

4.3 Quality in Assessment: Designing Assessment Instruments, Moderating Assessment Instruments and Results

Greater detail on assessment strategies at ICD is provided in section 5.2 and its subsections. The present section specifically focuses on mechanisms used and principles followed to ensure quality in assessment.

All assessment instruments at ICD are typically devised by the relevant module lecturer, who is facilitated a high degree of autonomy to create assessments. The strategy in assessment brief (or exam paper) design at ICD is to ensure that assessment briefs (across the module as a whole) enable learners to demonstrate (provide evidence for) learning outcome achievement. Instructions provided to learners in assessment guidelines should use command verbs and general instructions that define learners' required tasks in a way that encourages learners to show high levels of achievement of the learning outcomes at the higher-grade levels, rather than simply encouraging a 'pass.'

Assessment instruments should be designed to follow the assessment strategy and assessment instruments described in the module descriptor first and foremost because "effective assessment is consistent with, supportive of, and derived from the intended programme and module learning outcomes" (QQI 2013b section 2.1.1). All module assessment instrument design should be carried out with due consideration for the role of the module, and its assessment instruments, in achievement of:

- Enabling learners to achieve (and demonstrate achievement of) programme-level learning outcomes. This takes account of the QQI (2013b section 2.1.1) assessment standards theme that "the provider should ensure that there are learning opportunities for the programme's intended learning outcomes (except those which are satisfied by prior learning)"
- External accreditation (e.g. ACCA exemptions resulting from an ICD student successfully completing a specific assessment in a specific module on a specific programme [as continuously monitored by ACCA])

The number of assessment elements in a module should follow the module descriptor as should the breakdown of the marks/percentage of grade apportioned to each assessment element. This can sometimes entail a lecturer recommending the updating of a module descriptor to improve its assessment strategy as part of programmatic review, and where required, consultation with relevant external quality assurance and accreditation bodies such as QQI and/or ACCA, who provide validation and/or accreditation across ICD's programmes. Any module descriptor changes are subject to approval by Academic Council. The first point of contact for a lecturer in this regard is the Programme Director, with additional assistance available from the Head of Academic Development and the Registrar.

Assessment planning at the module level should follow the module descriptor and specifically take account of the learner work-load to ensure an appropriate work-load. This must also take account of assessment planning at the programme level, where "assessment should be planned and coordinated across modules and programmes" (QQI 2013b section 2.1.1). The responsibility for programme-level assessment planning is held by the respective programme board under the supervision and coordination of the respective Programme Director and the Registrar. The programme board contains the Programme Director and all lecturers involved with delivering and planning the programme. Consultation with the Registrar and other administration staff will be coordinated by the Programme Director with the specific goal of ensuring assessments create an appropriate work-load for learners across the programme. This means:

- Setting appropriately challenging assessment instruments to facilitate students to demonstrate learning outcomes. "The effort required of a learner to complete an assessment task should be proportional to the associated benefit to him or her" (QQI 2013b section 2.1.1)
- Ensuring the work-load is optimally distributed or sequenced across the semester and stage of programme such that learners can manage their work-load adequately.

Principles of Assessment at ICD:

All examiners and all staff involved in designing and moderating assessments have a duty to follow these principles of assessment, which are designed with reference to QQI (2013b) *Assessment and Standards* policy:

1. **Assessment instruments must be fair.** They must be inclusive recognising that “different people can have different learning needs, styles and approaches” (QQI 2013b section 2.1.1). Ideally, various assessment instrument types should be utilised across modules and programmes (e.g. verbal presentations, role play, examinations, Moodle quizzes, peer evaluated assessments, group assessments, individual assessments, written reports, research based assessments, reflective learning logs) in order to help learners with differing learning needs, styles, and approaches.
2. **Assessment instruments must be consistent.** “Consistency...does not require that particular outcomes must always be assessed in the same way from cohort to cohort, or from programme to programme” (QQI 2013b section 2.2.3). Ongoing module and programme reviewing facilitates changing and updating assessment instruments where beneficial, with key responsibility in this regard being shared by lecturers (who set assessments), the Programme Director, the Registrar, and the Head of Academic Development. These updates of assessment instruments follow QQI (2013b section 2.2.3) guidance that “consistency should never be used to justify stagnation...necessary change and evolution should be seen as compatible with consistency.” While updating assessment instruments between each module delivery is encouraged as part of module and programme review and development, within a specific module delivery instance, it is recommended that all learners should complete the same assessment instruments, wherever practical. The objective is to ensure that all learners have equal opportunity and platform to demonstrate learning outcome achievement. However, in order to achieve an inclusive educational platform, alternative arrangements can be made by assessment designers (e.g. module lecturers) to accommodate different learning needs. Any such alternative arrangements should be agreed between the module lecturer (examiner), the second marker (internal verifier), and the Programme Director. Students are encouraged to contact lecturers at any time to discuss any specific learning needs they may have that may qualify them for alternative assessment arrangements. ICD follows QQI (2013b section 2.2.10), which states that “some learners with disabilities may be unable to demonstrate their achievement of the intended learning outcomes through conventional assessment tasks...reasonable accommodations will therefore need to be made to deal with issues that would otherwise prevent such learners from demonstrating their achievement.” These reasonable accommodations are defined by QQI (ibid) as follows: “adapting the assessment approach, not with diluting the standard of learning to be attained, interfering with or amending the intended learning outcomes.

