The Rehab Group
Assessment Certification

Applies Jurisdiction: ☒ Ireland

Division: ☒ Learning & Employability

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Date: March 2018

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Title: Director of Quality & Governance
Date: October 2018
Signature:

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1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

The Rehab Group offers access to nationally and internationally recognised awards.

Assessment of awards is criterion referenced i.e. learners are assessed and the assessment decision is made based on whether the learner has reached the required national standards of knowledge, skill and competence for the award. The process of judging learning achievement and making the assessment decision is the responsibility of the assessor. Assessment of Learners may take place in a range of settings including classroom, home or on the job.

Standards for an award are expressed as learning outcomes and are outlined in the award specification for each named award. The award specification identifies the valid techniques for assessment of learner achievement.

In assessing learners for certification, it is our policy to comply with the criteria and procedures set down by the awarding bodies.

Quality assured assessment ensures learner achievement is assessed in a fair and consistent manner in line with the national standards for the award. The Rehab Group will ensure all assessments for certification are fair and consistent and carried out professionally at all times.

Assessment for awards is quality assured through the following processes:

1. Assessment
2. Authentication
    a. Internal Verification of the Process and Results
    b. External Authentication
3. Results Approval
4. Appeals

This quality assurance process must be completed in line with both funding body and awarding body requirements. The Rehab Group process for quality assuring assessment of ETB funded programmes should always be carried out in line with the local ETB requirements.

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2.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the steps to assessment and support staff members involved in the assessment of awards to ensure assessment is:

- Quality Assured
- Completed in a fair and consistent manner and
- In line with awarding and funding body requirements.

3.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all assessors who evaluate learner evidence and make assessment decisions/judgements.
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4.0 DEFINITIONS

Assessment – the process that determines the extent to which an individual has reached a level of knowledge, skill and competence. Reflects achievement of the standards of the award to which a programme is intended to lead. Assessment involves making a judgement, which is based on appropriate evidence of a learner's knowledge, skill or competence by comparison with a standard.

Assessor – a qualified person who has responsibility for the assessment of learners, who is proficient in the subject/technical area and has the appropriate knowledge of the award standards being assessed.

Award – A recognised certificate awarded when the learner has acquired the knowledge, skills and competence required to meet the standard.

Assessment Techniques – Assessment Techniques identified in the awarding body component specification e.g. Portfolio, Assignment, Exam, Project and Skills Demonstration. (Appendix 3)

Assessment Instrument – the specific test that is devised based on the specified assessment technique, such as the test paper or the brief for a portfolio.

Component Specification – An awarding body document outlining the standard for the award.

Learning Outcomes – describe hat the learner is expected to know, to understand and/or be able to do following successful completion of a period of learning.

QQI – Quality & Qualifications Ireland – the national awarding body for further and higher education in Ireland.

5.0 GENERAL PROVISIONS / PROCEDURE

1. Provide the learner with all information related to the assessment including information on learner supports and learner appeals
2. Plan and schedule the assessment in advance
3. Allow for time to carry out the assessment within the duration of the programme
4. Allow for External Authenticator costs or other resources that may be required for the assessment
5. Ensure the Learner is ready to be assessed
6. Clearly define what is being assessed
7. Ensure assessment arrangements are appropriate to the standard
8. Carry out a fair and consistent assessment to provide equity of opportunity
9. Be consistent in approach and grading (Appendix 5)
    Ensure the assessment is valid and reliable e.g. is the assessment technique appropriate to the purpose e.g. a practical assessment should be used to assess practical skills and will the assessment produce similar results under similar conditions
10. Select the appropriate technique to measure learner attainment
11. Comply with all policies, procedures and guidelines related to assessment in particular those required to be implemented by external contractors such as the ETB.
12. Provide timely feedback to learners both written and oral.

6 .0 ROLES & RESPONSILBITIES

Primarily responsibility for the fair and consistent assessment of learners rests with the manager extending to those who have a role in assessment of awards.

7.0 EVALUATION & AUDIT

Responsibility for evaluation and audit of this policy on assessment for certification rests with the Quality and Governance Directorate and the regional Programme Development Officers (PDOs).

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The fair and consistent assessment of learners will be monitored through the authentication process including Internal Verification (IV), External Authentication (EA) and the Rehab Group's Results Approval Panel (RAP). (Appendix 4)

8.0   REFERENCES
QQI Core Quality Assurance Guidelines
QQI Sector Specific Guidelines
ETB Standard Operating Guidelines
ETB Training Standard System
QQI Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines

8.1   Related PPPGs
Policy on Appeals Certification
Policy on Malpractice
Policy on Information to Learners

9.0   APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – List of Authors
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Appendix 1 – List of Authors

Authors List for New/ Reviewed Policy Area

The following names individual authors/ reviewers to this policy area.

