Policy name	**Contingency policy, procedure and process for alternative assessment**
QQI Core Guideline/s	**Assessment of Learners** **Support for Learners.**
Policy applies to	☒ All ☐ Specific *(outline organisational unit, etc.)*
	☐ Staff only ☐ Students only **x** Staff and Learners
Approved by	**Donegal ETB FET Quality Council**
Approval date	**16th April 2020**
Effective Date	**20th April 2020**
Reference Documents	**See Page 29**
Updated	**11/05/2020**

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Donegal ETB's contingency assessment arrangements to support learners to complete their course / programme of learning are transparent, fair, reliable and valid.

2. Scope/Application

This policy applies to all Donegal ETB QQI validated programmes [1*] as per the QQI Guiding Principles for Alternative Assessment. Donegal Education and Training Board's Contingency Assessment arrangements mark a clear distinction between:

- assessment for progression within a programme

  and

- assessment for the final stage of a programme which leads to an award in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) (award stage assessment).

It should be noted that these contingency arrangements do not apply in the following instances:

- Summative assessment events **that do not require immediate assessment** for the purposes of completing their programme of study leading to an award.
- Summative assessment that is dependent on **a specific environment and requires use of specific equipment**, and where no other option is possible (e.g. remote skills demonstration) should not be carried out. Deferral will be necessary. Examples of these include, Beauty and Hairdressing Practical's, Engineering practical's, etc.
- Assessments that seek evidence of appropriate skills, aptitudes and attitudes **that can only be acquired and assessed in the workplace and that have professional or regulatory body requirement to do so**. e.g., Nursing Studies

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[1*]Contingency policy does not apply to pre-2016 apprenticeship programmes which are Coordinated by SOLAS or other awarding body programmes and qualifications such as those coordinated by City& Guilds, VTCT/ITEC or ICS Skills which have their own Covid-19 contingency arrangements regarding assessment in place. In these instances, the other Awarding body or Coordinating provider of apprenticeship arrangements will supersede the scope this policy

3.   Policy

This policy and related procedures has been developed by Donegal ETB's FET Quality Assurance Support Service as a response to the Covid-19 Emergency Restrictions and are informed by QQI's Guiding Principles for Alternative Assessment (March, 2020). Alternative methods of assessment are being used solely and strictly on an exceptional basis (COVID19) and will have no precedent value into the future.

Donegal ETB commits to:

- Continuing to quality assure all assessment processes.
- Ensuring that learners / students have an opportunity to complete their course by successfully evidencing the skills, knowledge and competencies that they have gained through their participation.
- Offering a fair and equitable alternative assessment to that which is detailed in the validated programme.
- Ensuring that the assessment of all skills, knowledge and competencies are criterion referenced and that any new assessment technique that is introduced maintains the same weighting as the original assessment, and as outlined in the validated programme.
- Ensuring that all changes to the assessment technique are approved within the ETB's Quality governance structures.
- Clearly communicating all relevant information to assist in the changes to assessment.
- Developing an agreed contingency plan, and submitting a copy to QQI. The agreed contingency plan will also be published on Donegal ETB's website.

4. Responsibility

- **The Assessor (Teachers/Tutors/Instructors)**
  - o With the support of your manager/programme co-ordinator, identify where there is a need for an alternative assessment.
  - o Assessors will design the alternative assessments. To ensure consistency, assessors may work collaboratively with the Quality Assurance Support Service programme co-ordinator to undertake this work. Its reliability and usability will need to be tested i.e. will learners / trainees / students be able to use

it? Will assessors be able to oversee it? If not, consider another option.
- o Replace the current assessment technique with the alternative technique.
- o With your programme co-ordinator / manager, inform learners and ascertain if they have all the supports needed to complete the assessment. It is essential that GDPR is adhered to, therefore, if you do not have the email address of each learner, your line manager must make the necessary contact with learners.
- o With your programme coordinator / manager, prepare a summary document (**Appendix 3**) of the revised assessments *for noting* at the Quality Council.
- o When assessments are submitted, allocate marks and grade in accordance with the assessment rubric / marking scheme.
- o Learners complete a statement of authenticity, verifying that the work is their own.
- o Once the marking is complete, Donegal ETB's authentication process will apply where possible i.e., portfolios will be internally verified, externally authenticated and results submitted for approval to the Certification Approval Board.

