



Standardisation and Quality Assurance Policy

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Areas Covered:-

- **Standardisation and Quality Assurance**
- **Assessment Policy**
- **Referral & Deferral Policy**
- **Internal Verification and Moderation Policy**

SCOPE

The primary purpose of quality assurance is the enhancement of the quality of the learner's learning experience and the maintenance of academic standards in the context of an increasingly diverse learner population.

The Quality Assurance Framework is essentially a structured manifestation of good academic practice. It comprises the core quality assurance and control procedures, which promote quality enhancement and the maintenance of academic standards. It incorporates feedback loops that inform, modify and improve the quality and standards of the educational provision at CIA. It is a key element in the stated objective of the Academy to "create an effective and sustainable structure for the development of high quality teaching and learning by our students at CIA".

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to give quality assurance in the assessment process by establishing quality control mechanisms for assessment and, through a system of internal verification, moderation and standardisation.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

- Assessment is the measurement or evaluation of students' knowledge and understanding and skills as well as attitudes and values
- Verification is the process whereby the assessment carried out (internally) by assessors is checked for consistency and quality by other teachers or managers or (externally) by professionals nominated by the Academy and/or external awarding authorities usually applicable to qualifications offered.
- Validation is the process whereby it is ensured that the standard of the assignments set is appropriate for the target award.
- Moderation is the process whereby it is ensured that the marks/grades awarded are reasonable for any piece of work
- Standardisation is the process whereby it is ensured that the same criteria are applied, where relevant, across all courses taught within the Academy.
- An Awarding Body is any external body which has the authority to award accreditation for a course of learning.
- Quality Assurance comprises all the policies, systems and processes directed to ensuring the enhancement of the quality and standards of the educational provision.
- Academic Standards are the expected levels of academic attainment, which are used to describe and measure the academic requirements and performance of students.
- Quality Control relates to the arrangements (procedures, organisation etc.), which verify that teaching, learning and assessment are being carried out in an appropriate manner.

ASSESSMENT POLICY

Care International Academy is committed to providing learners with an assessment process that is both fair in intent and in outcome and therefore addresses the basic principles of authenticity, consistency, transparency, validity, reliability, currency and sufficiency.

The policy relates to the Academy strategic objective of providing an outstanding student experience and the key institutional risks of:

- ✓ failure to provide an outstanding experience, leading to decline in levels of recruitment, retention and achievement, and student satisfaction;
- ✓ failure to achieve (and meet the needs of) a diverse student population;
- ✓ failure to comply with legislative framework ; and
- ✓ poor quality assessments

The intended audience for the policy is academic and learning support staff, including those involved in the design, approval and review of courses. The policy is also made available to students.

The Academy believes that assessment is an integral part of effective learning processes, and has established the following principles for the design and management of there of:-

1. Each module/unit or course element will have an assessment strategy which is aligned with the intended learning outcomes and learning activities;
2. All stated learning outcomes for a module/unit/course element will be accumulatively assessed;
3. Assessments will enable students to demonstrate that they have met the learning outcomes of the module(s)/units/course elements and the overall aims and learning outcomes of their course or programme of studies and achieved the standard required for the award;
4. Each course will include a variety of assessment types and an appropriate balance of assessment for summative and formative purposes;
5. Information about assessment, including the details of assignments and due dates for submission, schedules for examinations if applicable, assessment or grading criteria, assessment regulations and arrangements for publication of results where these are course specific, will be published in the Academy Student Handbook, course handbooks, module outlines or equivalent as appropriate. This will be done at the start of the academic year or semester (or other defined teaching period) in which the course commences;
6. Assessment tasks and assessment items will be reliable, valid and authentic;
7. The scheduling and amount of assessment will be manageable for students;
8. Constructive and timely relevant feedback will be an integral part of the assessment process, usually a turnaround period of 5-6 weeks is the norm.
9. Assessment processes and regulations will be transparent, consistent and equitable across courses;

10. Assessment processes and outcomes will be monitored and evaluated through the six monthly monitoring process.

Formative, Formal and Informal Assessment

Formal assessments are those which have a summative role in contributing to the final grade or mark for the module/unit or course element. Informal assessments have a more formative purpose and do not carry a grade contributing to the final mark or grade for the module; their primary purpose is to improve the learning of students. Informal assessment can include peer assessment and self-assessment as well as tutor-assessment, and may include evaluation of the effectiveness of the learning process carried out while the module is in progress. It is recognised that summative assessments can also have a formative function.

