

CCT Marks and Standards, Assessment and Grading Policy

5.1 Part A: Policy Overview

5.1.1 Policy Purpose

The CCT College Dublin Marks and Standards document outlines the College's implementation of QQI's Assessment and Standards, Revised 2022 in assessment regulations and academic procedures, and specifically reflects QQI's Sectoral Conventions for Assessment. It outlines CCT's approach to assessment and grading and summarises how assessment regulations are applied.

5.1.2 Scope of Policy

The CCT Marks and Standards applies to all assessment on programmes leading to QQI awards.

5.1.3 Statutory and System Wide Basis (QQI, Legal, National & International Context)

The following key statutory and system wide information applies to this policy:

- CCT applies [QQI Assessment and Standards, Revised 2022](#) and associated sectoral standards as a provider of programmes leading to QQI awards.
- [National Framework of Qualifications \(NFQ\)](#)
- [Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines and Sector Specific Independent/Private Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines](#)
- [Policy and Criteria for Making Awards](#)
- [Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training](#)
- [Topic Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for providers of blended and fully online programmes](#)
- [European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area](#)
- [ECTS Users' Guide](#)

5.1.4 Responsibilities

- **Dean of Academic Affairs** - The Dean of Academic Affairs has overall responsibility for the conduct of assessments in the College.
- **Dean of Faculty** - The Dean of Faculty has operational responsibility for the implementation of Marks and Standards for the lifecycle of assessment.
- **Internal Examiners** - Faculty who undertake the assessment of learners are considered internal examiners and are responsible for familiarising themselves with, and applying, CCT Marks and Standards.
- **Dean of Teaching and Learning** - The Dean of Teaching and Learning is responsible for supporting faculty development and assuring the integrity of assessment.
- **External Examiners** - External Examiners provide external oversight to the College's assessment processes.
- **Academic Council** - Has oversight of the implementation of Marks and Standards across the College.
- **Learners** - Learners are responsible for familiarising themselves with CCT Marks and Standards and demonstrating their achievement of their learning outcomes. CCT will ensure learners have ample access to the relevant documents.

5.2 Part B: CCT Grading System

5.2.1 Principles for Assessment

The CCT Grading System and assessment of learner effort is underpinned by the following principles:

- **Fairness** - Assessment is just, unbiased, equitable, impartial; legitimate and conducted in accordance with the rules or standards. Assessment tasks and criteria should appropriately reflect the learning opportunities available to programme participants.
- **Consistency** - Consistency refers to the principle that assessment procedures and outcomes are compatible across different contexts and over time. While consistency is crucial, it should not prevent necessary changes or adaptations to assessment practices when they become invalid or unreliable.
- **Reliability** - Assessments are a genuine academic evaluation and judgement on a learner's achievement of the learning outcomes. Moderation and external examination are types of internal verification.
- **Validity** - Validity refers to the extent to which an assessment accurately measures what it is intended to measure. An assessment is valid if it effectively evaluates the intended learning outcomes, ensuring that the results reflect the true abilities or knowledge of the learners in relation to the specific goals of the programme or module.
- **Inclusivity** - Inclusivity in assessment means ensuring that assessment practices and procedures are accessible and fair to all learners, regardless of their backgrounds, abilities, or circumstances. Inclusive assessments accommodate the diverse needs of learners, allowing everyone an equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills.
- **Transparency** - Transparency refers to the clarity and openness of the assessment process. It means that the criteria, methods, and purposes of assessment are clearly communicated to learners, ensuring they understand how they will be evaluated and on what basis their performance will be judged. Transparency helps build trust and fairness in the assessment process.
- **Student-centred** - Student-centred assessment focuses on the needs, experiences, and learning processes of the learners. It prioritises the development and achievement of the students, aligning assessments with their learning outcomes and providing opportunities for them to engage meaningfully in the assessment process.
- **Feedback** - Learners are entitled to receive qualitative feedback on their assessment effort. Feedback should be timely, individualised, related to the work presented, an aid to learning and written in Plain English.

5.2.2 Learning Outcomes, Summative and Formative Assessment

- A learner's knowledge, skill and competence change as a result of learning. Learning outcomes are documented as part of a programme development and approved through the validation process.
- Learners are assessed against documented learning outcomes. Programme learning outcomes reflect the minimum achievement (in terms of knowledge, skill and competence) that the learner is certified to have attained if they successfully complete a particular programme (i.e. passes all the required assessments).
- Assessment in CCT is learning outcomes focused with the learning outcomes having been interrogated for their suitability as part of the programme validation process.
- Learning outcomes are clear statements of the knowledge or skills a learner is required to demonstrate on completion of a specified block of learning. The learning outcomes for CCT programmes are documented at module and programme level, reflecting the framework level applicable.
- The summative assessments issued to learners as part of a programme of study are designed to test a learner's ability to attain the specified learning outcomes. Summative assessments can take the format of continuous assessments, projects, and examinations. As part of the assessment process learners are advised of which learning outcomes are being assessed by each assessment. This enables learners to make

a reasonable attempt to demonstrate this, and it also informs examiners, including external examiners, what is being assessed.