- **Programme Coordinators/Centre Managers**
  - o Participate in audit of current assessment status of courses.
  - o Support instructors / tutors / teachers/ assessors in identifying needs and designing alternative assessment techniques, if necessary
  - o With instructors / tutors / teachers/ assessors prepare a summary document (**Appendix 2**) of the revised assessments '*for noting' at* the Quality Council.
  - o Liaise with learners and ensure adequate supports are available to ensure that they can avail of the alternative assessment technique.
  - o Ensure that Donegal ETB's Quality Assurance processes are adhered to.
  - o Arrange / carry out / support internal verification as possible.
  - o In conjunction with QASS, arrange External Authentication, where possible.
  - o Facilitate any Assessment appeals that may present in conjunction with the QASS.

- **Quality Assurance Support Service** **

  o Support the identification of where alternative assessments are needed.
  o Support assessors to develop the alternative assessments and techniques, as required.
  o Prepare a summary of alternative assessment technique proposals, for noting, at the FET Quality Council.
  o Support the internal verification process.
  o Arrange the External Authentication process, where possible.
  o Collate results for submission to the Certification Approval Board
  o Facilitate any Assessment appeals that may present in conjunction with the Centre Managers/Programme Coordinators.

- **FET Senior Management**
  o Ensure resources and supports (equipment, training, mentoring) are available to implement alternative assessment techniques, as required.

- **DETB FET Quality Council**.
  o Note the alternative Assessments and techniques presented in summary by the centres and programmes.

5.   Procedure & Process – Change of Assessment Technique

This procedure describes a protocol for the change of assessment technique from examination or skills demonstration, as described in a validated programme, to an alternative assessment technique. This procedure will be invoked by DETB centres/Schools where a module's theory examination or skills demonstration cannot be undertaken by learners as a result of the Covid-19 Emergency closure.

All assessment technique changes that arise, having invoked this procedure, must be planned carefully with the quality assurance of the

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** The Quality Assurance Support Service (QASS) comprises of the Quality Assurance Co-ordinator, QA Support Officer, Training Standard Officers, Assistant TS Officer and Administrator.

alternative assessment technique rigorously maintained. All changes must be clearly communicated to learners and must include supports to enable completion of that assessment.

Learners may opt to defer their assessment if unable to engage, for whatever reason, in a centre's alternative assessment arrangement. In the event that learners defer their assessment, they must be informed of any consequences that will result (e.g. negating their CAO application, lengthening attendance requirements on the course).

The following process will support the identification and design of alternative assessment techniques.

5.1 Identification of need for alternative assessment technique

a. FET senior managers will **audit** the centres and programmes to clarify the status of current assessment schedules and also to get a record of all **outstanding module theory examinations and skills demonstrations.**

b. The results of the survey will be analysed and, where needed, alternative assessment techniques will be discussed with relevant staff and learners/students.

c. In line with the QQI Guidelines, assessments that are not critical to supporting learners to complete their course may be deferred to a later certification period. QASS will advise on this. Learners/Students who wish to sit exams or submit portfolios / practical work at a later date will be facilitated to do so.

5.2   Designing alternative assessment instrument

a. Where alternative techniques are deemed necessary, the following applies:
   - The need for an alternative assessment technique is recognised
   - Assessors will design the alternative assessments. To ensure consistency, assessors may work collaboratively with the Quality Assurance Support Service programme co-ordinator to undertake this work.
   - **Appendix 1** also provides guidelines for designing alternative assessment techniques.
   - Programme coordinator submits proposed alternative technique to QASS. **Appendix 2** provides a form to record and submit the proposal.

b. The QASS will review and prepare all proposed alternative assessment techniques for submission and noting at the FET Quality Council.

c. **Learners** are informed by the programme manager/coordinators of changes that are being made to the assessment.

d. FET Centres that implement alternative assessments should keep copies of all locally devised alternative assessment instruments and the corresponding mapping documents on file to support the External Authentication process.