Feedback and Return of Student Assessments

In normal circumstances work would be marked and returned to students with feedback within six to eight working weeks of the date of submission. Where, for valid reasons, this cannot be achieved, the member of staff concerned should consult with the course leader and where appropriate the Head of Department; to agree an alternative date and inform the students affected of the revised date of return. In such circumstances it may be desirable to provide students with feedback in advance of the return of the assignment and determination of the provisional grade.

Monitoring, review and evaluation

- The Implementation of the assessment policy is monitored through the student perception questionnaires, the course review process and the moderation report.
- Monitoring, review and evaluation of this policy occurs through the self assessment process.
- The Committee of the board undertakes the monitoring of this policy for Quality and Standards.
- The Academic Board has key responsibility for receiving, approving and establishing this policy.
- The Academic Board will approve this policy annually, convening a working group as appropriate.

Care International Academy also negotiates special arrangements where applicable with the public examination boards and awarding bodies for candidates with special needs in securing adequate arrangements for access to and support in the assessment process.

REFERRAL AND DEFERRAL POLICY

The Assessment Board, chaired by **Director of Studies**, will meet once in 3 months to discuss matters concerning the assessment of learners and procedures of assessment in order to ensure that all assessments are conducted in accordance with its Assessment policy and is carried out in manner which is fair, impartial and consistent.

The Assessment Boards will also be responsible for the conduct of assessment of candidates, that is:

- a) Considering and determining the assessment grading of all candidates, including the class or grade of award of those completing the course/programme of study.
- b) Making recommendations to candidates who fail to satisfy the assessment requirements and how they can redeem their position, setting clear dates by which re-assessment should occur. (**see dates and deadlines below**)
- c) Reviewing the assessment arrangements for the course/programme of study as a whole and make recommendations to the Course Leaders, Tutors and Quality Academic Board.
- d) Confirm and review the minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising.
- e) Assessment outcomes are Pass or Fail

Assessment Submission Procedure

1. Assignments **must** be submitted by the due date. [or negotiated/approved extension date]
2. Submission dates for your written assessments will be confirmed by your tutor. These dates can also be found on Notice Board under the module information.
3. All written assessments should be submitted by 4pm on the day of submission. If learners submit their assessments after this time they will be considered late, thereby attaining a **FAIL**, unless they have extenuating/mitigating circumstances. (**see below**)
4. The Assignment Coversheet will be made available in a hard copy at the reception. The learner must complete the relevant sections and attach all pages to their work prior to submission. If they attempt to submit work without the completed coversheet you will be referred back to the Module Tutor. Assessments without the coversheet will not be accepted under any circumstances.
5. Assessments will be accepted by prescribed methods, such as, email, hard copy and soft copy.

Late Submission of Coursework

The Academy has very strict regulations regarding the deadlines for assessment submission. Submitting an assessment late automatically attracts a **FAIL** grade. As such, students should be aware that this may affect their chances of successfully passing the module, and may impact on your ability to complete your course and graduate or progress onto the next level of study.

It may be that the student has genuine reasons for not being able to submit his/her work on time, in which case he/she should speak to their module leader to chat through his/her situation to see whether there may be a case for applying for extenuating/mitigating circumstances.**(see below)**

Alternatively, if they are struggling with time management which may lead to submitting their assessment late it is strongly recommended that they seek help from the assessment board.

What is a referral?

We offer a very supportive assessment policy, where students can make a second attempt at a piece of coursework or resit an exam if they fail. He/she can re-submit it within **4 (four) weeks** of the initial decision.

What is a deferral?

If students are experiencing difficulties which mean that they can't submit a piece of coursework or sit an exam (we call these extenuating circumstances), they may be able to have an extended deadline for the coursework, or to sit the exam later in the academic year.

Extenuating/Mitigating circumstances may include:

- Death/critical illness in the family
- Sudden out of station transfer imposed by employer
- Loss of jobs

All significant extenuating circumstances relating to individual students must be documented. The Assessment Boards will not rely solely on oral reports.

There are strict criteria about what is or isn't an extenuating circumstance though, so the student would need to talk to his/her module or programme leader about the reasons for not being able to participate in the assessment. If the assessment board feels that the reasons meet the criteria for extenuating circumstances they will complete an Extenuating Circumstances form with you. Once they submit this, their assessment (either the coursework or the exam) can be deferred to a later date, i.e., within **8 (eight) weeks** of the initial submission date.

If the students are offered a deferral, provided they hand in the coursework at the agreed date or sit the exam, their marks will not be restricted, the student will receive the full marks and will not be penalised.

