



Carlow and Wexford Campus

**Academic Standards and Assessment Regulations**





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## **ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS**

### **1. INTRODUCTION:**

These Academic Standards and Assessment Regulations (ASAR) supersedes and replaces the University's Marks & Standards Policy, Procedure and Regulations and became effective from the Academic Session 2010-2011. This version (Version 17.01) stems from work supporting introduction of the Academic Delivery Framework and was approved in April 2022.

These ASAR were initially derived from the HETAC publication - Assessment and Standards - 2009, as amended by QQI – Assessments and Standards - 2013, which sets out principles, guidelines, conventions, protocols and interpretations in relation to implementing the National Framework of Qualifications and applying the European Standards and Guidelines for Assessment. The University has adopted the full QQI Sectoral Conventions for Assessment.

The Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999 gave prominence to the principle that education and training qualifications should be based on standards of knowledge, skill or competence to be acquired by learners and recognised the establishment of procedures for the assessment of learners as a provider responsibility. South East Technological University is required to have effective procedures for:

- (i) Designing, approving, monitoring and reviewing the assessment strategies for programmes and awards.
- (ii) Implementing rigorous assessment policies and practices that ensure the standard for each award and award element is set and maintained at the appropriate level and that learner performance is properly judged against this.
- (iii) Evaluating how academic standards are maintained through assessment practice that also encourages effective learning.

Assessment serves a range of purposes including the:

- (i) Development of learner learning (formative)
- (ii) Making of judgements about learner learning (summative); and
- (iii) Feedback on teaching.

This policy provides the compulsory framework within which assessment activities are to be managed within South East Technological University (refer to (Appendix 2) for responsibilities and guidelines for the implementation of this policy).

## **2. FOUNDATIONS AND DEFINITIONS:**

### **2.1 FOUNDATIONS:**

The foundation for the policy rests on key principles that underpin the University's academic standards. These principles are:

- (a) *"The assessment of learners is one of the most important elements of higher education. The outcomes of assessment have a profound effect on learners' future careers. It is therefore important that assessment is carried out professionally at all times and that it takes into account the extensive knowledge which exists about testing and examination processes. Assessment also provides valuable information for institutions about the effectiveness of teaching and learners' support."*

Learner assessment (specifically the assessment of learning) means inference (e.g. judgement or estimation or evaluation) of a learner's knowledge, skill or competence by comparison with a standard based on appropriate evidence. Self-assessment is included for this.

- (b) Learners are responsible for demonstrating their learning achievement.
- (c) Assessment supports standards based on learning outcomes.
- (d) Assessment promotes and supports both effective learning and teaching.
- (e) Assessment procedures are credible.
- (f) Assessment methods are reviewed and renewed as necessary to adapt to evolving requirements.
- (g) Learners are well informed about how and why they are assessed.

#### **2.1.1. Assessment Aligned to Learning Outcomes:**

Assessment should be aligned to specified minimum learning outcomes at module and programme level. Programme assessment strategies will be produced for each programme and aligned module assessment strategies for each of its constituent modules (Appendix 2).

#### **2.1.2. Summative and Formative Assessment:**

Programmes and their constituent modules shall include sufficient (but not excessive), timely, diverse and fit-for-purpose assessment tasks to; encourage effective learning; inform individualised feedback and support; and measure progress towards the attainment of the intended programme learning outcomes.

All assessment, whether graded or not, shall be seen as formative and include feedback to learners.

#### **2.1.3. Criterion-referenced Assessment:**

South East Technological University shall use criterion-referenced assessment as the method to explicitly define the relationship between assessment and the:



- (i) Learning outcomes
- (ii) Standards to be met
- (iii) Performance levels
- (iv) Award of grades

In criterion referenced assessment, judgements about the quality of learners' performance are made by reference to predetermined criteria and standards and not by reference to the achievement of other learners. The following definitions apply:

- **Criterion:** a property or characteristic by which the quality of performance may be judged / evaluated or measured.
- **Grading Standard:** a descriptor and mark for each level of achievement (aspired to or attained).

All criteria and grading standards/schemes for assessment tasks shall be published and made available to learners prior to assessment. (Appendix 3).

Generic criteria are adopted by the University but each module and assessment task shall develop their own specific criteria aligned to the learning outcomes. (Appendix 4).

#### **2.1.4. Credible Assessment:**

Assessment shall be valid, fair and consistent. The following definitions shall apply:

**Validity** essentially means fitness for purpose. A valid assessment:

- (i) Allows inference of the attainment of the learning outcomes it purports to address
- (ii) Assesses the person it purports to assess
- (iii) As appropriate for informing the decisions that it purports to inform

Condition (iii) is required because an assessment may be valid for informing one decision but invalid for another.

**Fair assessment** is inclusive, unbiased, and transparent and reflects appropriately the learning outcomes available to programme participants.

**Consistent assessment** is reliable, i.e. comparable performance levels reflect comparable grades over markers and time.

#### **2.1.5. Forms of Assessment:**

A variety of assessment forms shall be used in all modules (e.g. essay, oral presentation, written examination, multiple choice examination, laboratory report, literature review, practical performance, etc.)

A thesis and other large forms of assessment (e.g. design and enquiry – based projects) are regarded as including multiple forms of assessment.

**2.1.6 Spread and Timing of Assessment:**

Assessment shall be spread across a programme and module. This shall be reflected in the weighting given to and timing of assessment across each semester.

**2.1.7 Feedback on Assessment:**

Appropriate and timely feedback shall be provided to learners on assessed work in a way that promotes learning. Learners should typically receive feedback within **three working weeks** of submission of a continuous assessment task. Assessment methods shall be reviewed and renewed as necessary.

Learners shall be informed about how and why they are assessed and involved in reviews of assessment procedures.

**2.1.8. Double, Joint and Anonymous Marking:**

South East Technological University recognises that there are many different forms of assessment. These procedures apply to all forms of assessment where appropriate

All written theses and dissertations on taught programmes at NFQ Level 9 shall be blind double marked. Other assessments on taught programmes at NFQ Levels 6 to 9 may be double marked, blind double marked or jointly marked with the agreement of the programme board in line with the approved assessment strategy for the programme. In the case of postgraduate research programmes, marking will be conducted in line with procedures outlined in *South East Technological University's Policies and Procedures for Postgraduate Research*.

- In these processes, in the case of lack of agreement the views of the external examiner shall be sought.
- The relevant examination board shall be the final arbiter of the assessment mark.
- South East Technological University does not currently employ anonymous marking.

**Definitions:**

**Double marking:**

Assessments are marked by the first examiner using defined criteria and grading standard. They are also marked by a second examiner who has sight of the comments and the marks of the first examiner. After assessing the work, both examiners shall agree a final mark.

**Blind double marking:**

Two examiners will mark the same assessment separately using agreed criteria and grading standard. Both examiners are unaware of the marks or comments of the other marker when marking. After assessing the work, both examiners shall agree a final mark.

**Joint marking:**

Assessments are marked by two or more examiners using agreed criteria and grading standards.

**Anonymous marking:**

Examiners are unaware of the identity of the learner being assessed.

**2.1.9 Group Assessment**

The University recognises that group, team or collaborative learning is an important element of the learning process. When used effectively, group work can develop learners' teamwork and negotiation skills and can enhance learners' understanding of programme content (through group discussion and peer support). (Paragraph 4.2.3.6 for group assessment conventions.)

**2.1.10 Late Submission of Assignments**

All South East Technological University learners are entitled to fair and reasonable notice of assignment submission dates, times and methods and the consequences for failure to submit on time. South East Technological University's Policy and Procedure for Late Submission of Assignments <http://www.itcarlow.ie/resources/quality/quality-policies-procedures.htm>

**2.2 DEFINITIONS:****2.2.1 Assessment:**

Assessment describes any processes that evaluate/judge the outcomes of learner learning (knowledge, skills and competencies), by comparison with a standard based on appropriate evidence.

**2.2.2 Formative Assessment:**

Aims to support the learner in attaining specified learning outcomes. Formative assessment is designed to provide information and feedback to learners so they can improve their learning.

**2.2.3 Summative Assessment:**

Aims to determine if (or sometimes the extent to which) a set of specified learning outcomes have been attained by a person and (typically) their entitlement to academic credit. Summative Assessment means any assessment, the results of which are included in a learner's grade for a module or a programme. It includes results from continuous assessment, project work, oral assessment, written examinations etc.

### 3. **SECTORAL CONVENTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT:**

The Sectoral Conventions for Assessment comprise a set of regulations and benchmarks which, in the interest of fairness and consistency, are agreed at the sectoral level by QQI and all associate providers

#### **CONVENTION 1: AWARD CLASSIFICATION**

Classification of awards shall be criterion-reference as distinct from norm-referenced.

The following table describes the classification available for major awards (made by QQI or by recognised institutions under delegated authority) in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). They also specify the required boundary values for grade point average (GPA) and percentage point average (PPA) where the acronyms are defined by Sectoral Convention 4.