e. FET Centres should provide an opportunity for both assessors and learners to try out the new assessment technique/format for submission: **i.e., test the assessment method and process.**
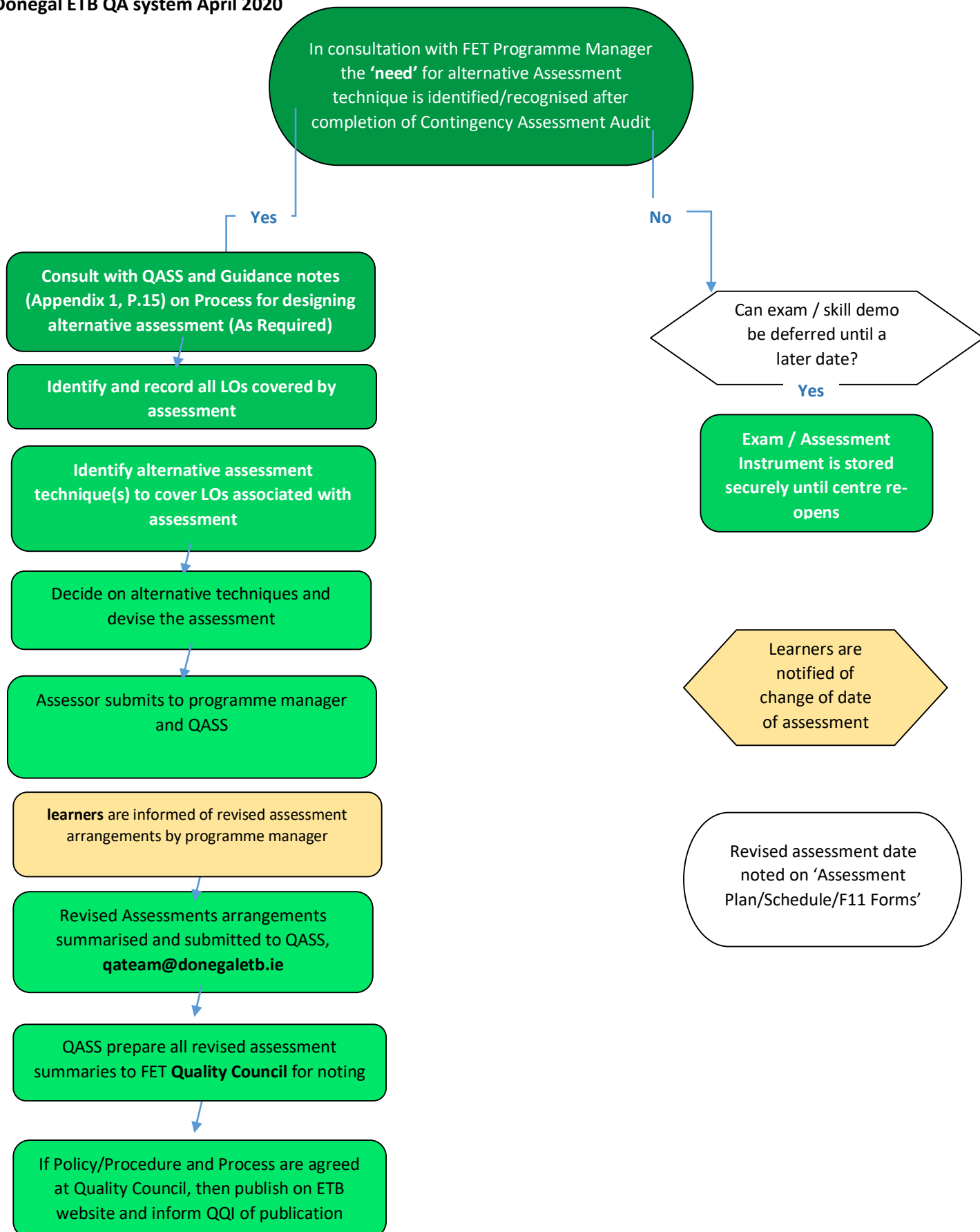
5.3   External input – Work Placement

Work experience and work placements may have been at different stages when the Covid-19 Emergency Restrictions were introduced. The following alternative arrangements for assessment will apply if required:

● Learners who have fully completed their work placement should be asked to submit their final evidence – records, Skills demonstration, journals, etc. Any outstanding documents, testimonials from their workplace supervisor should be sought via email, scans, or telephone conversation. If this is not possible, learner / candidate should sign a declaration that all efforts have been made to obtain the outstanding records.

● Learners who did not participate in their work placement, but who have worked within the last 5 years can be supported to explore if they can evidence the learning outcomes in the award specification through the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process. Donegal ETB's RPL Steering Group will support and advise on this process.

● Learners who have partially completed their work placement should submit all records to their programme coordinator and assessor. Programme coordinator and assessor should check if any of the outstanding outcomes have been evidenced in another module. As per the QQI Guidelines, it is essential that the core elements of each outcome should be evidenced.