- Learning outcomes represent the threshold standard for a pass i.e. to be awarded a pass mark a learner must have evidenced attainment of the learning outcomes. Higher grades are awarded based upon how the learner exceeds the learning outcomes and to what extent. Assessment feedback provided to learners should be learning outcome focused indicating how the outcomes may be more fully addressed or how they may be exceeded.
- Summative Assessment aims to determine if (or sometimes the extent to which) a set of specified learning outcomes has been attained by a person and (typically) their entitlement to academic credit. It normally contributes to learner's results for a module or a programme. It includes results from continuous assessment, project work, oral assessment, written examinations etc.
- Formative Assessment: supports the learner in attaining specified learning outcomes. It does not normally penalise error, or credit achievement. 'Formative assessment is concerned with how judgements about the quality of learner responses (performances, pieces, or works) can be used to shape and improve the learner's competence by short-circuiting the randomness and inefficiency of trial-and-error learning. Formative assessment supports learning and should therefore involve formative feedback. It is an essential part of any programme of education and training.

5.2.3 Grading System

- **Criterion-Referenced Grading-** Grading of work is always criterion-referenced, based on learning outcome criteria, and not norm-referenced using criterion-referenced grading schemes (QQI Sectoral Convention 1). Assessment decisions are not based upon the comparison of one learner against others or by the requirement to have a specified number in any given mark band.
- **Marking schemes-** CCT requires each assessment to include a marking scheme that identifies how the marks are awarded and what is expected within each section. Marking schemes should be sufficiently detailed to enable different examiners to interpret and apply it consistently. Information within the marking scheme should relate to the learning outcomes being assessed.
- **Marking** - Marking learner's work is the making of a quality judgement against clearly defined criteria. It is greater than the mathematical totalling of marks for subsections and therefore examiners are required to make a final quality judgement, having totalled marks, to determine the final mark to be awarded. Examiners are free to add or deduct marks to reflect more accurately the standard of the overall piece of work assessed. Marking of assessments is based upon the extent to which learning outcomes have been attained or exceeded. There must be a clear, demonstrable relationship between the learning outcomes and the mark awarded.
- **Moderation-** Details of the allocation of marks, in line with the marking scheme, must be clearly apparent to second markers, external examiners and learners, as appropriate. Internal moderation and external examination of a sample of all assessments takes place as standard in CCT.
- **ECTS Credits-** As members of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), Irish Higher Education Institutions use a credit system called the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). Modules in CCT are normally made up of 5, 10 or 30 ECTS, indicating how much an individual module contributes to the relevant stage of a validated programme.

5.2.4 Marking and Calculating Marks

- **Grading system** - Programmes and modules in CCT use a percentage grading system (QQI Sectoral Convention 2).
- **Pass/Fail** - In some instances, a 'Pass/Fail' system might be used and will be specified within the programme specific regulations.
- **Board of Examiners** - All programme and module grades are provisional until agreed at a formal meeting of the Board of Examiners.
- **Calculating Assessment Component Marks**- All assessments are marked out of 100% and marks recorded as a percentage mark. The overall percentage mark for each module is calculated based on the weighted average of its component results.
- **Calculating Overall Module Mark**- The overall mark for the module is calculated from the sum of the weighted marks awarded in each component of assessment. The final grade on the Broadsheet of Results is the numerical percentage achieved.
- **Stage Outcome** - A learner's performance at a non-award stage is normally unclassified and recorded as a pass where the pass standard has been attained or exceeded. If a learner has not met all the requirements for a stage, their stage outcome will be 'incomplete'.
- **Overall Result** - The overall result for each stage of a programme is represented by the Percentage Point Average (PPA) achieved within the stage. The overall result is a credit-weighted average of marks across all modules contributing to the result in the relevant stage.
- **Calculating Repeat Module Mark** - Normally, only the marks from the repeat attempts shall be aggregated to determine the module mark. Notwithstanding this, the Board of Examiners has the discretion to consider and aggregate marks from a previous attempt, where that attempt resulted in a pass mark, when it is in the best interest of the student.

5.2.5 Minimum Pass Marks and Assessment Regulations

- **Minimum pass mark** - A grade of 40% is normally the minimum pass mark for assessment in CCT and indicates that the student's effort meets the minimum intended learning outcomes for the relevant assessment. In exceptional circumstances a passing grade of higher than 40% may be required and will be explicitly stated on the approved programme schedule and noted on the Broadsheet of Results.
- **A marginal fail** - A grade of 35-39% indicates that the student's effort either almost meets the minimum intended learning outcomes or that some but not all the learning outcomes were met. Students with a marginal fail grade for a module may be eligible to pass by compensation, subject to programme specific rules.
- **An outright fail** - A grade of less than 35% indicates that the minimum intended learning outcomes have not been met to any acceptable extent.
- **Repeat result capped grade** - Repeat module assessments are capped at a passing grade. This means the maximum grade a student can receive in a repeat assessment is 40%. Where a student has demonstrated exceptional mitigating circumstances, their repeat attempt may be treated as a first attempt.
- **Number of attempts** - Students normally receive a maximum of four attempts at any assessment- their initial attempt plus three repeat opportunities. Capstone assessments are limited to three attempts- the initial attempt plus two repeat opportunities. Any restrictions on the number of attempts are outlined on the programme schedule and communicated to learners.

