EDUCATIONAL DESIGN DEVELOPMENTS t/a

DUBLIN INSTITUTE OF DESIGN

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QQI ASSESSMENT AND STANDARDS

DUBLIN INSTITUTE OF DESIGN QUALITY ASSURANCE

2013 October

PART A:
PROCEDURES FOR CANDIDATE ASSESSMENT LEADING TO QQI AWARDS

A1   Applicability

The Institute is responsible for the assessment of candidates and the maintenance of programme standards that accord with the relevant award standards.

A1.1   These Assessment and Standards shall apply to all assessment of credit based programmes, leading to QQI Awards, that have commenced delivery (i.e. first year intake) from the academic year 2014/15 and subsequent academic years unless and until amended by Dublin Institute of Design's Academic Council

A1.2   These Assessment and Standards shall also apply to all assessments of credit based modular programmes leading to QQI Awards, to be offered in the academic year 2014/15 and subsequent academic years, unless and until amended by the Academic Council of Dublin Institute of Design. For such assessments, this document should be read in conjunction with any additional assessment requirements for QQI programmes. Especially the Approved Programme Schedules

A1.3   Any special regulation, which is indicated in an Approved Programme Schedule as applying to a particular programme, is deemed to apply to the assessments relating to that programme, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the provisions of the Assessment and Standards herein. No special regulations shall apply unless the Academic Council has actually adopted such regulations and incorporated them in the Certificate of Programme Approval issued in relation to the programme concerned.

A1.4   These Assessment and Standards shall apply to all candidates studying on both full time and part time programmes.

A1.4.1   A candidate is deemed to be full time when he/she is undertaking 60 credits of learning during a stage (understood at this time to be a full academic year) and is not engaged in full time employment.

A1.4.2   A candidate is deemed to be part time when he/she is undertaking less than 60 credits of learning during a stage (understood at this time to be a full academic year) and/or is engaged in full time employment.

A1.4.3   A candidate is permitted to transfer from being registered as a part-time candidate to being registered as a full-time candidate provided they meet the eligibility requirements of the stage into which they wish to transfer. Likewise, a candidate is permitted to transfer from being registered as a full-time candidate to being registered as a part-time candidate.

A2   Assessment Approval Process

A2.1   The purpose of assessment is to establish that a candidate has demonstrated that they have attained the intended learning outcomes of a module, a stage or a full programme.

A2.2   Following completion of all the prescribed assessments for a module, a stage or a full programme, the Institute normally convenes a meeting of the Assessment Board to decide on the marks for

the assessments, to agree overall award classifications and to approve the awarding of ECTS credits. These approved marks, awards and credits are recorded onto the candidate record.

A2.3   Written assessments are understood to refer to a time-limited invigilated setting where a candidate is required to answer a number of questions set by an internal examiner and approved by an external examiner.

A2.4   Assessments come in a variety of forms, including practicals, projects, reports, essays, oral presentations, laboratory work, class tests. Programme assessment strategies should take cognisance of the practicalities of offering repeat continuous assessment opportunities. For example, it may not be feasible for some continuous assessment tasks to be repeated in the same timeframe as written assessments. In such a case, the Board may recommend that the candidate repeat-attend the module.

A3   Responsibility for Assessments

A3.1   The Registrar of the Institute shall have overall responsibility for the conduct of all academic assessment activities in the Institute and shall, in particular, ensure that:

i.   All assessment activities, (including invigilation) are properly conducted

ii.   All assessment entries are made to the Institute by the required date(s)

iii.   assessment question papers/and appropriate marking schemes are prepared by Internal Examiners, sent for approval by External Examiners and printed for assessments in a timely fashion

iv.   Appropriate accommodation arrangements are made for each candidate for assessments.

v.   Assessed learner work is assessed by an Internal Examiner, that a sample (e.g. 5% and including borderline cases) is assessed by an External Examiner, and that the results for each candidate are made available for meetings of Boards of Examiners

vi.   All assessed work of a candidate should be made available to the external examiners

vii.   Accurate records in regard to continuous assessment are maintained and made available to External Examiners

viii.   Proper arrangements are made for holding meetings of Boards of Examiners

ix.   The recommendations of meetings of Boards of Examiners to the Academic Council are transmitted in a timely manner

x.   Candidates are provided with the information relevant to them with regard to the conduct and regulation of assessments

xi.   There are appropriate procedures to make recommendations following requests for special consideration and for deferment of assessment made by candidates

xii.   There are appropriate procedures to make recommendations following an appeal related to the assessments made by candidates

A3.2   All examiners are expected to act in an ethical manner, and demonstrate a fair and consistent approach through objectivity, confidentiality, declarations of interest, and the avoidance of conflicts of interest, etc

A3.3   Meetings of Boards of Examiners should be established to consider all assessment findings (including the findings of repeat/supplemental assessment) and to determine assessment results for each of the candidates presented, possibly 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; and
– Classifications of those awards where applicable

A3.4   The decisions made at a meeting of the Assessment Board and subsequently ratified by the Academic Council, are final and may only be undone following a formal appeal made by a candidate. In the case where genuine administrative errors have been made, and are traceable, the Registrar or a nominee has the authority to make a Broad Sheet amendment. Any such change is noted in the candidate's records

A4   Internal Examiners

A4.1   Institution assessors and others approved by the Institute from time to time who exercise an assessment function shall, be deemed to be Internal Examiners.

