

Procedure on Security of Assessment

Policy Procedure Protocol Guideline

Office of the Nursing and Midwifery Services Director (ONMSD): Consortium of Centres of Nursing and Midwifery Education (CCNME)

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1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to inform all relevant staff in the Centre of the processes involved in ensuring the security of learner records, including assessment related records, for programmes validated by QQI (FET and HET).

2.0 Procedure for Security and Storage of Learner Records

2.1 Completed Programme Application Forms

- 2.1.1 Applicants for QQI (FET) and (HET) programmes are required to complete a Programme Application Form via the online platform
- 2.1.2 The Programme Coordinator is responsible for ensuring the security of completed Programme Application Forms when received, and for filing them in the programme folder on a password encrypted computer, or in a designated secure storage area, with restricted access.

2.2 Completed Programme Registration Forms

- 2.2.1 Enrolment/Registration may now take place using Classroom Management System (CMS) (online platform)
- 2.2.2 Learners are required to provide their Professional Regulatory Board PIN on their registration forms. A unique identifier will be generated for each learner for the duration of the programme.
- 2.2.3 The Programme Coordinator is responsible for checking the Programme Registration Form on enrolment, verifying all learner details are recorded and evidence presented.
- 2.2.4 The Programme Coordinator is responsible for ensuring the security of completed Programme Registration Forms, and for filing them in the programme folder on a password encrypted computer, or in a designated secure storage area in the central office, with restricted access.

2.3 Completed Certification Application Forms for entry to QQI Business System (QBS)

- 2.3.1 For the purposes of Certification, the Centre requires personal information including the PPS number to be collected and shared with QQI. This information will only be collected from the learner at the point of Certification to enter the PPS number onto the QQI QBS System (Refer to Policy and Procedure on Data Protection, Usage and Management).
- 2.3.2 Completed forms are retained in a folder in a designated storage area with restricted access.
- 2.3.3 The Programme Coordinator will enter the learner's registration details and results into the password protected QQI QBS.
- 2.3.4 Following verification of data entry, the completed Certification Application forms are shredded and electronic reports generated on the QBS are stored in the relevant folder on the Programme Coordinators desktop computer which is password encrypted, with restricted access.
- 2.3.5 Electronic reports can be printed by the Programme Coordinator when required for External Authentication or Board of Examiner meetings and kept in a secure storage area with authorised restricted access.

2.4 Programme Folders

2.4.1 The Programme Coordinator is responsible for

2.4.1.1 Ensuring that a programme folder is set up in respect of each programme, is labelled accordingly and stored in compliance with the Policy and Procedure on Record Maintenance and Retention in the Centre.

2.4.1.2 Ensuring the programme folder for each programme is stored on a password encrypted computer, with restricted access, at all times when not in use.

2.4.1.3 Ensuring the programme folder for each scheduled programme contains the following:

- Completed Programme Application Forms
- Completed Registration Forms
- Completed Certification Form
- Completed Attendance Records
- Programme Administration documents
- Programme Timetable
- Programme Handbook
- Assessment Schedule
- Completed Programme Evaluation Forms (learners and programme facilitators)
- Agenda and Minutes of Programme Board Meetings
- Agenda and Minutes of Results Approval Panel Meeting
- Agenda and Minutes of Pre-Board of Examiners' Meeting
- Agenda and Minutes of Board of Examiners' Meeting
- Copy of original signed Broadsheet of Results
- Internal Verification Report
- External Authenticator/Examiner's Report
- Applications and documentation relating to Mitigating Circumstances, Appeals, Reasonable Accommodation etc.
- Programme Review Report
- Programme Improvement Plan following programme review
- Other relevant communication relating to the programme e.g. e-mails, letters, etc.

2.4.1.4 Archiving the programme folder on completion of each programme on a password encrypted computer, with restricted access.