5.2.6 Assessment Submission

Learners must submit their assessments via Moodle and the following conditions apply:

- All learners must submit their assignments through their personal Moodle log in in the case of individual submissions. Or by nominated group leader in group assignments.
- In the rare case of individual Moodle access problems, assignment submissions may be made to a valid lecturer's or administrator's cct.ie email address, at the discretion of the lecturer. Once Moodle access is restored the submission must be made to Moodle.

5.2.7 Assessment Attempts

- Assessment components- a module typically contains more than one assessment component, and students are expected to attempt all components. Typically, students are not required to pass all components in order to pass the module overall. Components are normally assessed independently, and the marks scored in the independent component parts are aggregated to determine the overall module mark.
- Assessment Attempt- an attempt is defined as the completion of an assessment component for an approved sitting of a module for which a student is registered.
- Non-submission- non-submission of an assessment is counted as an attempt and a mark of zero is awarded for that component unless the student has an approved PMC.
- Exhausted attempts - Any learner not achieving a pass within the maximum opportunities, under normal circumstances, will be withdrawn from the programme of study.

5.2.8 Assessment Penalties

- Word-count or equivalent penalty - unless otherwise stated in the assessment brief, a student failing to comply with a word-count or equivalent limit for a piece of work will have a penalty of 10% applied to their submission i.e. 10% of the final assessment mark will be deducted.
- Late submission - assessments (with the exception of real-time assessments) will be accepted as late submissions up to and including 5 calendar days after the submission deadline with a 10% penalty applied. A late submission of an assessment six days and beyond the deadline is counted as an attempt and given a mark of zero unless the student has an approved personal mitigating circumstance.

5.2.9 Repeat Assessments

- Repeating for credit - a student cannot reattempt a module for the purpose of earning a higher passing mark.
- Repeat assessment pass mark - Repeat module assessments are capped at a passing grade. This means the maximum grade a student can receive in a repeat assessment is 40%.
- Repeating a component - In the case of a learner repeating an assessed component within a module, pass marks awarded on the basis of other components within the module shall, normally, be carried forward from the original attempt. The repeat component mark will normally be aggregated with the previously attained pass marks from other assessed work within the module.
- Determining repeat with attendance - Should the Board of Examiners deem that the module learning outcomes cannot be satisfied through completion of the repeat assessment, or that a repeat assessment attempt is unacceptable, the Board shall determine repeat with attendance is required.
- Repeating with attendance- In the case of a learner repeating a module with attendance, the completion of the module in its entirety, including all assessments and examinations is required. Normally, only the marks from the repeat attempts shall be aggregated to determine the module mark. Notwithstanding this, the Board of Examiners has the discretion to consider and aggregate marks from a previous attempt, where that attempt resulted in a pass mark, when it is in the best interest of the student.

- Alternative assessment for repeats- Where the Board of Examiners, in considering progression and recommendation for awards, determines that a learner is required to repeat a module or components of it, the Board, may devise alternative assessment arrangements in agreement with the External Examiner and having due regard for the approved programme schedule. In determining the assessment arrangements, the Board must agree how the overall module mark will be determined.
- Repeating assessment components- where the programme regulations require the independent passing of each component, repeat regulations apply to those components.

5.2.10 Borderline Results

- Borderline performance arises when a student's mark in a module lies close to the pass mark, or when the student's overall result lies close to the transition point between pass and fail or between award classification levels.
- CCT determines borderline cases to be any learner whose average mark across all modules is within 1% of any of a grade band classification (e.g. 39, 49, 59, 69 as relevant to the programme's award classifications). See Section 5.1.3 above for further guidance on marking.
- Assessors avoid issuing borderline module grades. Instead, a clear decision is made about the grade band into which a student's effort falls (i.e. assessors avoid 34, 39, 49, 59, 69 as relevant to the programme's award classifications).
- All borderline award results that sit at a 0.5 percentage point are automatically granted the next higher classification (i.e. a result of 69.5 would receive the award classification for the 70% boundary classification).
- All borderline cases are reviewed by the Board of Examiners to determine the final grade band classification where a combination of assessment marks result in an overall module borderline mark or an overall award stage borderline.
- When considering borderline cases, the Board of Examiners considers the learners' performance as a whole. That final decision is based on the cumulative evidence presented rather than on the view of one internal or external examiner. See Section 5.1.3 above for further guidance on marking.
- If more than half of the ECTS credits in the award stage fall within the higher award classification, the higher award classification is typically applied.
- When the decision is made to grant a higher award to the student, the final grade remains unchanged.