A4.2   The functions of Internal Examiners are to:

  i.   Ensure that the set of assessments carried out by a candidate is in compliance with the schedule of assessments, as specified in the Approved Programme Schedule

 ii.   Consult with the appropriate External Examiner(s) in the drafting of assessment papers by providing to the External Examiner(s), in good time before the printing of assessment papers, typewritten draft question papers, together with appropriate marking schemes, and/or model answers and/or worked solutions to numerical questions involving quantitative data

iii.   Take account of all suggestions, criticisms, deletions, additions and amendments proposed by the External Examiner(s)

 iv.   Submit assessment papers, a sample reviewed by the External Examiner(s), to the Registrar of the Institute, or to the person nominated thereby for this purpose

  v.   Make available for the External Examiner(s), all materials related to the assessments including continuous assessment work, projects, scripts etc

 vi.   Prior to the meeting of the Assessment Boards to consult with the External Examiner(s) and to agree the grades/marks proposed to be awarded to each candidate

vii.   Attend meetings of the Boards of Examiners and partake in the decision making process regarding the approval of candidate marks and awards

viii.   Act ethically and professionally

 ix.   declare any relevant interests that might give rise to a conflict of interest (actual or potential, real or apparent)

Note: All assessment materials (scripts, elements of continuous assessment) to be annotated by the internal examiner.

A5   External Examiners

A5.1   External examining is a quality assurance mechanism employed by the Institute that supports public confidence in academic qualifications. The external examining process offers valued objective interface; a principal outcome of external examining is the introduction of an independent element into candidate assessment procedures.

These guidelines encompass the external examining of all programmes and modules. Greater detail on the process for, and the conditions of appointment of external examiners can be found in the Institute's Quality Assurance Manual.

At all times External Examiners will treat all information and documents pertaining to programmes at the Institute and the communication of information to and from the Institute confidentially.

A5.2 The functions of the External Examiner are to:
  i. Comment on the programme standard (educational goal).
  ii. Probe the attainment of candidates using information agreed with and supplied by the Institute.
  iii. Comment where appropriate on the qualification-related assessment strategy and procedures and proceeding from there to probe the overall assessment strategy in consultation with the Internal Examiner(s)
  iv. Participate, where relevant, in reviewing the performance of modules across programmes.
  v. Review a sample of assessments in consultation with the Internal Examiner(s) prior to submission to the exams office
  vi. Review continuous assessment work, either during the academic year or at the time of the final assessment period
  vii. Review any recommendations for exemptions arising from the evaluation of prior learning, at the time of the final assessment period
  viii. Report findings and recommendations to the Institute in writing

A5.3 An External Examiner should ensure adequacy of standards at assessments. In particular, External Examiners should ensure that:
  i. The appropriate standards with regard to Pass, Merit and Distinction/ Honours are applied
  ii. Comparability of standards between equivalent level programmes from other providers is achieved and maintained as far as is feasible

A5.4 When visiting the Institute, the duties of External Examiners shall be as follows:
  i. To review the exhibition of candidates' work and if necessary and where appropriate, to interview a selection of candidates before the Assessment Board meeting.
  ii. To review the overall Assessment Broadsheet with mean marks being available for individual modules.
  iii. To review borderline cases where deemed necessary in consultation with the Internal Examiner(s).
  iv. To agree with the respective Internal Examiner(s) the proposed final marks for consideration by the appropriate Assessment Board.
  v. To attend appropriate meeting(s) of the Assessment Board as required.

A5.5 The External Examiner/s has the authority to propose changes to the marks awarded. If these proposals are challenged by the Internal examiner/s then the final decision is taken by a consensus of the Examiners at the Assessment Boards meeting.

A5.6   At the end of a meeting of the Assessment Boards, External Examiners are typically invited to give oral feedback on the process and their observations regarding the assessments.

A5.7   External Examiner Reports

A.5.7.1 The External Examiner issues a written report each time an individual or a cohort of candidates is assessed. The detailed requirements for the report are specified in the Institute's Quality Assurance Document.

A.5.7.2 An External Examiner is expected to comment on the design, structure, and content of a programme and its constituent components, and on the standard of the programme and its assessment in a national and international context during any formal review of the programme.

A5.8   Programme and Module External Examiners

A5.8.1 Programme External Examiners should deal with all modules in the programme(s), and should approach the task with a view to ensuring that each candidate's performance in the programme as a whole is properly assessed, subject to the requirements of the Institute's Assessment and Standards Regulations and the overall programme learning outcomes.

A5.8.2 Module External Examiners are required to ensure that each candidate's overall performance on the modules is properly assessed.

A6   Withholding Entries

A6.1   Should the Institute, 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 assessment modules to the purview of the Assessment Board, that it does not wish to so present the candidate, then it is the Institute's right and responsibility to withhold that candidate's results or part thereof from that purview. It is further a matter for the Institute whether it will present such a candidate again, and if it does so, under what circumstances e.g. as a first attempt or otherwise.

A6.2   Candidates who have taken the module assessment(s) and who have not complied with all appropriate Institute requirements will be regarded as provisional entries. Any recommendations by a Assessment Board in respect of the result of any such candidate will be regarded as provisional and the candidate will not be informed of their marks until such time as the candidate has complied with the appropriate requirements as outlined by the internal examiner to the Assessment Board and recorded by the internal examiner.

