

The Internal Quality Assurance and Appeals Policies

Date established:	May 2001
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Reviewed:	Annually
Purpose:	This policy aims to set out MITSkill's position regarding the Appeals Policy, Internal Quality Assurance Policy, Fair Assessment Policy, Registration & Certification Policy, Assessment Malpractice Policy & Late Submission of Work Policy

Appeals Policy (Assessment)

Aim:

- To enable the learner to enquire, question or appeal against an assessment decision.
- To attempt to reach agreement between the learner and the Work Based Trainer at the earliest opportunity.
- To standardise and record any appeal to ensure openness and fairness.
- To facilitate a learner's ultimate right of appeal to the awarding body where appropriate.
- To protect the interests of all learners and the integrity of the qualification.

In order to do this, the centre will:

- Inform the learner at induction, of the Appeals Policy and procedure
- Record, track and validate any appeal.
- Forward the appeal to the awarding body when a learner considers that a decision continues to disadvantage her/him after the internal appeals process has been exhausted.
- Have a staged appeals procedure.
- Will take appropriate action to protect the interests of other learners and the integrity of the qualification, when the outcome of an appeal questions the validity of other results.
- Monitor appeals to inform quality improvement.
- No candidate will be discriminated against because of gender, race, religion or sexual preference.

Appeals Process:

- Where practical, the candidate should discuss his/her objection to the assessment decision with the Work Based Trainer prior to making a formal appeal. The Work Based Trainer should be open-minded to the points raised by the candidate, discuss the matter with his/her

Internal Quality Assurer and a solution sought which makes an appeal unnecessary. If this cannot be achieved the candidate must be advised of his/her right to appeal.

- Appeals must be made in writing by the candidate, to the Centre Co-ordinator, within 14 days of the candidate being notified of the assessment decision against which the appeal is being made.
- The written appeal must be copied by the Centre Co-ordinator to the Work Based Trainer who made the decision and to the Internal Quality Assurer responsible for the Work Based Trainer.
- The Centre Co-ordinator must identify a member of his/her NVQ/SVQ programme team to evaluate the evidence and give a judgement. (the 'Appeals adjudicator').
- This adjudicator must hold D32, D33 or A1 plus evidence of continuing professional development (CPD), be technically competent in the skills area being assessed and be knowledgeable of the awarding body systems and procedures.
- The Centre Co-ordinator must ensure that the organisational structure of the centre is not a barrier to an objective judgement of the appeal. If necessary the centre should access independent resource to achieve this.
- The Appeals adjudicator and where appropriate independent advisor will report back to the Centre Co-ordinator who will make the final judgement on the appeal.
- **For Pearson's Candidates the Appeals Adjudicator is final with no further appeal to the awarding body.**
- If the candidate is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal a further appeal may be made to all awarding bodies with the exception of Pearsons. Where allowed this can be done in writing to the Compliance Leader at the awarding body within 14 days of the Centre Co-ordinators judgement being communicated to the candidate. The awarding body's Compliance Leader may appoint a member of staff to investigate this appeal within 14 days of receipt.
- The judgement will be communicated to the candidate by the awarding body Compliance Leader in writing within 21 days of the written appeal being received.

Appeals Process Conclusion:

- The adjudicator's judgement must be communicated to the candidate by the Centre Co-ordinator in writing within 21 days of the written appeal being received.
- This communication must be copied to the Work Based Trainer against whom the appeal was raised, his/her Internal Quality Assurer and the Appeals adjudicator.
- The Centre Co-ordinator must retain full details of the appeal within the Centre records for a period not less than 5 years.
- If the appeal is successful the Centre Co-ordinator must identify the specific failure in the Centre's assessment regime and implement corrective actions.
- The Centre Co-ordinator is at liberty to seek guidance from the External Verifier (EV) on any aspect of the appeals process.
- A successful appeal is not a reversal of the original assessment outcome. To establish this, the candidate may need to be re-assessed.

- The timescales quoted in these procedures are normal maximums. In extreme cases the timescales may need to be longer in which case the reasons for the longer timescales are to be documented.

INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY

Aim:

- To ensure that the IQA is valid, reliable and covers all Work Based Trainers and programme activity.
- To ensure that the IQA procedure is open, fair and free from bias.
- To ensure that there is accurate and detailed recording of IQA decisions.