> "Intended learning outcomes can sometimes be quite granular and include elements that are incidental rather than essential to expectations for the qualification. If the current situation makes the achievement of such incidental outcomes impossible, it is reasonable (subject to the approval of the appropriate governance structures) to replace or remove them, provided it does not substantially affect the overall expected learning outcomes. This does not apply to core learning outcomes associated with the qualification; these cannot be compromised. Nor does it apply to any core regulatory or professional body requirements save with the agreement of the relevant body. (QQI Guidelines, March 2020)

6. V1 Process Map-Changing Assessment Technique
Donegal ETB QA system April 2020

In consultation with FET Programme Manager the **'need'** for alternative Assessment technique is identified/recognised after completion of Contingency Assessment Audit

Yes

No

Consult with QASS and Guidance notes (Appendix 1, P.15) on Process for designing alternative assessment (As Required)

Identify and record all LOs covered by assessment

Identify alternative assessment technique(s) to cover LOs associated with assessment

Decide on alternative techniques and devise the assessment

Assessor submits to programme manager and QASS

learners are informed of revised assessment arrangements by programme manager

Revised Assessments arrangements summarised and submitted to QASS, **qateam@donegaletb.ie**

QASS prepare all revised assessment summaries to FET **Quality Council** for noting

If Policy/Procedure and Process are agreed at Quality Council, then publish on ETB website and inform QQI of publication

Can exam / skill demo be deferred until a later date?

Yes

Exam / Assessment Instrument is stored securely until centre re-opens

Learners are notified of change of date of assessment

Revised assessment date noted on 'Assessment Plan/Schedule/F11 Forms'

7. Internal Verification and Authentication Process

The authentication and certification process will continue and adhere to the awarding body's certification timetable and will go through the normal Assessment process of Internal Verification, External Authentication where possible, Results Approval and Appeals Staff and External Authenticators will be supported to work within the permitted COVID-19 restriction guidelines as permitted by the HSE in order to carry out the assessment process.

Contingency Authentication Processes for QQI awards within COVID-19 restricted access to centres

7.1 Scope:

The scope of this change to the current authentication process is to maintain the integrity of the assessment process within the current COVID-19 restrictions while also supporting the continued assessment of students and is supported by supplementary guidance published by QQI for tertiary providers. The processes and procedures within this contingency document will have no precedent value when COVID-19 restrictions and access to the centres are lifted. Current forms and documents used by Further Education Centres and the Training centre courses will continue to be utilised as and when available however changes regarding the approach to Internal Verification, sampling learner evidence and the appointment of EA's will have to be implemented due to access to centres and learner evidence in some cases. Due to these circumstances a revised sampling strategy is proposed for the Authentication processes.

7.2 Background

One of the most crucial components of a provider's assessment framework is its authentication process. For QQI awards, the operation of internal verification and external authentication processes is a core quality assurance mechanism which seeks to ensure fairness, consistency and validity of assessment and of assessment outcomes.

Donegal ETB's FET authentication and certification process will continue and adhere to the awarding body's certification timetable and will go through the normal Assessment process of Internal Verification, External Authentication where possible, Results Approval and Appeals. Staff and

External Authenticators will be supported to work within the permitted COVID-19 restriction guidelines as permitted by the HSE in order to carry out the assessment process.

7.3 Internal Verification Process

The purpose of Internal Verification is to make sure that all learners have had fair and consistent experiences of assessment throughout Donegal ETB Further Education and Training (FET) services. The Donegal ETB Internal Verification processes checks that assessment procedures have been followed.

Process for Internal Verification

Internal Verifiers will check that assessment procedures have been followed consistently for each programme for which assessment candidates are being submitted for certification, verifying that:

● Donegal ETB assessment procedures have been followed for each programme and group of candidates

● Assessment results are documented and accurately recorded as per Donegal ETB procedures.

The Donegal ETB Internal Verification system is designed for checking that all assessment procedures have been applied across a range of activities carried out in Further Education and Training Centres and to ensure accurate results are recorded for QQI for certification.

In the case of the current (2020 COVID19 crisis) Donegal ETB will introduce an updated sampling strategy (please see sampling strategy below) to reflect the current situation.

Following the normal procedures for Internal Verification, the Internal Verification report will be submitted to the appropriate personnel and will be made available to the External Authenticator.

Internal verification will be carried as per normal procedures and processes.

Due to the direction for maintenance of physical distancing, and curtailment of non-essential services, assessors are being requested to verify that all steps of the assessment process have been followed with integrity. Some assessment practices have changed as a result of the crisis, and it is critical that Donegal ETB can attest to the 'integrity and reliability' 1 2 of the assessment of candidates during this period.