A6.3   The Academic Council shall not grant an award to any candidate whose result is regarded as withheld or provisional.

A7   Meeting of the Assessment Boards

A7.1   After each end of year assessment, the Internal and External Examiners shall formally meet together as an Assessment Board under the chairmanship of the Academic Council Chairperson or by a member of the Institute's senior staff nominated for that purpose by the President. In as far as is practical, the Chair shall not be a member of the Department responsible for the candidates being assessed. Only those Internal Examiners who have participated in the assessments for a given award (or assessment stage leading to an award), together with the Registrar and Head of Department concerned, and such External Examiners as the Academic Council shall deem

appropriate, shall participate in the meeting of the Assessment Boards at which recommendations in relation to that award or assessment stage are decided.

A7.2 At an assessment meeting, the role of the Chairperson is to ensure that:
  i. Candidates are given fair and consistent consideration
  ii. Any decisions are properly recorded
  iii. Where a decision is voted upon, any dissentions from the internal or external examiners are recorded
  iv. The meeting proceeds in a timely manner
  v. The exam results are validated by the board
  vi. Any issue of interpretation of Assessment and Standards is properly clarified

A7.3 The membership of the Assessment Boards comprises all of the internal examiners, the external examiners, an independent Chairperson and a recording secretary. Normally the meeting may not proceed in the absence of any of the internal examiners unless a formal request for non-attendance is approved by the Head of School. Where an absent member is the Internal Examiner for a candidate's marks under consideration, these marks may only be considered when all of the necessary supporting information, documents and explanations are available to the Board. A meeting may proceed in the absence of the external examiner provided the assessment materials and broad sheets have been evaluated by external examiner and that the views of the external examiners are clearly conveyed to the meeting.

A7.4 The dates of meetings of Assessment Boards shall be agreed annually by the Academic Council of the Institute.

A8   Operation of the Assessment Boards

A8.1 The Assessment Boards considers the marks attained by the assessments taken by a candidate for the purposes of determining if the candidate has met the learning outcomes of the module(s), the stage, and of the programme award, as appropriate.

A8.2 The following are the functions of the Assessment Boards:
  i. Consider and approve each candidate's results (i.e. satisfy itself that candidates have been appropriately graded and classified)
  ii. Consider the overall performance of each candidate and satisfy itself that the required learning outcomes have been attained
  iii. Decide the level of the award for each candidate
  iv. Exercise discretion where appropriate
  v. Exercise special consideration as recommended by the Exams Office, and make appropriate changes
  vi. Where the overall award is determined by the Board to be close to a lower or higher award classification (i.e. a borderline case), the Board should satisfy itself that the award classification being made reflects the overall performance of the candidate in respect of the learning outcomes of the programme. Cases near the classification boundaries i.e. within + 1 percentage point of the percentage point threshold should be carefully considered
  vii. Where systemic errors are discovered, any necessary adjustments to marks/grades should be applied to all candidates affected. The decision to make such adjustments and the supporting rationale should be recorded in the minutes

viii. Record final agreed marks on a broadsheet of results, signed by the members of the board. The meeting is to be minuted

A8.3 Discussions about Progression and Awards

A8.3.1 Borderline Cases

When considering borderline cases it is important to consider the candidate's performance as a whole. A board should only grant eligibility for progression, or recommend that an award be made, when it is satisfied, based on consideration of the necessary evidence, that the required learning outcomes have been attained. In the event that the Board is not satisfied that it has the necessary evidence in a particular case, it may record the case as withheld (i.e. the result is undetermined). Such cases may be reconsidered at the next meeting of the Board, or, where the determination is conditional, by a special process recommended by the Board.

A8.3.2 Decision-Making Process

Normally decisions should be reached by consensus. However, in the event that consensus is impossible the alternative decision-making mechanism is by the majority vote of all properly recognised examiners in attendance at the meeting. In the event of a disagreement between the Assessment Board and an internal examiner, the Board may vote to replace a recommendation from an examiner with its own but should record the disagreement in the minutes of its meeting. In the event of an unresolved disagreement between the Board and the external examiner, the decision of the Board 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. Any dissenting opinion by the External Examiner which shall have been recorded shall be brought to the attention of the Academic Council, whose decision in relation thereto shall be final.

A8.3.3 Consistency of Standards

Regardless of the mode of delivery, the Assessment Boards must consider the assessments in a consistent manner and be satisfied that, in granting a pass mark, the candidate has met the learning outcomes for the module, the stage and/or the award, as appropriate.
Any module having a grade distribution which is persistently and significantly inconsistent with others warrants discussion. If systematic anomalies are discovered these should be discussed at the meeting of the Assessment Boards and referred to the Registrar and the relevant Head of Department for review and action.