<b>Classification of Higher Certificates (Level 6) and Ordinary Bachelors Degrees (Level 7)</b>	<b>PPA boundary values</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Distinction</b>	<b>70%</b>	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in most respects is significantly and consistently beyond this
<b>Merit Grade 1</b>	<b>60%</b>	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in many respects is significantly beyond this
<b>Merit Grade 2</b>	<b>50%</b>	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in some respects is significantly beyond this
<b>Pass</b>	<b>40%</b>	Definitive descriptor: Attains all the minimum intended programme learning outcomes

<b>Classification of Honours Bachelor's degrees (Level 8) and Higher Diplomas (Level 9)</b>	<b>PPA boundary values</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>First-class honours</b>	<b>70%</b>	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in most respects is significantly and consistently beyond this
<b>Second-class honours Grade 1</b>	<b>60%</b>	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in many respects is significantly beyond this
<b>Second-class honours Grade 2</b>	<b>50%</b>	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in some respects is significantly beyond this
<b>Pass</b>	<b>40%</b>	Definitive descriptor: Attains all the minimum intended programme learning outcomes

<b>Classification of Postgraduate Diplomas (Level 9)</b>	<b>PPA boundary values</b>	<b>Description 2009-2010 and following</b>
<b>Distinction</b>	<b>70%</b>	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in most respects is significantly and consistently beyond this
<b>Merit</b>	<b>60%</b>	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in many respects is significantly beyond this
<b>Pass</b>	<b>40%</b>	Definitive descriptor: Attains all the minimum intended programme learning outcomes

<b>Classification of Taught Master's degrees (Level 9)</b>	<b>PPA boundary values</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>First-class honours</b>	<b>70%</b>	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in most respects is significantly and consistently beyond this
<b>Second-class honours</b>	<b>60%</b>	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in many respects is significantly beyond this
<b>Pass</b>	<b>40%</b>	Definitive descriptor: Attains all the minimum intended programme learning outcomes

<b>Classification of Research degrees</b>	<b>PPA boundary values</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Unclassified (recognised as equivalent to an honours classification for progression and employment purposes)</b>	<b>N/A</b>	Definitive descriptor: Attains all the minimum intended learning outcomes for the relevant research degree programme.

<b>Other unclassified awards</b>	<b>PPA boundary values</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Unclassified</b>	<b>40%</b>	Definitive descriptor: Attains all the minimum intended programme learning outcomes

<b>Classification of Special Purpose Awards (Level 6 &amp; Level 7) with a credit value of 60 or greater</b>	<b>PPA boundary values</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Distinction</b>	<b>70%</b>	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in most respects is significantly and consistently beyond this
<b>Merit Grade 1</b>	<b>60%</b>	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in many respects is significantly beyond this
<b>Merit Grade 2</b>	<b>50%</b>	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in some respects is significantly beyond this
<b>Pass</b>	<b>40%</b>	Definitive descriptor: Attains all the minimum intended programme learning outcomes

<b>Classification of Special Purpose Award (Level 8) with a credit value of 60 or greater</b>	<b>PPA boundary values</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>First-class honours</b>	<b>70%</b>	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in most respects is significantly and consistently beyond this
<b>Second-class honours Grade 1</b>	<b>60%</b>	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in many respects is significantly beyond this
<b>Second-class honours Grade 2</b>	<b>50%</b>	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in some respects is significantly beyond this
<b>Pass</b>	<b>40%</b>	Definitive descriptor: Attains all the minimum intended programme learning outcomes

<b>Classification of Special Purpose Awards (Level 9) with a credit value of 60 or greater</b>	<b>PPA boundary values</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Distinction</b>	<b>70%</b>	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in most respects is significantly and consistently beyond this
<b>Merit</b>	<b>60%</b>	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in many respects is significantly beyond this
<b>Pass</b>	<b>40%</b>	Definitive descriptor: Attains all the minimum intended programme learning outcomes

A 'Pass' classification of an award is a positive statement of achievement.

All awards (other than research degrees, minor awards and supplemental awards) shall be classified. However, in exceptional cases, where classification is not feasible, an award may be issued as an unclassified award.

Special Purpose Awards which have a volume of at least 60 credits and are comparable to a major award (at the same NFQ level) may be classified in accordance with the convention for the relevant major award. Otherwise, awards of this type shall be unclassified.

Providers shall furnish supplementary information about a person's attainment. They will also work with stakeholders to specify and maintain a reporting system that can be understood and used by stakeholders. The European Diploma Supplement (EDS) is the channel for this information.

## **CONVENTION 2: Grading System**

South East Technological University adopts the percentage grading system.

## **CONVENTION 3: Determination of Award Classification**

Calculation of the award classification shall be based on the credit-weighted mean value of the allowable grades (i.e. those that contribute to the classification) for modules of a specific programme which has been validated by the South East Technological University, QQI or by a recognised institution for the purpose of making the award.

A learner may claim exemption from a module whose grade would otherwise contribute to the award classification, provided that they can demonstrate the attainment of the relevant knowledge, skill and competence. In cases where the attainment cannot be *graded* fairly and consistently, only an unclassified award shall be available.

Procedures for exemption and/or pass by compensation shall not compromise national standards for awards.

Honours classification, or any classification higher than 'Pass', shall be made based on first-attempt grades. Necessary procedures to allow consistent treatment of a repeat grade as a first-attempt grade, where exceptional mitigating circumstances exist, shall not compromise this principle.

## CONVENTION 4: Percentage Grading System

Percentage marks (p) and percentage point values (ppv) are defined in the following table:

Description	Percentage	Percentage point value (ppv)
Passing marks	$40 \leq p \leq 100$	$40 \leq ppv \leq 100$
Compensable mark	$35 \leq p < 40$	$35 \leq ppv < 40$
Outright failing marks	$0 \leq p < 35$	0

The percentage point average (PPA) for a stage is the credit-weighted mean of the percentage point values for the constituent modules.

No credit is allocated to a learner in respect of modules which are failed outright.

## CONVENTION 5: Post-award Achievement required for an additional major award at the same level

Subject to the following conditions, a graduate holding a higher education and training award may present for and, if successful, achieve a further major award at the same level within the same generic area of study. This must involve the attainment of new learning outcomes (i.e. post-award achievement).

If the area of specialisation of the post-award achievement is not substantially different, and/or if the associated credit is insufficient for granting a new major award, the applicant may be granted a Minor, Special Purpose or Supplemental Award or a Single Module.

The following table sets out the minimum volume of newly certified learning required of a candidate who is seeking to qualify for an additional major award *at the same level* within the same generic area of study. Note that repeating learning that is substantially equivalent to previously certified learning is not included in the calculation of post-award credit in the following table.

Award currently held	Additional Award Sought	Post-award credit for newly certified
Higher Certificate	Higher Certificate	A minimum of 60 credits at Level 6
Ordinary Bachelors Degree	Ordinary Bachelors Degree	A minimum of 60 credits at Level 7
Honours Bachelors Degree	Honours Bachelors Degree	A minimum of 120 credits, at least 60 of which are at Level 8
Masters Degree	Masters Degree	A complete programme



## **CONVENTION 6: ECTS Grade and Grade Interpretation Scheme (EGIS)**

The ECTS Grade and (if appropriate) the ECTS Grade Interpretation Scheme are implemented, on the basis of Sectoral, National and European convention. See [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/repository/education/library/publications/2015/ects-users-guide\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/library/publications/2015/ects-users-guide_en.pdf)

## **CONVENTION 7: Exceptions**

In exceptional circumstances, where, for a particular programme, the legitimate requirements of external authorities conflict with one or more of the Sectoral Conventions *and make their application impossible*, an alternative arrangement may be used for that programme. Such exceptional arrangements shall be identified on the Europass Diploma Supplement, described in the programme assessment strategy, and articulated during the programme validation process.

In the case of collaboration between providers using different grading systems, there shall be negotiation and agreement on a joint programme assessment strategy, as well as a joint grading system for the collaborative programme and on any necessary conversions of module grades. This shall be addressed during the validation of collaborative programmes and in the context of collaboration and joint awarding agreements, etc.

Joint awards have a distinct identity and may use an alternative classification system where appropriate. See South East Technological University's Policy and Procedure for Joint Awards and Joint Awarding Agreements <http://www.itcarlow.ie/resources/quality/quality-policies-procedures.htm>

## 4. ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

### 4.1 Assessment and Programme Structures

Programmes are typically divided into *stages/semesters and modules*.

Stages/semesters and modules are sub-programmes within programmes.

Stages of programmes are frequently organised in semesters. A semester-based system (**semesterisation**) is one where modules can be wholly taught and assessed in a single teaching period. In the case of the South East Technological University, each of the two semesters is 15 weeks in duration with a minimum of 12 weeks of teaching in each semester.

*Capstone* modules and stages are designed to provide an opportunity for learners to integrate learning attained in other modules and stages.

A programme can be constructed without semesters or modules or stages. The best example of this is the 'traditional' PhD programme, but even in this case, there is now a move towards more structured provision.

A module does not require direct teaching as such but always requires learning and assessment – a programme could, for example, be based entirely on a prescribed sequence of assessments, with no teaching in the direct sense.

In the case of full-time learners who take all the modules in a stage in parallel, the module assessments (other than programme work) are typically conducted during a *session* (or sitting) at the end of the stage

In exceptional circumstances an Internal Examiner, following consultation with the relevant Head of Department and by agreement with the External Examiner, may provide for an alternative form and/or timing of assessment for any candidate/s. The circumstances and the alternate form and/or timing of assessment, as applicable, shall be brought to the attention of the Examination Board before a decision on the final results for the candidate/s is made.

### 4.2 Minimum Pass Mark

**4.2.1** The minimum mark required for a pass in an Examination Module shall be 40% of the maximum marks available for that Examination Module. In any case where the Approved Programme Schedule provides for a minimum pass mark other than 40%, the minimum pass mark must be indicated **clearly** on the Broadsheet of Results; in default of such indication, the minimum pass mark is assumed to be 40%.

#### 4.2.2 Component Modules:

In each Examination module which consists of component modules the marks awarded to each candidate shall be the total of the marks scored in the various examination elements.