5.2.11 Requirements for Progression

- A candidate who has successfully earned all the credits, i.e. passed all the modules, in a stage of a multi-stage programme is eligible to progress to the next stage of the programme.
- In exceptional circumstances, there may be specific prerequisites between modules within the same stage that must be completed in a semester before a student can progress to the subsequent. In these instances, the requirements must be clearly outlined in the approved programme schedule.
- Subject to any special conditions of the programme, there are three exceptions to the general requirement of passing all the required modules in order to progress to the next stage. These are:
 - Pass by compensation
 - Exemption from part of the programme (with or without the allocation of a grade and credit)
 - Eligibility to progress carrying the failed modules to be passed during the subsequent stage (progression with a credit deficit)

5.2.12 Pass by Compensation

Students who receive a marginal failing mark of between 35%-39% in a module may be entitled to 'pass by compensation' subject to the following conditions:

- The learner has attempted the full module and marks of all modules in the stage are from first attempts
- No modules in the stage have been failed outright
- Compensation may be applied only to enable a student to pass a stage.
- The number of modules to be compensated does not exceed one-third of the credits for the stage (for example, no more than 20 ECTS in a 60 ECTS stage)
- Double the deficiency of marks is available within the remaining passed modules (for example, for a marginal fail of 36, twice the deficiency of four marks, 8 marks total, must be made up in passing marks of equivalent credit modules)
- Compensation does not change the result of the module, and the actual module result is used on all formal documentation along with an indication that the module Pass has been granted by compensation
- There are no programme or module specific regulations prohibiting pass-by-compensation.

5.2.13 Module Exemptions

- A module exemption can be earned through successful completion of a module in one or more attempts, or through the College's Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process.
- Once the credits associated with a module have been awarded to a candidate, the candidate is exempt from any further assessment obligations for that module.
- This means that once a module is completed by the student, it is marked 'EXE' on any subsequent Broadsheets of Results considering assessment in the same stage.
- Marks are only applied to modules exempted through RPL with the approval of the Dean of Academic Affairs. When modules are exempted through RPL in an award year, the Dean of Academic Affairs will confirm how the award will be calculated and award classification assigned in line with the formal RPL process.
- Exempted modules will normally remain valid for the purposes of completing the programme requirements for an award, unless a programme review and revalidation affect the module's relevance to the programme and award.

5.2.14 Progression with Credit Deficit

- Within a programme, a student may be permitted to carry a maximum deficit of 10 ECTS credits from one stage into the subsequent stage on a case-by-case basis.
- The following conditions apply to carrying a credit deficit:
 - All other modules in the stage have been completed for the stage.
 - Any pre-requisite modules on the current stage leading to modules on the subsequent stage have been completed.
 - The deficit cannot be carried forward more than one stage (for example, a student cannot carry a failed module from stage 1 to stage 3)
 - The normal maximum missing credit shall be one sixth of the credit for the stage, e.g. 10 credits per 60-credit stage.

5.2.15 General Requirements for Awards

- Academic programmes in CCT are certified by its awarding body, QQI.
- A 'Pass' classification of an award is a positive statement of achievement.
- When a student fails a module that contributes to the award classification, the repeat module mark is capped at 40% but the award is not capped. (Prior to 2022, the overall award classification was capped at a Pass (QQI Sectoral Convention 4)).

- A module that is validated as being assessed as Pass or Fail only will not contribute to the award calculation.
- Where the award classification is determined by performance in different stages of the programme, the award classification may not be considered until such a time as all contributing modules have been passed and all modules in the award influencing stages are passed or exempted.
- All students who have satisfactorily addressed the programme requirements on a programme of study leading to a QQI award, in line with CCT Marks and Standards, will be recommended to QQI for award purposes.
- Calculation of the final award classification is based on the credit-weighted mean value of the module grades contributing to the final award.
- Students are entitled to receive:
 - An award certificate when they have successfully completed all elements of a programme leading to an accredited award.
 - A transcript of results outlining all elements they have completed on their registered programme, regardless of whether they have successfully completed the programme overall.
 - A diploma supplement.
- The nature of non-academic programmes and certification of non-validated programmes is clearly communicated to students to ensure the nature of the programme they are undertaking.
- The majority of CCT Awards are classified in line with the table below. Special purpose awards or minor awards that are less than 60 credits are unclassified.

Percentage Point Average	Higher Certificates (Level 6), Special Purpose Awards, Diplomas (Level 7) and Ordinary Bachelor's Degrees (Level 7)	Honours Bachelor's Degrees (Level 8) and Higher Diplomas (Level 8)	Postgraduate Diploma (Level 9)	Master's Degrees (Level 9)
70% and above	Distinction	First-class honours	Distinction	First-class honours
60% - 69%	Merit Grade 1	Second-class honours Grade 1 (2:1)	Merit	Second-class honours
50% - 59%	Merit Grade 2	Second-class honours Grade 2 (2:2)	Pass	Pass
40% - 49%	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass

5.2.16 Post Award Achievement

- QQI's Sectoral Convention number 5 addresses post-award achievement and stipulates that, subject to the following conditions, a graduate holding a higher education and training award may present for and, if successful, achieve a further major award at the same level within the same generic area of study. This must involve the attainment of new learning outcomes (i.e. post-award achievement).
- If the area of specialisation of the post-award achievement is not substantially different, and/or if the associated credit is insufficient for granting a new major award, the applicant may be granted a minor, special-purpose or supplemental award.
- The following table sets out the minimum volume of newly certified learning required of a learner who is seeking to qualify for an additional major award at the same level within the same generic area of study. Note that repeating learning that is substantially equivalent to previously certified learning is not included in the calculation of post-award credit in the following table.