Following assessment, some online sampling of procedures may take place, based on a reduced sampling process. The Internal Verifiers will:

● Request relevant documentation electronically from assessors. ● Check that all assessment procedures have been applied

● Monitor assessment results, according to the sampling decision made

● Produce an Internal Verification Report.

As a consequence of learner evidence and assessor meetings being recorded remotely in video conference software during the current restrictions, it is good practice to record this meeting either through a video recording or audio recording to assist with the integrity of the assessment process.

Verification of Assessment Results

Internal Verifiers will check a sample of learner evidence, to make sure that assessment evidence is available for all learners and that grades are assigned and results recorded according to QQI requirements.

A systematic check of documentary evidence will be carried out by Internal Verifiers to ensure that:

● When a learner is entered for certification, that portfolio(s) containing assessment evidence and marking sheet(s) are available and results are recorded and visible.

● Assessment evidence is available for ALL learners presented for an award (i.e. evidence for all minors is available for major awards).

● Learning has been assessed using the techniques and instruments indicated in the validated programme (or Module Descriptor in the case of levels 4,5, & 6)

● Evidence is presented as per the assessment techniques specified in the Validated programme Specification and using appropriate assessment instruments.

● Candidates for assessment have provided a cover sheet indicating that the work is their own work. Procedures for assessment deadlines, compassionate considerations and special accommodations, if needed, have been applied.

● Assessment results are available and recorded for each learner.

● Marks are totalled and percentage marks are calculated correctly and are transferred from learner evidence to marking sheets/provisional results sheets accurately.

● The percentage marks and grades awarded are consistent with QQI grading bands.

Practitioners and assessment coordinators/relevant programme personnel will ensure that all documentation and evidence is filed appropriately and securely, ensuring that it is accessible where decisions are queried, e.g., An appeal is requested.

The Internal Verification Process

The following documents will assist the process of Internal Verification:

● Assessor checklist – Preparation for the Internal Verification Process

● Internal Verification Checklist

● Internal Verification Report

● Sampling strategy for the Authentication Process

Each Assessor will complete the Assessor Checklist as applicable.

As per normal practice, internal Verifiers check that assessment procedures have been followed including:

● Planning and delivery of assessment

● Information has been given to learners at the appropriate time, in appropriate formats

● Security of assessment related processes and materials

● Reasonable Accommodations and Compassionate Consideration and submission deadlines have been applied where applicable.

● Verify that all documentation is in place

● Review marking sheets and learner evidence to ensure that these are complete.

● Verify that all assessment evidence is available for candidates presenting for assessment

● Verify that the evidence matches the requirements set out in the Award Specification, validated programme or Module Descriptor (in the case of Levels 4,5, & 6).

● Verify that evidence presented is reliable and that learners have attested to the fact that it is their original work.

● Verify that evidence generated is in accordance with the techniques and instruments indicated in the validated programme.

● Verify that marks have been correctly totalled.

● Verify that grades have been awarded in accordance with QQI and programme requirements.

● Provisional results reports should also be extracted from QBS and cross-checked with centre-level results.

● Complete an Internal Verification Report, noting examples of good practice, and items for corrective action and improvement.

● Circulate the Internal Verification Report to the relevant personnel.

Training Standards Officers and Quality Assurance Support Service (QASS)

● Coordinate Internal Verification reports

● Collate Internal Verification Reports

● Analyse Internal Verification Reports

● Preparing reports for the Certification Approval Board and relevant summaries the Quality Council

● Prepare a summary outlining all of the alternative assessments which will be made available to External Authenticators which have been formally approved by the provider (and any other authority with standing in the variation of assessment arrangements, e.g. a regulator) consistent with QQI guidance.

Guidance to Assessors for presentation of Assessment Evidence

(To be presented to Assessors by Centre Co-ordinators).

Prior to presenting Assessment evidence for Internal Verification and

External Authentication, please ensure that the following are complete:

● All assessment evidence is included in the Learner portfolio (Care should be taken to ensure that any visual/audio quality of assessment recordings is sufficient to enable accurate review for IV and by an external authenticator).

● You have marked all assessment evidence submitted.

● All of your calculations are correct and accurate.

● Where Special Accommodations, Compassionate Considerations or Procedures regarding Assessment Malpractice have been applied, there is evidence that these have been implemented and resulting actions documented.

● All codes and titles used are correct.

● You (the Assessor) have signed the Results Sheet (This can be email or other electronic confirmation if access to the Results Sheets is problematic within the current circumstances).

● The Results Sheet is completed in full and signed (By electronic means as appropriate). You will be requested to complete a Results Sheet and to submit it to the appropriate personnel.