### **4.2.3. Continuous Assessment Mark:**

- 4.2.3.1** In the case of a candidate who has omitted to perform a satisfactory proportion of continuous assessment tests in any examination module, or who has been awarded such low marks for continuous assessment that a pass in the examination module as a whole is unlikely, the University should advise the candidate of this situation in good time to enable the candidate to take appropriate action before the final examination.
- 4.2.3.2** In the case of a candidate repeating an examination, marks awarded on the basis of continuous assessment, oral, practical, project or laboratory examinations, shall, typically, subject to **4.2.3.3** be carried forward from the original examination to the repeat examination and shall be aggregated with the marks scored in the latter to determine the total marks to be awarded in respect of the repeat examination. However, in the case of a candidate repeating an examination following a repeat attendance, only the marks awarded as a result of the repeat assessment and examination shall be considered.
- 4.2.3.3** In the case of a candidate repeating an examination whose results are liable to be jeopardised by the carry forward of poor continuous assessment, oral, practical, project or laboratory marks, the University may devise, having due regard to the provisions of the Approved Programme Schedule, alternative assessment arrangements in agreement with the External Examiner(s) in lieu of the Continuous Assessment. The results of such candidates at the repeat examination shall be based on the marks awarded for the alternative assessment combined with the other repeated examination elements. Where a candidate has poor continuous assessment marks and has not been afforded the opportunity to improve this element of the result, then typically the repeat examination results should be considered to cover all such elements of the examination and accordingly be the only result taken into account by the Examination Board.
- 4.2.3.4** The maximum mark for each Examination Module, and the allocation of marks to each Component Module and to each examination element shall be as indicated in the Approved Programme Schedule. Where learners have not been successful in passing a module and where possible, it is recommended to provide a repeat opportunity to support the learner in meeting the minimum learning outcomes. Examples include repeat examination or re-submission of assignments.

#### **4.2.3.5 Assessment of Joint Projects:**

Where two or more candidates present a joint project, the individual contribution and performance of each candidate shall be assessed, and individual marks/grades awarded accordingly.

#### **4.2.3.6 Group Work Assessment:**

Effective group work assesses both the process and the product.

**4.2.3.6.1** Group work shall be assessed by means which allow the contribution of each member of the group to be determined individually. Marks shall be allocated on an individual and group basis.

**4.2.3.6.2** When using group work for assessment purposes lecturers shall:

- (i) Establish clear equitable procedures for group work and detail these procedures in the module outline, including the purpose and function of the group work/project, how potential group conflict would be dealt with and the group work/project assessment criteria.
- (ii) Ensure equity of assessment and workload within and across groups.
- (iii) Maintain regular communication with groups.
- (iv) Establish procedures for: the selection of group members; the role and responsibility of group members; the conduct of group meetings; feedback stages.
- (v) Monitor individual performance within the group on a regular basis during the programme of the assessment and have a defined process for assisting under- performing learners and, if necessary, replacement or withdrawal of a learner from a group.

#### **4.2.3.7 Late Submission of Assignments**

Refer to South East Technological University's Policy & Procedure for Late Submission of Assignments

<http://www.itcarlow.ie/resources/quality/quality-policies-procedures.htm>

#### **4.2.3.8 Absence from Assessment(s)**

Refer to South East Technological University's Policy & Procedure for Absence from Assessment(s)

<http://www.itcarlow.ie/resources/quality/quality-policies-procedures.htm>

#### **4.3. EXEMPTIONS:**

##### **Exemption from Studying a Module**

For the purpose of this section, *exemption* means exemption from parts of a programme. (Note that the term exemption is also use in a different sense to indicate satisfactory completion of a module)

Exemption procedures must be consistent with the necessity for learners to demonstrate the learning outcomes required to qualify for an award. Exemption allows those learning outcomes to be achieved and/or demonstrated in alternative ways. It also recognises that the learning outcomes may have been achieved prior to enrolment in the programme.

In principle, exemptions are permitted at any stage of a programme, module to the relevant programme and constituent module assessment strategies.

Where the result of the module is required for calculating an award classification, South East Technological University shall, where feasible, establish a fair, consistent and transparent process for grading the learner's achievements in respect of the exempted module's learning outcomes. Where this is not possible, the award can only be recommended without classification.

**4.3.1** Subject to typical programme update and modification via periodic programmatic review or otherwise, modules passed shall accrue for the purposes of award and need not be retaken. This does not apply in respect of any sub-unit of an examination module, e.g. in respect of a component module within an examination module.

##### **4.3.2 Additional Exemptions:**

**4.3.2.1** Additional exemptions may be granted to a candidate in respect of additional Examination Modules passed by virtue of further attempts at the examination. In order to complete the examination stage concerned, the candidate must obtain a clear pass in all required Examination Modules.

**4.3.2.2** In recording exemptions on the Broadsheet of Results, in respect of attempts subsequent to a candidate's first attempt at the examination, only the additional exemptions gained should be recorded in the overall result column; exemptions awarded by virtue of previous attempts should not be repeated in the overall result column on a

current Broadsheet. They should however, be recorded in the module mark/grade column(s) as EX.

#### **4.3.3 Waiver of Exemptions<sup>1</sup>**

A candidate to whom exemptions have been granted and who present for further examination in any or all of the exempted Examination Modules, shall be deemed to have waived the exemptions granted. A candidate exercising such right of waiver may be granted the benefit of compensation at the repeat examination in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 4.4.1. The waiver of exemptions cancels the original result(s) which cannot be restored for the purpose of further attempts at the examination.

#### **4.4. EMBEDDED LEARNER EXIT PATHWAY**

Learners who choose not to progress to the subsequent year of an academic programme and who formally exit from the programme of study and from the Institution, may apply for an Exit Award where eligible and where this Exit Award exists.

Completed Exit/ Withdrawal forms should be submitted to the Examination Office by the 20<sup>th</sup> September of the respective Academic Year. (Available from the Admissions or Faculty/Campus Office)

Learners who apply for and are approved for an Exit Award may be conferred at the next University graduation ceremony.

These graduates may apply for re-entry to the subsequent year/s of their original programme subject to continuation of the programme in later academic sessions.

#### **4.5. PROGRESSION ELIGIBILITY**

Programmes are organised in stages, a learner, to be eligible to progress to a particular stage, is typically required to demonstrate achievement of the minimum intended learning outcomes of all the preceding stages. This should be elaborated in the programme assessment strategy. The *Approved Programme Schedule* summarises the allocation of credits and grades, as well as any special progression requirements.

Subject to any special conditions of the programme, there are three exceptions to the general requirement of passing all the required modules

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<sup>1</sup> **Note:** Honours classification, or any classification higher than a 'Pass' shall be made based on first-attempt grades

in order to progress to the next stage. These are:

- (i) Pass by compensation
- (ii) Exemption from part of the programme (with or without the allocation of a grade and credit)
- (iii) Eligibility to progress carrying the failed modules to be passed during the subsequent stage

These conditions are addressed in Sections 4.5.1, 4.5.2, 4.5.3.

#### **4.5.1 Pass by Compensation:**

Grades which are greater than or equal to 35% but less than 40% in the percentage system are awarded when a learner has nearly (but not quite demonstrated attainment of the relevant minimum intended learning outcomes for a particular assessment task).

In the programme assessment strategy and Approved Programme Schedule, certain modules may be designated as not passable by compensation.

#### **4.5.2 Compensation can only be applied in the following circumstances:**

- (i) The learner has been assessed for all stage/semester modules and no module in the stage/semester has been failed outright (below 35%).
- (ii) In the case of full-time learners, the results are from the same sitting (session).
- (iii) The stage-aggregate of credit weighted excesses of percentage marks (over 40) is greater than or equal to twice the stage-aggregate of credit-weighted deficits of marks (under 40) and the potentially compensable results account for no more than one-third of the credit for the stage: i.e. or 10 credits in a 30-credit stage/semester.

**4.5.3** Compensation may be applied only to enable a learner to pass a stage/semester. At the award stage a learner who passes by compensation remains eligible for honours etc. Compensation does not change the result of the modules passed in that way. When reporting module passes by compensation (on the Europass Diploma Supplement), the actual result is returned, e.g. 37% along with an indication that the module pass has been granted by compensation.

**4.5.4** Compensation between stages/semesters is not permitted. However, this regulation may be waived in the case of first year undergraduate students, provided all other conditions pertaining to compensation are satisfied (Section 4.5.2)

## **4.6 Requirements for Progression (Full-time Learners)**

**4.6.1** Typically, a learner shall not be admitted to a second or subsequent year within a programme or to progress to an add-on award or higher level programme without first having passed all modules required at the previous stage.

**4.6.2** A learner will be permitted to carry a failed module to the next stage, provided the module is not a pre-requisite for any module in that stage.

A maximum of 10 credits or 1 module outstanding (module to a maximum of 15 credits) from the previous examination stage may be carried.

An exception of up to 30 credits can be made in the case of a Work Placement module where the Work Placement is not completed and is deferred due to exceptional circumstances as agreed by the Programme Board. The Work Placement will then be scheduled to be completed after the next programme stage has been completed by the learner.

**4.6.3** A learner may, in exceptional circumstances, be permitted to carry a failed module while progressing to the add-on award or higher level programme, provided the module is not a pre-requisite for any module in this higher level award. A maximum of 10 credits or 1 module outstanding (module to a maximum of 15 credits) from the previous examination stage may be carried.

A learner availing of this clause, waives the right to be conferred with the award at the lower level on successful completion of that stage and is thereafter only entitled to such award/s, including an exit award, pertaining to the higher level programme.



## **5. PROCEDURES FOR EXAMINATION LEADING TO UNIVERSITY AWARDS**

### **5.1. Responsibility for Examinations:**

The President or other appropriate officer at the South East Technological University, as assigned by the President, shall have overall responsibility for the conduct of examinations in the University and shall, in particular, ensure:

- (i) The proper conduct of examinations, including invigilation
- (ii) The maximum security in all matters pertaining to examinations
- (iii) All examination entries are notified to the Examinations Officer at the University by the required date(s)
- (iv) Examination question papers and appropriate marking scheme are prepared by Internal Examiners, sent in good time for approval by External Examiners and printed in good time for examinations
- (v) Appropriate accommodation arrangements are made for each candidate for examinations
- (vi) Examination answer scripts are examined by Internal and External Examiners and results for each candidate are made available for meetings of Boards of Examiners
- (vii) Accurate records in regard to continuous assessment are maintained and made available to External Examiner
- (viii) Proper arrangements for holding meetings of Boards of Examiners, in accordance with the provisions of Section 6 below
- (ix) Candidates are provided with the information relevant to them with regard to the conduct and regulation of examinations

### **5.2. Internal Examiners:**

**5.2.1** South East Technological University staff, who exercise an examination function shall, together with the persons indicated in 5.1 above, be deemed to be Internal Examiners.