A8.4 Confidentiality

The proceedings and deliberations of the Programme Assessment Board and Assessment Boards are strictly confidential; under no circumstances should any person attending a meeting of these Boards disclose to any other person a decision of the Board or any document, information or opinion considered, conveyed or expressed at the meeting. The Chairman of the these Boards may however cause to be issued the provisional list of results referred to at Paragraph A11.6 below, 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 these Board meetings

A9 Broadsheets of Results

A9.1 At the meeting of the Assessment Boards a Broadsheet of Results shall be endorsed which shall record the total marks awarded to each candidate in each module and which shall indicate, in relation to each candidate's overall result, as to whether the candidate has passed, or has passed with Merit (indicating the grade of Merit), or has passed with Distinction, or has passed with Honours (indicating the grade of Honours), or has failed. Any other overall result should be recorded in accordance with Table A1. In the case of a candidate who fails, recommendations of exemptions, if any, should be indicated. The annotation of results shall be in accordance with Institute requirements in this regard.

A9.2 The Broadsheet(s) of Results shall be signed by the Chairman and Secretary of the meeting, and by all of the Examiners (External and Internal) present at the meeting. It shall be forwarded to the Registrar of the Institute immediately following the meeting.

A9.3 **Provisional Lists of Results**
Following recommendations made by Assessment Boards, a provisional list of results may be issued by the Institute. The Board may choose not to issue a provisional result in the case of any candidate whose result is in dispute, indeterminate, the subject of referral to the Academic Council, or whose entry is regarded as provisional in accordance with Paragraph A6 or otherwise. The name of any such candidate may not be included in any provisional list of results issued by the Institute, nor should any information in relation to results be communicated to any such candidate pending a decision by the Academic Council.

Table A1   Recording of Module Attempts on Assessment Broadsheets

Result Code	Result	Effect on Number of Assessment Attempts	Recorded on Broadsheet	Origin of Decision
EX	Exemption(s) granted	Counted as Attempt	**EX** – noting the number of the exemptions in space provided (boxes)	Ref: Granting of Exemptions for modules for learners with prior certified and/or non certified learning.
EX Module repeat	EX in module/subject result box to indicate modules passed in previous session		Applicable to the overall result– normally further **EX** or Pass or Fail etc.	Head of Department / Registrar's Office
NS	No Submission / Absent from Examination	Counted as Attempt	**AB**	Lecturer / Assessor
F	Unsuccessful Attempt / Not a Passing Grade	Counted as Attempt	**F** - Fail is recorded in the overall result	Lecturer / Assessor
P	Pass in Pass/Fail Module	Counted as Attempt	**P** - Fail is recorded in the overall result	Lecturer / Assessor
%	Mark at a previous assessment	Counted as Attempt	**%** - The learners PPA is recorded in the overall result	Lecturer / Assessor
DE	Deferral of Result(s): An Assessment Board may, in the case of illness or bereavement, recommend that a final decision on a learners result be deferred to enable the learner to complete specific outstanding requirements of the course or assessment	Not Counted as attempt	**DE** in overall result	Registrar's Office

WD	Withdrew from Course. The Institute normally has evidence stipulated in its procedures that the learner has withdrawn from the programme	Counted as Attempt	WD	Registrar's Office
WH	Learner's Result(s) Withheld	Provider to determine attempt or otherwise	WH	Registrar's Office

A10   Recommendation of Results to Academic Council

A summary of the Broadsheet of results for all assessments will be presented by the Registrar to the Academic Council at the earliest possible occasion after the completion of the assessment period. The Academic Council will be asked to ratify the assessment results. Any concerns regarding the assessment process may be raised at this time. The decision of the Academic Council is referred to the Governing Body for final ratification.

A11   Complaints, Re-checks, Reviews, & Appeals

A11.1   Complaints

A complaint is the expression of a specific concern about the provision of a course/module, or a programme of study, or a related academic service. Candidates' complaints may concern, but are not limited to: the assessment process, the conduct of the process, the assessment criteria and the relevance of the assessment tasks to the intended programme learning outcomes. A candidate may also express concern about the teaching provision in relation to their assessment. No fee applies to the expression or submission of a formal complaint.

A11.2   Re-checks

Re-check means the administrative operation of checking the recording and the combination of component scores for a module and/or stage.

A11.3   Review

Review means the re-consideration of the assessment decision either by the original assessor or by other qualified and competent persons. Candidates are required to state the grounds for the requested review. The grounds for review will normally be that the candidate suspects that the assessment was erroneous in some respect. Reviews should be overseen by the Institute's Academic Council or designated persons and the relevant external examiner should be notified and/or consulted if any change in classification is decided upon following review.

A11.4   Appeal

A11.4.1 An appeal is a request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with decisions on candidate progression, assessment and awards. A candidate has the right to appeal the grade awarded in any module or any decision to disqualify or exclude them from the assessment process in accordance with Institute procedures.

A11.4.2 Normally, an application for an appeal will be entertained once the review process has been exhausted. The appealed assessment will be re-graded by other qualified and competent persons other than the original assessor. The revised grade and accompanying feedback if appropriate will be sent to the candidate. The revised assessment grade is final, and the candidate is not

guaranteed to retain a minimum of the previous result.

A11.5   Deadlines regarding Re-checks, Reviews or Appeals

A11.5.1 The deadline for submitting a request for a complaint, recheck, or review is no more than five working days following issue of the results. An administrative fee applies to the application to re-check or review an assessment mark.

A11.5.2 The deadline for submitting a request for an appeal is no more than ten working days following issue of the results. An administrative fee applies to the application to appeal an assessment mark.

A11.6   The complaints, rechecks, reviews, and appeals processes are managed by the Registrar's office and may require consultation with a number of people including the internal and external examiners.