Assessments which involve reasonable accommodations should be consistent with those which do not.”

- 3. Assessors must “have the necessary competence” and expertise to set and grade assessments** (QQI 2013b section 2.1.1). The Programme Director and Registrar hold the responsibility to ensure that assessors are competent. The key competence in this regard is the assessor’s competence to devise and grade assessments that enable learners to demonstrate the module and programme level learning outcomes. “Assessors should only be requested to assess learning outcomes which they are competent to assess” (QQI 2013b section 2.2.7). Assessors are responsible for ensuring they “have a deep understanding of the programme assessment strategy, as well as the module assessment strategies for the modules directly involving them” (ibid).
- 4. Assessors must declare any “conflict of interest (actual or potential, real or apparent) if he or she were to act as an assessor in a particular situation [and] should neither act nor be required to act as an assessor in that situation”** (QQI 2013b section 2.1.1)
- 5. Assessment instrument design, setting and grading must be objective and transparent.** This requires all final examinations to be anonymously marked (i.e. the student name is not contained on the exam script) and double marked (internal verification). Assessment setting also requires internal verification of assessment briefs and examinations. Final examination papers (and questions) are also externally assessed by the External Examiner, before being approved. Assessment briefs and exam papers are also subject to ACCA approval for the purposes of ACCA exemptions, where relevant. A sample of all graded assessments is also subject to approval by an internal verifier (second marker) and the External Examiner. All grades are subject to approval by the Examination Board. The overarching objective of all first marking, second marking (internal verification), and External Examiner assessment is to ensure consistency; that “comparable performance levels should be reflected in comparable grades” (QQI 2013b section 2.2.3). “Consistency should apply within a programme, an institution, within a discipline or professional field. It should also apply between institutions, and be applicable nationally, across borders (where appropriate), across time and across the whole population of learners” (QQI 2013b section 2.2.3). Consistency extends to ensuring that assessments are devised to capture learning outcome demonstration evidence at the correct National Framework for Qualifications level of the award (e.g. Level 8, Level 9). Internal and external verification of assessment instruments and grades enables ICD to ensure consistency.

- 6. Assessment of learning must be transparent.** Learners must be informed about how and why they are assessed (QQI 2013b). The intended programme and module learning outcomes must be plainly written and communicated at the start of the programme to the learners and to all those involved with teaching and assessment (QQI 2013b). At ICD, all modules have a Moodle page for all students enrolled on that module, which contains the module descriptor and details of the assessment instruments for the module.
- 7. Assessments must be devised to incorporate formative and summative feedback mechanisms.** Learners should receive feedback in a timely manner and have the opportunity to seek feedback, for assessment grading rechecks, reviews, and appeals, by request.
- 8. Learners must be made aware of (and follow) assessment and examination regulations.** It is the responsibility of the student to make themselves aware of these regulations. It is the responsibility of ICD and its staff to communicate these regulations to the students in a variety of ways. Students receive a copy of the examination and assessment regulations as part of their registration, in the student handbook, as part of the mandatory induction module, and via the ICD Moodle system. In keeping with QQI's (2013b section 2.1.1) guidance that "they should be reminded of these...assessment regulations on a regular basis," ICD also recirculates the regulations in the weeks before all end of semester examinations. ICD also prints excerpts from these regulations, as appropriate, and places them in public view in communal areas such as corridors, for learners' information. Exam invigilators are continuously trained and updated, under the supervision of the Registrar, to ensure they are aware of examination regulations. Exam invigilators communicate specific regulations to students at exam venues as appropriate.
- 9. Assessment strategies across modules on a programme must be coordinated.** Programme Directors use Programme Board meetings at the start of every semester to plan (with the lecturers/assessors) the schedule, nature, and sequence of assessments to ensure that "programmes and their constituent modules...include sufficient (but not excessive), timely, diverse and fit-for-purpose assessment tasks that: encourage effective learning...and measure progress towards the attainment of the intended programme learning outcomes" (QQI 2013b section 2.2.5).
- 10. Learners should be involved in the periodic review of assessment procedures** (QQI 2013b). "Learners can be involved in the design of some assessment tasks and criteria, where this would not lead to any conflicts of interest" (QQI 2013b). Where practical, at ICD, learners are included in assessment decision-making and planning. At ICD, lecturers and assessment setters, where practical, consult with students on modules to ensure they are aware of the

assessment strategy and also to include students in decision-making (e.g. lecturers consult students regarding sequencing of assessment submission date schedules across the programme to ensure students are satisfied with assessment planning and sequencing and to ensure students are included in work-load planning). Academic Council analyses student feedback on programmes through receiving reports/findings of the Registrar's analysis of student feedback surveys and through consultations with the Student Representative Committee via student representation on the Academic Council. This enables Academic Council to communicate student-informed assessment planning guidelines to all assessors via quality assurance policy updates and via guidance to Programme Directors. Qualitative lecturer feedback surveys are also carried out by Programme Directors who report findings to the Academic Council. These feedback surveys enable lecturers to inform Programme Directors of how modules, including their assessment strategies, may be improved. This lecturer feedback mechanism also enables lecturers to relay feedback from students on assessment strategies, as received over the course of (and as a result of) specific module deliveries.

