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**Institiúid Teicneolaíochta Leitir Ceanáin**  
**Letterkenny Institute of Technology**

## **Section 6**

# **Procedures and Guidelines for Assessment Planning**

## **Procedures and Guidelines for Assessment Planning**

The procedures outlined below will guide all staff with responsibilities for learner assessment. This document is also relevant to all staff and external assessors/experts involved in the institutional approval and validation of new programmes and the periodic programme evaluation process.

### **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of these procedures and guidelines is to ensure that the Institute operates assessment methods that
- are fair and consistent and comply with standards determined by HETAC or other approved validating bodies;
  - comply with the validating body's standards in respect of the National Framework of Qualifications;
  - are effective in measuring the students' attainment of the intended learning outcomes;
  - provide feedback to the learner enabling the learner to improve his/her performance;
  - contribute positively to the total learning experience and in particular to achieving the intended learning outcomes;
  - encourage creativity and originality in demonstrating achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

### **2. SCOPE**

- 2.1 This document refers to programmes offered by the Institute where the Institute has responsibility for curriculum development and the assessment of learners.
- 2.2 Learners on other programmes should familiarise themselves with the assessment guidelines and regulations of the relevant awarding body.

### **3. INTRODUCTION**

- 3.1 The impact of assessment on student learning cannot be over emphasised. It is well recognised that how students learn and what students learn is very significantly influenced by the assessment mechanisms employed.
- 3.2 The procedures and guidelines outlined here focus for the most part on developing and maintaining an assessment plan. The relevant contents of this plan must be reflected in the student information pack. The assessment plan must address the following:
- Purpose of assessment;
  - Provision of appropriate feedback, including how the learner can improve his/her work;
  - Assessment schedule outlining the weighting and timing of assessments;
  - Details of how and when assessment judgements will be made known;

- Criteria for assessment, including descriptors of expected standards of attainment for particular marking bands;
  - Grading and marking conventions to be employed;
  - Consequences of assessment for both progression and final award.
- 3.3 The current Marks and Standards document, available on the Institute's web site, should be referred to for additional information on Assessment.

#### **4. THE LANGUAGE OF ASSESSMENT**

4.1 It is important to distinguish between formative and summative assessment. Formative assessment is designed to have benefits for both learning and teaching but does not contribute to an overall mark. Summative assessment is often viewed as assessment to meet society's needs for certification. In summative assessment the learner's performance is measured against the prescribed learning outcomes. In reality most assessment instruments have both a formative and summative element. The important formative element of programme work should be considered when designing new programmes and reviewing existing programmes.

4.2 Desirable characteristics of an assessment instrument are the power to discriminate, objectivity in scoring, validity and reliability.

##### Discriminate

It is important that assessment recognises the different levels of achievement of the learners. A test or assignment that is too easy will not reflect the greater achievement of the excellent student relative to the weak student.

##### Objectivity in scoring

An objective assessment instrument will yield the same result irrespective of who marks the work. Multiple-choice tests represent one means of achieving objectivity of scoring. In designing an assessment careful consideration should be given to objectivity of scoring.

##### Validity

In assessment terms validity means the extent to which the assessment instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. An assessment method is said to have high *content validity* if it measures achievement of a number of the intended learning outcomes. The assessment instrument is said to have *construct validity* if it is appropriate to the programme, subject or vocational area.

##### Reliability

Reliability in assessment means the degree to which the assessment instrument consistently measures what it is supposed to measure. An assessment method that is reliable will have the following qualities:

- i. different examiners award the same marks for the students' work;
- ii. examiners award the same mark when they score the work on subsequent occasions.

Clearly reliability is related to the objectivity in the scoring and must be considered when designing an assessment instrument.

#### **5. PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT AND LEARNER FEEDBACK**

5.1 The reasons for choosing a particular assessment instrument should be outlined to the learners. The rationale for the assessment must be comprehended by the learners and teaching colleagues alike.

- 5.2 Assessment instruments should be designed with learner feedback in mind. Learners should be given individual and timely feedback on assessment and it should be evident to the student why they obtained the mark they did. It should also be clear to the learner how his/her grade could be improved upon. The feedback should identify the learners' strengths and weaknesses without damaging their self esteem.
- 5.3 The learner should be made aware of both how and when the assessment judgement will be made known.
- 5.4 The programme board must put in place process for ensuring that students with poor continuous assessment marks are informed in line with the requirements of the most recent Marks and Standards document.
- 5.5 It is an Institute requirement that, in designing new programmes and the review of existing programmes, the rationale for the various assessment methods is examined and the provision of assessment feedback is adequately planned for.