Division/Other	Name(s)
Quality & Governance	Linda Coone
Quality & Governance	Jeanette Haughey
Quality & Governance	Helen Keogan

*Note that it is not obligatory for each division to be involved in a new policy/ review if the policy is not relevant; this should be decided by each division on a case-by-case basis.

Appendix 2 – Read & Understood

I have read, understand and agree to adhere to the attached Assessment Certification (IRE) Policy, Procedure, Protocol/ SOP or Guideline:

Print Name	Signature	Date

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Appendix 3 – Assessment Techniques defined by the Awarding Body

Assignment

An assignment is an exercise carried out in response to a brief with specific guidelines as to what should be included. An assignment is usually of short duration but may be carried out over a specified period of time. Assignments may take the form of a practical activity e.g. a practical assignment or a research activity/evaluation following investigation of a particular topic e.g. a written assignment.

Project

A project is a response to a brief and is usually carried out over a period of time specified as part of the brief. Projects may involve research, may require investigation of a topic, issue or problem, or may involve a process such as a design task, a performance or practical activity or production of an artifact or event.

Portfolio/Collection of Work

A portfolio or collection of work is a collection and/or selection of pieces of work produced by the learner over a period of time that demonstrates achievement of a range of learning outcomes. Guidelines and instructions are devised for the learner. Using these, the learner compiles a collection of their own work. The collection may be self-generated or may be generated in response to a particular brief or tasks/activities devised by the assessor.

Learner Record

A learner record is the learner's self-reported and self-reflective record in which he/she describes specific learning experiences, activities, responses and skills acquired. The record may take a number of forms: it can be a structured logbook, a (reflective) diary, a selective record of events or experiences over a period of time, a learning journal, a lab notebook or a sketchbook. For example, a lab notebook could record specific tasks or activities carried out and the analytical results obtained by the learner.

Skills Demonstration/Practical Tests

A skills demonstration is used to assess a wide range of practical based learning outcomes including practical skills and knowledge, such as

laboratory skills, interpersonal skills or oral language skills. The demonstration of skill including process skills related to practical achievement is assessed by means of practical test. It is essential to use practical tests where key objectives state that the learner must demonstrate practical achievement in defined tasks.

Practical assessments are generally used where a *set* period of time is allocated to the learner to demonstrate practical knowledge, skills or competence.

Sufficient learner evidence must be made available from the skills demonstration for internal and external verification. In the case of a practical task-based demonstration this may include a range of the following:

- product/outcome of the tasks where applicable e.g. computer print out
- photographic or video evidence of learner completing the task
- learner account of task
- completed assessment sheets/checklists

A skills demonstration may take place in the workplace i.e. in a live environment, or in a simulated environment. In some specific cases the demonstration must take place in a real/live environment.

Theory Test

A theory test provides a means of assessing a learner's ability to recall and apply knowledge, skills and understanding within a set period of time and under clearly specified conditions. Theory tests are a form of assessment which normally require a fixed timeframe and a sight unseen question paper and range of questions. The assessment instrument for theory tests is the test paper i.e. questions or tasks devised for the learner. The theory test may involve assessing listening and interpretation skills (aural testing), or may involve assessment through verbal questioning (one-to-one or in a group), or written responses.

Assessment instruments used for the testing of theory can include:

- **Short answer questions:** these require a response of limited length and may take a number of forms. Some short answer

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questions may seek specific words or phrases in the response. Short answer questions are generally easy to construct and with the assistance of model answers are relatively easy to mark.

- **Multiple choice tests/questions:** these may be used to test factual knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, problem solving and evaluation. As multiple choice questions are not open-ended, they are not useful in assessing communication skills such as the ability to organise and express information and to write fluently and quickly. Although multiple choice questions provide objectivity and reliability as regards marking, assurance of their reliability is an important factor in their design.

- **Structured questions:** these are divided into a number of related parts and generally require the learner to demonstrate more in-depth knowledge and understanding of a topic. Structured questions are useful for seeking evidence of cognitive skills such as ability to discuss, compare, analyse, evaluate, translate or solve an issue, problem or topic. However, structured questions can be difficult to mark reliably.

- **Essay type questions:** like structured questions, these require the learner to demonstrate an in-depth knowledge and understanding of a topic. Essay type questions usually focus on one particular area of knowledge and are useful for seeking evidence of cognitive skills such as the ability to discuss, compare, analyse, evaluate, translate or solve an issue, problem or topic. Essay questions can be difficult to mark reliably.

Competence Based Assessment

In addition to being criterion-referenced, some assessments are also competence based, because they involve certain assessment items that are designated as "essential" in order to achieve a pass grade. Assessment items are designated as "essential" only if identified as such in the related award standard and in the programme and assessment specifications prior to assessment development. The "essential" items can relate to areas such as health and safety or other critical legislative or industry standards.