ICD has established procedures in place for the internal and external moderation and verification of assessment instruments (briefs), results, and student attainment. These are detailed in the subsections below.

4.3.1 Internal Moderation:

Internal moderation is coordinated by Programme Directors, the college Registrar, and the college's administrative staff and typically involves reviewing lecturer's assessment methods and decisions to ensure that they are reliable, consistent, fair, and in keeping with their module's intended learning outcomes.

Internal verification sampling and reporting:

A sample of work from each module is used as evidence during this process. The college's administrative staff will also check sample scripts and broadsheets for calculation errors and other mistakes. At this stage, it will also be checked that lecturers are providing sufficiently detailed and appropriate feedback to learners. After confirming the accuracy of assessment results, and identifying errors and taking corrective action, an internal verification report will then be prepared by the relevant Programme Director and college Registrar and made available to all external examiners, programme team members and Academic Council.

External Examiner assessment of internally verified samples:

Following this (above), samples of each assessment task – accompanied by module descriptors and marking rubrics - will be provided to a panel of suitably qualified external examiners who will independently assess the fairness and consistency with which marks have been awarded to learners, as well as the intrinsic validity of the programme's assessment strategy. In addition to formally reporting their findings and recommendations to ICD, external examiners will also be invited to provide advice and guidance to the programme team and to comment on the design of the programme, its assessment strategy, and its constituent modules and syllabi. ICD is particularly keen to ensure that the programme team will benefit from verbal and written, and formal and informal feedback from its external examiners. Greater detail on External Examiner assessment at ICD is provided in section 4.4 (and its subsections) of the ICD QA policy.

Policy on Second Marking (Internal Verification) at ICD:

By default, the second marker for all modules is the Programme Director (of the programme on which the module runs). In specific cases, the Programme Director may nominate an alternative second marker for specific modules (e.g. due to areas of expertise).

See below for purpose and process of second marking (internal verification).

Purpose of Second Marking (Internal Verification):

- To ensure:
 - Assessment briefs and grades are at the correct NFQ award level (e.g. Level 8, Level 9) and award classification (e.g. first class honours)
 - Assessment briefs enable and encourage learners to achieve, and demonstrate (provide evidence for) achievement of, module learning outcomes
 - Grades/grading are/is fair and consistent

Process of second marking (internal verification):

Second marking (internal verification) at ICD takes two forms:

Stage 1: Internal verification of assessment briefs (review of draft assessment tasks) (using Form 101 [see Appendix 4.3.1a] and referring to this policy)

Stage 2: Internal verification (second marking) of assessment grades (using Form 102 [see Appendix 4.3.1b] and referring to this policy)

Stage 1:

- Internal verification of assessment briefs requires the first marker (e.g. lecturer) to provide a draft of all assessment briefs (e.g. coursework briefs AND final examination papers) to the assigned internal verifier (second marker) for the module. Grading/marking schemes/rubrics must also be provided for all assessment elements

- The second marker (internal verifier) reviews the briefs and feeds back to the first marker (e.g. lecturer) using Form 101
- Form 101 must be completed and stored securely to provide documentary evidence of stage completion
- After internal verification of assessment briefs, final exam papers (only) also require External Examiner approval
- Internal verification (and External Examiner approval of final exam papers) must be confirmed before all assessment briefs are released to students

Notes on Stage 1:

QQI Assessments and Standards (Revised 2013b) Guidelines:

[available here
https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Assessment_and_Standards%20Revised%202013.pdf]

Extract from section 2.2.5 of above guidelines:

“Assessment tasks and criteria, arrangements, model answers and grading schemes are reviewed internally (and externally where appropriate) prior to use.

It is good practice for all assessment tasks to be reviewed internally where possible, and otherwise externally.

High-stake assessment tasks (e.g. examination papers), model responses and grading schemes should normally be reviewed independently of their authors, including by the external examiners.”

Extract from section 4.6.1 of above guidelines:

“Internal review of draft assessment tasks:

A criterion-referenced grading scheme should be produced for each assessment task.