Award Currently Held	Additional Award Sought	Post-award Credit for Newly Certified Learning
Higher Certificate	Higher Certificate	A minimum of 60 credits at L6
Ordinary Bachelor's Degree	Ordinary Bachelor's Degree	A minimum of 60 credits at L7
Honours Bachelor's Degree	Honours Bachelor's Degree	A minimum of 120 credits, at least 60 of which are at L8
Master's Degree	Master's Degree	A complete programme

5.2.17 Approved Programme Schedules and Modules

The type(s) of assessment employed and their contribution to the overall grade must be decided as part of the Programme Assessment Strategy during Programme Design and Validation. The Approved Programme Schedule forms part of the Marks and Standards applying to the programme, and outlines:

- The Modules and ECTS value of modules as validated by QQI in respect of each programme.
- Programme pathways, if any (e.g. embedded awards)
- Any programme specific regulations (e.g. programme specific progression requirements)
- The approved assessment methods and weightings for each module. A module may consist of one or more components of assessment.

Any special regulations outlined on the approved programme schedule must be communicated to learners at the outset of their studies and as part of the assessment brief.

5.2.18 Programme Assessment Plan

- All programmes are required to have an assessment plan for each stage of the programme that is reviewed and updated annually, aligned to the approved programme schedule.
- The programme assessment plan is agreed by the Programme Board in advance of the teaching semester beginning and is communicated to students within one week of teaching beginning.
- The assessment plan details the following information as it relates to every module on the programme:
 - The number of assessments (assessment components or instances)
 - The type of assessment (for example, written examination, practical examination, project, report, presentation, oral examination etc.)
 - The nature of each assessment (for example, individual assessment or group assessment)
 - The allocation of marks / weighting associated with each assessment component
 - The indicative dates for assessment
 - The arrangements for repeat assessment
 - It is expected that formative assessment takes place in the early stages of a module, normally within the first five weeks.
- The programme assessment plan considers programme level criteria including alignment to teaching and learning schedule, diversity of assessment methods, assessment burden and submission bottlenecks, use of authentic assessment, opportunities for knowledge transfer across modules and issues of upholding academic integrity across the programme.
- Faculty are expected to adhere to the agreed assessment schedule. In exceptional cases where a deviation is required this should only be done in consultation with the Programme Leader and Dean of Faculty.
- In all cases, learners must be made aware of the weighting of the assessment issued to them and the due date for the assessment must be communicated in writing as part of the assessment brief.

5.2.19 Moderation Principles

- Moderation is how examiners secure confirmation of their initial judgements and is concerned with the consistency, comparability and fairness of professional judgements about the levels demonstrated by students (Maxwell 2002).

- All summative assessment leading to QQI awards is internally and externally moderated to provide assurance of the reliability and validity of assessment.
- Where alternative processes are employed, these must be documented, approved by the Dean of Faculty or Dean of Academic Affairs and communicated to the External Examiner in advance.
- For collaborative programmes, arrangements for the internal moderation of assessment will be agreed as part of the initial collaborative agreement and documented accordingly. CCT College expects an equivalent standard of moderation to that required by this policy. In the absence of a moderation policy the CCT policy will apply.
- In CCT, it is standard practice for sampling of graded assessments by an internal moderator for summative assessment tasks, including examinations. The specific moderation requirements of each module will be agreed at programme level and approved by the Programme Leader and Dean of Faculty.
- Moderation of graded work will cover the grading of both CA / project and examination, as applicable, for each faculty member. For capstone assessments at level 9 all assessments must be second marked and made available to the external examiner.
- The moderation sample size of student work normally includes 10% of the assessment submissions including samples from each grade band, all borderline grades, and all fail grades.

5.3 Part C: Module Results and Exam Board Classifications

5.3.1 Recording Module Results

The following table outlines results codes and descriptions for recording learner module results on Broadsheets of Results and statements of results as released to learners.

Result Code	Result Description	Credit Achieved	Effect on Number of Attempts
P	Pass	Yes	Counted as an attempt.
PBC	Passed by compensation	No	Counted as an attempt.
F	Fail	No	Counted as an attempt.
DEF	Deferral	No	Not counted as an attempt.
NP	Absent or Non-submission	No	Counted as an attempt.
WH	Withheld	No	Not counted as an attempt until a full learner profile is available.
EXE	Exemptions/ approved prior learning	Case-by-case basis.	Counted as an attempt.
RG	Review grade for compensation	No	Counted as an attempt- PBC withheld until full stage results are available.
PD	Approved to progress to next stage with deficit	No	Counted as an attempt.
W	Withdrawn (not counted as an attempt)	No	Not counted as an attempt.
WE	Withdrawn for non-engagement	No	Counted as an attempt.
AM	Academic Misconduct	Case-by-case basis.	Counted as an attempt.