#### **5.2.2 The Role of Internal Examiners shall be as follows:**

- To consult with the appropriate External Examiner(s) in the drafting of examination papers by providing to the External Examiner(s), in good time before the copying of examination papers, both final and repeat printed draft question papers, together with appropriate marking schemes and worked answers to questions.
- To take account of all suggestions, criticisms, deletions, additions and amendments proposed by the External Examiner(s).
- To submit examination papers and marking schemes, as approved by the External Examiner(s), to the President of the University, or to the person nominated thereby for this purpose.
- Prior to the meeting of the Board of Examiners to submit the

- grades/ marks proposed to be awarded to each candidate.
- To attend meetings of the Board of Examiners.

### **5.3 External Examiners Policy and Procedures:**

Refer to South East Technological University's Policy & Procedure for External Examiners <http://www.itcarlow.ie/resources/quality/quality-policies-procedures.htm>

## **6. BOARD OF EXAMINERS:**

### **6.1. Meeting of Board of Examiners**

After each examination the Internal and External Examiners shall meet together as a Board of Examiners under the Chairmanship of the President of the University, or by his/her nominee. Only those Internal Examiners who have participated in the examinations for a given award (or examination stage leading to an award), together with the Chairperson, Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar, Head of Department/Faculty/Campus concerned, and such External Examiners as the University shall deem appropriate, shall participate in the meeting of the Board of Examiners at which recommendations in relation to that award or examination stage are decided. A Board of Examiners may act, notwithstanding, in the absence of one or more members, provided that the Chairperson of the Board is satisfied that the meeting has been duly notified and convened and that the members present at the meeting constitute an appropriate attendance for the proper discharge of the Board's responsibilities.

It is desirable, but not essential, for the External Examiner to be present, provided they attend Examination Boards as detailed in South East Technological University's Policy and Procedure for External Examiners.

### **6.2. Proceedings and Deliberations of Boards of Examiners**

The proceedings and deliberations of Boards of Examiners are strictly confidential; under no circumstances shall any person attending a Board of Examiners meeting disclose to any other person a decision of the Board or any document, information or opinion considered, conveyed or expressed at that meeting. The Chairperson of the Board of Examiners may however cause to be issued the provisional list of results and may, as necessary and as decided by the Board, communicate appropriately with the Academic Council with regard to any matter requiring such communication arising out of the proceedings of the Board of Examiners.

### **6.3. Dates of Meetings of Boards of Examiners:**

The dates of meetings of Boards of Examiners shall be agreed by the Vice-President for Academic Affairs & Registrar and the President of the University.

**6.4. Overview of Findings:**

The Board of Examiners should typically consider overall findings and trends, noting any general issues that may require consideration before looking at individual findings.

**6.5. Preparing for Board of Examiners Meeting:**

A Board of Examiners cannot base its decisions on incomplete results. Therefore, all preparatory work should be completed prior to the deliberations of the meeting.

The following material should typically be available to the Board of Examiners meeting:

- The programme assessment strategy and Approved Programme Schedule
- The draft Broadsheet of results
- Any further information to be considered by the Board of Examiners

**6.6. Meeting Prior to the Board of Examiners: meeting for the consideration of results**

It is reasonable for providers to arrange meetings that offer examiners an opportunity to review and discuss their findings, ensure that they are accurate and prepare the draft Broadsheet of Results for presentation to the Board of Examiners, where appropriate. External Examiners may be requested to attend such meetings.

While some modules may be more challenging than others, and this may be reflected in the grades assigned, any module having a grade distribution which is persistently and significantly inconsistent with others, warrants investigation. If systematic anomalies are discovered, these should be reported to the Board of Examiners meeting and notified to the Academic Council.

**6.7. Board of Examiners Decision-making Process:**

The Board of Examiners meeting is formal and deliberative.

Typically, decisions are reached by consensus. If this is not achievable, then majority census applies provided the Chair is in agreement. In the event of an irresolvable disagreement between the Board of Examiners and an individual Internal Examiner, the Board of Examiners may replace an examiner's recommendation with its own. This disagreement shall be recorded.

In the event of an irresolvable disagreement between the Board of Examiners and the External Examiner, the Board of Examiners decision shall be final. The disagreement shall be recorded.

**6.8. Matters to be deliberated by the Board of Examiners:**

The Board of Examiners should satisfy itself that learners have been appropriately graded and classified. This information shall be recorded on the Broadsheet of Results and signed by the members of the Board as follows:

## EXAM BROADSHEET CODING SYSTEM

TITLE	Banner Overall Result Codes (will appear on Broadsheet) Code	Academic Standards & Assessment Equivalent Code
Degree – 1 <sup>st</sup> Class Honours	H1	H1
Degree – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Class Honours Grade 1 Grade 2	21 22	H21 H22
Absent from Examination	AB	ABS
Deferral of Results(s)	DE	DEF
Pass with Distinction	DT	DIS
Exemption(s) Granted	EX	EXE
Fail	FL	FAIL
Pass with Merit – Grade 1	M1	M1
Pass with Merit – Grade 2	M2	M2
Not Recommended (PG Only)	NR	NREC
Pass	PS	PASS
Recommended (PG Only)	RC	REC
Withdrew from Programme	WD	WDRW
Result(s) Withheld	WH	WHLD
Exam Board Decision	EB	

Result Code	Result	Effect on Number of Exam Attempts	Recorded on Broadsheet
EXE	Exemption(s) granted	Counted as an Attempt	Overall EXE – note the number of the exemptions in space provided (boxes)
EXE module repeat	EXE in module/module result box to indicate modules passed in previous session		Applicable to the overall result – typically further EXE or Pass or Fail etc
Absent	Absent from Examination	Counted as an Attempt	ABS
Fail	Fail	Counted as an Attempt	Fail is only recorded in the overall result when a learner has achieved no exemptions.
Deferral	Deferral of Result(s) A Board of Examiners may, in the case of illness or bereavement, recommend that a final decision on a candidate's result be deferred to enable the candidate to complete specific outstanding requirements of the programme or examination	Not Counted as an attempt	DEF in overall result
Withdrew	Withdrew from Programme. The provider typically has evidence stipulated in its procedures that the learner has withdrawn from the programme	Counted as an Attempt	WDRW
Withheld	Learner's Result(s) Withheld	Provider to determine attempt or otherwise	WHLD

### EXPLANATION OF GRADE CODES APPEARING ON BROADSHEETS:

BANNER GRADE CHANGE CODE	MEANING
AB	Absent
AE	Administrative Error
ER	Exam Board Revision
FE	Faculty Error
NP	Not Present
OE	Original Entry
RC	Re-Calculated
SG	Substitute Grade
EO	Entry One
YC	Year Compensation
E1	A medical certificate was taken into account.
E2	The personal circumstances of the candidate, which may have had a bearing on the candidate's examination performance was taken into account.
E3	The recommendation of the External Examiner was taken into account.
E4	An error/omission in the marks entered onto the Examination Results Broadsheet was corrected/rectified.
E5	A decision of the University Examination Infringement Panel/Examination Infringement Appeals Panel was taken into account.
E6	The Examination Board decided to adjust the result of a candidate in a module/s in order to reflect the marks merited by that candidate taking into account his/her overall performance throughout the programme/semester/year.
E7	The Examination Board took the view that the candidate, being borderline for a level of award, merited an upgrading of the marks entered on the Examination Results Broadsheet.
E8	A decision was taken by the Examination Board in relation to the results achieved in a module/s by a substantial number of candidates that the module/s was too harshly / too generously marked and the marks of those learners were adjusted accordingly.
E9	Other reason(s) – <i>please specify at the end of the Examination Results Broadsheet.</i>
E10	The result of a candidate was adjusted following a review.

Where systematic errors are discovered, any necessary adjustments to marks/grades shall be applied to all learners affected. The decision to make such adjustments and the supporting rationale should be on the Broadsheet of Results so that the Academic Council is informed and for the purpose of follow-up. Boards of Examiners shall base their decisions on the valid and reliable assessment of explicit learning outcomes.

Any adjustment to a broadsheet after the Board of Examiners meeting has concluded requires a re-convening of the Board of Examiners to approve such amendments. Subject to approval from the Registrar's office, errors that do not require an examination board decision but simply notification of a change, for example clerical errors, can utilise an examination board email notification process as an alternative

Meetings of Boards of Examiners shall allow for full and frank discussion of all borderline cases before a final decision is made. That final decision should be based on the cumulative evidence presented rather than on the view of one Internal or External Examiner.

#### **6.8.1 Minutes of Boards of Examiners Meetings:**

The decision of the Boards of Examiners meeting shall be recorded on the Broadsheet of Results with explanations of grade as determined by the Exam Broadsheet Coding system.

The South East Technological University is committed to protecting the rights and privacy of individuals with respect to the processing of their personal data. A copy of the University's Privacy notice is available on the University's website (<https://www.itcarlow.ie/resources/data-protection.htm> ). This website also contains further information relating to your rights regarding subject access requests, records retention and data protection in general. Any further queries in relation to the GDPR can be addressed to the University's Data Protection Oversight Group (e-mail: [gdpr@itcarlow.ie](mailto:gdpr@itcarlow.ie))

#### **6.8.2 Broadsheet of Results:**

At the meeting of the Board of Examiners, a Broadsheet of Results shall be endorsed which shall record the total marks or grades awarded to each candidate in each Examination Module and which shall indicate, in relation to each candidate's overall result, academic standing and award classification (Convention 3)

#### **6.8.3 Verification of Recording of Examination Results:**

The Broadsheet(s) of Results shall be signed by the Chairperson, Secretary of the meeting and by all of the Examiners (External and Internal) present at the meeting. However, where physical signatures are not feasible such as with online examination boards and with approval of the examination board, the broadsheet of results will be signed by both the Chairperson and Secretary with the attendance list of the board of examiners provided in lieu of physical signatures.