Draft summative assessment tasks (such as draft examination papers and continuous assessment work and, where used, alternative assessment for the purpose of recognising prior learning etc.) and grading schemes for all stages of assessment should be internally reviewed”

Stage 2:

- Must be completed after grading an assessment element (e.g. all assignments)
- This can be completed at the end of the module (i.e. when all assessment elements have been graded)
- Requires the first marker (e.g. module lecturer) to submit a sample of graded assessments (e.g. coursework AND final examinations) to the second marker (internal verifier)
- The second marker will review the sample to ensure marking is fair, consistent, and at the correct level
- The second marker should focus on whether grades are at the correct level in terms of grade classification (e.g. Level 8, First Class Honours [70%+]; OR Level 8 2.1 [60-69%]). The second marker should NOT advise grade changes within bands (e.g. increasing a grade from 61% to 63% or vice versa). The second marker may advise a grade band change (e.g. changing a grade from 60s to 50s) but such changes must happen across the entire cohort [individual grade changes are strongly discouraged in the absence of entire cohort grade changes].
- Must be completed before graded assessments are sampled for assessment by the External Examiner
- Form 102 must be completed and submitted with the assessment sample pack to be made available for assessment by the External Examiner
- The sample pack reviewed by the second marker (internal verifier) should be identical to the sample pack reviewed by the External Examiner (excepting special circumstances)

Notes on Stage 2:

QQI Assessments and Standards (Revised 2013b) Guidelines:

[available here
https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Assessment_and_Standards%20Revised%202013.pdf]

Extract from section 2.2.8 of above guidelines:

“Student assessment procedures are expected to not, where possible, rely on the judgements of single examiners”

Extract from section 2.2.12 of above guidelines:

“Student assessment procedures are expected to be subject to administrative verification checks to ensure the accuracy of the procedures”

Extract from section 2.2.13 of above guidelines:

“Records are maintained to facilitate monitoring and reviews”

4.3.2 Security in Assessment

The registrar ensures security in assessment procedures are followed and updated as appropriate. All examination scripts are stored in a secure, locked location, that is controlled by the Registrar. Records are stored securely by the Registrar.

As per QQI (2013b) guidelines, all assessments at ICD are handled confidentially. Staff do not share learner results/grades with parties other than the student themselves. Sharing of learner grades internally among staff is standard process as a part of second marking (internal verification), examination board meetings (where grades are approved), and other administrative tasks related to collecting and distributing grades (to students). The Moodle system provides a facility for staff to distribute **provisional grades** to students individually, confidentially, where appropriate, but **official grades** are distributed to students by the Registrar. External Examiners are informed of grades as part of external assessment and examination board meetings.

Unseen examinations are created by individual lecturers pending approval of the second marker and the External Examiner, with this process coordinated by the Registrar and Programme Director. Internal sharing of unseen examination papers and solutions involves password protecting digital documents.

The Registrar and Administrative office staff (under the supervision of the Registrar) coordinate the secure printing and distribution of examination papers. A key duty of examination invigilators is to ensure that unseen exam papers are not seen by any student until the examination begins, at which time all exam candidates are instructed to begin to read their exam paper at the same time, to ensure all students have equal opportunity to attempt the assessment instrument to demonstrate their learning outcome achievement.

Assessment results are permanently archived and protected by the Registrar. The Registrar has overall responsibility for maintaining records relating to learner assessments, as per QQI (2013b) guidelines. Records relating to summative assessment results are permanently and securely retained, whether an award has been recommended or not.

Assessment attempts submitted by learners are recorded in the following ways:

- All attendees at examinations or in-class tests (e.g. paper exams, or presentations) must sign an attendance sheet and display their student card to verify their identity
- Where practical, students will submit copies of assessment submissions via Moodle
- Physical (e.g. paper) copies of assessment attempts are, where practical, submitted directly to either:
 - o The lecturer/assessor, who records submissions
 - o Or the administration office who securely store submissions and take students' signatures as records of submission

4.3.3 The Conduct of Assessment and Examinations

Assessments and examinations at ICD are subject to the policies located in section 5.2, and subsections, of the present document. The conduct of examinations is supervised and coordinated by the Registrar in conjunction with the administration office at ICD and examination invigilators.

4.3.3.1 Programme-level Management of Assessment

As per QQI (2013b) guidelines, the Registrar and Administrative office staff (under the supervision of the Registrar) coordinate examinations in the following ways:

- the secure printing and distribution of examination papers
- coordinating, preparing, and resourcing venues for assessments
- organising and training invigilators
- collecting scripts from venues and recording their collection (in coordination with invigilators)
- coordinating grading processes
- maintaining records of attendance at examinations (and in classes/lectures)
- make all reasonable arrangements for learners requiring special accommodation (in examinations and throughout their learning experience at ICD)
- securely transfer scripts to assessors who must count and sign for all assessments in the company of an administrative staff member, on receipt and return of assessments to the administration staff who ensure the exam scripts are stored securely. This includes all examinations being graded on ICD premises only

The Registrar and respective Programme Director(s) for each programme carry out the following functions, as described by QQI (2013b section 4.6) *Assessment and Standards* guidelines:

- **Ensure that assessment procedures accord with QQI (2013b) *Assessment and Standards* guidelines and foundations/principles** through coordinating assessments across each programme in conjunction with respective lecturers/assessors. This includes planning assessments, ensuring effectiveness of assessments, sequencing of assessments, and assessment work-load analysis. The effectiveness of assessments refers to the effectiveness of the assessment to facilitate learners to demonstrate achievement of module and

programme learning outcomes in a manner that allocates, to learners, a sufficient and appropriate workload. The effectiveness of assessments is a direct output from how accurately assessment requirements are designed to test specific module and programme learning outcomes through criterion-referenced assessments of specific learning outcomes. Effective assessment supports are also provided to students through ongoing formative feedback on learners' assessment planning and attempts, along with summative assessment feedback, with assessments being seen as assessment of learning (summative) and assessment for learning (formative). Please see section 4.3 of ICD's QA document for greater detail on the principles of assessment at ICD.

