

Document Name and Version	5.1 Policy and Procedure: Examinations Board Regulations.
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Policies that Interact with Policy 5.1	Policy 5.2 Assessment Regulations Policy 5.3 External Examiner Policy Policy 5.4 Moderation of Assessment Material and Results Policy 5.5 Learner Information Provision and Feedback in Assessment. Policy 5.6 Learners with Learning Difficulties 293 Policy 5.7 Examination Results: Review, Recheck and Appeal
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1. Preamble.

- 1.1. IICP College recognises that the credibility of its qualifications depends on the validity and reliability of its procedures for the assessment of learners. Assessment also provides valuable information for the College about the effectiveness of its teaching and learning. It is therefore important that assessment is carried out rigorously, fairly and professionally.
- 1.2. This policy addresses the requirements of (i) QQI's suite of QA guidelines, and (ii) QQI Assessment and Standards (revised 2013) These regulations require that Institutions have in place and consistently apply pre-defined and published assessment regulations.
- 1.3. This policy also addresses the requirements of ESG¹, which requires that Institutions ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages learners to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of learners reflects this approach.
- 1.4. Examination Board meetings are of central importance in assuring the reliability, fairness and validity of assessment result, a core requirement of QQI and ESG.

2. Scope.

- 2.1. The regulations and guidelines contained in this document relate to the assessment of modules, stages and awards in all QQI validated programmes in IICP College. These regulations and guidelines may be adapted when applied to non-QQI validated programmes.
- 2.2. This policy should be read in conjunction with Quality and Qualifications Ireland [QQI] Assessment and Standards (Revised 2013) and related IICP College policies, in particular:

¹ European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), et. al (2015), *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)*, 2nd edn, Available at https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf (Accessed 28 November 2018).

- All Assessment Regulations.
- Role & Responsibilities of External Examiners.
- Assessment Control Procedure.
- Review, Rechecks and Appeals Procedure.

3. Purpose.

3.1. The principles and guidelines identified in this document provide the policy, principles and procedure for Examination Boards.

4. Principles.

4.1. The guiding principles are organised around the six themes identified in QQI Assessment and Standards (Revised 2013)²:

- i. Learners are responsible for demonstrating their learning achievement;
- ii. Assessment supports standards based on learning outcomes;
- iii. Assessment promotes and supports effective learning and teaching;
- iv. Assessment procedures are credible;
- v. Assessment methods are reviewed and renewed as necessary;
- vi. Learners are well informed about how and why they are assessed.

5. Policy.

5.1. Accountability:

5.1.1. A Board of Examiners is accountable to the Academic Council [AC]. Therefore, the AC or a subcommittee of the AC is responsible for overseeing appeals of decisions made by Boards of Examiners.

5.2. Examinations Board Members:

5.2.1. Members include a chairperson and a secretary, and normally include all assessors (internal and external) who have a role in the assessment of relevant

² QQI *Assessment and Standards* (2013) Available from https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Assessment_and_Standards%20Revised%202013.pdf (Accessed 28 November 2018).

module and programme stages, along with the relevant external examiners, programme leaders, programme coordinators and academic managers.

5.2.2. Academic support staff and administrative staff who may have relevant contributions to make in respect of decisions about learner eligibility to progress may also be invited or required to attend.

5.2.3. A QQI representative may attend. This representative will have no active part in the deliberations of the Board but may assist in matters related to QQI standards, policy, criteria and procedures.

5.2.4. The secretary is responsible for minute-taking. The secretary to the Examination Board should ensure that the minutes of meetings are prepared so that the recording of discussions about specific learners/ or sensitive issues is kept separate from that of general business matters.

5.3. Quorum:

5.3.1. Those present must include a chair and a secretary, and also a sufficient number of the programme's assessors to deliberate competently upon the assessment findings presented.

5.3.2. Usually, each examination board will have an External Examiner present. Where examination boards include Award Years then the External Examiner must be present, other than in exceptional circumstances.

5.3.2.1. Where the External examiner is unable to attend then alternative arrangements to ensure external oversight of the programme(s) should be proposed by the Programme Leader and approved with the Registrar and/or College President. This may include:

- Arranging for the External Examiner to be sent information, attend an examination board and confirm acceptance of the Board's recommendations through secure electronic means.
- Requesting another external examiner (who has been through the IICP's) approval process to provide cover for the absent external examiner's duties.