● You have compiled a complete teacher/tutor assessment portfolio for each component, including the following documentation, and have arranged to store it safely with other assessment material relevant to the 2020 certification cycles:

   ▪ Component Specification/Module Descriptor

   ▪ Details of feedback given to learners (where feedback has been given to learners electronically, for example using Word Review, this will suffice as evidence that feedback has been given).

   ▪ Assessment Plan/schedule for the component/module, together with any adjustments to the plan made as a result of the crisis.

   ▪ Assessments (including alternative assessments)

   ▪ Outline Solutions

   ▪ Marking Scheme

   ▪ Copy of the learner submission cover sheet

▪ Assessor Checklist for Internal Verification completed and submitted to the Programme Coordinator/relevant personnel

All Assessment Evidence is to be presented per course as follows:

Assessment evidence, in as far as is reasonably practicable (i.e. it is recognised that some candidates may be submitting evidence of practical assessments) must be stored electronically, using the following convention:

● One folder per component, named by component and award code (i.e. as per QQI Award Specification – starting with 4N….; 5N…. or 6N….)

● Within the folder, a folder for each Candidate, named for the candidate.

● Centres may be requested to upload material to a central Online folder. If required further instructions will be issued.

● All digital records of assessments, should be: correctly labelled and attributed to the correct learner; stored securely and backed-up.

Internal Verification Sampling Strategy

Square root of n+1, and include:

● All class groups

● All Major and Minor Awards

● All new teachers, tutors, assessor and instructors

● All teachers, tutors and instructors delivering a programme new to them

● Any programmes that have been changed or updated (for example new modules introduced or alternative assessments used)

● Any awards where issues arose in previous certification periods External Authentication Process

External authentication establishes the credibility of the provider's assessment processes. Essentially it aims to ensure that assessments are valid, reliable and consistent with the requirements for the relevant awards. Given the scale of disruption to teaching, learning and assessment during the pandemic, an external perspective on

assessment is even more imperative at this time and this is especially true for alternative assessment arrangements.

In light of the current situation Donegal ETB may not be able to access all of the EAs we might need. We will therefore prioritise the components and programmes that need to be externally authenticated in response to a reduced capacity. This will be carried out on a risk rated basis.

It is proposed that we appoint external authenticators on a programme basis rather than on a component-basis, i.e. individuals who have a comprehensive knowledge of the discipline and are in a position to judge the consistency of standards across a range of components rather than having very specific expertise in one sub-specialism.

As external authenticators may not be able to access centres/evidence in person, we may have to plan for all external authentication to be carried out remotely until such time as normal practice can continue.

Risk rating criteria for programme/module selection for external authentication

● reviewing evidence that has been assessed using alternative assessments

● a small number of learners or a very uneven distribution of results

● a substantive change to the programme (new modules, a new teacher, or a different type of learner cohort is undertaking the programme)

● programmes that have had issues identified in previous (the last two years) external authentication reports

● a reduced focus on long-established programmes that have been subject to extensive external authentication previously and in which very few issues have been identified in the last 2 years.

● if there is no requirement for the programme to go forward for external authentication based on the above criteria, then the Certification Approval Board (CAB) will consider the previous year's External Authenticator's report which will ensure the process of authentication.

External Authentication Sampling Strategy

The sample must be sufficient to enable the authenticator to make an informed judgement. The following sampling strategy will be adopted:

● 50% of all evidence presented for external authentication

● the sample will focus on borderline grades (e.g. Unsuccessful/Pass, Pass/Merit, Merit/Distinction)

● the sample must cover the full range of grades achieved (e.g. Unsuccessful, Pass, Merit, Distinction)

The strategy for sampling has been considered by the appropriate governance structures and approval documented.

To maintain the integrity of the sampling process the External Authenticators will select from the provisional results lists and the evidence to support these grades will be made available virtually to the Authenticator

If the External Authenticator requires more evidence than the original sample, every effort will be made to ensure this is available

The EA is required to complete an external authentication report which comments on the effectiveness of the assessment process and procedures and on the extent to which the assessment arrangements are consistent with the awards standards. Where an EA identifies serious flaws or concerns, these must be highlighted in the external authentication report and referred to the Certification Approval Board for consideration and follow-up.

8. Academic Integrity

In view of the change to assessment technique it's important that academic integrity is maintained throughout the assessment process. The following actions will support maintaining the academic integrity of the assessment.

