Quality Assurance System

PP01 - Policy and procedure for carrying out assessments

Rev 1.0

Policy and procedure for Carrying out assessments

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Amendment History:

Date	Revision Number	Details of amendment
8/8/20	1.0	New Document

LASNTG is committed to ensuring that Learners are assessed in a fair, transparent manner and clearly understand all assessment procedures. These assessment procedures must be in line with the Programme's assessment requirements and national standards and are implemented consistently.

Purpose:

- To ensure that Learners are appropriately assessed
- That Learners have achieved their award appropriate to their performance
- To implement the process in a fair and impartial manner

Scope

All LASNTG Learners that partake in the assessment process

Definitions/Acronyms:

Assessment in this context refers to an examination of Learners, which is a requirement of certain Programmes where Learners must be assessed in order to fulfil the requirements of the Programme.

Authorities/Responsibilities:

Function	Activities
Programme Design and Development Team	Devise assessment instruments, marking schemes and assessment criteria
RTC Manager	Issue Assessment Pack
Programme Coordinator	Prepare Assessment Pack Review Programme Specification/Modular Assessment Plan (MAP).
Trainers	Distribute a copy of the Modular Assessment Plan which includes deadline dates for submission of assessments and examination dates at Learner Induction Provide timely and constructive, formal and informal feedback to Learners on formative and summative assessments throughout the Programmes Mark and grade the Learner evidence Submit the required paperwork to the RTC Verifier
Secretary	Process appeals Convene meetings of the Results Approval Panel Issue certificates Implement corrective action plan
External Authenticator	See below

Procedure:

Assessment policies, processes and procedures are developed, implemented and agreed with the awarding body.

Assessment Design and Planning

All aspects of assessment are considered, and comprehensive assessment guidelines are produced by the Programme Design and Development Team at the design stage. The guidelines contain a

standard set of procedures, assignment briefs, marking schemes, assessment schedules in the Modular Assessment Plan based on award specifications (if applicable) and details of resources required for assessment. The MAP is reviewed and signed off by the Programme Coordinator to ensure that it is compliant with quality assurance procedures.

Role of the Programme Design and Development Team in assessment design

- Ensure that there is an appropriate and coherent mix of assessment tasks and that the overall assessment workload is not excessive
- Ensure that there is an even and logical spread of formative and summative assessment throughout the duration of the Programme
- Ensure that assessment is aligned with demonstrating attainment of learning outcomes

Formative Assessment

Trainers use formative assessment on an ongoing basis throughout Programmes to monitor learning, to engage and motivate the Learners and to monitor their own performance. The formative assessment strategy for each Programme is designed by the Programme Design and Development team at the assessment design stage and the strategy is detailed in the Programme Specification. Formative assessment helps to develop a Learner's understanding of their own strengths, weaknesses and gaps in knowledge/skills and improve their learning. It also helps Trainers to improve their own performance

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment is used for certification purposes and is based on the cumulative learning experience that takes place. Assessment undertaken for the purpose of achieving QQI certification is summative assessment. Summative assessment instruments are designed by the Programme Design and Development team, based on the award specification and validated Programme and are discussed and agreed with the Trainer at the pre-Programme briefings which details are issued to Learners at induction.

Authentication

See Procedure for Internal Verification

Results Approval and Issue

- The Secretary convenes meetings of the Results Approval Panel
- The Panel reviews, approves and signs off assessment results
- The LASNTG Verifier makes results available to the Learners

Request for Certification

- The LASNTG Verifier submits Learner results to QQI via the QBS

Appeals

- Learners are allowed 10 working days to lodge an appeal
- The Secretary processes appeals

Security and Integrity of Assessment

Have systems are in place to ensure the security and integrity of assessment related processes and materials and the recording, storage and access of assessment records. Copies of assessments (examination papers and assessment briefs) should be printed as, and when, they are needed. Trainers must return marked and graded assessments to the RTC on or before a specified date set out in the certification plan personally or by courier. The RTC Manager must record the outcomes at

the earliest available time. The RTC Manager is responsible for ensuring that all assessment related materials are securely stored in the RTC pre/post assessment until they are submitted to the LASNTG Verifier. Learner evidence is maintained in a secure storage area in the RTC that remains locked at all times with access restricted to the RTC Manager and Local Verifier.

Trainers are responsible for the secure storage of all assessment related materials while in their possession and must report any breaches to the RTC Manager as a matter of urgency.

Procedures are in place for dealing with incidents of cheating/suspected malpractice and this is highlighted at Learner induction and in the Learner Handbook

Detailed security arrangements are in place for the conduct of examinations and all examination papers issued are previously 'unseen'.

On conclusion of the Results Approval Panel meetings, the LASNTG Verifier destroys Learner evidence, which have been ratified by the RAP except Learner evidence pertaining to any Learner who has appealed results. These are retained until the completion of the appeals process timeframes.

Assessment Submission Process

Submission of Assignments

Learners must submit a signed authorship statement which includes a plagiarism disclaimer confirming that the assignments they are submitting is their own work. They attach the coversheet to their printed assignment and submit these documents either electronically or by registered post as advised by the Trainer. The assignments are date stamped on receipt and recorded by the Local Verifier.

