

Details of application:

Supporting evidence: (Please list all supporting evidence included in this application)

Exemptions (based on RPCL) in respect of:

Module Code	Module Title	Module Level

Learner Signature:

Date:

Programme Coordinator Signature:

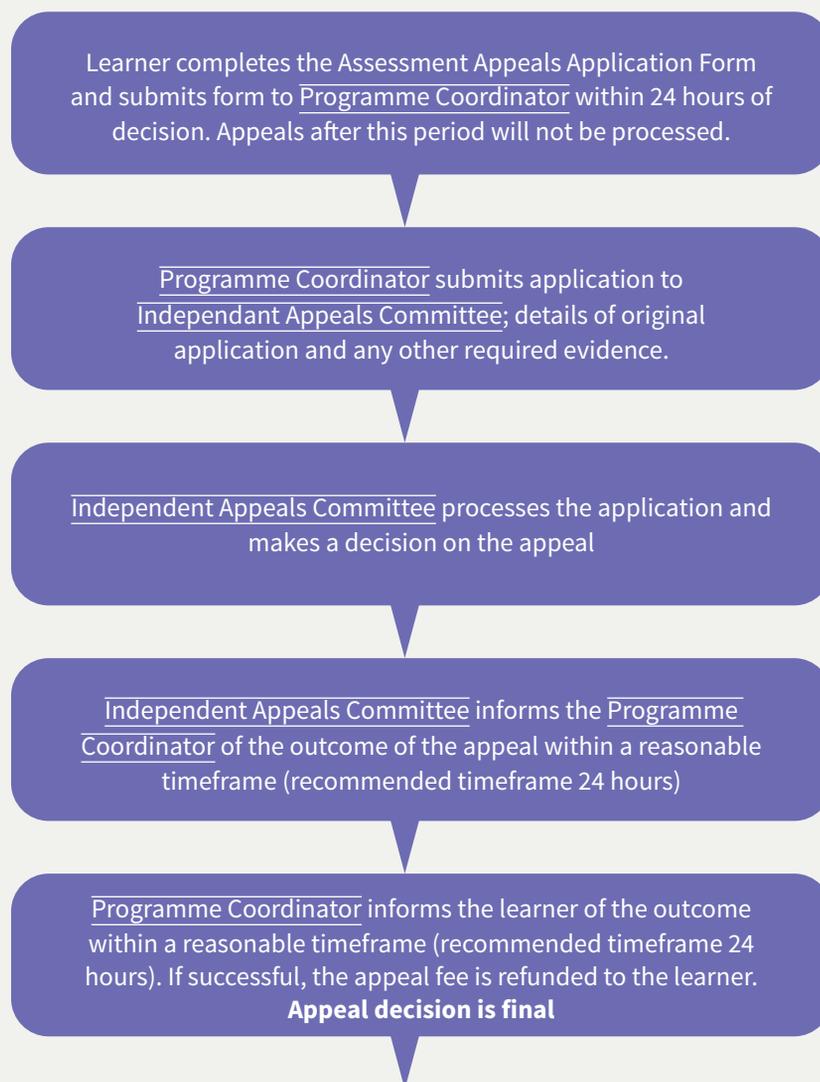
Date:

Programme Coordinator Name:

APPENDIX 2: LEARNER APPEALS PROCESS

Where possible, the learner discusses the appeal application with the Learning Practitioner and/or Programme Coordinator.

Figure 1 Learner Appeals Process



LEARNER APPEALS APPLICATION FORM

Part A: To be completed by the learner and returned to the Programme Co-ordinator by a specified deadline

Centre Name:		
Learner Name:		
Learner Address:		
<u>PPSN No (if required)</u> :		
Are there impending deadlines which may need to be considered with this application: CAO Applicant/Other Applicant:	Yes/No	
If yes, please give details:		

Please circle appropriate appeal:

Reasonable Accommodation in Assessment outcome	Yes/No
Assessment Deadlines (short-term extension) outcome	Yes/No
Assessment Deadlines (compassionate consideration in extenuating circumstances) outcome	Yes/No
Learner Assessment Malpractice outcome	Yes/No
Recognition of Prior Learning outcome	Yes/No
Other (please give details):	Yes/No
Details of appeal application (please provide full details of reasons for appeal):	

Learner Signature:

Date:

Programme Coordinator Signature:

Date:

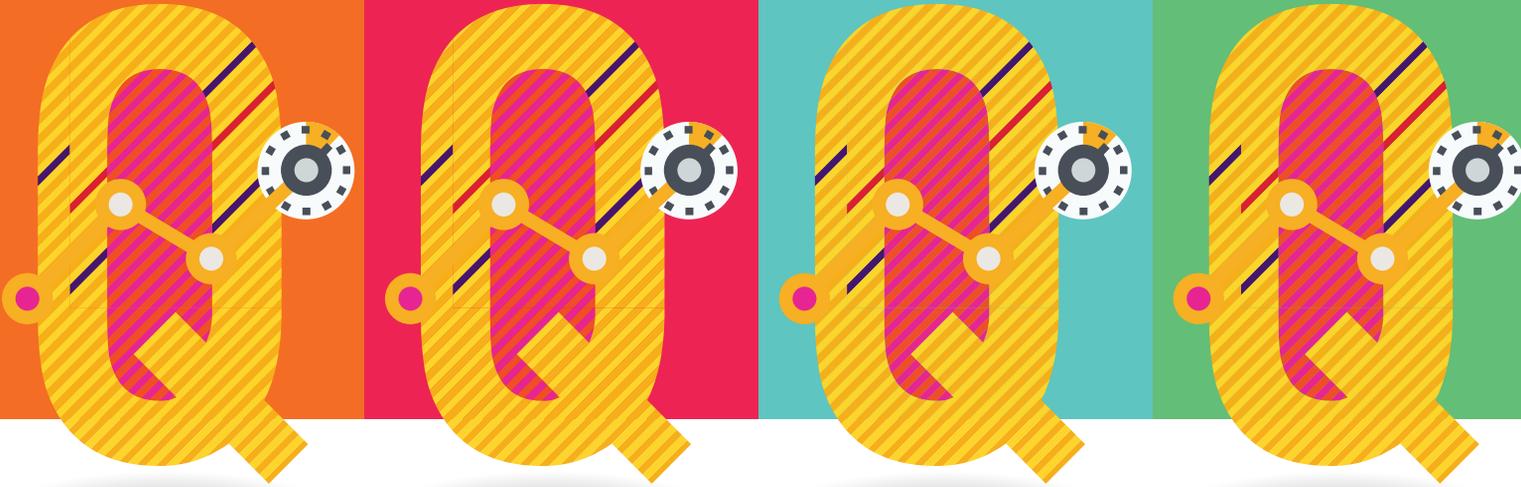
Programme Coordinator Name:

Part B: To be completed by the Independent Appeals Committee

Independent Appeals Committee Members:		
Details of evidence received:		
Date received:		
Outcome of decision:	Successful/Unsuccessful	
Date:		
Decision Details:		
<u>Independent Appeals Committee</u> Signatures and Date:	Signature	Date

QUALITY ASSURING LEARNER ASSESSMENT

ETB SECTOR ASSESSMENT REFERENCE DOCUMENTS



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Boards Ireland
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