A12   Educational Integrity

A12.1   Plagiarism is a common form of academic misconduct. There are degrees of plagiarism ranging from the unintentional and minor to the clearly intentional and extensive. It can arise in a written assessment, but more obviously it can arise in course work and project work.

A12.2   Where plagiarism is suspected to have occurred, the examiners must consider the evidence carefully before deciding on any course of action. On the basis of the evidence, the examiners may refer the matter to a disciplinary hearing or raise the matter at the meeting of the Assessment Boards.

A13   Review of Assessment Performance

A13.1   Programme Committee

On an annual basis, each Programme Committee (comprising the team of Internal Examiners for a programme) must formally consider the assessment profile for the programme, including the report of the External Examiner(s) and any feedback from candidates on the programme. The report of each Programme Committee is sent to the Registrar via the Heads of Department, and Academic Council.

PART B: GENERAL ASSESSMENT AND STANDARDS

B1 General Requirements for Assessments and Awards

B1.1 Only candidates who have satisfactorily pursued or followed a programme of study or instruction approved by the Academic Council, and who have met all programme requirements, including satisfactory completion of prescribed coursework and projects within prescribed deadlines, shall be admitted to the assessments or other tests.

B1.2 The granting of all approved awards shall be on the basis of a candidate's performance in assessments or other tests of knowledge or ability which have been set or prescribed by the Academic Council and which have been approved and monitored by External Examiner(s) appointed by the Academic Council.

B1.3 All assessment material must normally be available for scrutiny and approval as required by the Academic Council's External Examiner(s).

B1.4 Normally, no result shall be approved in respect of any candidate presenting in an assessment module or in combination of Assessment Modules which has not been approved by the QQI.

B2 Approved Programme Schedule

B2.1 Definition
The Approved Programme Schedule indicates the Assessment Modules, and combinations of Assessment Modules, approved by the QQI in respect of each programme.

B2.2 Assessment and Standards
Where the QQI has adopted an Approved Programme Schedule in relation to an approved programme, the provisions of that Schedule are deemed to form part of the Assessment and Standards applying to the programme.

B2.3 Modules
The Approved Programme Schedule for each approved programme specifies the set of approved assessment modules for the programme. A module may consist of one or more component for assessment. Where a module consists of more than one component for assessment, these are normally assessed separately and the marks scored in the several component parts are aggregated to determine the candidate's overall performance in the module.

B2.4 Module Categories
Assessment Modules are categorised as Mandatory, Elective, Optional, Excluded and Exempted. The following provisions apply to the various categories of Assessment Modules for the purpose of completing any assessment stage leading to an Academic Council award:

Mandatory: Each candidate must present and pass in all Mandatory Assessment Modules.
Elective: Where the programme structure consists of one or more Mandatory Assessment Modules and several Elective Assessment Modules, each candidate must present and

pass in all Mandatory Assessment Modules and in a prescribed number of Elective Assessment Modules. The number of Elective Assessment Modules required is prescribed in the Approved Programme Schedule.

Optional: Performance in Optional Assessment Modules is not taken into account in determining a candidate's overall result.

Excluded: An excluded module is one which the candidate is not permitted to take, as it has similar learning outcomes to another module already chosen or taken previously by that candidate. Performance in an Excluded Module is not taken into account in determining a candidate's overall result.

B3 Attendance

Certain modules have requirements for candidate attendance during the delivery of the learning. The Programme Committee is responsible for ensuring that any such requirements are clearly communicated to and understood by candidates. The Assessment Boards may take a candidate's attendance into consideration when deciding on the marks awarded for a module. The Internal Examiner is responsible for providing evidence in support of the attendance record.

B4 Minimum Pass Marks, Marks Maxima, and Allocation

B4.1 Allocation
The allocation of marks to each Component Module and to each assessment element of a module and to each assessment shall be as indicated in the Approved Programme Schedule.

B4.2 Marks Maxima
The maximum marks available in each Module should be 100 marks [100%] and results entered on the Broad Sheet should be recorded as a numerical percentage.

B4.3 Minimum Pass Marks
The minimum mark required for a pass in any Module shall be 40% of the maximum marks available for that 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 marks [40%].

B4.4 Pass / Fail Assessments
In certain cases a module may be assessed on a Pass/Fail basis, and no PPA [percentage point average] is assigned. In that case, this module is not included in the assessment of the overall award grade.

B4.5 Credit Weighted Average Marks
A learner's performance on any stage is expressed by the "Overall Mark". This is a credit weighted average mark across all modules and is computed as follows:
The sum of the product of marks awarded and credits assigned to each module divided by the product of 100 and the sum of the credits attempted.
Or,
If the marks awarded for the modules 1 to n are given by: $X_1, X_2 \dots X_n$ and the credits respectively assigned are: $C_1, C_2 \dots C_n$, then the Overall Mark is given by:

(X1.C1 + X2.C2 … +Xn.Cn)/(100*(C1+C2 … Cn))

B4.6   Pass by Compensation

B4.6.1 Unless expressly designated as "designated as not passable by compensation" within an Approved Programme Schedule, normally a candidate who has failed one module may be allowed to 'Pass by Compensation'. Compensation can only be applied in the following circumstances:

i. The learner has been assessed for all stage modules and no module in the stage has been failed outright (below 35%)

ii. The results of all modules in the stage are from first attempts

iii. In the case of full-time learners, the results are from the same sitting (session)

iv. The overall 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 compensatable results account for no more than one-third of the credit for the stage: i.e. 20 credits in a 60-credit stage

B4.6.2 Core modules may not be passed by compensation.