5.3.2 Board of Examiner Decisions

The following table summarises key Board of Examiners decisions.

Exam Board Decision	Description
Capped grades	The final result for all modules passed on a repeat sitting is capped at 40%. Prior to March 2022, a module passed on a repeat sitting would result in a cap to the Award Classification.
Overall stage result	Stage outcome can either be 'Pass' or 'Incomplete'. A 'Pass' outcome indicates a learner has met all the requirements to complete the stage. This means they will progress to the next stage of their programme, or they will have been given a final award result and award classification. 'Incomplete' means they have not yet fulfilled all the requirements for a stage.
Review grade for compensation	A module result of 'RG', this means the learner might be eligible for pass by compensation at the end of the stage. If they successfully complete the rest of their stage and meet the requirements for pass by compensation, they will not have to repeat this module.
Progressing with deficit	A final module result of 'PD' means a learner has failed a module and therefore has a credit deficit for the stage. This means they have not fully met the requirements to Pass the stage, but have been approved to carry this credit deficit to the next stage. A credit deficit cannot be carried forward more than one stage i.e. if a learner carries a failed module from stage 1 to stage 2 of a programme, they will not be permitted to progress to stage 3 until they have passed the failed module from stage 1.
Credit deficit for masters progression to capstone	If a learner has a credit deficit of more than 15 credits at the end of semester 2 on a master's programme, the Board of Examiners will advise the learner to defer completion of their capstone module until they have successfully completed their failed modules to give them the best possible chance of success in their capstone module.
Calculating award	Final award results are calculated using a weighted average calculation. This is only completed when the full stage has been attempted. For a single-stage programme (e.g. Masters, Diplomas), all modules contribute to the learner's final result. For multi-stage programmes, the final result is calculated using final year modules only.
Exit Awards	Some programmes are validated with an 'Exit award'. This means a recognised qualification is embedded in the full programme. A learner who is unable to complete the full programme will be able to request an exit award if they have satisfied its requirements
Withheld	A result of 'withheld' means the Board of Examiner withheld decision-making on a learner's results, and their results will be issued later. Results can be withheld for a number of reasons including late submission of assessment, consideration of extenuating circumstances, or investigation of academic impropriety.
Withdrawn	A learner can receive an outcome of 'withdrawn' for two reasons as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The has exhausted all of their attempts on the programme and therefore their 'result' will be marked as Withdrawn. • The learner chooses to discontinue their studies.
Withdrawn for non-engagement	If the College identifies a learner as not engaging in their programme (i.e. non-attendance, non-submission) and has made multiple failed attempts to get in contact with the learner,

Exam Board Decision	Description
	the learner will be withdrawn by the Board of Examiners for non-engagement on their programme.
Academic Misconduct	In some instances, an Academic Misconduct case proven may result in a notation on the learner's transcript.

5.4 Part D: Procedures for Assessment

5.4.1 Assessment Design

Internal examiners are responsible for ensuring that all assessment, is designed to adhere to the following:

- **CCT Marks and Standards and Quality Framework** - Is designed and conducted in line with CCT Marks and Standards and Quality Assurance policies and procedures in general, including use of up-to-date assessment templates.
- **Module and programme teaching learning and assessment strategies** - Aligns with programme and module content and teaching, learning and assessment strategies including consistency of assessment within a module and comparability of standards across modules within a subject area.
- **Learning outcomes and rubrics** - Meets module learning outcomes and the assessment grading mechanism is fair and transparent, and consistent with the level being assessed with an accompanying marking rubric.
- **Clarity of instruction** - Have assessment briefs providing clear instructions to learners, that the assessment, allows the learner to demonstrate attainment of learning outcomes, and that assessment isn't requiring the learner to address requirements that are not aligned to the learning outcomes.
- **Assessment documentation** - Assignment briefs and examination templates include at a minimum:
 - Clear and concise instructions for learners
 - The learning outcomes being assessed
 - Marks awarded for each question
 - Submission deadline/Time allowed to complete the exam
 - Workload expectations/Number of pages in the exam paper
 - The marking rubric and a repeat examination and marking rubric
 - Any additional guidance and specifics related to the exam and or the format for completion should also be clearly articulated.
- **Assessment Workload** - Is designed and conducted in line with CCT guidelines for assessment workload giving due consideration to weighting of module and individual component assessments, avoiding over-assessment.

5.4.2 Academic Security

All internal assessors and administrators with responsibilities for assessment must apply the following guidance in relation to assessment security:

- **Security of assessment** - All reasonable efforts to protect the security of the assessment and particularly examination papers. They must not be shared with parties beyond those specified unless approved otherwise by the QA Office, in conjunction with the Dean of Academic Affairs. Digital access will normally be the provision of approved access to CCT platforms and not email. Where email is unavoidable it must be to authorised CCT accounts only (except for external examiners) and must be password protected.