In order to ensure fairness in assessment, all assignments must be submitted on or before the dates set out on MAP (unless otherwise indicated to the Learners by the Trainer). Requests for extensions, granted for extenuating circumstances only, must be submitted in advance of the submission date to the RTC Manager using the Extension Request Form with supporting verifiable evidence if relevant e.g. medical certificate in case of sickness. The RTC Manager liaises with the Programme Coordinator if necessary.

Dealing with Examination Misconduct/Cheating

If a Learner is suspected of cheating in an examination the invigilator, witnessing the suspected misconduct, will retrieve the evidence of cheating and complete a Cheating and Plagiarism Form, which is forwarded, with the alleged evidence, to the RTC Manager who meets with the Learner with the Trainer. If there is an unsatisfactory explanation from the Learner, the matter will be referred to the Secretary to review the circumstances of the incident.

Consistency of Marking

The Programme Coordinator is responsible for systems to ensure consistency and for monitoring and evaluating the efficacy of these systems.

Marking and grading is addressed at Trainer Induction and in the Trainer Handbook. A detailed marking scheme is set out for all assessment briefs which shows clearly how the Learner evidence is to be marked and graded.

The LASNTG Verifier reviews all marks and grades across all RTCs and all Trainers, highlights any inconsistencies, discusses them with the Secretary and comments in the Internal Verification report which is presented to the External Authenticator and the Results Approval Panel.

Moderation of Marking

The External Authenticator reviews marks of a sample of work across all grade bands. The size and choice of the sample depends on the type of assignment task and the nature of the material being assessed.

Purpose

- To support the internal verification process
- To ensure that assessment tasks and marking are accurate, appropriate to the level of the assessment and comparable with equivalent assessments.
- To take an overview of the quality and consistency of assessment decisions
- To give feedback to LASTNG with regard to marking and grading

Reasonable Accommodation

See Procedure for Reasonable Accommodation.

External Authentication

The External Authenticators appointed will:

- Confirm the fair and consistent assessment of Learners in line with the agreed QA procedures
- Review internal verification report(s) and authenticate the findings/outcomes
- Apply a sampling strategy to moderate assessment results.
- Moderate the assessment results in accordance with standards outlined in the Award Specification
- Participate in the results approval process, if requested
- Identify any issues/irregularities in relation to the assessment process
- Produce the External Authentication report which is made available to the Results Approval Panel.

Authentication is carried out in line with the defined sampling strategy.

Results Approval

The Secretary will convene a meeting of the Panel for each certification period and issues an agenda to all Panel members in advance. At the RAP meeting the results/outcomes are reviewed, including internal verification reports and External Authenticators' reports. The Secretary prepares a report of the meeting which is signed by the Chair and retained for auditing and monitoring purposes. The Panel highlights any issues identified and improvements recommended at the meeting and any need for corrective action. The Secretary monitors these on an ongoing basis and reviews at the subsequent meeting of the RAP and discusses at Programme review meetings. The Secretary also records examples of best practice identified during the authentication process with a view to sharing these with relevant staff/Trainers.

Issue of Results and Certification

See Procedure for Internal Verification

Issue of Award Certificates

QQI issues award certificates for all results received except those flagged as being under appeal according to a pre-defined schedule at the end of February, April, July, August, October and

December each year. LASNTG receives the award certificates from QQI approximately 2 to 3 weeks after the Final Submission Date for the certification period.

On receipt of the award certificates, the Secretary will

- Log receipt of the award certificates
- Store the award certificates securely in a locked facility until they are issued
- Issue the award certificates to Learners by registered post within 14 days of receipt unless there are exceptional circumstances
- Attach a personalised letter of congratulations
- Maintain records.

If the Secretary issues the copies of award certificates to an employer for a group of Learners (on request) the following procedure is followed:

The Secretary will;

- Send the batch of award certificates by registered post to a named person in the organisation who must agree to store them securely in a locked facility.

Assessment Appeals

The Secretary is responsible for ensuring that there is a fit-for-purpose appeals process in place, that Learners are aware of, and familiar with, the process and that the process is implemented fairly and effectively.

The Secretary retains copies of Completed Appeals or Complaints Forms and correspondence with appellants/complainants. An appeal is handled by an independent adjudicator and the original assessor has no part in the review.

Corrective Action

Decisions regarding corrective action are recorded by the Secretary in the form of a corrective action plan. The Secretary is responsible for oversight of the implementation of this plan and monitors the actions on an ongoing basis and presents details of the outcomes at the subsequent RAP meeting. If the implementation of corrective action results in a delay in the issue of results to a Learner, the LASNTG Verifier contacts the Learner to explain.

Retention of Assessment Evidence

On conclusion of the certification process, the Secretary destroys hardcopies of all Learner evidence except evidence pertaining to any Learner who has appealed results. In the event of an appeal, as described, assessment evidence is retained for one year after the Learner has been informed of the outcome.

Supporting Documents

- LASNTG Quality Assurance Manual
- Learner Handbook
- Trainer Handbook

Reference Documents

Metrics
- Number of complaints
- Number of appeals
- Number of corrective actions