2.5 Security and Storage of Assessment Material

2.5.1 The Programme Coordinator is responsible for

2.5.1.1 Ensuring that all assessment related material such as assessment guidelines, examination papers and criterion referenced answer plans, are stored in the relevant folder on their desktop computer which is password encrypted, with restricted access and or kept in a secure storage area with authorised restricted access

- 2.5.1.2 Back up and safe storage of any electronic assessment materials. All online systems must be password encrypted with restricted access
- 2.5.1.3 Ensuring assessment related materials are never shared by Email or fax. This is prohibited.
- 2.5.1.4 Ensuring their computer screen is always locked with restricted access when away from the desk.
- 2.5.1.5 Photocopying/printing of all assessment related material such as assessment guidelines and examination papers, in advance of its distribution to learners
- 2.5.1.6 Collating examination papers securely and placing into a clearly labelled envelope containing the programme title, assessment title, and date for distribution. The envelope will be sealed and signed by the Programme Coordinator prior to storing it in the designated secure storage area with restricted access and shall remain sealed until the beginning of the examination.
- 2.5.1.7 The security of assessment related material whilst in their possession. Assessment related material must be stored in a secure storage area when not being worked on, and a 'clear desk' policy must be applied at the end of the working day.
- 2.5.1.8 Photocopying/printing assessment related material to be forwarded to the External Examiner. Original learner assignments, exam scripts etc. must be retained in the Centre. Audio or visual recordings must be retained in the Centre and made available to the External Authenticator/Examiner prior to the Board of Examiners' meeting.
- 2.5.1.9 Ensuring that assessment material for forwarding to the External Examiner (HET) is secured in envelopes in a manner which deters unauthorised access. Envelopes must be clearly labelled with the agreed contact details of the external examiner and a return to sender label affixed to the back of the envelope in the event there is a difficulty in delivery.
- 2.5.1.10 Alert the External Examiner (HET) via email that the assessment material for review is in the post or with the courier.
- 2.5.2 The External Examiner (HET) is required to acknowledge receipt of examination and assessment material and to destroy the copies once he/she has reviewed them and provided his/her feedback report to the Programme Coordinator.
- 2.5.3 The External Examiner (HET) may email his/her feedback report, to the Programme Coordinator, by attaching a password protected document to the email. Alternatively, the report may be sent by registered post as agreed with the Programme Coordinator.

2.6 Submission and secure storage of assessments

- 2.6.1 Learners will submit all assessments, by the due date indicated on the assessment schedule, to the Centre

- 2.6.2 By submitting the assessment and the signed Submission of Assessment Form in person to a named person within the Centre.
- 2.6.3 Learners are responsible for signing a submission of assessment form for each assignment submitted.
- 2.6.4 Assessments may be posted to the named person within the Centre. It is the responsibility of learners to register their work when using the postal system. Once received a confirmation e-mail is sent to the Learner, a record of receipt is maintained and stored securely.
- 2.6.5 Faxing or emailing of assessments by learners to the Programme Coordinator is not permitted.
- 2.6.6 Examination answer booklets and text booklets shall be returned by the Learner to the primary invigilator on completion of an examination. The invigilator checks the returned documents, completes the examination and invigilation record and returns to named person within the Centre.
- 2.6.7 Assessments may be submitted via an online platform that is secure and password protected with a backup system in place. If the platform automatically generates a confirmation e-mail, this will suffice as evidence.
- 2.6.8 The Programme coordinator or named person is responsible for
 - 2.6.8.1 Recording receipt of assessments on the Submission of Assessment Form once received by the Centre. Checking to ensure submitted assessments correspond with the signed submission of assessment form. Any discrepancies must be followed up as a matter of priority.
 - 2.6.8.2 Submitted assessments and examinations must be kept in a secure storage area with restricted access to designated staff only.
 - 2.6.8.3 Where a computer network or online platform is used to store soft copies of assessment evidence this must be password encrypted and only accessible by authorised staff. The system must be also backed up to prevent loss of evidence and is compliant with GDPR.

2.7 Submission of assessment material

- 2.7.1 The Programme Coordinator is responsible for sorting and distributing submitted assignments and examination scripts in a sealed envelope, (with the requisite assessment guidelines, examination paper, answer plans, overall results sheet and instructions on the return of marked or moderated material included), for marking and moderation to the relevant programme facilitator or programme component leader, registered tutor.
- 2.7.2 Examination papers and criterion referenced answer plans must not be emailed.
- 2.7.3 The Internal assessors/moderators are responsible for:
 - 2.7.3.1 Completing an Assessment Tracker Form on the agreed removal and return of assessment material with the Programme Coordinator
 - 2.7.3.2 Maintaining security of all assessment materials whilst in their possession.

2.8 Security relating to process of Internal Verification(FET)

- 2.8.1 The Programme Coordinator is responsible for
 - 2.8.1.1 The assembly and security of assessment related material presented to ensure the Internal Verifier has access of to all relevant assessment related material and associated documents.
 - 2.8.1.2 Ensuring that only authorised staff has access to the designated area.
 - 2.8.1.3 Returning all assessment related material to secure storage once the internal verification process is complete.
- 2.8.2 The Internal Verifier is responsible for the security of assessment related materials for the duration of the verification process.