## **6. SCHEDULE OF ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1 A schedule of assessment is an outline of the assessment requirements for the programme. The assessment schedule should state the subject/module title, the percentage of marks for the work, the date when the assessment will be handed out together with the date for handing in completed work.
- 6.2 Learners should normally be given at least four weeks notice of the submission date for assessment work. The programme board should ensure that there is the minimum possible overlap in the timing of assessment work for the different subjects/modules.
- 6.3 Where programme boards deem that re-assessment may be conducted, provided this does not conflict with the current Institute Marks and Standards, this re-assessment should be reflected in the schedule of assessment.
- 6.4 It is an Institute requirement that, in designing new programmes and the review of existing programmes, a schedule of assessment be provided.

## **7. ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES**

- 7.1 Assessment techniques can be grouped together under generic titles such as examinations, skills demonstrations, studio practice, learner records and project work.
- 7.2 In grouping assessment techniques it is possible to determine best practice across the grouping and further enhance consistency.

- 7.3 It is an Institute requirement that, in designing new programmes and the review of existing programmes, assessment techniques be examined and grouped with identified best practice used to improve all the assessment instruments.

## **8. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**

- 8.1 Assessment criteria define the knowledge, understanding, skills, and other qualities that a learner is required to achieve for particular grade bands.
- 8.2 Assessment criteria can be presented in broad terms to help assess individual essays, projects etc. For whole group assessments it is possible to develop criteria from the relevant learning outcomes and to detail how well particular aspects of the work have to be accomplished to achieve each grade band.
- 8.3 It is clear that criteria identified for the grading of assessment work is useful in increasing the power to discriminate, adds to objectivity in scoring and improves validity and reliability. A number of assessment criteria forms are in use Institute-wide for marking final projects
- 8.4 The validity of assessment can be further enhanced by developing assessment criteria that are closely aligned to the particular knowledge and skills, the subject/module, and the level of the programme being assessed.
- 8.5 The assessment criteria should be clear to both learners and lecturers and published prior to assigning the work.
- 8.6 It is clear that assessment criteria must be developed locally at School/Department/ programme board level, in keeping with standards defined by HETAC, to take account of variations in subject content and the level of award.
- 8.7 Programme boards are strongly encouraged to develop assessment criteria, for major assessments (20% or more of a module/subject), appropriate for particular programmes and subjects. A sample generic assessment criteria form and a sample of a specific assessment criteria form are included in Appendix 6.1.

## **9. RECEIPTING ASSESSMENTS AND LATE SUBMISSIONS**

- 9.1 Receipting assessments can be useful in motivating students to complete work on time. It is recommended that programme boards establish procedures for the receipting of major assessments. Options for receipting work are outlined in Appendix 6.2.
- 9.2 Learners must retain a copy of submitted work where possible.
- 9.3 A formal mechanism for considering requests for extensions to deadlines for major assessments should also be in place. Consistency in the application of this process can be achieved if the Head of School (or his/her nominee) processes requests relating to a particular programme in consultation

- with the relevant lecturer(s). An example of an Assignment Deadline Extension Request form is included in Appendix 6.3.
- 9.4 A clear policy for dealing with work that is submitted after the deadline should be devised by the programme board. Deadlines for continuous assessment work should normally facilitate the submission of work that is up to two weeks late. The application of penalties for late submissions should be consistent with the following recommendations:
- The total marks available for an assessment be reduced by 15% for work up to one week late
  - The total marks available be reduced by 30% for work up to two weeks late
  - Assessment work received more than two weeks late should receive a mark of zero
  - Work is deemed late when an unauthorised missing of a deadline has occurred
  - The programme board and extern examiners should be informed of instances where penalties have been applied
- 9.5 The points outlined above must be addressed when designing new programmes and reviewing existing programmes.

## **10. BREACHES OF ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS**

- 10.1 The Institute's *Assessment Regulations* are outlined in Section 7. The *Instructions for Examination Candidates* (presented in Section 7.2) are a subset of the assessment regulations with particular relevance to terminal examinations.
- 10.2 Definitions are presented for plagiarism and cheating in the Assessment Regulations. The regulations also identify the procedures for dealing with incidents of alleged cheating. The programme board must monitor procedures in place for informing students about the Institute's regulations and ensure adherence in the operation of these regulations.
- 10.3 An important preventative practice in dealing with plagiarism and cheating can be an *Assignment Cover Sheet* (see example - Appendix 6.4). In the example the cover sheet gives a brief definition of plagiarism and cheating and the learner is required to sign that the work was produced through his/her own efforts. The cover sheet can also be used to highlight the penalties applying to work submitted late.
- 10.4 It is appropriate that each School adopt a policy on academic referencing and citation and include this policy in the student information pack.

