Sligo College of Further Education

Assessment

Handbook

Contents

INTRODUCTION

The assessment of students' work is undertaken in the first instance by a teacher of Sligo College of Further Education. It is then subject to the Internal Verification and External Authentication processes before finally being ratified by the Results Approval Panel (each of these processes refers to a Quality Assurance process which has been approved and is monitored by QQI). Each module is assessed separately. This system enables students to hold credits in the event of having to interrupt their course of study. This means that where a student has to take leave from their studies for a period of time due to ill health, family or personal matters the student retains the credits gained for those modules which have been successfully completed, assessed and ratified.

Students with additional support needs in relation to assessment are required to notify their teacher immediately upon starting their course so that appropriate measures can be implemented.

PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT

1. To ascertain that students meet the standards agreed with QQI in order to qualify for the award for their programme / module.
2. To provide a mechanism through which to give students feedback on certain areas of their learning.
3. For teachers and the College to evaluate the efficacy of the Sligo College of Further Education teaching model in delivering knowledge and in facilitating the development of skills and professional attitudes.

ANONYMITY AND CONSENT

For legal and ethical reasons it is important that information concerning an agency and the people who live and work there, be used respectfully and with care, within the context of assignments.

To ensure anonymity, students are required to change the names of their organisations and the names of the service users in their assignments so that identification of the same is not possible. You will be advised on individual requirements for assignments during lessons.

Students are encouraged to seek advice from supervisors, and/or teachers concerning permission with regard to the use of information about service-users in their assignments.

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

It is the responsibility of the student to familiarise themselves with all information relating to assessment.

Submission of Assignments

Students are required to submit assignments with an assignment cover sheet and brief. Typed assessments are preferable but handwritten assessments will be accepted. All assessments should be presented on white A4 size paper and bound with a cover and spine. Loose pages will not be accepted. When typed, assessments should be double-spaced or 1.5 spaced and in font size 12.

All submissions must be signed for by the student and submitted to the teacher in class time as specified on the cover of the assignment brief. Projects will also only be accepted in that module's class time.

In exceptional circumstances a student may wish to hand up an assignment early, or have a classmate / family member hand up the assignment and sign for it on their behalf. In such circumstances a student must agree a time for handing up the assignement with the module teacher, and follow up with a written request / email to the teacher in question.

All students are advised to keep a copy of their work, as work submitted to the College cannot be returned.

Skills Demonstrations

Skills demonstrations will be scheduled in class time (where possible). Advance notice will be given to students. Failure to attend a timetabled skills demonstration will require a medical certificate in order to facilitate a repeat.

Assessment Process

Sligo College of Further Education implements carefully designed assessment procedures for the assessment of modules. This process is governed by the QQI agreed policy and procedures for the *Fair and Consistent Assessment of Learners*. These ensure that each student's work is considered on its own merit, and is marked to the same standard and at the appropriate level agreed with the accrediting body. Marks are awarded for learning that has a balance, appropriate to the module, between theory and practical application.

Students' work is assessed against specific criteria from a standardised marking scheme, which has been designed in accordance with the learning outcomes of the associated module. These are clearly stated in the learning materials at the beginning of each module and in the module descriptors. This approach ensures that although different teachers mark assignments, each assignment is marked in exactly the same way. To verify the assessment process, and to ensure that the assessment procedures meet the standard required by the accrediting body, each student assessment is subject to the Internal Verification and External Authentication processes

Plagiarism

Plagiarism, which is the copying of another person's writings or works or ideas in any assignment, essay, project, or other exercise, that forms part of the requirements for an academic programme where such copying is either unauthorised by the copyright owner or unacknowledged in the assignment, essay, project, or other exercise is considered to be an infringement of SligoCFE assessment regulations. SligoCFE uses a plagiarism programme to detect occurrences of plagiarism and the following procedures will apply when there is evidence of such;

1. First offence: The learner is given an opportunity to re-submit the work within 5 calendar days.

2. Second offence: The work is not accepted.

3. If two students hand up the same work then neither piece of work will be accepted and both will be given the opportunity to re-submit within 5 calendar days.

4. The same process will apply to self – plagiarised work.

Feedback on Assignments

Where possible, detailed written / oral feedback will be given to students on a twice yearly basis, once in term one and once in term two. (For those modules which carry a 70% project, feedback can be given during class time on progress thus far). In order to receive feedback, students must attend at the time allocated by the teacher for feedback. As with late submission, exceptional circumstances will be taken into consideration.

Once an assignment is submitted it cannot be given back to the student to improve their grade and subsequently re-submitted.

Feedback will be given in order for them to improve in their next assignment.