- **Computer mediated assessment** - assessment that requires use of a computer and access to the internet (e.g. an online exam OR an in-person invigilated exam where students are using their laptops), must be designed and graded as an 'unrestricted resources exam' where students permitted and assumed to be able to access any available resource at their disposal.
- **Restricting access to resources in assessment** - if an assessment requires restricted access to resources (e.g. an exam where students are allowed to bring two pages of their own notes but cannot have unlimited access to resources including the internet), then it needs to be conducted as a paper based in-person assessment.

5.4.3 Academic Integrity and Assessment

- Assessment and grading is conducted in line with the Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct policy and related procedures.
- Assessment is current and modifications are made regularly to uphold academic integrity. Examination papers should never be identical to a previous paper.
- Academic integrity is promoted across modules and programmes by proactively:
 - Setting clear expectations and providing clear information to students in Plain English and using multiple means (e.g. both in person and in writing)
 - Using Assignment Briefs and rubrics
 - Setting realistic expectations around the use of Artificial Intelligence
 - Ensuring we are using valid assessment instruments and not using high security assessment approaches at the expense of assessment validity
 - Balancing High and Low Security Assessment Approaches to ensure integrity of overall programme assessment approaches
 - Designing Unrestricted Resources Assessment
 - Designing Restricted Resources Assessment
 - Applying principles of universal design to promote inclusivity
 - Adhering to CCT Assessment Workload guidelines.

5.4.4 Grading of Student Work Conduct for Internal Assessors

Internal assessors are responsible for ensuring the following is applied in relation to the grading of student work:

- Proposed assessment briefs, repeat assessment briefs, and associated marking schemes for each assessment are submitted in a timely manner for internal and external moderation within the specified timeframe.
- All assessment briefs and results are issued electronically through Moodle. Assessment dates are released as early in the semester as possible and no later than two weeks in advance.
- Complete the grading of student work, and submission of results, and making them available for internal moderation and external examiner moderation within the specified timeframes.
- Where a late penalty is applied this must be clearly indicated to the learner and notified to the Faculty Office. The Faculty Office will make a record of the penalty applied as well as the original result.
- to engage, and fulfil their responsibilities, in line with the internal and external moderation procedure
- Marks and formative feedback must be returned to learners within reasonable time (normally two weeks from the assessment submission date), and no less than one week before the exam period, and not before moderation is complete. In all cases marks are provisional until ratified at the Board of Examiners.
- To prepare, attend, engage with and generally fulfil their responsibilities regarding the meetings of the Board of Examiners in line with the related policy, and following the relevant process for appointing a nominee to fulfil their obligations in the event they
- To agree marks to be proposed for each learner, in consultation with the moderator and external

examiner and submit final assessment results to the Faculty Office in the agreed timeframe in advance of Boards of Examiners.

- To prepare, attend, engage with and generally fulfil their responsibilities regarding the meetings of the Board of Examiners in line with the related policy.
- Updating and releasing results and feedback on Moodle after Boards of Examiners.

5.5 Part E: Moderation Procedure

5.5.1 Appointment of Moderators

The Dean of Faculty or Programme Lead are responsible for appointing and ensuring arrangements are made for the implementation of internal moderation with:

- Competent and experienced internal assessors as internal moderators.
- Independent internal assessors, within reason, who have not had previous involvement in grading the work to be moderated.
- An appropriate mentor for internal assessors who are new to moderation.

External Examiners are appointed in line with the External Examiner Policy.

5.5.2 Implementing Internal Moderation of Assessment Briefs

Internal moderation of assessment briefs (continuous assessment and exam papers) is completed within the faculty prior to progressing assessment documentation to the external moderation process. Each lecturer is responsible for ensuring their appointed internal moderator receives complete assessment documentation including the assessment brief/exam paper, any supporting material or instructions and the grading rubric to be applied.

The internal moderator acts as a critical friend to ensure that assessment documentation aligns with the overall principles for assessment with particular emphasis on:

- Issues of clarity, ambiguity and consistency of requirements between question and marking scheme, assessment format, structure and supporting materials for all assessments.
- Suitability of the task for the award level and for the potential to enable attainment of the learning outcomes specified
- Suitability of the size of the assessment for its weighting
- Relevance of the task(s) / questions to the learning outcomes, and specifically ensuring that additional unnecessary tasks or questions are not included
- Alignment with programme and module content and teaching, learning and assessment strategies
- Appropriateness of the marking scheme in ensuring consistency, fairness and standards and appropriate allocation of marks
- For online mediated assessment, the moderation should include reviewing the exam in the intended format to ensure full functionality and access.

The internal moderator will report their findings and observations to the internal assessor responsible for the assessment.

The internal assessor is responsible for liaising with the internal moderator in a timely manner to discuss their findings, observations and any potential changes, and for making any required amendments in a timely manner. Both parties should seek to reach agreement on any matters identified. Where agreement cannot be reached, the matter should be referred to the Programme Leader or Dean of Faculty for resolution. Where necessary a third party may be required to undertake further review.