2.9 Security relating to process of External Authentication (FET)

- 2.9.1 The Programme Coordinator is responsible for
 - 2.9.1.1 The assembly and security of assessment related material presented to ensure the External Authenticator has access of to all relevant assessment related material and associated documents.
 - 2.9.1.2 Ensuring that only authorised staff has access to the designated area.
 - 2.9.1.3 Returning all assessment related material to secure storage once the external authentication process is complete.
- 2.9.2 The External Authenticator is responsible for the security of assessment related materials for the duration of the verification process.

2.10 Security relating to process of Board of Examiners' Meeting: Results Approval Panel (FET)

- 2.10.1 The Programme Coordinator is responsible for:
 - 2.10.1.1 The assembly and security of assessment related material prior to the Results Approval Panel at the Board of Examiners' meeting;
 - 2.10.1.2 Ensuring that assessment related materials are not left unattended before or after the Results Approval Panel meeting;
 - 2.10.1.3 Presenting the original and copies of the results sheets, internal Verification and external authentication reports in a sealed envelope to the Chairperson who is then responsible for the security of the material, for the duration of the meeting;
 - 2.10.1.4 Collecting all documents following the meeting, retaining the original documents securely in a designated locked storage area and for shredding all other copies immediately.

2.11 Security relating to process of Board of Examiners' Meeting (& Pre-Board)

- 2.11.1 The Programme Coordinator is responsible for:
 - 2.11.1.1 The assembly and security of assessment related material prior to the Board of Examiners' meeting;
 - 2.11.1.2 Ensuring that assessment related materials are not left unattended before or after the meeting;
 - 2.11.1.3 Ensuring accuracy of all learners results entered on broadsheet of results;

2.11.1.4 Collecting all documents following the meeting, retaining the original documents securely in a designated locked storage area and for shredding all other copies immediately.

2.12 Disposal of Assessment Related Material

2.12.1 Following the issue of award Certificates by QQI, the Programme Coordinator is responsible for identifying and sorting learner assessment material for shredding (Refer to Policy on Retention of Records)

2.12.2 Records relating to assessment shall be disposed of using a secure and confidential disposal system (General Data Protection Regulation 2018).

2.13 Security related to Communication

2.13.1 The Programme Coordinator is responsible for:

2.13.1.1 Ensuring all reports, results sheets and minutes of meetings are secured in a designated programme folder or electronically using password protected systems;

2.13.1.2 Issuing provisional and final assessment results in writing to learner's correspondence address and retaining a copy in the programme folder.

4.0 Document Control

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Author	Consortium of Centres of Nursing and Midwifery Education (CCNME)	
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	V.1.0	04/11/2022
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Supporting Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. (2018). <i>Data Protection and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)</i> [online]. Available from: https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/Data-Protection/ [accessed 16 June 2022]. Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). (2013a). <i>Assessment and Standards, Revised 2013</i> [online]. Available from: https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/2021-09/assessment_and_standards-revised-2013.pdf [accessed 30 January 2022]. Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). (2013b). <i>Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers Revised 2013</i> [online]. Available from: https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/2021-10/quality-assuring-assessment-guidelines-for-providers-revised-2013.pdf [accessed 30 January 2022]. 	
Related Policies & Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy on Assessment of Learners [PDF, 8 Pages] Procedure on Assessment of Learners [PDF, 7 Pages] Policy on Reasonable Accommodation in Assessment [PDF, 5 Pages] Procedure on Reasonable Accommodation in Assessment [PDF, 5 Pages] Policy on Submission of Assessment [PDF, 4 Pages] Procedure on Submission of Assessment [PDF, 5 Pages] 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on Security of Assessment [PDF, 4 Pages] • Procedure on Regulations for the Conduct of Written Examinations [PDF, 8 Pages] • Policy on Grading and Certification of Learner Assessment [PDF, 6 Pages] • Procedure on Grading and Certification of Learner Assessment [PDF, 8 Pages] • Policy on Assessment Appeals [PDF, 7 Pages] • Procedure on Review, Recheck and Appeal of Learner Assessment Decisions [PDF, 6 Pages] • Policy on Promoting and Maintaining Academic Integrity [PDF, 7 Pages] • Procedure on Promotion of Academic Integrity among Learners [PDF, 5 Pages]
Related Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment Tracker Form