#### **6.8.4 Withholding of Results:**

Should South East Technological University, for any reason (personal, health, discipline, or otherwise), decide before, during or after the process of presenting a candidate's performance in one or more examination modules to the purview of the Academic Council, that it does not wish to so present the candidate, then it is the University's right and responsibility to withhold that candidate's results or part thereof (including to the Board of Examiners meeting, etc.), it is further a matter for South East Technological University whether it will present such a candidate at a later date and if it does so, under what circumstances, e.g. as a first attempt or otherwise.

**6.8.5 Recommendation of Results to Academic Council:**

Subject to regulation 6.9.4 the recommendations of the Boards of Examiners shall be presented to Academic Council for ratification.

**6.8.6 Deferral of Examination Results:**

A Board of Examiners may, in the case of illness or bereavement or other extenuating circumstances, recommend that a final decision on the candidate's results be deferred to enable to candidate to complete specific outstanding requirements of the programme or examination.

**6.9 The Granting of University Awards:**

When the University's Academic Council ratifies the recommendations of a duly constituted meeting of a Board of Examiners and the ratification is noted by the Governing Body, the results thereafter shall be final and appropriate awards shall be granted by South East Technological University or, where South East Technological University has not obtained Delegated Authority at Level 10, by QQI.

## 7.0 EXAMINATION AND ASSESSMENT REVIEW POLICY AND PROCEDURE

### 7.1 Introduction

Everyone involved in the examination and assessment process which leads to an University or QQI award shall ensure they are fully informed of the regulations and procedures in accordance with the process conducted and are entitled to have decisions made in relation to that examination/assessment process reviewed upon request, in the interests of transparency, accountability and learner and public confidence. Accordingly, the University puts forward the following mechanisms for the review of final examination/assessment results within the University. This is the only mechanism by which a final result issued by the examinations office can be appealed or amended.

### 7.2 Examination/Assessment Reviews

Examination/assessment results, once issued, may be reviewed in one of two ways:

- 7.2.1 An application for a Review may be made by a learner  
(Learner Instigated Review)
- 7.2.2 The University itself may instigate a Review (University Instigated Review)

A Review, however instigated, means the reconsideration of the assessment decision by two competent persons and includes a full recalculation of all component marks awarded.

### 7.3 Learner Instigated Reviews

- 7.3.1 Learners are advised to seek feedback on examination/assessment results in question from the relevant module lecturer before an application for Review is made.
- 7.3.2 Review applications to be received by the Examination Office **within five working days** after publication on the University website of the candidate's provisional examination results.
- 7.3.3. Application(s) for a Review must be made on the appropriate form, signed by the applicant, include the fee and be submitted to the Examination Office. Forms are available from the Examination Office and the Faculty Administration Office.
- 7.3.4 The review shall be carried out by two competent persons, namely the Internal/External Examiner and another Internal/External Examiner. The reviewers shall conduct a recalculation of the marks awarded and a review of the available examination and assessment material which comprise the mark in the module(s) under review.



- 7.3.5 One review report form is to be completed by each reviewer in respect of each subject reviewed.
- 7.3.6 Decisions in relation to the Review shall be entered on the appropriate form, brought to the relevant Examination Board for consideration and returned to the Examination Office
- 7.3.7 The official result of the Review shall be communicated to the learner, via the University's examination results system where practicable.

#### **7.4 University Instigated Reviews**

- 7.4.1 In exceptional cases, the University itself may instigate a review of a learner's examination/assessment results. This may be required, for example, if an error or omission comes to light. In such cases, the University shall pro-actively take steps to investigate the matter, to bring the error or omission to light, and amend the examination results record accordingly, if required. Therefore the University reserves the right to correct a learner's examination results/record in circumstances where the result awarded is shown to be as a result of an error or omission.
- 7.4.2 University Instigated Reviews are initiated by the relevant Head of Faculty/Campus/Department by completing the appropriate form, available from the Examinations/Faculty Office. The form shall record the name and ID of learners affected and the revised result. It shall also detail the circumstances in which the error/omission came to light, and also what steps shall be taken to prevent re-occurrences in the future.
- 7.4.3 The learner(s) shall be informed of the purported error or omission as soon as possible, and be notified by the Faculty that a review has been instigated by the University. The learner shall be invited to make written representations to the relevant Examination Board on the matter, and these shall be brought to the attention of the reviewers and the Board.
- 7.4.4 The review shall be carried out by two competent persons, namely the Internal/External Examiner and another Internal/External Examiner. If the External Examiner is not one of the reviewers, they shall be informed of the review and the recommendations thereof. One review report form shall be completed by each Examiner in respect of each subject reviewed.
- 7.4.5 Following the Review, an Examination Board shall be convened to consider the outcome of the Review. Decisions in relation to the Review made by the Examination Board shall be recorded by the Faculty, which shall then inform the Examination Office of the decision.
- 7.4.6 The official result of the Review shall be communicated to the learner by the Examinations Office.

## **7.5 STATUS OF RESULTS:**

A provisional or ratified examination result remains in force unless it is withdrawn in writing by the University. Changes to provisional or ratified examination results, from reviews shall be considered by Academic Council on the basis of a recommendation made by the appropriate Examination Board.

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## **7.6. DATE(S) OF THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL MEETING RATIFYING THE EXAMINATION RESULTS:**

These dates shall typically be published in advance each year by the University. The outcome of all reviews shall be brought before the University's Academic Council. All ratified results shall be issued within two weeks of the appropriate Academic Council meeting.

## **7.7 REVOCATION OF AWARD**

The Academic Council may revoke any award made by the University and all privileges connected therewith if it shall be discovered at any time and proved to the satisfaction of the University that either:

- after investigation, the award is found to have been obtained by fraud or deception, including unfair practice and plagiarism;
- an award has been obtained due to an administrative error or irregularities in the conduct of an Examination Board
- Subsequent to award, an Examination Board, having taken into account information which was unavailable at the time its decision was made, determines that a classification should be altered and/or the award withdrawn.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Examination and Assessment Regulations**

<http://www.itcarlow.ie/resources/quality/quality-policies-procedures.htm>

## APPENDIX 2: RESPONSIBILITIES AND GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 1 The Vice-President for Academic Affairs & Registrar has overall responsibility for implementing these regulations.
- 2 The Heads of Faculty/Campus are responsible for overseeing the implementation of 5.1.
- 3 Teaching Staff are responsible for the implementation of 5.2
- 4 The Heads of Faculty/Campus are responsible for advising the Teaching and Learning Centre of the staff training requirements each year in order to ensure staff are afforded the opportunity to receive training which promotes best practice in assessment.
- 5 **Heads of Faculty/Campus ensures that:**
  - 5.1 All teaching staff are fully conversant with these regulations and the requirements it places on them.
  - 5.2 All staff are competent to undertake their roles and responsibilities and afforded the opportunity to receive training which promotes and shares best practice in assessment.
  - 5.3 All staff actively promote the principles of equality and diversity and are aware of who to approach for specific modifications to assessment materials and procedures for learners who have a disability/learning difficulty.
6. **Teaching Staff should ensure that:**
  - 6.1 Assessment is an integral part of the learning process which is undertaken both inside the classroom and outside in the form of set work. Assessment should be made a stimulating, challenging and positive experience for learners.
  - 6.2 Learners have access to the clearly defined assessment procedure and criteria
  - 6.3 Formative and summative assessments employ a range of methods which measure appropriately the learning outcomes defining a particular level of award.
  - 6.4 Formative assessment is suitably differentiated to reflect the individual needs of learners.
  - 6.5 Demands on learners are challenging but not excessive. Once agreed, individual teaching staff should uphold the rules governing the hand-in date of assignments.
  - 6.6 Feedback to learners on their assessed work is timely and constructive. Such feedback should contain reference to the criteria for the marking and grading of work, how far learners have met these criteria and what they need to do in future in order to improve. Where work is submitted on time, formal feedback shall be provided within three working weeks or by the agreed date if externally moderated.
7. **Learners should ensure that they:**
  - 7.1 Make a positive commitment and contribution to their own development and individual learning targets/goals.
  - 7.2 Pay attention to the advice and feedback from the teaching staff on their progress.
  - 7.3 Complete and submit programme work on time.
  - 7.4 Prepare thoroughly and present themselves for all assessments and examinations.
  - 7.5 Comply with the assessment regulations for the programme as described in the Learner Handbook, including the procedures governing plagiarism

## **APPENDIX 3: PROGRAMME ASSESSMENT STRATEGY – GUIDELINES**

### **Programme assessment strategy shall:**

1. Link programme assessment methods to the programme intended learning outcomes
2. Provide a rationale for the choice of assessment tasks, criteria and procedures
3. Describe any special regulations and specify these on the Approved Programme Schedule
4. Link and integrate the module assessment strategies and (where used) stage assessment strategies.
5. Provide contingent strategy for cases where learners claim exemption modules including for recognition of prior learning
6. Match the programme's assessment instruments to the institutional grading system
7. Ensure the programme's continuous assessment workload is appropriately balanced
8. Relate to the programme's overall teaching and learning strategy

## APPENDIX 4: SPECIFICATION OF CRITERIA AND GRADING STANDARDS FOR ASSESSMENT TASKS

### Specification of criteria and grading standards for Assessment Tasks

It is recommended that grading descriptors be developed for each criterion to be used in making assessment judgements. Explicitly described standards provide learners with a valuable learning resource and that they also facilitate assessment judgements that are consistent, defensible and transparent. An example of criteria and grading standards (i.e. rubric) is provided below for:

#### Example: Group Work

Criteria	Grading Standard Pass	Grading Standard 2 <sup>nd</sup> Class Hons	Grading Standard 1 <sup>st</sup> Class Hons
<b><i>Interaction skills</i></b>	Evidence of efforts to develop and use basic interactive skills such as listening to and contributing ideas	Evidence of skill in offering ideas listening, responding to and supporting others' ideas and initiatives	Evidence of skill in communicating at both emotional and intellectual levels, establishing rapport and recognising others' viewpoints
<b><i>Contributions to group planning</i></b>	Evidence of recognition of some steps essential to working towards a solution to group problem-solving;	Evidence of acknowledgment and incorporation of others' ideas when planning group problem-solving tasks	Evidence of proactive leadership through reflecting on and learning from the group problem solving experience and developing suggestions for enhanced group performance

## APPENDIX 5:            **GENERIC GRADE DESCRIPTORS FOR UNDERGRADUATE MODULES** (related to Bloom's levels of learning development)<sup>2</sup>

Grade	Criteria relevant to assessing <b>Knowledge, Understanding, Application</b> ( Bloom's levels 1–3)	<b>Additional criteria relevant to assessing Analysis, Synthesis, Evaluation</b> (Bloom's levels 4-6)
<b>70 – 100</b>  <b>1.1</b>	<p><b>Excellent</b> A comprehensive, highly structured, focused and concise response to the assessment task, consistently demonstrating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ An extensive and detailed knowledge of the subject matter.</li> <li>+ A highly-developed ability to apply this knowledge to the set task.</li> <li>+ Evidence of extensive background reading.</li> <li>+ Clear, fluent, stimulating and original expression.</li> <li>+ Excellent presentation (spelling, grammar, graphical) with minimal or no presentation errors.</li> </ul>	<p>A deep and systematic engagement with the assessment task, with consistently impressive demonstration of a comprehensive mastery of the subject matter, reflecting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ A deep and broad knowledge and critical insight as well as extensive reading.</li> <li>+ A critical and comprehensive appreciation of the relevant literature or theoretical, technical or professional framework.</li> <li>+ An exceptional ability to organise, analyse and present arguments fluently and lucidly with a high level of critical analysis, amply supported by evidence, citation or quotation.</li> <li>+ A highly-developed capacity for original, creative and logical thinking.</li> </ul>
<b>60 – 69</b>  <b>2.1</b>	<p><b>Very Good</b> A thorough and well-organised response to the assessment task, demonstrating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ A broad knowledge of the module matter.</li> <li>+ Considerable strength in applying that knowledge to the task set.</li> <li>+ Evidence of substantial background reading.</li> <li>+ Clear and fluent expression.</li> <li>+ Quality presentation with few presentation errors.</li> </ul>	<p>A substantial engagement with the assessment task, demonstrating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ A thorough familiarity with the relevant literature or theoretical, technical or professional framework.</li> <li>+ Well-developed capacity to analyse issues, organise material, present arguments clearly and cogently well supported by evidence, citation or quotation.</li> <li>+ Some original insights and capacity for creative and logical thinking.</li> </ul>
<b>50 – 59</b>  <b>2.2</b>	<p><b>Good</b> An adequate and competent response to the assessment task, demonstrating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Adequate but not complete knowledge of the module matter.</li> <li>+ Omission of some important module matter or the appearance of several minor errors.</li> <li>+ Capacity to apply knowledge appropriately to the task albeit with some errors.</li> <li>+ Evidence of some background reading.</li> <li>+ Clear expression with few areas of confusion.</li> </ul>	<p>An intellectually competent and factually sound answer with, marked by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Evidence of a reasonable familiarity with the relevant literature or theoretical, technical or professional framework.</li> <li>+ Good well developed arguments, but more statements of ideas.</li> <li>+ Arguments or statements adequately but not well supported by evidence, citation or quotation.</li> <li>+ Some critical awareness and analytical qualities.</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> Anderson, L. W. and David R. Krathwohl, D. R., et al (Eds..) (2001) *A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*. Allyn & Bacon. Boston, MA

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Writing of sufficient quality to convey meaning but some lack of fluency and command of suitable vocabulary.</li> <li>† Good presentation with some presentation errors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Some evidence of capacity for original and logical thinking.</li> </ul>
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Criteria relevant to assessing Knowledge, Understanding, Application</b> (Bloom's levels 0 – 3)	<b>Additional criteria relevant to assessing Analysis, Synthesis, Evaluation</b> (Bloom's levels 4 - 6)
<b>40 – 49</b>  <b>Pass</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b> An acceptable response to the assessment task with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Basic grasp of module matter, but somewhat lacking in focus and structure.</li> <li>† Main points covered but insufficient in detail.</li> <li>† Some effort to apply knowledge to the task but only a basic capacity or understanding displayed.</li> <li>† Little or no evidence of background reading.</li> <li>† Several minor errors or one or more major error.</li> <li>† Satisfactory presentation with an acceptable level of presentation errors.</li> </ul>	An acceptable level of intellectual engagement with the assessment task showing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Some familiarity with the relevant literature or theoretical, technical or professional framework.</li> <li>† Mostly statements of ideas, with limited development of argument</li> <li>† Limited use of evidence, citation or quotation.</li> <li>† Limited critical awareness displayed.</li> <li>† Limited evidence of capacity for original and logical thinking.</li> </ul>
<b>0 – 39</b>  <b>Fail</b>	<b>Unacceptable</b> A response to the assessment task that is unacceptable, with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† A failure to address the question resulting in a largely irrelevant answer or material of marginal relevance predominating.</li> <li>† A display of some knowledge of material relative to the question posed, but with very serious omissions / errors and/or major inaccuracies included in the answer.</li> <li>† Solutions offered to a very limited portion of the problem set.</li> <li>† An answer unacceptably incomplete (e.g. for lack of time).</li> <li>† A random and undisciplined development of argument, layout or presentation.</li> <li>† Unacceptable standards of presentation, such as grammar, spelling or graphical presentation.</li> <li>† Evidence of substantial plagiarism</li> </ul>	An unacceptable level of intellectual engagement with the assessment task, with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† No appreciation of the relevant literature or theoretical, technical or professional framework.</li> <li>† No developed or structured argument.</li> <li>† No use of evidence, citation or quotation.</li> <li>† No analysis or critical awareness displayed or is only partially successful.</li> <li>† No demonstrated capacity for original and logical thinking.</li> </ul>



## APPENDIX 6: INTERPRETATIONS

This section explains the usage of certain key terms in this document and elaborates on some areas that are closely linked to assessment, such as *feedback* and *learning theory*.

**ACCS:** Accumulation of Credit by Certification of Modules. An ACCS learner is a person who is working (perhaps part-time) towards a qualification by studying the component modules at his/her own pace.

**Academic Council:** A top-level deliberative committee with overall responsibility for academic affairs.

**Approved Programme Schedule** The approved programme schedule provides an overview of the programme. The details provided include, inter alia: the name of the programme, the name of award, the NFQ level of programme and the total number of credits. For each stage of the programme, the schedule lists the credit available for each of the modules and the contribution to the grade of each of the modules' assessment components. It also specifies the requirements for learners to progress from one stage to another and to complete the programme successfully. The approved programme schedule is attached to the certificate of programme accreditation, and is deemed to form part of the assessment regulations applying to the programme. It is worth noting that the approved programme schedule is but a summary of *some* of the information that should be reflected in the overall programme documentation and the attendant programme assessment strategy.

Any special assessment conditions (such as modules which cannot be *passed by compensation*) must be included in the approved programme schedule. Such conditions must not contravene the *Sectoral Conventions* for Assessment (Section 3).

**Appeal:** An appeal is a request to a higher authority for the alteration of the decision of judgement of a lower one. In the context of the assessment of learners, the lower authority could be a board of examiners, and the higher authority the academic committee or one of its committees. In the context of the assessment of learners, a *complaint* is an expression of a concern that a particular assessment procedure is unfair or inconsistent or not fit-for-purpose.

**Assessment:** Assessment refers to the variety of methods or tools that educators use to evaluate, measure, and document the academic readiness, learning progress, skill acquisition, or educational needs of students.

**Assessment of Learning:** Assessment of learning refers to a summative form of assessment which implies inference (e.g. judgement or estimation or evaluation) of a learner's knowledge, skill and/or competence by comparison with a standard based on appropriate evidence. This is termed summative assessment as it tends to occur at the end of a period of learning, compared to formative assessment of which the main intent

is to gather insight about student learning, track student progress and inform future instruction. One of the most common types of summative assessment is the high-stakes, final unseen examination.

Assessment as Learning:	The purpose of this form of assessment is to conduct tasks that allow students to critically evaluate their own work, to be able to monitor themselves. Where students make changes and consider actions to their work, based on this activity, they are now 'self-regulating' their work. These self-monitoring and self-regulating activities can be termed Assessment as learning.
Assessment <i>for</i> Learning:	Assessment <i>for</i> learning is an approach to teaching and learning that creates feedback which is then used to improve students' performance. Assessment for learning involves students becoming more active in their learning thereby assuming more responsibility for their own learning.
Assessment criteria:	Assessment criteria are the standards by which a learner's performance in an assessment task is evaluated. See also <i>grading scheme</i> . These criteria may be presented in the form of an assessment rubric.
Assessment grade:	A label which quantifies the learner's level of performance of an assessment task. Communication of the grade constitutes a form of feedback.
Assessment instrument:	Any assessment task and criteria, along with procedures for its conduct, together with the explicit marking/ <i>grading scheme (i.e. rubric)</i> .
Assessment procedures:	All assessment-related activity including the ways in which assessment is conducted and undertaken.
Assessment task:	An assessment task could be a written or oral examination, programme work, project work, poster creation, the writing of a thesis, dissertation or similar work, or other such forms of performance as have been approved in relation to a validated programme.
Assessor:	A person who assesses the work submitted by a learner.
(External) Examiner:	An External Examiner is an assessor who is external to the provider institution.
(Internal) Examiner:	An Internal Examiner is a member of the University staff who is an assessor.
Authenticity:	Authenticity is related to <i>validity</i> and is one of the key principles of assessment. Authentic assessment involves using assessment tasks that resemble the kinds of professional tasks that may arise in the relevant community of practice. The assessment task must appear authentic to the learner. Examples include the use of a poster presentation or the writing of a short research article as part of the assessment task for a final-year investigative project..