● Provide clear information on each assessment technique and what is acceptable and what is not. Guidelines will be given to the assessor in relation to this.
● Explain to learners why academic integrity is important to their end result: standard letter to be issued from programme co-ordinator
● Explain to learners what each alternative assessment technique means and what resources can be used.

- Ask learners to acknowledge all their sources – books, web pages, etc.
- Verifying the identity of the candidate is important. Learners should:
  - state their name at the beginning of any remote recording.
  - sign each complete assignment.
  - Sign the declaration on the brief.
- Require each learner to confirm academic integrity on each piece of assessment, and on the completed brief.

Note: If facilities are not available to print and sign, then a scanned email / written declaration confirming their own work should be sent. The wording should be the same as on the brief (See **appendix 5b**): I, _____, *acknowledge that I understand that it is vitally important to maintain the integrity of this assessment. In adhering to this, I confirm that the attached* assignment is my own original work and was carried out without external support).

9. Assessment Malpractice

Centres should ensure appropriate academic integrity/assessment malpractice arrangements are in place to assure the quality of any alternative assessment instruments that arise. Response to detecting malpractice (plagiarism, cheating) should be as per Donegal ETB's current practice as outlined in Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures.

8. Monitoring and Reviewing this policy

Donegal ETB's FET Service will update this document in accordance with guidelines and directives issued by ETBI, QQI and other awarding bodies.

Responsibility	Frequency	Methods
SMT	May 2020	Review in line with guidelines and directives issued by QQI
Quality Council	May 2020	Review in line with guidelines and directives issued by QQI

10. Document Control

Version Number	Approval date	Description of revision	Originator	Approved by
2	May 2020	Addition of Contingency Planning for Internal Verification and external Authentication Process	Joe Whitelock	SMT

Appendix 1 - Alternative Assessment Techniques

The following alternative forms of assessment may be considered for skills demonstrations, work placement/work experience and examinations:

- **Alternative to Practical Skills Demonstration**
  The following techniques can be used as an option to assess and evidence the skills, knowledge and competences gained throughout the course of learning:
    - an assignment (Appendix 5b provides an assessment brief that has been changed from a skills demonstration to an assignment. The original brief is provided in Appendix 5a)
    - Remote recording of a practical skills demonstration.

- **Alternative to Examination**
  The following techniques can be used as an alternative to using a supervised examination hall:
    - an assignment;
    - An open book examination with methods in place to verify the integrity of the assessment process.

- **Alternative to evidence of outcomes including work experience**
  Consider if skills, knowledge and competencies can be assessed through the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process. Support in collecting evidence through the RPL process and developing an assessment rubric will be provided by the RPL Steering Group.

- **Using the evidence from other modules which have already been assessed**
  The core elements of a learning outcome may have already been assessed in another module. Where there is evidence to support, there is no need to assess again.

Note: As connectivity and access to technology will vary, learners should be given the option to submit evidence a number of ways including, both electronically or by hard copy submission.

Depending on the circumstances / HSE guidelines prevailing at the time, arrangements will be made with assessors in relation to accessing student assessments for correction.

Process for Designing an Alternative Assessment

The following stages should be followed when adapting an assessment technique that is part of a validated programme to one of the options outlined above:

- Review the existing examination paper(s), or skills demonstration brief. In reviewing you should consider the following:
  - Learning Outcomes being assessed.
  - the existing 'weighting' given to the assessment technique.
  - the existing word count stipulated in assignments
  - the duration of the existing assessment technique – skills demonstration, or examination.
- Identify the skills, knowledge and competencies which must be assessed and consider the most suitable alternative technique. In doing this give consideration to your learners and any additional resources and supports that might be needed.
- Check if any of these outcomes have already been assessed through another mode of assessment (e.g. and earlier submitted assignment). If this is the case, there will be no need to assess again.
- Decide the new assessment technique(s).
- Map the learning outcomes to the assessment technique. The template in **Appendix 2** will support you to keep a record of this stage. The Grid of Level Indicators for the NFQ that provided in **Appendix 4** will support you in ensuring that the assessment is correctly referenced to national standards.
- Design the assessment brief. Instructions should be clear and the alternative assessment should acknowledge the 'action verb' used in the learning outcome (discuss, analyse, etc.). **Appendix 5a** is a brief that is currently used for Level 5 Communications. It is for a Skills Demonstration. **Appendix 5b** is an alternative version of this brief (outlined in Appendix 5a), changing the technique from skills demonstration to an assignment.
- Include the learning outcomes on the brief.
- Develop / adapt marking scheme, or rubric to support assessment.
- Submit both to your co-ordinator who will submit to the QASS

Appendix 2: Mapping Tool

Learning Outcomes [Insert module name and code] [Insert assessment technique]	
Learners will be able to:	*Learners will be asked to:*
You can copy and paste the relevant learning outcome from the module descriptor – including the LO number)	*Please describe the assessment activities within the chosen technique that corresponds to each learning outcome*

Please outline how you are planning to distribute the assessment to learners and how you will be asking learners to submit completed assessments.