In order to do this, the centre will:

- Ensure Work Based Trainers and Internal Quality Assurers are competent.
- Ensure that all Centre assessment instruments are verified as fit for purpose
- Verify an appropriately structured sample of Work Based Trainer work from all programmes, sites and teams, in line with the MITSKILLS Internal Quality Assurance Strategy. Ensure centre programmes conform to the awarding body standards and external verification requirements.
- Plan an internal quality assurance schedule, linked to assignment roles and in line with the MITSKILLS Internal Quality Assurance Strategy.
- Define, maintain and support effective internal quality assurance roles.
- Ensure that identified staff will maintain secure records of all internal quality assurance activity.
- Brief and train staff of the requirements for current internal quality assurance procedures.
- Promote internal quality assurance as a development process between staff.
- Provide standardised IQA documentation
- Use the outcome of internal quality assurance to enhance future assessment practice.
- Work Based Trainers and Internal Quality Assurers are regularly monitored in line with the MITSKILLS Internal Quality Assurance Strategy.
- Special assessment needs are identified and assessment procedures are adjusted to suit the identified needs.
- Ensure all Candidates, Work Based Trainers and Internal Quality Assurers understand the appeals procedures.
- No candidate will be discriminated against because of gender, race, religion or sexual preference.

Conflict of Interest

- **MITSkills has a conflict of interest policy which is covered in our Company Rules this integral to our Internal Quality Assurance and this policy requires compliance with that document this covers all staff, contractors ,agency workers, and freelance staff.**

REGISTRATION & CERTIFICATION POLICY

Aim:

- To register individual learners to the correct programme within the agreed timescales.
- To claim valid learner certificates within agreed timescales.
- To construct a secure, accurate and accessible audit trail to ensure that individual learner
- Registration and certification claims can be tracked to the certificate which is issued for each learner.

In order to do this, the centre will:

- Register each learner within the awarding body requirements.
- Provide a mechanism for programme teams to check the accuracy of learner registrations.
- Make each learner aware of their registration status.
- Inform the awarding body of withdrawals, transfers or changes to learner as required by the awarding organization.
- Ensure that certificate claims are timely and based solely on internally verified assessment records or claim forms.
- Provide unit certification claims for learners where appropriate.
- Audit certificate claims made to the awarding body.
- Audit the certificates received from the awarding body to ensure accuracy and completeness.
- Keep all records safely and securely for a period required by the awarding body.

FAIR ACCESS TO ASSESSMENT POLICY

Aims:

- MITSkills aims to ensure that assessment methodology and access to assessment, is valid, reliable, fair and does not disadvantage or advantage any group of learners or individuals.
- MITSkills aims to give Equal opportunities including fair access to assessment to all our learners.
- We aim to ensure that the assessment procedure is open, fair and free from bias and to national standards.
- This is underpinned by our aim to ensure that equality of opportunity is promoted in all areas of our products and services and that unlawful or unfair discrimination, whether direct or indirect, is eliminated.

- MITSkills policy is staff and centres are to deliver accurate and detailed recording of assessment decisions. They are to ensure assessment procedure is open, fair and free from bias and consistent. All assessment is to use the codes of practice (2006) as guidance and adhere to regulations laid down by the relevant awarding and validation bodies, as well as current equality legislation.

The role of the IQA

In order to do this, we task our lead IQA's in leading procedures to deliver this policy and ensure that all Workbased Teachers, teaching staff, and invigilators are conforming to Fair Access to Assessment(including other relevant policies) , the aims stated above and the following principles and responsibilities.

All employees

All employees and MITSkills centres are to follow the aims of this policy and the associated relevant policies and MITSkills principles listed below.

MITSkills recognises that the following policies are relevant to Fair Access to Assessment.

- Equality and Diversity Statement and Policy
- Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration (Assessment) Policy
- Learners Charter

MITSkills will expect the following Principles to be applied for all learners by relevant staff, lead by the relevant IQA

- Ensure that learners are provided with assignments that are fit for purpose, to enable them to produce appropriate evidence for assessment.
- Ensure Workbased Trainers and teachers are competent and qualified.
- Ensure Workbased Trainers and teachers are regularly monitored.
- The candidate is made fully aware of the assessment process.
- Workbased Trainers and Teachers and candidates complete assessment plans which are reviewed against progress.
- The candidate has access to their Workbased Trainer and they know how to make contact when needed.
- Any learner specific assessment needs are identified recorded and assessment procedures are adjusted as far as is reasonably possible even, if this is to delay an assessment, (all adjustments should be advised and agreed with the IQA).
- R.P.L.(Recognition of Prior Learning) MITSkills will evaluate any prior learning or certification achieved by a learner; ensuring where appropriate that the evidence presented/recorded is mapped to their current learning aim.
- Through unavoidable circumstances on either side, should a learner not be able to fully complete their main aim, MITSkills will unit accredit where appropriate.

- Workbased Trainers and Teachers assess learner's evidence using only the published assessment and grading criteria.
- Ensure that assessment decisions are impartial, valid and reliable.
- Not MITSkills or 'cap' learner achievement if work is submitted late.
- Develop assessment procedures that will minimise the opportunity for malpractice
- Maintain accurate and detailed records of assessment decisions.
- Maintain a robust and rigorous internal verification procedure.
- Provide samples for external verification, as required by the awarding body.
- Monitor external quality assurance reports and undertake any remedial action required.
- Share good assessment practice between all awarding organisation programme teams.
- Ensure that awarding organization's assessment methodology and the role of the Workbased trainer are understood by all awarding organizations' staff.
- Provide resources to ensure that assessment can be performed accurately and appropriately.
- Provide resources to ensure that assessment is performed on all units before delivering to candidates.
- Ensure that the relevant awarding bodies procedures and process for Reasonable Adjustment and or Special Consideration are adhered to where required on behalf of a learner, by flagging to the relevant IQA who is then responsible for following up the request with the awarding body .