B4.6.3 Compensation may be applied only to enable a learner to pass a stage. At the award stage, a learner who passes by compensation remains eligible for honours. Compensation does not change the result of the modules passed in that way. When reporting module passes by compensation, the actual result is returned, e.g. 37% along with an indication that the module pass has been granted by compensation.

B4.7   Bonding within Modules

It is normal that there are several assessments required to be completed to attain a Passing grade for a module. Unless it is specifically designated as "un-bonded", a module will normally allow a percentage weighted average of the separate assessments within one module to form an overall mark for that module. For example in a module split evenly in to two parts, each worth 50% of the overall module, it may not be necessary to attain a pass for Part 1 if the sum of the marks for Parts 1 and Part 2 averages a pass.

B5   Repeat Assessments

B5.1   Re-Sit Assessments

B5.1.1 Where the Assessment Board decides that a candidate must repeat part or all of the assessments, it may chose to 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 assessment specified in the Approved Programme Schedule. In such cases, the overall mark considered at a subsequent assessment board of such candidates shall be based on the marks awarded for the repeat assessment combined with any other repeated components of the assessment or elements of marks from previous relevant assessments which were not required to be repeated. The internal examiner will record the details of the repeat assessment arrangement where the candidate has to repeat an assessment.

B5.1.2 A candidate is deemed not eligible to re-sit any module assessments, within the same academic year, if the total sum of the modules failed within a programme stage, is more than 50% of the credits assigned for that stage of the programme. E.g. if a programme stage totals 60 Credits, then modules carrying a total of up to 30 Credits may be allowed re-sit assessments.

B5.2   Repeat-Attendance Modules

B5.2.1 Where the overall mark for a module is made up of mostly continuous assessment work and where a candidate fails the module, the Assessment Boards will normally recommend that the candidate repeat-attends the module. However, the Assessment Boards have the discretion to prescribe alternative assessment work and/or a written assessment provided that it is satisfied that any such assessment will test the full set of learning outcomes for the module, as specified in the module descriptor.

B5.2.2 In the case of a candidate repeating an assessment following a repeat attendance of a module, only the marks awarded as a result of the full set of repeat assessments and repeat sitting of the assessment shall be considered.

B5.3   Passing of each Component of Assessment

a) Normally, the mark awarded for a module is calculated as the sum of the marks awarded for the component assessment items for that module. Nevertheless, the Assessment Boards has the discretion to modify any final mark, based on information that is formally brought to its attention.

b) In the event of completion of outstanding assessment items being required of a candidate in order to fulfil the requirements of a module, apart from a terminal assessment, the lecturer must clearly indicate such requirement in the required manner i.e. in formative feedback to the learner. This information is communicated to the candidate.

B6   Recording of Exemptions

B6.1   Classification of Exemptions
There are two exemption classifications:

i. An exemption awarded by the Assessment Boards based on the attainment of a pass mark of a candidate who undertook the full assessments, as specified in the Approved Programme Schedule. In this case, the agreed numerical mark attained by the candidate is entered onto the Broadsheet at the location of the module result box and (where this is a passing mark) the module is recorded as being exempted. This is recorded as an 'EX' on the overall result section of the Broadsheet.

ii. An exemption awarded following the evaluation of a portfolio of a candidate (prior accredited and unaccredited) work which was submitted prior to the commencement of the module delivery. This exemption is awarded based on the recognition of prior learning, and the candidate is not required to take the assessment specified in the Approved Programme Schedule. In this case, an 'X' is entered onto the Broadsheet at the location of the module mark and the module is recorded as being exempted (this is recorded as an 'EX' on the overall result section of the Broadsheet).

B6.2   Subject to normal programme update and modification via periodic programmatic review or otherwise, modules exempted shall accrue for the purposes of completing the requirements of an award and need not be retaken.

B6.3   Additional Exemptions
B6.3.1 Where a candidate has failed a module, an exemption in this module may be granted following a subsequent sitting of the assessment/s and consideration of the marks from these assessments by the Assessment Boards. In order to complete the assessment stage concerned, the candidate must obtain a clear pass in all required Assessment Modules for that stage.

B6.3.2 In recording exemptions on the Broadsheet of Results, in respect of attempts subsequent to a

candidate's first attempt at the assessment, 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. Previously granted exemptions should be recorded in the module mark column(s) in the format of the mark, contained within parentheses – i.e. 'the mark from the previous attempt'.

B6.4   Number of Attempts

B6.4.1 A candidate is permitted a maximum of five attempts at an assessment to pass a module. Any candidate not achieving a pass after five attempts, under normal circumstances, will be withdrawn from the programme of study. The Assessment Boards has the discretion to recommend that a candidate re-attend the module or an equivalent module and all of the assessments of the module.

B6.4.2 A candidate who has failed a module does not have an automatic entitlement to request a repeat assessment to be set for them. For example, where

   i) Such time has passed between successive assessment attempts that the Programme Committee considered the relevancy of modules to be out-dated; or

   ii) The current delivered version of the programme is sufficiently different from the original approved programme undertaken by a candidate, the Programme Committee may require the candidate to attend a more current equivalent module and to take the assessments related to that module in order to meet the Learning Outcomes for the current programme.