6. Procedures.

6.1. The Examinations board meet twice in each academic year. The Chair (in consultation with the AC) may convene additional meetings where required.

6.2. These meetings are confidential. Other than communications required by QQI or decided upon by the Board, proceedings of the Board must be treated as confidential and will not be disclosed outside the Boards of Examiners.

6.3. Any member of a Board of Examiners who has a present or past relationship with a candidate beyond the usual academic one is obliged to declare such an interest to the Chair of the appropriate Board of Examiners. In the event of a conflict of interest involving a member of the Examinations Board, the matter will be discussed in that member's absence.

6.4. Preparing for Board of Examiners' Meeting:

6.4.1. The dates of Boards of Examiners' meetings are arranged in good time and in consultation with external examiners.

6.4.2. Dates are notified to all required to attend the Board meetings.

6.4.3. Prior to the Examination Board, the Registrar prepares a list of learners for which supporting documentation shall be available to present at the Examination Board.

6.4.4. The Registrar prepares a broadsheet of results for presentation to the Examination Board. Where a Pre-examination Board is held, this is amended as required by this Board.

6.4.5. Documents for consideration by the Examination Boards are prepared in advance of the meeting date. These include:

- Broadsheet of results;
- Minutes of the Pre-Examination Board Meeting;
- Programme Handbooks;
- Programme Validation and Re-Validation Documents;
- Summary Results;

- IICP College Quality Assurance Manual QAM;
- Learner Portfolios;
- Mitigating Circumstances Applications.

6.5. Examinations Board Purpose:

6.5.1. Subject to the authority of the AC, the Examination Board has the final decision concerning assessment results, with the exception of the review, recheck and appeals process.

6.5.2. The Board of Examiners should satisfy itself that learners have been appropriately graded and classified. They should base their decisions on the valid and reliable assessment of explicit learning outcomes.

6.5.3. Before looking at individual findings, the Board of Examiners considers overall findings and trends, noting any general issues that may require consideration.

6.5.4. When considering individual findings, the authority of the Board of Examiners extends to all education components, professional and academic, of the learner's education.

6.5.5. The Board of Examiners will consider any application for mitigating circumstances made by a learner prior to confirming marks for that learner. The outcome of the application should be clearly recorded in the minutes.

6.5.6. Boards of Examiners are vigilant against grade inflation.

6.6. Summative Assessments:

6.6.1. Other than in review, recheck and appeals processes, the Examination Board has the authority to make final decisions on all summative assessments. In reaching its decision the Board of Examiners considers all assessment findings (including the findings of repeat/supplemental assessment), any mitigating circumstances application, and the recommendations of the assessors.

6.6.2. The Board may determine assessment results for each of the learners presented, including:

- Grades for assessment tasks;
- Grades for modules;
- Eligibility to progress from one stage in a programme to the next;

- Eligibility for higher education and training awards;
- Classifications of those awards, where applicable.

6.6.3. Deferral of examination results:

6.6.3.1. A board of examiners may, in the case of illness or

6.7. Recording results:

6.7.1. At the meeting of the Examination Board a broadsheet of results records the total marks or grades awarded to each candidate in each assessed activity.

6.7.2. The provisional results are called by the Registrar.

6.7.3. Board members may raise issues for further discussion and deliberation following the calling of all results. Any comments by members of the Board should be brought to the Chair for further discussion and deliberation. Issues such as pass by compensation and learners on borderline marks/grades etc. are relevant matters to discuss at this meeting.

6.7.4. Any modification to the draft broadsheets should be made to the original copy at the Examination Board meeting. The overall result will be indicated according to QQI regulations. This information is recorded on a master copy of the broadsheet of results and signed by all members of the board.

6.8. Where systemic errors are discovered, any necessary adjustments to marks/grades should be applied to all learners affected. The decision to make such adjustments and the supporting rationale should be recorded in the minutes and communicated to the Academic Council for the purpose of follow-up.

6.9. Board Report to the Academic Council:

6.9.1. The Examination board shall identify any issues related to the nature of assessments and assessment arrangements that may need to be addressed within IICP College. If the board decides, the issue will be recorded in the minutes and communicated to the Academic Council for the purpose of follow-up.

6.10. Decision-making:

6.10.1. Normally, decisions of the Examination Boards are reached by consensus.

However, exceptional circumstances may arise where this is not possible. Where such circumstances arise, then the following processes should be used.