Learners.

- Where a learner believes they have an access to fair assessment issue that has not been addressed by the relevant staff they can raise a formal complaint via MITSkills Client and Learner Complaints policy.

ASSESSMENT MALPRACTICE POLICY

Aim:

- To identify and minimise the risk of malpractice by staff or learners.
- To respond to any incident of alleged malpractice promptly and objectively.
- To standardise and record any investigation of malpractice to ensure openness and fairness.
- To impose appropriate penalties and/or sanctions on learners or staff where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice are proven.
- To protect the integrity of this centre and awarding organisation qualifications.

In order to do this, the centre will:

- Seek to avoid potential by using the induction period and the student handbook to inform learners of the centre's policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice.
- Show learners the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources.

- Ask learners to declare that their work is their own.
- Ask learners to provide evidence that they have interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and acknowledged any sources used.
- Conduct an investigation in a form commensurate with the nature of the malpractice allegation. Such an investigation will be supported by the Centre Coordinator/Quality Manager/Programme Manager and all personnel linked to the allegation. It will proceed through the stages as recommended by the appropriate awarding body.
- Make the individual fully aware at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven.
- Give the individual the opportunity to respond to the allegations made.
- Inform the individual of the avenues for appealing against any judgment made.
- Document all stages of the investigation. Retain all relevant paperwork until a decision has been reached.

Where malpractice is proven, this centre will apply the following penalties/sanctions as required:

- Written warning (informal).
- Examination or assessment re-marked.
- Examination or assessment (unit) (qualification) result declared void.
- Bar from examination.
- Special conditions.
- Training/mentoring.
- Bar from involvement.

Definition of Malpractice by Learners

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by this centre at its discretion:

- Plagiarism of any nature.
- Collusion by working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work.
- Copying (including the use of ICT to aid copying).
- Deliberate destruction of another's work.
- Fabrication of results or evidence.
- False declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework.
- Impersonation by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment/examination/test.

Definition of Malpractice by Centre Staff

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by this centre at its discretion:

- Improper assistance to candidates.

- Inventing or changing marks for internally assessed work (coursework or portfolio evidence) where there is insufficient evidence of the candidates' achievement to justify the marks given or assessment decisions made.
 - Failure to keep candidate coursework/portfolios of evidence secure.
 - Fraudulent claims for certificates.
 - Inappropriate retention of certificates.
 - Assisting learners in the production of work for assessment, where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment, for example where the assistance involves centre staff producing work for the learner.
 - Producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the learner has not generated.
 - Allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the learner's own, to be included in a learner's assignment/task/portfolio/coursework.
 - Facilitating and allowing impersonation.
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- Misusing the conditions for special learner requirements, for example where learners are permitted support, such as an amanuensis, this is permissible up to the point where the support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment.
 - Falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or fraud.
 - Fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the learner completing all the requirements of assessment.

LATE SUBMISSION OF ASSESSED WORK POLICY

This document provides the principles and regulations governing the deadlines for the submission of assessed work and the penalties applied for the late submission of assessed work, the penalties applied for the late submission of assessed work and the mitigation of such penalties.

General Principles

MITSkills seeks to ensure that the assessment of students is conducted in a fair and secure way so that students are not advantaged by their late submission of assessed work and staff may provide timely developmental feedback to students on their assessments.

MITSkills has determined that students shall not be permitted to submit assessed work later than 14 days after the published deadline for submission and has agreed a tariff of penalties for the late submission of assessed work up to 14 days after the submission deadline.

Where a student has valid reasons for submitting work late, the penalty applied for late submission may be removed through submission by the tutor to the departmental manager.

Regulations (Submission of Assessed Work)



Tutors shall provide learners with information relating to the assessment/assignment which shall contain as a minimum the following: assessment details, dates of deadlines for submission of coursework or any other assessment requirements.

Learner performance in coursework shall normally be assessed and recorded as a mark. All marks shall be in the form of a percentage (i.e. out of 100%).

No changes or additions may be made to work after it has been submitted and receipted.

Regulations (Penalties for Late Submission)

Where coursework is submitted late the following penalties for late work shall be applied to the mark or grade for that work:

Criterion based assignments/assessments

For criterion based assignment(s)/assessment(s) the grade may be reduced to a Pass if late submissions are not previously agreed with the course tutor.

Marks based assignments/assessments

If the work is up to 14 calendar days late without prior arrangement with the course tutor then 10 marks shall be deducted but if the work would otherwise pass then the mark for the work shall be reduced to no lower than the pass mark for the module.

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