Award:	An award which is conferred, granted or given by an awarding body and which records that a learner has acquired a standard of knowledge, skill or competence.
Award Standard:	<p>Award standards are the expected prior learning required to qualify for an award.</p> <p>Awards standards and award type descriptors are structured and presented under the three main strands: Knowledge, Know-how, and Skill and Competence; these are further divided into eight sub-strands. The National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) defines these terms.</p> <p>Awards standards describe the required learning for awards at specified levels in the NFQ in specified fields of learning. Awards standards are concise texts that typically cover broad-fields of learning. However, professional qualification-specific award standards may also be determined where appropriate.</p> <p>Together with the award type descriptors of the NFQ, the awards standards describe the learning, in terms of knowledge, skill and/ or competence, that is to be acquired by learners before awards may be made.</p>
Broadsheet of results:	A broadsheet of results is a spreadsheet to facilitate the recording of results by the University.
Capstone:	<p>A capstone module is one that provides an opportunity for a learner to integrate accumulated learning and make the necessary connections in the context of a particular discipline. An example of an award-stage capstone module is a dissertation or project.</p> <p>Capstone assessment aims to measure cumulative learning at a particular stage, including at the award stage.</p>
Compensation:	<p>In certain conditions, a learner who has not passed a specific assessment task in a particular stage may be granted a pass by compensation for that task. The marginal result is compensated by a satisfactory performance in another assessment task or tasks in the same stage.</p> <p>Compensation does not change the original result. Instead, it enables progression and allows the allocation of credits.</p>
Competence (NFQ):	Competence is the effective and creative demonstration and deployment of knowledge and skill in human situations. Such situations could comprise general social ones, as well as specific occupational ones. Competence draws on attitudes, emotions, values and sense of self-efficacy, as well as on declarative and procedural knowledge. Competence outcomes can thus be stated in the form, "In a specified range of circumstances, a learner should be able to ...".

Consistent assessment:

The provider is responsible for establishing assessment procedures which are consistent. As a concept, consistency means '*agreeing in substance or form; congruous, compatible (with, to), not contradictory; marked by uniformity or regularity*'. Consistent conduct means '*adhering to the same principles of thought or action*'. The assessment procedures should be consistent. This includes grading - comparable performance levels should be reflected in comparable *grades*. Consistency, however, does not require that particular outcomes must always be assessed in the same way from cohort to cohort, or from programme to programme, etc.

Consistency should apply within a programme, an institution, within a discipline or professional field. It should also apply between institutions, and be applicable nationally, across borders (where appropriate), across time and across the whole population of learners.

Consistency should never be used to justify stagnation. Necessary change and evolution should be seen as compatible with consistency. If a practice becomes invalid or unreliable, it should be replaced.

Consistency extends to the use of assessment findings in decision-making. It includes decisions by boards of examiners concerning awards, grades and (if applicable) entitlement to credit or access, transfer or progression.

Cornerstone module or assessment

A cornerstone module or assessment is one which incorporates learning from several modules across a stage. It is usually smaller in scope than a capstone assessment. One example of a cornerstone assessment could be that in a semester, three parallel modules run for the first eight weeks of the semester and then these are followed by a single shorter module where students are placed in groups to undertake projects/assessments that are designed in such a way so as to integrate the learning from the three preceding modules.

Criterion-referenced Assessment:

Criterion-referenced assessment is the process of evaluating the learning of students against pre-determined qualities or criteria, without reference to the achievement of other learners (Harvey, 2004). Criterion-referenced assessment based on learning outcomes is inconsistent with *norm-referenced assessment*.

Diagnostic Assessment:

Diagnostic assessment refers to assessment which is done in advance of an instructional unit, so as to inform the teacher of the learners' needs. The purpose is to determine the specific learning needs of individuals and to be able to meet those needs through instruction, facilitation and the tailoring of particular teaching strategies (Yorke, 2003). Diagnostic assessment is an example of *formative assessment*.

ECTS:	<p>European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System.</p> <p>See ECTS User's Guide (2015) - ECTS credits are attached to the workload of full-time year of formal learning (academic year) and associated learning outcomes. In most cases, learner workload ranges from 1,500 to 1,800 hours for an academic year, whereby one credit corresponds to approximately 25 hours of work.</p>
External examiner:	<p>An external examiner is an independent expert who is a member of the broader community of practice within the programme's field of learning and whose accomplishments attest to his/her likelihood of having the authority necessary to fulfil the responsibilities of the role.</p> <p>In research degree programmes, the term 'external examiner' is used to refer to an 'external assessor'. The functions of the research degree external examiner are different from those of the external examiner for other types of programmes.</p>
Fair assessment:	<p>Fair in the context of assessment means just, unbiased, equitable, valid, impartial, legitimate, in accordance with the examination regulations and standards.</p>
Feedback:	<p><i>Assessment feedback</i> is used as an umbrella concept to capture the diversity of definitions and types of feedback including the varied roles, types, foci, meanings, and functions of feedback, along with the conceptual frameworks underpinning feedback principles. Assessment feedback therefore includes all <i>feedback exchanges</i> generated within assessment design, occurring within and beyond the immediate learning context, being overt or covert (actively and/or passively sought and/or received), and importantly, drawing from a range of sources (Evans, 2013).</p> <p>Communicating feedback to learners should be regular, timely, beneficial, and matched to their assessed learning needs. Knight (2002) suggests the feedback needs to be interactive, purposeful, relative to criteria, developmentally usefully understood, timely and appropriate to learners' conceptions.</p> <p>Formative feedback is any feedback that is relevant to learning needs and which furthers the progress towards attainment of the intended programme learning outcomes. A facilitator's formative feedback is based on his/her inference through assessment of a learner's learning needs: hence the term formative assessment.</p>
Formative assessment:	<p>Formative assessment is concerned with how judgements about the quality of learner responses (performances, pieces, or works) can be used to shape and improve the learner's competence by short-circuiting the randomness and inefficiency of trial and error learning (Sadler, 1989).</p>
Formative feedback:	<p>See <i>Feedback</i>.</p>
Grade (verb):	<p>This means the same as to mark — to award percentage marks to or to assign an alphabetic grade to an assessment.</p>
Grade (noun):	<p>This means the same as a mark. A grade may be a number in the</p>

percentage scheme or an alphabetic grade symbol in the alphabetic system.

Grading rubric: See *Rubric*.

Grading/marking scheme: A written specification of how to grade a response to an attempted assessment task. For an essay, this might take the form of a rubric describing different performance thresholds for each of the criteria being used to assess the essay.

Grading system: A grading system is an *a priori* set of rules for reporting and combining grades for assessed modules. Because the grading system provides rules for how module results may be combined, it may impact on how a programme may be partitioned into modules.

Intended Learning Outcomes: The intended learning outcomes represent the educational goals. They describe the learning outcomes that the facilitator *intends* that learners will attain as a result of teaching and *learning activities*. (See *minimum intended programme learning outcomes*.)

Intended learning outcomes must always consider the *minimum intended learning outcomes* as the baseline for acquired learning outcomes. Actual learning outcomes achieved by a learner should include at least the minimum intended learning outcomes; they will typically include additional outcomes. Taxonomies, for example, Bloom's revised taxonomy and the Structured Observed Learning Outcomes (SOLO) taxonomy can help to articulate intended learning outcomes.

Know-how and Skill (NFQ): The exercise of a skill is the performance of a task that in some way responds to or manipulates the physical, informational or social environment of the person. Know-how underpins the skill but is not identical to skill. Know-how, or *savoir faire*, is the procedural knowledge required to carry out a task.

Knowledge: Knowledge is the cognitive representation of ideas, events or happenings. It can be derived from practical or professional experience, as well as from formal instruction or study. It can comprise description, memory, understanding, thinking, analysis, synthesis, debate and research' (NFQ definition). More information about the meaning of knowledge, skill and competence is contained in *Policies and Criteria for the Establishment of the National Framework of Qualifications (2003)* (NFQ).

Learner: See *Learning*.

Learning: Learning refers to the processes by which a sustainable change in someone's knowledge, skill or competence occurs as a result of experience (of phenomena). Learning increases the potential for enhanced performance and future learning (Ambrose et al, 2010). Deep and long-lasting learning includes understanding, relating ideas and concepts, establishing connections between prior and new knowledge as well as the development of critical thinking skills.

Knowledge that is neither innate nor inferred from existing

knowledge derives from phenomena. Phenomena are the objects of observation — for example, a lecture, images on the pages of a book etc. A learner constructs a ‘cognitive representation’ from phenomena by a process which involves, links and modifies existing knowledge, skills and competences, each of which influences the interpretation of phenomena. Mere observation of phenomena will not necessarily result in learning.