6.10.1.1. Any difference or dispute, and the resolution used, must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

6.10.1.2. Persistent and recurring disagreements at Boards of Examiners' meetings may require particular attention, and the Board may choose a particular course of action.

6.10.1.3. Where there is a difference or disagreement between the Board of Examiners and an individual Assessor, then the Board must give an appropriate and reasonable length of time towards resolving this difference. Where such a resolution is not possible within that time then the Board of Examiners may replace an Assessor's recommendation with its own. Any such disagreement must be recorded in the minutes of its meeting. Formalising a dissenting view in this way should not be done lightly.

6.10.1.4. Where there is a difference or a disagreement between the Board of Examiners and an External Examiner, then the Board must give an appropriate length of time towards resolving this difference. In the event of an irresolvable disagreement between the Board of Examiners and the External Examiner, the Board of Examiners' decision should be final. The disagreement should be recorded in the minutes of the meeting, in the External Examiner's Report, and in an attachment to the Broadsheet of Results.

6.10.1.5. The External Examiner may, in exceptional circumstances, submit a separate written report to the Academic Council regarding such other matters as (s)he deems appropriate.

6.10.1.6. Where the external examiner differs from the assessment board even after discussion, he or she must exercise the right not to sign the broadsheet, and the Academic Board will adjudicate.

6.11. Chairs Action:

6.11.1. Chair's action allows for the consideration of some matters between examination boards. Usually only minor and non-controversial items can be considered in this way.

6.11.2. If the need for urgent consideration of major and/or controversial items between planned meetings is foreseen, then a special meeting may need to be called. However, chair's action could be used in conjunction with telephone / email / conference call contact with Examination Board members where there are time constraints on the decision.

6.11.3. Normally decisions about the performance and progress of learners are made at a meeting of examination boards. However, the Chair, in consultation with the appropriate External Examiner(s), may be empowered to take such action as he or she sees fit at a later date.

6.11.4. This may occur where, for example, a piece of work is not completely ready for an exam board, but the examination board were of the opinion that they had sufficient information before them to judge that the decision would not be controversial. In this situation they may empower the chair to take chair's action to place the internal marker's decision before the external examiner, and to produce a final mark for insertion in the broadsheet.

6.11.5. All decisions taken by Chair's Action should be reported to the Academic Council at its next meeting.

6.11.6. The circumstances where a chair's action might be used include:

- A learner's work is not ready for the exam board – they may have had to re-write some part;
- All academic requirements have been evidenced, but a particular learner is finishing off clinical requirements
- An internal assessor was unable to mark an examination before the examination board;
- A question about mitigating circumstances arises and needs an answer before a mark can be confirmed;

- An internal examiner is missing, and they need to be heard before a mark can be confirmed.

6.12. Procedure after the examination board:

6.12.1. Following the examination Board:

- The electronic version of the broadsheet is updated with the results;
- The Registrar submits the original broadsheet (White Signed Copy) to QQI immediately after the exam board and updates the QQI portal accordingly.

6.13. Release of Results:

6.13.1. Confirmed results are emailed a transcript of results and official notice of graduation usually within 7 working days of the Examination Board meeting.

6.14. The grounds under which a learner may appeal the decision of an Examination Board are set out in Review Recheck and Appeal Process.

7. Supporting documentation.

7.1. Indicative agenda for the examinations board:

- I. Chair welcomes and introduces members of the board.
- II. Statement of Confidentiality.
- III. Statement of Due Process.
- IV. Statement of System of Grading.
- V. Provisional Results are presented and discussed.
 - Any queries or matters arising from provisional results are discussed at this point.
- VI. Agreed changes made to results.
 - Results are recommended and changes, where relevant, are recorded on the master broadsheet (White Copy).
- VII. Calling of Results.
 - The Registrar calls the results.
- VIII. Signing of the Broadsheet.

- The Chairperson, Lecturers and External Examiner sign the original copy of the broadsheet.
- IX. Confidentiality arrangements.
- All confidential documentation (i.e. yellow copies of broadsheets) is returned to the Registrar
- X. Chair outlines process for Communication of Results.
- XI. Chair outlines Recheck, Review and Appeals process.
- XII. The meeting Concludes.

7.2. The following list of documentation are available to the examination board:

- Programme Handbooks;
- Programme Validation and Re-Validations Document;
- Matrix of Summary Results;
- IICP College Quality Assurance Manual;
- Learner Portfolios;
- QQI Assessment and Standards, 2013.