

QA 6.3 ASSESSMENT DESIGN PROCEDURE FOR QQI AWARDS



Purpose of Procedure

This procedure outlines how assessments should be designed for QQI awards in a way that is fair and consistent to learners and satisfies the requirements of the awarding body. Learners should have sufficient opportunities to generate evidence to demonstrate achievement of the standards of knowledge, skill or competence.

Scope of Procedure

This procedure applies to all further education and training provision provided by Cork ETB colleges and centres or by organisation funded by Cork ETB to provide further education and training, whether accredited or unaccredited, with the exception of programmes managed by Cork Training Centre where the Centralised Assessment Management System (CAMS) is currently in operation. Where assessments need to be designed for awards other than QQI Awards the policy and procedures of designing assessments of this awarding body applies.

Responsibilities

Cork ETB is responsible for ensuring that staff are aware of Cork ETB Assessment Procedures and trained in devising assessments to meet the standard of the award.

The Manager/Principal of each Cork ETB Centres is responsible for ensuring that appropriate conditions and facilities are in place, at local level and that assessments are designed in accordance with the Cork ETB procedures.

The Assessor¹ in the Cork ETB Centres are responsible for designing assessments that are appropriate for the level of the award in line with these procedures.

Procedure Details.

¹ The term assessor is an umbrella term to include teachers, tutors, trainers, instructors.

6.3.1 Ensure that learning is being assessed at the correct level

In order to ensure that learning is being assessed at the correct level and that assessments are fair, consistent, valid and reliable it is necessary that assessors utilise the following:

- The Award Specification
- The validated Cork ETB Programme Descriptor
- National Framework of Qualifications Grid of Level Indicators which outlines the Knowledge, Skills and Competencies required at every level
- QQI Grading Classifications
- QQI Grading Criteria

6.3.2 Writing Briefs

In order to ensure fair and consistent assessment of learners it is essential that learners receive clear and accurate instruction in the form of an assessment brief. An assessment brief is a set of written instructions given by the assessor to the learner outlining the requirements and assessment criteria of each piece of an assessment. Briefs are required for every assignment, project, portfolio/collection of work, learner record, skills demonstration (i.e. every assessment technique apart from examinations where an exam paper is used).

The assessor should prepare a brief based on **6.3.2.a Template for Assessment Brief/Cover Sheet, unless creating an online brief on a virtual learning environment**, for each assessment. If using the PAT booklet² system the assessment brief may be appropriately amended.

All Assessment Briefs must contain the following information:

- Clear instruction on what the learner is required to do for the assessment
- The weighting of the assessment
- Assessment instrument i.e. the specific activity/task or questions devised by the assessor based on the specified assessment technique e.g. case study, report, project, diary etc.
- Evidence needed

² The PAT, Programme, Assessment Test booklet is used in some colleges in conjunction with briefs.

- How marks will be allocated
- Details regarding integration of assessments as appropriate
- Deadline for assessments
- A statement that it is the learner's own original work
- A statement that the learner has been provided with information about Cork ETB's assessment and appeals procedures and their responsibilities with regard to assessment

In writing a brief, it is important to use language and terminology that will be understood by the Learners and that is appropriate to the level of the award standard. At levels 1 and 2 the brief will need to be presented in a very simple format using pictures or symbols if appropriate and the information will also need to be given orally and explained to the learners to ensure they fully understand the information. While assessment should always be planned and managed, it may happen informally at levels 1 and 2.

All briefs must be in written form and must be available for Internal Verification and External Authentication. See **6.4.4a Assessors QA Checklist** for further information.

6.3.3 Integrating Briefs

It is possible to write an integrated brief, which combines several assessment guidelines and criteria, across a programme, into a single coherent assessment activity/task. This approach should be encouraged by the centre as part of the planning process at the beginning of the year.

This provides a holistic approach to teaching and assessment and avoids the over assessment of learners. It also facilitates the development of briefs based on meaningful, realistic, streamlined activities that better mirror activities in life and participating in a work force. See

<http://www.fess.ie/assessment/integrating-assessment> for further information.

6.3.4 Examination Papers

An examination 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.

An examination paper is an assessment instrument, which is designed in accordance with the instructions given in the assessment section of the provider's validated programme module. Examination papers are only used at levels 4, 5 or 6. Unless otherwise specified by the center, the assessor is required to prepare examination papers.

Examinations may be practical, interview style, aural testing and/or theory based. For theory-based examinations, questions may be objective, structured, short answer and so on. Specific information about the types of examination questions that should be used to assess a learner in a theory-based examination can be found in the section on guidelines for assessment in the validated programme module.

When devising an examination, the assessor should ensure that:

- questions or tasks reflect the learning outcomes as outlined in the Award Specification
- instructions are clear and unambiguous
- examinations have a cover page outlining details such as; date, duration and number of questions
- answer books for learners to complete their answers should be provided where appropriate
- confidentiality is maintained during preparation and handling of examination documents
- groups of learners being assessed at different times are provided with different written examination questions
- specific resources or equipment required are available and in good working order
- the marks per section and marks per question are clear to the learner
- the learner is aware of the weighting of the examination in relation to the award
- learners are given a quiet environment in which to complete the examination

(QQI QA Assessment Guidelines for Providers, p. 17)

6.3.4a Template for Exam Paper is laid out to ensure consistent formatting and alignment throughout. Table borders should be removed once the questions and details for marking have been entered. For consistency Calibri font size 14 is recommended.

