Policy on Assessment of Learners

Policy ☒   Procedure ☐   Protocol ☐   Guideline ☐

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

Title of PPPG Development Group:	Consortium of Centres of Nursing and Midwifery Education (CCNME)
Approved by:	Academic Council: 04/11/2022
Reference Number:	CCNME06(1)2022
Version Number:	1
Publication Date:	2022
Date for revision:	2025
Online Location:	https://healthservice.hse.ie/filelibrary/onmsd/policy-assessment-learners.pdf

Version	Date Approved	List section numbers changed	Author

This is a controlled document: While this document may be printed the electronic version posted on the website is the controlled copy and can only be guaranteed for 24 hours after downloading.

1.0 Purpose

This policy sets out the Consortium of Centres of Nursing and Midwifery Education (CCNME) approach in the development and implementation of quality assured processes and procedures for the fair and consistent assessment of learners. The CCNME is committed to providing Quality Assurance (QA) procedures, structures and resources to underpin fair, valid and consistent Learner assessment in compliance with Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Policies, Procedures, Protocols and Guidelines on Assessment.

1.1 Quality Assured Assessment

Quality assured assessment ensures learner achievement is assessed in a fair, valid, reliable, transparent and consistent way in line with QQI national standards and principles (QQI, 2013). As a provider of QQI validated awards, the CCNME is required to adhere to the guidelines and principles of assessment and the Quality Assurance of Assessments as stipulated by QQI (2013).

- Assessments for QQI awards is criterion-referenced i.e. learners are assessed and the assessment judgment is made based on whether the learner has reached the required national standards of knowledge, skill and competence for the award.
- The QQI standards clearly identify the knowledge, skill and/or competence that must be attained by a learner in order to achieve a specific award. These standards are expressed as Minimum Intended Programme Learning Outcomes (MIPLOS) and are outlined in the Award Specification for each named award.
- The Award Specification will also identify valid and reliable techniques for the assessment of learner achievement. The CCNME will ensure that learner achievement is assessed in a fair and consistent way in line with the national standards for the award.

The following principles underpin the policy on quality assuring assessment (QQI 2013, p 4-5; QQI Revised 2013 p 52).

1.2 Validity

Validity is a key principle which underpins assessment. Validity essentially means fitness-for-purpose (QQI revised 2013, p 52). A valid assessment means that the assessment should measure what it is supposed to measure i.e. only the standards of knowledge, skill or competence required for the award should be assessed. An assessment is valid when it;

- Is fit for/appropriate to the purpose (i.e. a practical assessment should be used to assess practical skills);
- Allows the learner to produce evidence which can be measured against the standards;
- Allows inference of the attainment of the learning outcomes it purports to address;
- Assesses the person it purports to assess;
- Facilitates reliable assessment decisions by assessors;

- Is accessible to all candidates who are potentially able to achieve it;
- Is appropriate for informing the decisions that it purports to inform. This is required because an assessment may be valid for informing one decision but invalid for another.

1.3 Reliability

Reliability refers to the accuracy with which an assessment measures the skill or attainment it is designed to measure. To be reliable an assessment must:
- Be based on valid assessment techniques;
- Ensure evidence is generated under consistently applied conditions of assessment;
- Ensure reliability of learner evidence;
- Produce consistent decisions across the range of assessors applying the assessment in different situations and contexts and with different groups of learners be consistent over time;

- Assessments are an authentic evaluation of learner's achievement of programme learning outcomes.
- Learners are assessed by a Registered Tutor or by a staff member who holds an MSc in Education incorporating academic judgement and assessed by clinical assessors utilising professional judgement on learner's knowledge and skills.
- Assessment processes are internally verified and moderated (FET) and externally authenticated (FET) and reviewed (HET).
- Assessment procedure and administrative processes are reviewed regularly to ensure these regulations are applied and that administrative processes remain sound.
- A variety of appropriate assessment techniques and methodologies are used across programmes. Assessment strategies, types and methodologies are regularly reviewed and improved.

1.4 Fair

A fair assessment in addition to being valid and reliable provides equity of opportunity for learners. Unfairness in assessment is based on unequal opportunities i.e. lack of resources/equipment, inappropriate techniques, inexperienced assessors. For assessment procedures and practices to be fair and equitable for learners the influence of these factors must be considered in the design and implementation of assessment.

1.5 Quality

Quality is a key principle in ensuring the credibility and status of QQI awards. Quality will be assured through the publication of national award standards, the providers' own quality assurance, the establishment of an assessment framework, programme validation, the process of self-evaluation and national monitoring.

1.6 Transparency

A transparent assessment policy and guidelines will ensure clarity and understanding by all relevant stakeholders. Clear and unambiguous definitions and requirements regarding fairness, validity and reliability are provided. Learners

are aware of why, how, and when they will be assessed. Learners are informed in advance of programme learning outcomes; assessment schedule; submission deadlines; marking criteria, decision-making and appeals processes.

2.0   Scope
This policy applies to:

Academic Council & Committees	CCNME Programme Teams	Learner
✓	✓	✓

3.0   Policy Statement
The CCNME will ensure through its procedures that assessment of learners will be valid and undertaken in a fair and consistent manner that complies with Section 45(3b) of the Qualifications & Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 and the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, 2015. The QQI Standards relating to assessment will be adopted by the CCNME, as will any further guidance documentation pertaining to assessment.