## Appendix 6.1 Project Assessment Criteria

	<b>V.Poor 0-1</b>	<b>Poor 2-3</b>	<b>Fair 4-5</b>	<b>Good 6-7</b>	<b>V.Good 8-10</b>
<b>Planning (10%)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- identification of project requirements</li> <li>- identification of required resources</li> <li>- time management and scheduling</li> </ul>					
<b>Literature Review (15%)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- identification of important references</li> <li>- places the project in context</li> <li>- evidence the project is informed by the literature</li> </ul>					
<b>Introduction (10%)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- project context</li> <li>- focus of project</li> <li>- aims and objectives</li> </ul>					
<b>Methodology (10%)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- alternative methodologies explored</li> <li>- justification for methodology</li> <li>- methodology explained</li> </ul>					
<b>Findings (20%)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- key findings presented</li> <li>- analysis performed</li> <li>- limitations acknowledged</li> </ul>					
<b>Conclusions (15%)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- compared findings with aims and objectives</li> <li>- clear conclusions/recommendations</li> <li>- identified potential project extensions</li> </ul>					
<b>Overall Presentation (20%)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- logical organisation and presentation</li> <li>- references acknowledged correctly</li> <li>- appropriate length</li> <li>- well integrated document</li> <li>- use of tables, drawings, formulae etc.</li> <li>- retains readers interest</li> <li>- style, grammar, and spelling</li> </ul>					

Appendix 6.1

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

	Year 1 & 2	Year 3	Year 4
<b>MARK</b>	<b>Higher Cert</b>	<b>Bachelor Degree (Ordinary)</b>	<b>Bachelor Degree (Honours)</b>
<b>70-100</b>	Demonstrates an excellent knowledge of the basic facts and can apply the knowledge in the correct context. The written work is literate and data is appropriately displayed.	Demonstrates an excellent comprehension of the topic, reflecting independent study. Can apply the knowledge very well. The written work is highly literate and the relevant data is well presented.	Demonstrates an excellent comprehension of the topic and displays very good critical analysis through developed argument. The topic is very well summarised and the important aspects are identified and clearly explained. The extension of the knowledge to other fields is well understood.  A strong commitment to independent study is evident and all references are well integrated within the work and correctly acknowledged. The written work is highly literate and any relevant data is well presented and well integrated within the work.
<b>63-69</b>	Demonstrates a very good knowledge of the basic facts and applies the knowledge reasonably. The work is well presented.	Demonstrates a very good comprehension of the topic, reflecting some independent study. The work is very well presented and includes appropriate data presentation.	Demonstrates a very good comprehension of the topic and displays good critical analysis through developed argument. The topic is well summarised and the important aspects are identified and explained. The extension of the knowledge to other fields is adequately addressed. A commitment to independent study is evident and all references are well integrated within the work and correctly acknowledged. The written work is highly literate and includes appropriate data presentation.
<b>55-62</b>	Demonstrates a good knowledge of the basic facts, however, there is some confusion regarding the application of the knowledge. Contains some errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar, however, conforms to a logical format.	Demonstrates a good comprehension of the topic. The application of the knowledge is good. There is little evidence of independent study. The work is well presented.	Demonstrates a good comprehension of the topic and some critical analysis of the topic. The topic is summarised and many of the important aspects are identified and explained. The extension of the knowledge to other fields is addressed. A commitment to independent study is evident, however, not all references are well integrated within the work and correctly acknowledged. The written work is of a logical format and is well presented.
<b>40-54</b>	Demonstrates some knowledge of the basic facts but has little knowledge of the applications. Contains errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. The work is not logically presented.	Demonstrates a good knowledge of the basic facts and a satisfactory level of comprehension. Contains some errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar, however, conforms to a logical format.	Demonstrates a comprehension of the topic but only a brief critical analysis of the topic. The extension of the knowledge to other fields is not adequately covered. The student's work does not demonstrate a commitment to independent learning. The written work is of a logical format and is well presented.
<b>35-39</b>	Demonstrates only a superficial knowledge of the basic facts. The work is poorly presented with many spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.	Demonstrates only a superficial comprehension of the topic. The work does not conform to a logical format and includes spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.	Demonstrates only a superficial comprehension of the topic. Little evidence of independent learning exists. The work does not conform to a logical format and includes some spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.
<b>25-34</b>	Demonstrates a very superficial knowledge of the basic facts. The work is very poorly presented with many spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.	Demonstrates a very superficial comprehension of the topic. The work is weak with many spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.	Demonstrates a very superficial comprehension of the topic. The work is weak with many spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.
<b>0-24</b>	Demonstrates almost no knowledge of the basic facts. The work is very poorly presented with many spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.	Demonstrates almost no knowledge of the basic facts. The work is very poorly presented with many spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.	Demonstrates almost no knowledge of the basic facts. The work is very poorly presented with many spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.