Additional information such as assessors name, course location etc. may be included if required.

The examination paper must be available for Internal Verification and External Authentication. See **6.4. Implementation of Assessment Activities Procedures** for further information.

It is essential, when drawing up an examination paper that assessor draw up Marking Schemes and Outline Solutions at the same time.

6.3.5 Marking Schemes

To ensure fair and consistent marking, assessors must devise a marking scheme. This is a transparent and reliable marking system with detailed breakdown of how the marks will be allocated to the assessment criteria or parts/elements of each question. A marking scheme is different to the marking sheet, which outlines the overall marks only.

A marking scheme should identify per technique:

- marks allocated to each assessment criterion
- sub totals
- total mark

Where possible the total assessment marks should be out of 100 or multiples of 100.

In devising a marking scheme, assessors should refer to:

- The assessment guidelines in Cork ETB's validated programme module descriptor for the weighting of the assessment, the format of the assessment and the allocation of marks per question where appropriate
- The Learner Marking Sheet at the back of Cork ETB's validated programme module descriptor for a breakdown of the marks allocated for each question

Assessors are required to devise a marking scheme per technique and use a summary marking sheet per minor award, so it is clear and obvious that the

learner has achieved all learning outcomes (QQI QA Assessment Guidelines for Providers, p. 20)

See template **6.3.5a Marking Scheme Template as a sample. The marks may also be broken down in detail on the assessment brief or in a rubric.**

6.3.6 Outline Solutions

Outline solutions are required for all examinations. They should reflect the answers you expect the Learner to produce. Depending on the questions, outline solutions may have:

- one correct answer
- a range of acceptable answers
- a list of minimum acceptable key points

In devising outline solutions Assessors should refer to:

- The assessment guidelines in the provider's validated programme module for the weighting of the examination, the format of the examination and the allocation of marks per question
- The Learner Marking Sheet at the back of the programme module for a breakdown of the marks allocated for each question

The table below outlines what is required for each Assessment Technique

Assessment Technique	Required
Assignment	Brief & Detailed Marking Scheme
Examination	Examination Paper & Detailed Marking Scheme & Outline Solutions
Learner Record	Brief & Detailed Marking Scheme
Portfolio/Collection of Work	Brief(s) & Detailed Marking Scheme
Project	Brief & Detailed Marking Scheme

Skills Demonstration	Brief(s)/Task List(s) & Detailed Marking Scheme
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Document Details

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Templates/Resources:	6.3.2.a Template for Assessment Brief/Cover Sheet 6.3.4a Template for Exam Paper 6.3.5a Marking Scheme Sample Template 6.4.7 Assessors QA Checklist

Appendix 6.3.2.a Template for Assessment Brief/Cover Sheet



Learner Name:			
Class Group:			
Assessor:	<i>i.e. name of teacher/tutor/instructor/trainer</i>		
Component Title and Code:	<i>e.g. Word Processing 3N0588</i>		
Assessment Technique:	<i>e.g. Project</i>	Weighting³:	<i>40%</i>
Title:	<i>e.g. Modifying a Letter of Complaint</i>		
Issue Date:	<i>3/11/16</i>	Submission Date:	<i>25/11/16</i>
Learning Outcomes Assessed:	<i>e.g. LO 3, 6 & 7</i>		
<p>Guidelines:</p> <p><i>What the learner is required to do, as per the guidelines in the assessment section of the validated programme module. These should be detailed guidelines on how to complete this piece of assessment.</i></p> <p><i>The guidelines MUST be linked to the learning outcomes being assessed (as per validated programme map) as it is the learning outcomes that will guide you about the level and the kind of knowledge, skill and competence the learner should be demonstrating in the piece of assessment.</i></p> <p><i>The guidelines may allow for the assessment of one learning outcome, a range of learning outcomes from one component specification or in the case of integrated assessments, a range of learning outcomes across a number of component specifications.</i></p>			
<p>Assessment Criteria/Marking Scheme:</p> <p><i>These are statements of the standards against which the evidence produced by the learner will be marked/graded. This information MUST be taken from Cork ETBs validated descriptors.</i></p>			

Learner Name:	
I confirm that: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. I have been provided with information about Cork ETB’s assessment and appeals procedures and my responsibilities with regard to assessment2. The assessment work produced by me is all my own original work	
Learner Signature:	
Date:	

Note to Learners:

- Assessments will not be accepted without this coversheet.
- Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else’s ideas, arguments, concepts or work as your own by failing to reference or acknowledge it properly. All such work must be acknowledged. Any learner, who presents another’s work as their own, will be investigated in line with Cork ETB Assessment Malpractice procedures and may be awarded a zero grade.
- Learners should keep copies of all assessment submitted, where applicable.

³ Not applicable at levels 1-3



6.3.4a Template for Exam Paper

Component:

Month: May

Course(s):

Learner Name:

Class/Group:

Weighting:

Time Allowed:

Instructions to Candidates:





Appendix 6.3.5a Marks Allocation Template

Component & Code:			
Assessment Technique:		Weighting:	
Assessment Criteria	Task	Marks Allocated	Total
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