4.0   Roles and Responsibilities

	Academic Council & Committees	CCNME Programme Teams	Learner
Responsible for Implementation	✓	✓	✓
Responsible for Monitoring & Review	✓	✓	✓

4.1   Academic Council
4.2.1   The Academic Council is responsible for all matters relating to the Learner Assessment and is supported by the relevant Academic Committees, including Programme Board, Teaching Learning & Assessment Committee, Board of Examiners, Quality Enhancement, Appeals, Academic Integrity, Disciplinary and Programme Development.

4.2.2   The responsibilities of each academic committee will be identified in the relevant policy and procedure

4.2   CCNME Programme Teams
4.2.3   Adhere to the responsibilities as outlined in this policy

4.2.4   Ensure assessment processes is in line with and complies with legislation as outlined in policy statement;

4.2.5   Ensuring compliance with Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers (QQI 2018) in relation to security of assessment related material and processes;

4.2.6 To ensure that learner achievement is assessed in a fair and consistent way in line with the national standards for the award;

4.2.7 Liase with the Programme & Board Committees as appropriate;

4.2.8 Coordinate QQI programmes as delegated by Director of Centre and ensure assessment processes are adhered to;

4.2.9 Apply the QA standards to all assessments and examinations;

4.2.10 Utilise a range of assessment methods which are consistent with the aims and stated learning outcomes of the programme;

4.2.11 Provide learners with relevant and timely written information regarding the programme assessment strategy, the assessment schedule, responsibilities of learners, and the assessment criteria;

4.2.12 Ensure processes for reasonable accommodation are in place to support learners with an identified disability;

4.2.13 Ensure processes are in place for conduct of examinations;

4.2.14 Manage the examination process within the Centre and shall ensure that such examinations meet the criteria detailed in the QQI Assessment and Standards (revised 2013) document;

4.2.15 Ensure learners are informed, both verbally and in writing, about plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct, and are fully cognisant of the penalties or sanctions which may be applied as a result;

4.2.16 Provide learners with qualitative formal feedback on assessments submitted for marking and grading. Feedback should be timely, specific, related to the assessment, support, enhance and drive learning;

4.2.17 Be available to learners for informal feedback to engage and support the learner through the programme;

4.2.18 Provide formative feedback to support learning and development of the learner on applicable programmes;

4.2.19 Apply relevant PPPGs in relation to security in all matters pertaining to assessment related materials;

4.2.20 Ensure adequate time is allocated to prepare assessment related materials and to liaise with the External Examiner;

4.2.21 Ensure processes are in place for internal moderation/verification of assignments and examination scripts;

4.2.22 Ensure adherence to policies and procedures for the management of learner assessment material;

4.2.23 Comply with policy and procedure for managing appeals and complaints by learners;

4.2.24 Ensure assessment processes and procedures are reviewed as part of ongoing monitoring and evaluation of programmes;

4.2.25 Ensure that all relevant internal and external stakeholders are made aware of this policy.

4.3 Learner

4.3.1 Familiarise themselves and comply with policies and procedures that apply to their programme;

4.3.2 Demonstrate their achievement of the minimum intended programme learning outcomes through assessment;

4.3.3 Undertake assessment in a fair and honest manner, that upholds academic integrity;

4.3.4 Engage with all feedback provided by Internal Assessors to further enhance and engage learning;

4.3.5 Partake in evaluation and feedback of the assessment process as part of ongoing monitoring and evaluation of programmes.

5. 0   Document Control

Document Title	**Policy on Assessment of Learners**	
Author	Consortium of Centres of Nursing and Midwifery Education (CCNME)	
Version Control	Version	Date of Approval
	V.1.0	04/11/2022
Policy Review	November 2025	
Supporting Documentation	• European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). (2015). *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)* [online]. Available from: https://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf [accessed 22 April 2022]. • *Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012*. No. 28/2012, s.28 [online]. Available from: https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2012/act/28/enacted/en/html [accessed 31 January 2022]. • Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). (2013a). *Assessment and Standards, Revised 2013* [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). (2016a). *Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for use by all Providers* [online]. Available from: https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/media/file-uploads/Core%20Statutory%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines.pdf [accessed 30 January 2022]. • Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). (2017). *Policy and Criteria for Making Awards* [online]. Available from: https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/media/file-uploads/Policy%20and%20Criteria%20for%20Making%20Awards.pdf [accessed 30 January 2022]. • Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). (2014). *Policy for Determining Awards Standards* [online]. Available from: https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/media/file-uploads/Policy%20for%20Determining%20Award%20Standards.pdf [accessed 30 January 2022]. • Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). (2016b). *QQI Sector Specific Independent/Private Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for Independent/Private Providers coming to QQI on a Voluntary Basis*. Dublin: Quality and Qualifications Ireland.

	• Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). (2013b). *Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers Revised 2013* [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]. • Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). (2016c). *Topic Specific: Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes* [online]. Available from: https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/media/file-uploads/Statutory%20QA%20Guidelines%20for%20Blended%20Learning%20Programmes.pdf [accessed 30 January 2022].
Related Policies & Procedures	• 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] • Policy on Security of Assessment [PDF, 4 Pages] • Procedure on Security of Assessment [PDF, 8 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 Internal Verification as part of the Authentication Process (FET) [PDF, 6 Pages] • Procedure for Internal Verification as part of the Authentication Process (FET) [PDF, 4 Pages] • Policy on External Authentication (FET) [PDF, 6 Pages] • Procedure on External Authentication (FET) [PDF, 4 Pages] • Policy and Procedure on Board of Examiners: Results Approval Panel [PDF, 6 Pages] • Policy on External Examination (HET) [PDF, 9 Pages] • Procedure on the Process of Board of Examiners Meetings for QQI HET Validated Programmes [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]