- **Ensure that programme boards and assessors discharge their assessment functions professionally.** A programme board at ICD contains the Programme Director and the teaching staff on that programme. Programme board meetings take place every semester to plan delivery of the programme and to plan assessments (including sequencing and workload management) and to discuss any issues pertaining to the programme (e.g. the semester one 2019-2020 addition of a mandatory induction module). The Registrar liaises with the Programme Director and lecturers as appropriate to provide supervisory coordination at the programme level (e.g. coordinating activities across stages of programmes and across programmes, including matters such as timetabling and resourcing). Programme Boards report to the Programme Development Committee and the Academic Council, with primary responsibility for reporting allocated to the Programme Director(s).
- **Monitor programme assessment findings, making national and international comparisons and diagnosing problems, followed by taking appropriate remedial action to address the causes of the problems (and not just the symptoms) and confirming that the actions have had their intended effect.** Monitoring assessment findings entails receiving quantitative (student grades; student feedback surveys) and qualitative data (student feedback surveys; lecturer feedback surveys) on student performance in assessments and the overall effectiveness of assessment instruments, and the overall effectiveness of teaching and learning supports and strategies at ICD. Feedback on assessment findings and effectiveness (of assessments and their supports) is also reported at Examination Board meetings and at Academic Council. An example of a problem diagnosed at ICD relates to plagiarism. In recent years, ICD examiners have become concerned about plagiarism as a growing problem across the higher education sector, but one that we, at ICD, are not willing to take a laissez-faire attitude towards. In 2019, ICD formally approached QQI to discuss the matter and received feedback that plagiarism is a national and international problem. ICD, of its own volition,

decided to create a mandatory academic skills (and academic integrity) module to be used across all programmes, approached QQI for approval, received approval, and is now (August 2019) designing that module. This initiative is designed to improve the effectiveness of assessment supports and includes continuous work done by the Head of Academic Development under the supervision of the Head of Quality Assurance, Registrar, and respective Programme Director(s) in order to inform and train students with regard to academic integrity (e.g. shunning plagiarism) and other general academic skills (as achieved by the induction module described elsewhere in the QA document; as also achieved by continuous academic skills/writing sessions at ICD about citation and referencing, how to complete specific types of assessments; also achieved by English language supports and training, where appropriate). ICD has already 2017-2019 been increasing student awareness of plagiarism prevention through increased citation and referencing classes and has already increased plagiarism detection rates. This action is already (summer 2019) beginning to have its intended effect with plagiarism issues reducing. However, the process continues with the objective of reducing incidents of plagiarism to their minimum. This is a problem across higher education but is also one that ICD is determined to solve. The Urkund system is being rolled out at ICD as an added support both for learners (e.g. self-plagiarism checking and reports) and to assessors/lecturers.

- **Prepare the information required by boards of examiners.** At ICD, the Registrar coordinates the preparation and distribution of information required by examination board meetings, in conjunction with the Programme Director(s), lecturers/assessors, and External Examiners, as is described in the next section of the QA document

4.3.4 Exam board meetings and future practice

Examination Board meetings are an essential quality assurance mechanism. Examination Boards at ICD and the overall grade and award classifications system follows best practice guidelines, as defined by QQI (2013b) *Assessment and Standards Guidelines*.

In advance of Examination Board meetings, all second marking (internal verification) should be completed between the first and second marker for every module, under the coordination of the Programme Director(s) and the Registrar. The Registrar is sent all grades (and related information) by all lecturers (first markers) in advance of the Examination Board. A sample of the completed assessments is provided to the External Examiner(s) for their perusal, as distributed by the Registrar, in advance of, or at, the Examination Board meeting.

At the Exam Board meeting, Programme Directors and module lecturers (assessors) discuss grades achieved for learners in respective modules on respective programmes in conjunction with External Examiners. The Registrar is the Chair and coordinator of exam board meetings. All assessors on a programme are invited to discuss and deliberate on all grades for all students on all modules presented at the Examination Board and will make decisions, as required, regarding final grades and award classifications as necessary. Differing opinions on proposed outcomes should be settled using votes to achieve majority consensus on decisions, but unanimity is not required. ICD places high priority on the views of External Examiners, as independent members of the board, and will take feedback and advice from the External Examiner as a key decision maker regarding grades, award classifications, assessment strategies, conduct of exam boards, the teaching and learning environment at ICD, and quality assurance policies and infrastructure. However, decisions made at the Examination Board meeting must be made by consensus (the consensus of all members of the Examination Board meeting). This can require a vote on specific items/decisions. In the event of an irresolvable disagreement between the examination board members (e.g. internal assessors on a programme) and the External Examiner, the examination board members' consensus decision is final, as per QQI (2013b section 4.8.7) guidelines. Such disagreements must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. As an extension of this point, ICD Examination Boards place a high regard on the input of the specific assessor (i.e. first marker [module lecturer]) as the most knowledgeable exam board member in a specific case of a module grade or assessment element grade. Exam Board attendees are advised strongly to respect first markers, allowing the presentation of their knowledge