5.5.3 Implementing External Moderation of Assessment Briefs

Following the Internal Moderation of Assessment Briefs, the Faculty Office arranges for all assessment documentation to be submitted to the external examiner for external moderation.

The external examiner:

- Reviews the drafts of all assessment briefs and examination papers, marking schemes, worked solutions, etc. External examiners
- Have the right to make suggestions, criticisms, deletions, additions, and amendments as they deem appropriate.

The internal assessor is responsible for taking account of all suggestions, criticisms, deletions, additions and amendments proposed by the External Examiner(s).

5.5.4 Implementing Internal Moderation of Student Work

Following grading in line with the Marks and Standards, Assessment and Grading Policy, internal moderation of student work is conducted for all assessment within each faculty before progression of student work to the external moderation process. Each lecturer is responsible for ensuring their appointed internal moderator receives a complete package of graded student work. As the issuing of a mark / grade is a quality judgement, greater than the computation of marks from subsections, moderation should not normally result in the dispute over nominal differences. Internal moderators are required to:

- Review a sample of student work that includes, at a minimum, the following:
 - Between 15% and 20% of assessed work should be moderated:
 - For groups of less than 50 students, 20% of scripts should be moderated
 - For groups of more than 50 students, 15% of scripts should be moderated
 - A random and equal number of assessments for each grading band.
 - All borderline results, recognising that it is feasible for a learner to attain a standard that indicates they are close to moving into the next grade band and that raising the grade is not automatic.
 - All provisional fail grades.
 - Any assessment for which the original assessor has requested a second marker review for any assessment related concerns.
- Assure themselves that all student work has been marked in line with the grading rubric presented, that the grades awarded are reflective of the academic standard associated with that specific grade band and that students have been graded equitably.
- Reporting their findings and observations to the assessor responsible for the assessment. Both parties should seek to reach agreement on any matters identified. Where agreement cannot be reached, the matter should be referred to the Dean of Faculty for resolution. Where necessary a third party may be required to undertake further moderation.
- Completing a report and submitting it to the Faculty Office, including clear identification of student work that has been subject to internal moderation.
- All forms are retained by the Faculty Office in accordance with the College Records Retention Schedule.

5.5.5 Implementing External Moderation of Student Work

Following the Internal Moderation of Student Work, the Faculty Office arranges for a sample of student work to be submitted to the external examiner for external moderation.

- The Faculty Office provides External Examiners with a sample of student work that includes, at a minimum, the following:
 - Between 15% and 20% of assessed work:
 - For groups of less than 50 students, 20% of scripts should be moderated
 - For groups of more than 50 students, 15% of scripts should be moderated
 - A random and equal number of assessments for each grading band.
 - All borderline results, recognising that it is feasible for a learner to attain a standard that indicates they are close to moving into the next grade band and that raising the grade is not automatic.
 - All provisional fail grades.
 - Any assessment for which the original assessor has requested a second marker review for any assessment related concerns.
 - All capstone assessments in a level 9 programme.

5.5.6 Moderation of Student Work for Alternative Assessment Types

Programmes often incorporate assessments which are not paper or text based (e.g. presentations, role play, placement, simulations) requiring bespoke moderation processes.

In all cases where an alternative moderation method is to be employed, the Faculty member must ensure that:

- The assignment brief is subject to pre-release internal assessment review as normal
- The alternative moderation method must be documented (e.g. live attendance/moderation at the assessment event, video recording for future moderation, separate placement visits by assessor and moderator and discussion to determine suitability of grade to be awarded)
- The alternative moderation is formally approved by the Dean of Faculty or Dean of Academic Affairs and communicated to the External Examiner in advance.

POLICY CONTROL SHEET

Policy Title	Marks and Standards for CCT Programmes Leading to QQI Awards
Responsible Officer(s)	Dean of Academic Affairs, President
Issuance Date	June 2025
Effective Date	June 2025
Last Review Date	August 2022
Supersedes	V.1.2
Next Review Date	August 2027
Designated Reviewer(s)	Dean of Academic Affairs, QA Office
Scope	Internal Examiners, External Examiners, Boards of Examiners

Revision History

Revision	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approved By
New Publication	Sept 2018	New publication to concisely document the academic regulations and assessment procedures documented in the QA Manual, as applicable to CCT programmes leading to QQI awards.	Academic Council	Academic Council
Version 1.1	Sept 2019	Edits to reflects updates to policies following annual review of QA. Specifically, capping of overall module mark at 40% for any learner who fails a module at first attempt, except where PMC approved.	QA Committee	Academic Council
Version 1.2	August 2022	Updated to reflect access to award classifications higher than pass with repeat marks as per amended sectoral convention number 3.	QQI	Academic Council
Version 2.0	June 2025	New publication to concisely document the academic regulations and assessment procedures documented in the QA Manual, as applicable to CCT programmes leading to QQI awards.	Dean of Academic Affairs	Academic Council