B7   Requirements for Progression

B7.1   Progression through a Programme

Candidates will be able to progress through a programme based on the requirements of the Approved Programme Schedule, subject to having met all the pre-requisite and co-requisite requirements of the modules they are undertaking.

B7.2   Borderline Cases

B7.2.1 A Borderline case refers to a candidate presenting for progression or award, who is close to the threshold between successive award grade bands. As a guide, a borderline case would typically be any candidate whose:

   i) Average mark across all modules is within 1% of any of a threshold, as specified in Table B1.

   ii) In the case of a candidate who is not passing all modules at a stage in a programme, the Assessment Boards, as a guideline, may consider increasing the mark for a module.

B7.2.2 Meetings of the Assessment Boards should allow for a full, frank and succinct discussion of all borderline cases before a final decision is made. Any decision should be based on the cumulative evidence presented rather than on the view of one Internal or External Examiner or on the marks of a single module.

B7.2.3 Following deliberations, the Assessment Boards may recommend that a candidate's marks be increased or decreased and that a candidate be granted a higher or lower overall award than the current modules marks would add up to. Where the decision is made to change the overall grade (and award classification, where appropriate), the Board must agree the changes in module marks to ensure that the candidate record system correctly calculates the new grade or award classification.

B7.2.4 In the case of non-award assessment stages, the candidate should, normally, be accorded the benefit of the doubt, given reasonable grounds, and the Board should endeavour to make a firm

recommendation on the matter without referral to the Academic Council, unless a fundamental question of principle is involved.

B7.2.5 In the case of final (award stage) assessments, Assessment and Standards should be interpreted in such a manner as to require the candidate to have demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt an entitlement, on the basis of assessment performance, to the result being sought with due regard to the overall programme learning outcomes.

B7.3 Carrying of Failed Elements

B7.3.1 Learners will be eligible to progress to a subsequent stage of a programme while carrying failed modules from a stage, subject to having met the pre-requisite requirements of the modules on the subsequent stage. In any such case, a candidate may carry failed modules up to a total credit value of 10 credits from a previous stage. The decision to permit progression to a subsequent stage carrying failed elements is at the discretion of the Assessment Boards.

B7.3.2 Modules classified as "Core Modules" within the Approved Programme Schedule must be completed within the stage of a programme to which they are included. Core Modules may not be carried forward to a sub-sequent stage of a programme.

B7.3.2 In any case, a learner while repeating the failed assessment is required to undertake all the learning specified for the subsequent stage and must give a written confirmation of their understanding of this requirement. The prior written approval of the Head of Department and of the Registrar, on the recommendation of the Board, shall be required before commencement of the stage of the programme leading to the second or subsequent assessment stage.

B7.3.3 The performance in a second or subsequent assessment, by a candidate who has been admitted under this procedure, will not be considered until the candidate has completed the requirements of the previous assessment stage. It is the responsibility of the relevant academic department to ensure that all such candidates are clearly identified at the meeting of the Assessment Boards.

B8 Standards for Awards at Different Classifications

B8.1 Classification of Awards

The classification of awards shall be criterion referenced (as distinct from norm referenced).

Table B1 describes the classifications available for major awards made by the Institute on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

Table B1 Classification of Awards

Result Code	NFQ Level	Result	Effect on Assessed Attempts	Recorded on Broadsheet	Origin of Decision	Descriptions
1st Class Honours	Level 8	> 70%	Counted as an attempt	H1	Assessment Board	Pass and achievement is significantly and consistently beyond pass standard in most respects
2nd Class Honours Grade 1	Level 8	60 - 69%	Counted as an attempt	2.1	Assessment Board	Pass and achievement is significantly beyond pass standard in many respects
2nd Class Honours Grade 2	Level 8	50 - 59%	Counted as an attempt	2.2	Assessment Board	Pass and achievement is significantly beyond pass standard in some respects
Pass	Level 8	40 - 49%	Counted as an attempt	3	Assessment Board	Attains all the intended programme learning outcomes

Distinction	Level 6 / Level 7	> 70%	Counted as an attempt	DT	Assessment Board	Pass and achievement is significantly and consistently beyond pass standard in most respects
Merit Grade 1	Level 6 / Level 7	60 - 69%	Counted as an attempt	M1	Assessment Board	Pass and achievement is significantly beyond pass standard in many respects
Merit Grade 2	Level 6 / Level 7	50 - 59%	Counted as an attempt	M2	Assessment Board	Pass and achievement is significantly beyond pass standard in some respects
Pass	Level 6 / Level 7	40 - 49%	Counted as an attempt	PS	Assessment Board	Attains all the intended programme learning outcomes

B8.2 General Conditions

B8.2.1 To be eligible for an NFQ award at Pass classification, a candidate must:

1) satisfy all assessments for modules at the same NFQ Level as the award and any other requirements specified in the Approved Programme Schedule for the programme,

2) pass the assessment as a whole in accordance with these Assessment and Standards, and

3) obtain an overall assessment mark (based on the total marks available as specified in the Approved Programme Schedule), as shown in Table B1

B8.2.2 To be eligible for an NFQ award at Merit or Distinction or Honours classification, a candidate may not be considered unless the candidate has passed all relevant and final assessments:

1) In the case of full-time candidates, at the first attempt, and in one sitting; or

2) In the case of candidates who have taken a programme on a part time basis, by virtue of passing in each required assessment of an Approved Programme Schedule (at the same NFQ level as the award), at the candidates first attempt for each module.