INTERNAL VERIFICATION & MODERATION POLICY

Purpose

The Internal Verification and Moderation Policy is designed to develop and provide an effective Internal Verification and Moderation System across all areas of the Academy to ensure that the quality criteria is as determined by the respective awarding bodies.

Statement

The Internal Verification and Moderation Policy is a sub policy of the Quality Assurance Policy and is designed to provide a consistency and transparency of assessment for learners.

The Policy underpins the Academy Mission Statement and priorities arising from Strategic Planning.

Aims and Objectives

Through a common approach Care International Academy will demonstrate a coherent quality system in all programmes to learners, Internal Verifiers and Moderators. The Academy will assure the quality of assessment and thereby increase levels of customer satisfaction.

The establishment of the criteria detailed below will ensure the effectiveness of the system:

- A common appeals procedure against assessment decisions.
- Procedure for security and ownership of portfolios of evidence and assessment documentation in line with the appropriate awarding body recommendations
- Entitlement of candidates including:

- ✓ Reasonable timescale for assessment, feedback and appeals
- ✓ Entry for external tests, where applicable
- ✓ Entitlement to APL, and consequent fast tracking, if relevant
- ✓ Entitlement to repeat areas of the programme
- Arrangements for monitoring administrative systems
- Systems for standardising assessment
- Arrangements for Internal Verification evaluation and review
- Provision for course team meetings to address Internal Verification and Moderation issues as part of course review and self assessment
- Arrangements for regular meetings of Internal Verifiers/Moderators within Curriculum Areas and across Academy Liaison with External Verifiers/Moderators
- Certification of staff as assessors and Internal Verifiers/ Moderators to national standards

Responsibilities

Management have a responsibility to ensure appropriate Internal Verifiers/Moderators are allocated to courses, allocated time to carry out the work and to fulfill the quality assurance role of the Internal Verifier/Moderator as set out in the Internal Verification and Moderation Policy.

The **Director of Studies** is required to monitor External Verifier/Moderator reports and ensure action points are carried out within Curriculum Areas.

The **Internal Verifier/Moderator** is required to support assessors by providing advice and assistance and to ensure the quality assurance requirements of the Academy and awarding body are met

The **Assessor** is required to work with the Internal Verifier/Moderator in ensuring the assessment and quality assurance requirements of the Academy and awarding body are met.

Moderation and Verification of Assessments

It is the responsibility of the Board of Assessment to ensure scrutiny and approval of all summative assignments and coursework assignments, including specific assessment criteria or equivalent, before publication to students. The purpose is to ensure that the standards set are appropriate and consistent across modules/units/ course elements, and that the assessments are reliable, valid and authentic. The Board of Assessment may delegate this task to the course/subject team.

Anonymous marking

Wherever possible and practical the anonymity of students in the marking process will be maintained. Anonymous marking is a system whereby the student's identity is not made known to the internal/external examiner at the time of marking. Its purpose is to protect students and markers against the possibility of bias, whether conscious or unconscious.

The student's assessed work should be identified only by a reference number, which will normally be the student number found on their identity card.

Implementation of the Policy

1. Standardisation/Moderation Meeting

Care International Academy has a duty to operate explicit, written internal verification procedures to ensure:

- the accuracy and consistency of assessment decisions between assessors operating at the centre
- that assessors are consistent in their interpretation and application of the national occupational standards of the award and/or the respective awarding bodies.

2. Internal Verification Allocation

A limit of 3 groups per Internal Verifier/Moderator is recommended. A course could be made up of more than one group. A group would normally be approximately 15 to 20 learners. For each group that the Internal Verifier/Moderator is responsible, the equivalent of one hour per week should be made available to carry out their duties. In some instances, additional time may be required for specific industrial links. The recommended minimum number of Internal Verifiers/Moderators per group is two, to enable cross verification/moderation and quality procedures to be maintained if both are assessors on the course. However, one Internal Verifier/Moderator may be sufficient, if that individual does not also carry out assessment on that course.

The Internal Verification and Moderation Policy and supporting documentation will be implemented by all Assessors, Internal Verifiers/Moderators and External Moderators.

3. Verification/Moderation Sampling Strategy

Care International Academy uses a 100% sampling strategy for all programmes. This ensures the accurate picture of the quality of assessments. This will also eliminate the issue of fraudulent or “Ghost” claims

N.B. Whilst care has been taken to ensure the accuracy of information included this is not a legal document and the Academy does not accept liability for errors or omissions. The document sets out a policy which the Academy is seeking to achieve, and as such is not contractually binding or part of the terms and conditions of staff.

Date: _____

Name: _____

Signature: _____

(For and on behalf of Care International Academy)

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