Learning experiences:	<p>Learning experiences are diverse. Examples of activities involved include pre-session reading, writing, discussion, enquiry, experience, group work, problem-solving, performing, designing, volunteer activities, internships, , etc. Both learners and facilitators can create learning experiences.</p> <p>Effective learning experiences are purposefully directed towards attainment of the programme’s educational goals(minimum intended programme learning outcomes) and build on (connect with) prior learning. The learner’s engagement with any assessment process, including the reception of <i>feedback</i>, is a learning activity.</p>
Learning outcome:	<p>A learner’s knowledge, skill and competence change as a result of learning. In principle, learning outcomes may describe the change in knowledge, skill or competence in an individual (differential form). They may also mean the cumulative result of all learning, including prior learning at the time of entry to the programme (integral form). <i>Award standards</i> and award-type descriptors are generally cumulative.</p>
Learning theory:	<p>Every educator and learner aligns with a learning theory but not always consciously — it may be tacit, informal or eclectic. Some might think of this as their educational philosophy. Formal learning theories (and learning models) can contribute to the understanding of learning and the design of effective learning environments. Epistemologies (theories of knowledge) may vary with the field of learning.</p>
Mark (v):	<p>This means the same as grade — <i>i.e.</i> to award marks to or to grade (an assessment response, a learner etc.).</p>
Minimum Intended Programme Learning Outcomes:	<p>The minimum achievement (in terms of knowledge, skill and competence) that the learner is certified to have attained if they successfully complete a particular programme (<i>i.e.</i> passes all the required assessments). The minimum intended programme learning outcomes define the minimum learning outcomes for a particular programme at the programme level. These must always be specified by the provider. If the programme allows substantial choice, there may need to be variant forms of the minimum intended programme outcomes — <i>e.g.</i> a programme might allow a person to choose from a number of specialisations.</p> <p>A learner who completes a validated programme is eligible for the relevant award if they have demonstrated, through assessment (including by recognition of prior learning), attainment of the relevant minimum intended programme learning outcomes.</p> <p>In addition to minimum intended programme learning outcomes, the programme provider may aspire to describing other ‘intended</p>

programme learning outcomes' beyond the minimum. In this document, 'intended learning outcomes' refers to all or any of the intended outcomes, including the minimum ones. 'Minimum intended learning outcomes' refers exclusively to the minimum ones. The minimum intended programme learning outcomes identify the principal educational goal of the programme — effective assessment helps learners to attain that goal. Minimum intended programme learning outcomes are developed and maintained by providers. Programmes are designed to enable learners to achieve minimum intended programme learning outcomes. Minimum intended learning outcomes are specified for each of a programme's constituent modules.

The number of learning outcomes in a statement of intended learning outcomes is variable (depending, for example, on the semantics and the level of explicitness used). This is not a proxy for credit.

Teachers and learners may strive for additional learning outcomes that are beyond the minimum. In addition to 'minimum intended programme learning outcomes', providers may describe other levels of intended programme learning outcomes beyond the minimum.

See also *Intended learning outcomes*.

Module:

A programme of education which is a self-contained unit of instruction with its own learning outcomes. It is designed to be capable of being integrated with other modules into larger programmes if needs be. A module can be shared by different programmes. Modules can vary in terms of their length and scope and may carry different credit allocations.

Certain parameters are often used in the description of a module. These include an indication of the level (e.g. of the outcome on the NFQ of the module) and of the average (entry qualified) learner effort required to complete the module successfully (typically represented using ECTS compatible credit), along with the module learning outcomes and the related teaching, learning and assessment strategies.

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Named Awards:

Within an award type (e.g. honours bachelor's degree), the particular awards that are named with respect to a field of learning (e.g. honours bachelor of science degree). Standards for named awards include reference to knowledge, skill and competence within a specific field of learning.

Norm-referenced  
assessment:

A norm-referenced assessment is one that is based on comparing the relative performances of students, either by comparing the performances of individual students within the group being tested, or by comparing their performance with that of others of similar age,



Pass by compensation:	experience and background. See <i>Compensation</i> .
Programme Board:	A dedicated committee established by the provider with overall responsibility for that programme, including the programme assessment strategy. The programme board is generally composed of all staff involved in teaching on the programme, along with learner and management representation.
Prior learning:	The totality of a person's learning before starting on a programme of study. It may also be referred to as prior knowledge.
Programme:	<p>A programme of education refers to any process by which learners may acquire knowledge, skill or competencies. It includes programmes of study or instruction, apprenticeships, training and employment. A programme offers learners the learning opportunities by which they may attain particular educational goals (expressed as the intended programme learning outcome) by learning activities in a learning environment.</p> <p>A programme is typically comprised of <i>modules</i>.</p> <p>A major award programme will typically require some kind of 'cohesion generating' process which integrates constituent modules so that the <i>minimum intended programme learning outcomes</i> are supported. The cohesion generating process should establish the epistemological and cultural identity of the programme. It should also coordinate alignment of activities with the <i>minimum intended programme learning outcomes</i> and introduce learners to the broader community of practice to which they aspire.</p>
Provider:	A provider of a programme of education is a person who, or body which, provides, organises or procures a programme of education and training.
Reasonable accommodation:	<p>Reasonable accommodation is defined by the Equal Status Act 2000-2004. A reasonable accommodation is any means of providing specific facilities if, without such accommodations, it would be impossible or unduly difficult for the person to avail of the service provided by the educational establishment.</p> <p>A reasonable accommodation is a support provided to a candidate with a disability or specific learning needs. It acknowledges that a particular assessment instrument may place barriers in the way of a candidate seeking to demonstrate his/her learning. (For example, a visually impaired candidate may need to use specialist technology to complete his/her assessment.) Reasonable accommodation recognises the impact of a disability in an assessment situation. It enables the candidate to use an alternative assessment method (where necessary) to demonstrate his/her attainment of the required standards.</p>
Recognised Institution:	The institutions specified in section 24 of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999.

Vice President for Academic  
Affairs & Registrar:

Used in Section 4 and defined in Section 4.5.

Reliability:

An assessment's reliability is the confidence one can have in the result or how informative it is. Inference in the assessment of learning may be inductive, in the sense that observing particular instances of a trait or quality may be used to infer the presence of that trait or quality. Inference may be deductive, in the sense that the existence of a particular trait may be deduced if associated traits are observed. A simple measure to increase reliability is, for example, double blind-marking of assessments (*i.e.* two examiners grading each essay independently). The choice of assessment task, given the intended outcome and the learner, is another important source of variability. Using a diversity of assessment tasks to measure an outcome can increase reliability.

Results:

A set of *grades* (or *marks*), typically for a stage of a programme. In the singular, the *grade or mark* for a particular assessment task.

Review:

The re-consideration of the assessment decision, either by the original assessor or by other competent persons.

Rubric:

The same as a *grading scheme*.

Sector:

In the context of Assessment and Standards, sector refers to that part of the higher education system where awards are made by QQI, or by recognised institutions by the authority delegated to them by QQI.

Sectoral conventions:

A very small set of regulations and benchmarks which, in the interest of fairness and consistency, are agreed at the sectoral level by QQI and by all associated providers, and where any right to unilateral deviation is waived.

Semester-based system

A semester-based system (**semesterisation**) is one where modules can be wholly taught and assessed in a single teaching period. In the case of the South East Technological University, each of the two semesters is 15 weeks in duration with a minimum of 12 weeks of teaching in each semester.

Skill:

See *know-how and skill*.

Stage (in a programme):

Conceptually, a stage is a rung on a progression ladder. Many programmes are organised in either semester-based or year-based stages. However, it should be stressed that other kinds of stages may be established. Even in cases where there is no temporal structure to the programme (*i.e.* a learner is only required to pass modules to progress), the stage concept may be used by the programme assessment strategy to group modules, taking the NFQ level and the pre- and co-requisites into account. Typically, the NFQ level of a module increases as a learner progresses through successive stages of a programme.

Summative assessment:

Summative assessment aims to determine if (or sometimes the extent to which) a set of specified learning outcomes has been attained by a person and (typically) their entitlement to academic credit. It typically

contributes to a learner's results for a module or a programme. It can include results from continuous assessment, project work, oral assessment, written examinations, etc.

Teaching:	The endeavour to provide an opportunity for learning — <i>i.e.</i> for acquiring knowledge, skill and competence, in a planned, arranged setting, thereby creating a learning experience. .
Threshold:	<i>Minimum intended programme learning outcomes</i> are an example of a pass threshold. Other thresholds can be defined. A threshold concept represents a transformed way of understanding or interpreting or considering something without which the learner cannot progress (Meyer and Land, 2003).
Validation of a Programme:	<p>Validation means the process by which an awarding body shall satisfy itself that a learner may attain knowledge, skill or competence for the purpose of an award made by the awarding body.</p> <p>Providers of validated programmes are responsible for, among other things, establishing fair, consistent and fit-for-purpose assessment procedures.</p>
Validity:	Validity essentially means being fit-for-purpose. A valid assessment: (i) allows inference of the attainment of the learning outcomes it purports to address; (ii) assesses the submitted work it purports to assess; and (iii) is appropriate for informing the decisions that it purports to inform.

## **APPENDIX 7**

### **Extension to Assignment Submission Date - Application Form**

Refer to South East Technological University Carlow's Policy & Procedure for SETU Carlow Policy & Procedure for Late Submission of Assignments

<http://www.itcarlow.ie/resources/quality/quality-policies-procedures.htm>

<https://staffportal.itcarlow.ie/functions/Quality/default.aspx>

## **APPENDIX 8**

### **Request for Deferral and/or Absence from Assessment Form**

Refer to South East Technological University's Policy & Procedure for South East Technological University Policy & Procedure for Absence from Assessment(s)

<http://www.itcarlow.ie/resources/quality/quality-policies-procedures.htm>

<https://staffportal.itcarlow.ie/functions/Quality/default.aspx>

## **APPENDIX 9**

### **Policy and Procedure for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Appendices**

Refer to South East Technological University's Policy & Procedure for Recognition of Prior Learning <http://www.itcarlow.ie/resources/quality/quality-policies-procedures.htm>.

<https://staffportal.itcarlow.ie/functions/Quality/default.aspx>