of assessment submissions, grades, or other information relating to a specific grade they have provided for deliberation. First markers should not be in any way discounted or disregarded in discussions of grades, as a matter of professionalism and to ensure the most knowledgeable exam board member (in a specific case) is provided an equal platform to provide a rationale for a grade. First markers are to be consulted (provided they are present). However, first markers must also hear the deliberations of the other Exam Board members respectfully and be open to accepting votes on any grades.

The key objective of decisions made at the Examination Board meetings is to ensure fairness, objectivity, confidentiality, transparency and consistency as per QQI's (2013b section 2.2.3) guidance that "consistency extends to the use of assessment findings in decision-making...it includes decisions by boards of examiners concerning awards, grades and (if applicable) entitlement to credit or access, transfer or progression."

External examiners will visit the college at the time of examination board meetings and/or at any such times as may be determined by the college in consultation with external examiners. Where an External Examiner cannot attend, they must inform the college Registrar and make necessary arrangements to ensure they assess relevant materials. A schedule of outputs and meetings will be agreed between the college and external examiner(s) for each academic year. External Examiners are invited to make recommendations regarding modules, programmes, grades, assessment instruments, and on any other matters they see fit. Where External Examiners identify any significant issues with the grading practices in a particular module, they are encouraged to share this information at the exam board (and in their full report). External Examiners are invited to propose adjustments to grades for a group of students as a whole, as they see fit, and are requested to share this information with internal examiners before or at the Examination Board Meeting.

All assessors (internal and External Examiners) sign respective broadsheets after all deliberations and decisions relating to said broadsheet are concluded. Signing the broadsheet records approval of grades and decisions relating to these grades. However, if disagreements occur at the Examination Board meeting, it should be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

The meeting will have assigned minute takers and the outcomes of the examination board meeting are reported to and discussed by the Academic Council as appropriate. The proceedings and deliberations of Examination Board meetings is strictly confidential, excepting legitimate reporting requirements (QQI 2013b section 4.8.3). Academic Council ensures that Examination Board meetings contribute to quality assurance through both:

- Acting with authority to make deliberative decisions regarding summative assessments (e.g. grades and award classifications) regarding all learners presented at the board meeting
- Reporting outcomes of the meeting to the Academic Council to include analysis of progression, failure, and completion rates and more specific analysis of beneficial changes that should be considered, whether this relates to assessment strategies, programme delivery strategies, or any other quality assurance infrastructure or policy that may need to be updated or changed to improve the overall teaching, learning, and assessment environment, most specifically for learners' learning outcome achievement and learner welfare

Appendix 4.3.1a - Internal Verification (second marking) of assignment briefs and examination papers Form 101

This form can be typed or completed by hand (hand-written) depending on first marker preference. Where there are multiple assessment elements for a module, then multiple forms must be used (one for each assessment element [e.g. one form for the final exam brief [worth 50%], and a separate form for a coursework assignment(s) brief(s) [worth 50%]).

Section X (checklist): To be completed by the first marker (e.g. module lecturer):

Before submitting this form and related paperwork to the Second Marker (Internal Verifier), the first marker (module lecturer) must ensure that the answers to these three questions is yes:

Questions to be answered by the First Marker	
Is the module descriptor included with this form?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is the assessment brief (e.g. coursework assignment guidelines OR exam paper) included with this form?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is the marking scheme provided (e.g. solutions to assignments OR exam solutions OR marking scheme OR marking rubric)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

Section A: To be completed by the first marker (e.g. module lecturer)

**Questions to be answered by the
First Marker**

Programme Name:

Module Name:

Academic Year: (e.g. 2018-19)

Semester:

First Second Repeats

Type of assessment:

Final Exam Coursework

Allocation of marks as a percentage of overall module grade (e.g. 50%):

Name/title of assignment:

*e.g. assignment 1 of 2: Presentation of Different Management Styles

Details of Module Learning Outcomes being assessed in this assignment/exam

Just list the relevant learning outcomes here (follow the module descriptor)

*E.g. Module Learning Outcome 1 to critically evaluate the.....in a company

Etc

Section B: To be completed by the Second Marker (Internal Verifier):

**Questions to be answered by the
Second Marker (Internal Verifier)**

Is the Programme and Module title provided?