Security and Storage of Assessment related materials

For the duration of their studies with the College, work submitted by learners for assessment is stored securely by the Programme Coordinator. Materials pertaining to any learner results which have been appealed will also be retained until the completion of the College and QQI appeals process timeframes.

On conclusion of the College's Repeats process (October Assessment) and the final meeting of Results Approval Panel, hardcopies of all assessments and related materials which have been ratified by the panel, will be destroyed.

Where students wish to collect Practical Coursework which has been completed and assessed, they can collect from the teacher on completion of a waiver request.

Records of all modules successfully completed by learners, and grades awarded are maintained indefinitely by the College in secure electronic files.

LATE SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS

In adverse personal circumstances, or where a student experiences a period of ill health, students may apply for a two-week extension for submission of an assignment.

The procedures for the late submission of an assignment are as follows:

1. In the first instance the request must be discussed with your teacher. Pending agreement with your teacher, an exceptional circumstance form must be completed in full by the student and forwarded to their teacher. Students are supplied with a copy of the exceptional circumstance form by their teacher. Where the student is applying for a late submission due to ill-health, a medical certificate is required and must be attached to the exceptional circumstance form.

    Please note that request for extension of deadline must be received before the original assignment deadline.

2. Should a further two week extension be needed, the student should apply directly to the Principal and a decision will be made at that point whether to grant the extension.

GRADING SCHEME FOR ASSIGNMENTS

The grading scheme used by the College in relation to QQI Level 5 & Level 6 courses is as follows:

80-100%	Distinction

65-79%	Merit
50-64%	Pass
0-49%	Unsuccessful

LATE SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS

Any work handed in past the assignment deadline without an extension, or work handed in after the extension deadline will not be accepted for the May Assessment period and will be held and submitted during the next QQI assessment period in September. A €50 charge will apply to cover such costs as administration and external authentication.

APPEALS PROCEDURE IN RELATION TO THE ASSESSMENT OF ASSIGNMENTS

Following assessment grades and feedback being issued to students, teachers will be available to discuss these with students who wish to query their assessment outcome or who require assistance with understanding their assessment outcome.

Where a student is dissatisfied with the application of the assessment process in relation to their work the following appeals procedure applies:

Students may appeal to the College for their work to be re-checked and/or reviewed.

Please note that any request for an appeal must be made in writing to your teacher and signed by you in order for it to be given consideration.

- *Re-check* means the administrative operation of checking the recording and the addition of marks
- *Review* means the re-consideration in detail of all or part of the existing assignment and examination material where feasible by an internal teacher and/or the External Authenticator

The following steps apply to either of the above procedures.

1. The grounds for re-checking and reviewing must be specified under the following three headings:
   a. The assessment/examination procedures of the College have not been properly implemented.
   b. The procedures do not adequately cover the student's individual requirements
   c. Compassionate circumstances were not adequately taken into account in the assessment process.
2. The written submission for an appeal must identify the elements of the assignment or

examination for which the re-check or review is being sought. It must also specify the grounds on which the re-check/review is sought and must contain all the information that the student requires to have taken into account in the recheck or review.

3. The appeals process is as follows:
   a. Having specified the details required in sections one and two above, the student may appeal in writing to his/her teacher within a period of one week of receiving the grade/feedback and additional feedback will be given.
   b. If, after following step a., the student wishes to make a further appeal, he/she may request in writing to the College Principal (within a period of one week) that his/her work be reviewed through the External Authentication and Results Approval processes

4. The decision of the Results Approval Panel is final and the result will be forwarded to QQI. Students are advised that, as a result of any appeal their grades may go up or down.

MSL ETB APPEALS PROCESS

Module results can also be appealed to MSL ETB. In this instance MSL ETB will check that the providers assessment policy and procedures have been implemented appropriately in relation to the work being appealed, i.e. Learners appeal the outcome of the provider's assessment and appeals process *only;* not the assessment result.

There is a cost of €40 for such appeals, payable by the student. Appeals to MSL ETB should be directed through Sligo CFE.

REPEAT PROCEDURES

Students must maintain 80% attendance in a module in order to qualify to repeat that module or part of that module.

The option to repeat is only available where students have failed a module or part of a module.

Should a student wish to repeat a module to improve a grade they must re-register for that module in the following academic year and pay the appropriate course fee.

Students must complete the Repeat Application Form and submit this and the fee to Kendra Conneely by 31st August in the year of award.

Repeat work must be submitted in September. It will then be submitted to QQI in the October assessment period. There is a charge of €40 per module.

This policy was ratified in June 2014

Most recent review: March 2019