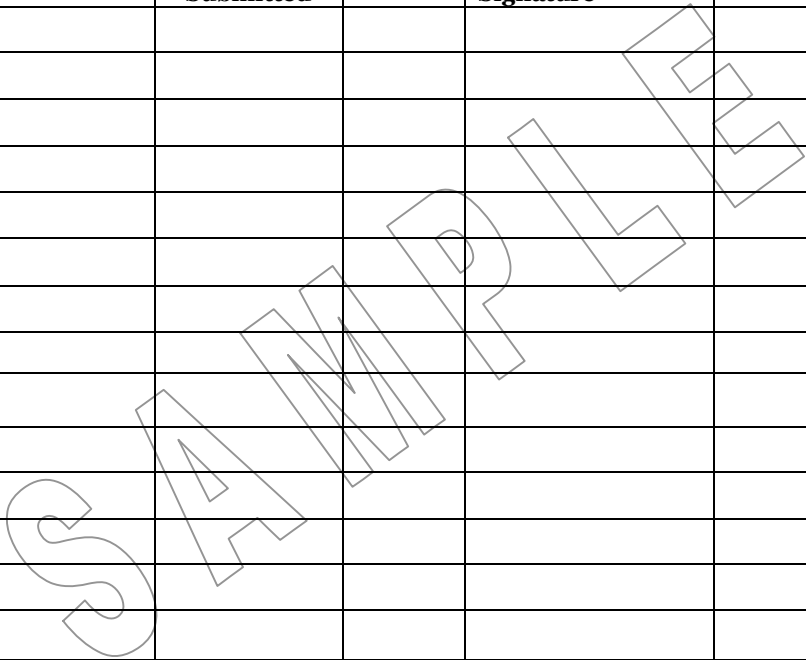


**Appendix 6.2**

**LETTERKENNY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY  
RECEIPT OF ASSIGNMENT (CLASS)**

Class:  
 Subject/Module:  
 Assessment Title:  
 Lecturer's Name:

No.	Student's Name	Date Submitted	Time	Student's Signature	Notes
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					
19					
20					



**LETTERKENNY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**  
**ASSIGNMENT DEADLINE EXTENSION REQUEST**  
**Must be completed prior to the submission deadline**

**To be completed by the student**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject/Module: \_\_\_\_\_

Assessment Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Lecturer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Original Submission Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of Request: \_\_\_\_\_

Reasons for request: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**To be completed by the Head of School (or his/her nominee)**

Request Approved: Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_

Decision: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of decision: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Head of School (his/her nominee): \_\_\_\_\_

**The student should be informed of the outcome within a week of submitting the request.**

## Appendix 6.3

## LETTERKENNY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

## ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEET

Lecturer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Assessment Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Work to be submitted to: \_\_\_\_\_

Date for submission of work: \_\_\_\_\_

Place and time for submitting work: \_\_\_\_\_

**To be completed by the Student**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject/Module: \_\_\_\_\_

Word Count (where applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

I confirm that the work submitted has been produced solely through my own efforts.

Student's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Notes**

**Penalties:** The total marks available for an assessment is reduced by 15% for work submitted up to one week late. The total marks available are reduced by 30% for work up to two weeks late. Assessment work received more than two weeks late will receive a mark of zero. [Incidents of alleged plagiarism and cheating are dealt with in accordance with the Institute's Assessment Regulations.]

**Plagiarism:** Presenting the ideas etc. of someone else without proper acknowledgement

**Cheating:** The use of unauthorised material in a test, exam etc., unauthorised access to test matter, unauthorised collusion, dishonest behaviour in respect of assessments, and deliberate plagiarism.

**Continuous Assessment:** For students repeating an examination, marks awarded for continuous assessment, shall normally be carried forward from the original examination to the repeat examination.