B8.2.3 Normally, an Award at Merit or Distinction or Honours classification may be made on the results of the assessments of the final stage (year) only of the Programme; unless weighted contributions from previous years' assessments are specified in the Approved Programme Schedule.

B8.2.4 Normally at a non-award stage, a candidate's result is declared as a Pass, where the candidate has met or improved upon the Pass standard for that stage.

B8.2.5 Where an Assessment Board has approved a Pass result at a non-final year of a programme, a candidate may subsequently apply for an Embedded Award only where such an award has been validated by the Academic Council. In this case, the candidates overall result is considered at a separate meeting of the Assessment Boards to determine if the award should be granted.

B8.3 Discretion of Assessment Boards

The Assessment Boards have the discretion, on a case by case basis, to amend an award classification, by taking into account the totality of the candidate's performance and any formal recommendation for Special Consideration as advised by the Programme Committee at the Board.

B8.4 Unclassified Awards

B8.4.1 All non-major awards, including minor awards, supplemental and special purpose awards are made without classification.

B8.4.2 All awards other than minor awards and supplemental awards shall be classified. However, in exceptional cases, where it is not feasible to classify, an award may be issued as an unclassified award.

B8.4.3 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 relevant major award otherwise awards of this type shall be unclassified.

B9   Additional Awards at the same NFQ Level

B9.1   A candidate with prior accredited learning may present for a further award at the same NFQ Level within a generic discipline area provided that the candidate undertakes a different area of specialisation than that of the award they already hold. If the area of specialisation of the second award is not substantially different and/or if the associated credit is insufficient for the granting of a new major award, the applicant may be granted a minor, special purpose or supplemental award. The following table sets out the minimum volume of newly certified learning required of a candidate seeking to qualify for an additional major award at the same level within the same generic area of study.

Award currently held	Additional award sought	Post-award credit for newly certified learning
Higher Certificate	Higher Certificate	A minimum of 60 credits at level 6
Ordinary Bachelor Degree	Ordinary Bachelor Degree	A minimum of 60 credits at level 7
Honours Bachelor Degree	Honours Bachelor Degree	A minimum of 120 credits at least 60 of which are at level 8.

B9.2   A candidate with prior unaccredited learning may seek exemptions in respect of modules on an accredited programme of learning that they wish to undertake, following Institute procedures for the recognition of prior learning. Where such exemptions have been granted, the candidate is required to:

1) Undertake a minimum of 60 credits at the NFQ Level of the award being sought, and
2) Achieve a minimum of a Pass result in respect of all the remaining requirements of the Programme in accordance with the Approved Programme Schedule.

B9.3   In principle, exemptions are permitted at any stage, other than the award stage, of a programme subject to the relevant programme and constituent module assessment strategies.

APPENDIX A

Glossary

Approved Programme

The Approved Programme Schedule (APS) refers to the set of Schedule modules (together with their associated credits, teaching contact hours and breakdown of assessments) that make up a full programme of study.

Assessment

The term "assessment" in this document should be construed to include reference, as appropriate, to written and oral assessments, assessment of coursework, project work, etc., assessment of theses, dissertations and similar work, and such other forms of assessment of candidates' performance as may have been approved or prescribed by the Academic Council in relation to any programme of study or instruction, and cognate expressions should be construed accordingly.

Award Stage

The term "Award Stage" of a Programme is normally used to describe the final year of a programme i.e. the stage of a programme upon sucessful completion a full award can be offered

Terminal Assessment

A terminal assessment is one which is conducted at the end of a stage of a programme. It is not possible in all cases of terminal assessments to afford the learner formative feedback, unless it is in the case of the learner being required to re-sit the terminal assessment.

Re-check

Re-check means the administrative operation of checking the recording and the combination of component scores for a module and/or stage.

Review

Review means the re-consideration of the assessment decision either by the original assessor or by other competent persons. Candidates are required to state the grounds for the requested review. The grounds for review will normally be that the candidate is of the opinion that the assessment was erroneous in some respect. Reviews should be overseen by the Institute's Academic Council or designated persons and the relevant external examiner should be notified and/or consulted if any change in classification is decided upon following review.

Appeal

An appeal is a request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with decisions on candidate progression, assessment and awards. A candidate has the right to appeal the grade awarded in any module or any decision to disqualify or exclude them from the assessment process in accordance with Institute procedures.

Deadline

The deadline for submitting a request for a recheck, review or an appeal is no more than five working days following issue of the results.

Re-check Process

The complaints, rechecks, reviews, and appeals processes are managed by the Registrar's office.

Exempted

Assessment Boards may from time to time approve the exemption of a Module or Modules on a programme in respect of a candidate, using the Institute's procedures related to the recognition of prior learning. For non-award and award stages, the credits for such exempted modules will be

awarded and the mark will be recorded as an X' in the Broad Sheet of results. This mark will not be taken into account in determining the candidate's overall grade point average (GPA) for that stage, which will be based on the scores attained by the candidate only in those modules taken and assessed in the normal way.

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