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Appendix 4

Authentication Process

5 Key Stages

1. **Assessment**
   - Establish and implement assessment policies and procedures
   - Devise assessment instruments, marking schemes and assessment criteria
   - Assess and judge learner evidence and record outcome

2. **Authentication Process**
   - Internal verification - verify that all assessment procedures have been applied - monitor the outcome of the assessment process, check the assessment results
   - External authentication - assign an external authenticator per award based on broad award/field of learning expertise to moderate assessment results

3. **Results Approval**
   - Establish a Results Approval Panel
   - Approve and sign-off assessment results
   - Make results available to learners

4. **Appeals Process**
   - Establish an Appeals Process
   - Allow a minimum of 10 working days for learners to lodge an appeal of the assessment process or result
   - Process all appeals

5. **Request for Certification**
   - Submit all learner results
   - Flag results under appeal

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Appendix 5

Grading

For programmes leading to awards at levels 1 to 3 learners are graded as follows:

- When a learner has not achieved the minimum standards in an assessment, the grade is recorded as 'Referred'
- A 'Successful' grade is awarded to a learner who has achieved all required learning outcomes

For programmes leading to awards at levels 4 to 6, the following grading approach applies:

- When a learner has not achieved the minimum standards in an assessment, the grade is recorded as 'Referred'
- A 'Pass' is awarded to a learner who has attained the minimum standard. To be awarded a pass grade, a learner must achieve a mark of between 50-64%
- A 'Merit' is awarded to a learner who has exceeded the minimum requirements. To be awarded a merit grade, a learner must achieve a mark of between 65-79%
- A 'Distinction' is awarded to a learner who has substantially exceeded the minimum requirements. For a learner to be awarded a distinction he/she must achieve a mark of 80% or over.

Grading awards must be carried out in line with awarding body and funding body requirements. Grading of Major awards must be carried out in line with awarding body requirements.

It is the Rehab Groups policy that a fair, transparent and reliable marking system is devised for each assessment, which identifies assessment criteria and allocates marks to each criterion.

The acceptable evidence expected in a learner's response should be indicated in a model answer or checklist that shows expected performance against each assessment criterion.

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With the exception of assessments leading to awards at Levels 1 to 3 on the National Framework of Qualifications all results for assessments are expressed in marks of 100.

Assessment criteria is marked in a way that is appropriate to the assessment technique i.e. one mark or multiple marks may be applied to an assessment criterion as required.

Assessment criteria is allocated marks that reflect their relative difficulty, and partial marks may be awarded for partial answers.

Assessment Evidence, Marking Sheets and Records

Clear marking schemes and records are a necessary part of an assessment system, as they help to ensure that the assessment is fair, reliable, and transparent. Assessment records include the assessor's marking sheets, summary assessment sheets, assessment attendance records etc.

Assessment evidence must be <u>authentic</u> i.e. created by the learner during the assessment event, <u>relevant</u> to the assessment criteria and <u>sufficient</u> to satisfy the requirements of assessment criteria.

Marking sheets must be devised for the purpose of capturing, grading and approving results.

Retention of records and evidence must comply with funding body and awarding body requirements. These requirements are reflected in QQI's core quality assurance guidelines and the EBT Training Standard System.

Assessment Review

The Rehab Group is committed to ongoing assessment review as part of its Quality Assurance policy. Processes are in place to ensure that assessments are fit for purpose, and that they continue to adhere to the principles of assessment and remain capable of determining the relevant standards of knowledge, skill and competence. This is particularly relevant where programme design or delivery may alter over a period of time.

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QQI System of Classifying Grades for Major Awards (Sample)

Grade Multiplier:
Distinction 3, Merit 2, Pass 1

MODULE	TITLE	CREDIT
Module 1	Sculpture	15
Module 2	Ceramics	15
Module 3	Printmaking	15
Module 4	Communications	15
Module 5	Team Working	15
Module 6	Personal Effectiveness	15
Module 7	Numeracy	15
Module 8	Computer Literacy	15

Total Credits available for all Minor Awards = 120

Learner Results

MODULE	RESULT	GRADE	WEIGHTED CREDITS
Module 1	95%	Distinction	$15 \times 3 = 45$
Module 2	80%	Distinction	$15 \times 3 = 45$
Module 3	84%	Distinction	$15 \times 3 = 45$
Module 4	70%	Merit	$15 \times 2 = 30$
Module 5	70%	Merit	$15 \times 2 = 30$
Module 6	72%	Merit	$15 \times 2 = 30$
Module 7	70%	Merit	$15 \times 2 = 30$
Module 8	71%	Merit	$15 \times 2 = 30$

Total Weighted Credits 285
Weighted Average = $285 \div 120 = 2.38$
Rounded to Whole Number = 2 = MERIT

Learner Grade for Major Award in ART = MERIT