Yes No

Is the submission date achievable in relation to the issue date of the assignment? (Yes/No):

Yes No

Comment on above where applicable:

For Pearson HNC/HND programmes-only:

Is the vocational scenario appropriate, sufficient and current?:

Yes No N/A

Comment on above where applicable:

Does the assignment present students with appropriate opportunity for demonstrating achievement of all relevant module learning outcomes (as identified by the first marker)? (Yes/No):

Yes

No

Comment on above where applicable:

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Is the language and presentation of the assignment appropriate? (Yes/No):	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Comment on above where applicable:	
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<p>Is the assignment brief consistent with the NFQ level of the module? (Yes/No):</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Comment on above where applicable:</p>	
<p>Action required or recommended:</p>	
<p>Required Actions (these are actions that the Second Marker [Internal Verifier] requires to be completed before the Second Marker is willing to approve [sign-off on] the assignment brief/examination paper):</p>	

Recommended Actions (these are actions that the Second Marker [Internal Verifier] suggests but are NOT a requirement to be completed before the Second Marker is willing to approve [sign-off on] the assignment brief or examination paper):

--

Section C: to be completed by the first marker:

Action taken (by the first marker as a result of recommendations or requirements provided by the Second Marker [Internal Verifier]):

<p>*Please note that if the first marker and second marker cannot come to an agreement they should contact the Programme Director to discuss</p>
--

Section D: To be completed by the First Marker after feedback from Second Marker and agreement on the final draft of the assignment brief or exam paper (pending External Examiner approval for examinations only):

First Marker (print name):			
First Marker signature:		Date	

Section E: To be completed by the second marker after agreement on the final draft of the assignment brief or exam paper (pending External Examiner approval for examinations only):

Second Marker (Internal Verifier) (print name):			
Second Marker (Internal Verifier) signature:		Date	

Please note that, as normal, examination papers must be submitted to the Registrar (before each semester deadline, as communicated by the Registrar) who will forward them to the External Examiner for approval and feed back to the relevant lecturer the External Examiner's response.

Appendix 4.3.1b - Internal Verification (second marking) of assignment examination grades Form 102

***Please see Policy on Second Marking (Internal Verification at ICD)**

This form can be typed or completed by hand (hand-written) depending on first marker preference. Where there are multiple assessment elements for a module, then multiple forms must be used (one for each assessment element [e.g. one form for the final exam sample [worth 50%], and a separate form for a coursework sample [worth 50%]]).

Section X (checklist): To be completed by the first marker (e.g. module lecturer):

Before submitting this form and related paperwork to the Second Marker (Internal Verifier), the first marker (module lecturer) must ensure that the answers to these five questions is yes:

Questions to be answered by the First Marker	
Is the module descriptor included with this form?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is the assessment brief (e.g. coursework assignment guidelines OR exam paper) included with this form?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is the marking scheme provided (e.g. solutions to assignments OR exam solutions OR marking scheme OR marking rubric)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<p>Is an adequate sample* provided with this form?</p> <p>*An adequate sample is defined as either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three graded pieces (high grade, low grade, middle grade) or more • All graded pieces where the total number of pieces is less than three (e.g. two students sitting the assessment) 	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Is a list of all grades included with this form? (e.g. spreadsheet of all grades)</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>

Section A: To be completed by the first marker (e.g. module lecturer)

Questions to be answered by the First Marker	
Programme Name:	
Module Name:	
Academic Year: (e.g. 2018-19)	

Semester:	First <input type="checkbox"/> Second <input type="checkbox"/> Repeats <input type="checkbox"/>
Type of assessment:	Final Exam <input type="checkbox"/> Coursework <input type="checkbox"/>
Allocation of marks as a percentage of overall module grade (e.g. 50%):	
Details of sampled material to be input below:	
Student:	Grade:

Student:	Grade:
Student:	Grade:

First marker comment on overall performance of cohort:

***Comment here:**

--

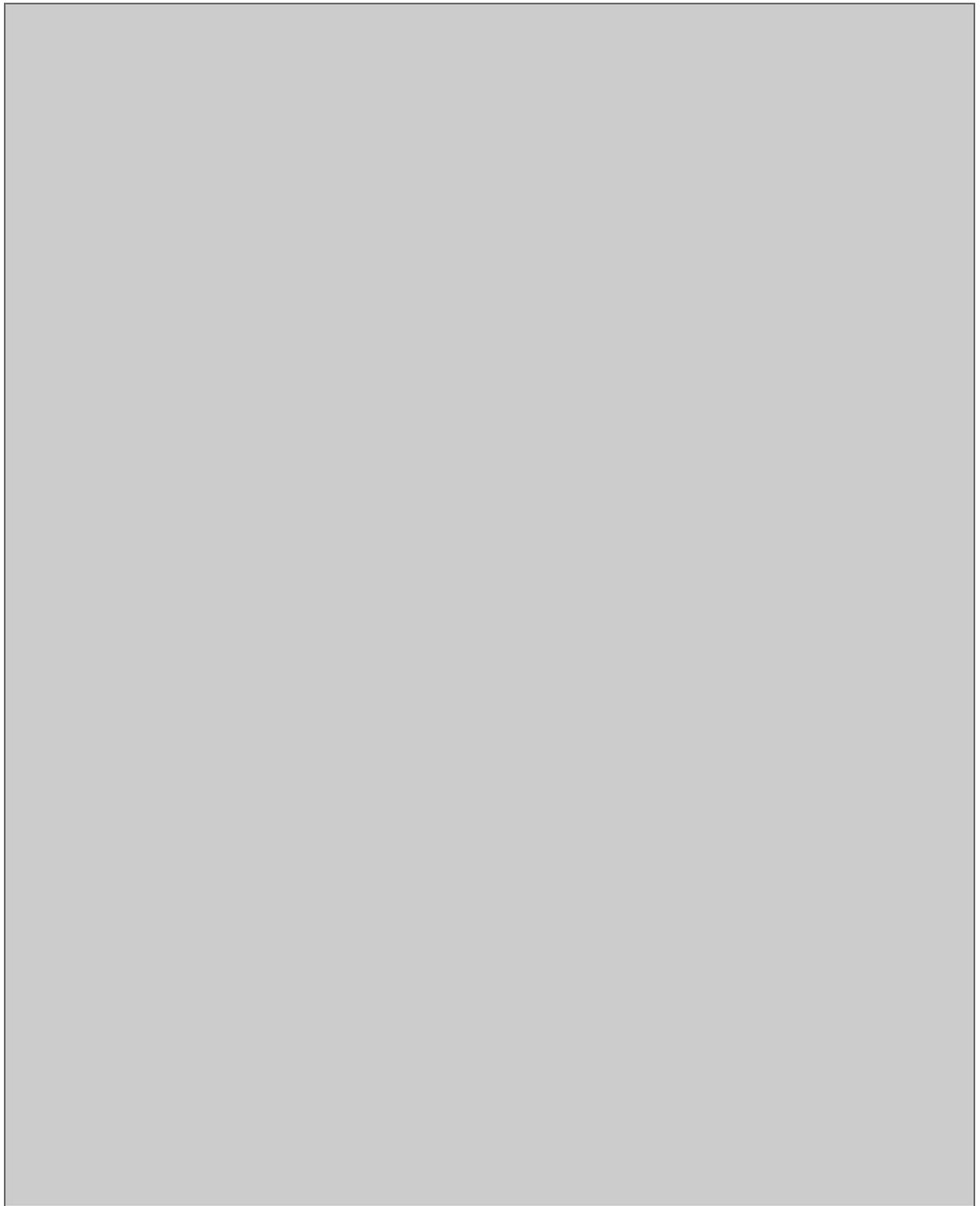
Section B: To be completed by the Second Marker (Internal Verifier):

Questions to be answered by the Second Marker (Internal Verifier)	
Is grading across the sample fair and consistent? (Yes/No):	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Comment on above where applicable:	

Is grading consistent with the learners' level of achievement of Minimum Intended Learning Outcomes of the Module (MIMLOs)? (Yes/No):	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Comment on above where applicable:	
Is grading consistent with the NFQ level of the module? (Yes/No):	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Comment on above where applicable:	

<p>Do you agree with all grades? (Yes/No):</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Comment on above where applicable:</p> <p>*Note to second markers:</p> <p>The second marker should focus on whether grades are at the correct level in terms of grade classification (e.g. Level 8, First Class Honours [70%+]; OR Level 8 2.1 [60-69%]). The second marker should NOT advise grade changes within bands (e.g. increasing a grade from 61% to 63% or vice versa). The second marker may advise a grade band change (e.g. changing a grade from 60s to 50s) but such changes must happen across the entire cohort [individual grade changes are strongly discouraged in the absence of entire cohort grade changes].</p>	
<p>Action required or recommended:</p>	
<p>Required Actions (these are actions that the Second Marker [Internal Verifier] requires to be completed before the Second Marker is willing to approve [sign-off on] the grades):</p>	

Recommended Actions (these are actions that the Second Marker [Internal Verifier] suggests but are NOT a requirement to be completed before the Second Marker is willing to approve [sign-off on] the grades):



Section C: to be completed by the first marker:

Action taken (by the first marker as a result of recommendations or requirements provided by the Second Marker [Internal Verifier]):

***Please note that if the first marker and second marker cannot come to an agreement they should contact the Programme Director to discuss the possibility of a third marker assessing the sample**

Section D: To be completed by the First Marker after feedback from Second Marker:

First Marker agrees that these grades are

ready for External Examiner Assessment:

Yes

No

Comment on the above where appropriate:

First Marker (print name):

First Marker signature:

Date

Section E: To be completed by Second Marker (Internal Verifier) when grades are agreed:

Second Marker (internal verifier) agrees that these

grades are ready for External Examiner Yes

No

Assessment:

Comment on the above where appropriate:

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Second Marker (Internal Verifier) (print name):			
--	--	--	--

Second Marker (Internal Verifier) signature:		Date	
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REFERENCES

QQI (2013b) *Assessment and Standards, Revised 2013*. Quality and Qualifications Ireland, Dublin.

Available

from:

https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Assessment_and_Standards%20Revised%202013.pdf