Appendix 3: Summary of changes to Assessment Techniques

   1. Please submit the following information

FET Programme/Centre Name & Requesting No.	
Date of application	
Number of applications	
Submitted by	

   2. Please list each module that requires a change to the assessment technique and summarise that change *(you may copy more tables as required)*:

Module Name	
Module Code	
Assessor Name	
Summary of Changes	

Module Name	
Module Code	
Assessor Name	
Summary of Changes	

   3. Please outline the resources that are in place to ensure the integrity of these changed assessment techniques:

Appendix 4

National Framework of Qualifications – Grid of Level 4 and 5 Indicators

	Level 4	Level 5
Knowledge: Breadth	Broad range of knowledge	Broad range of knowledge
Knowledge: Kind	Mainly concrete in reference and with some elements of abstraction or theory	Some theoretical concepts and abstract thinking, with significant depth in some areas
Know-How & Skill Range	Demonstrate a moderate range of practical cognitive skills and tools	Demonstrate a broad range of specialised skills and tools
Know-How & Skill Selectivity	Select from a range of procedures and apply known solutions to a range of predicable problems	Evaluate and use information to plan and develop investigative strategies and to determine solutions to varied unfamiliar problems
Competence: Context	Act in familiar and unfamiliar contexts	Act in a range of varied and specific contexts taking responsibility for the nature and quality of outputs, identify and apply skill and knowledge to a wide variety of context.
Competence: Role	Act with considerable amount of responsibility and autonomy	Exercise some initiative and independence in carrying out defined activities; join and function within multiple complex and heterogeneous groups
Competence: Learning to Learn	Learn to take responsibility for own learning within a supervised environment	Learn to take responsibility for own learning within a managed environment
Competence: Insight	Assume partial responsibility for consistency of self-understanding and behaviour	Assume full responsibility for consistency of self-understanding and behaviour

QQI (2003) *National Framework of Qualifications Grid of Level Indicators*. QQI. Available from https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/NFQLevelindicators.pdf [April 6th 2020]

Appendix 5A (Current Skills Demonstration Assessment)

![etb Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna Dhún na nGall / Donegal Education and Training Board logo]

ASSESSMENT BRIEF

Module Name/Component Title:	Communications
Module/Component Code:	5N0690
Assessment Technique:	Skills Demonstration
Title:	**ICT Practical Skills Demonstration**
Weighting:	**10%**
Level:	**5**
Learning Outcome	**9 (partial), 11**

Guidelines/Scenario

You are required to carry out a range of task that demonstrates your competent use of a range of Communications Technology skills relevant to your vocational area. Each task is stipulated in the attached sheet. This is a class based skills demonstration. Each task will be supervised by your internal assessor and all evidence/documents must be submitted at the end of the demonstration.

Assessment Criteria:

- All tasks completed correctly, understanding of process clearly demonstrated in each of the tasks   (5 Marks)
- Each task planned and executed efficiently (5 Marks)

Your skills presentation will take place on the date specified by your assessor.

Draft Submission Date: _____

Date Brief Issued: _____ **Submission Date**: _____

I, _____, confirm that this is my own original work.

Learner Signature: _____ Date: _____

Assessor Signature: _____ Date Received: _____

You are required to create a one-page newsletter/poster relevant to your vocational area of study that provides information to your client group, for example, an Early Childhood Care and Education learner may produce a newsletter/poster that provides information to the parents of the children under their care or a Nursing studies learner may create a newsletter/poster that provides information on a health related illness. The newsletter/poster must contain the following:

- A minimum of 2 photographs that you have taken and edited yourself.
- A minimum of 2 images/graphics/logos that you have downloaded from the Internet and edited yourself
- Information relevant to your topic. This information must provide instructions and suggestions and be free from spelling or grammatical errors. Some of this information must be obtained from the Internet and referenced accordingly.

You must email a draft version of the newsletter to your assessor on the draft date. You must also attach the photographs/images/graphics/logos that you have used or intend to use.

Your assessor will provide you with feedback via email. You must download this feedback and make the appropriate changes.

The final version will be submitted to your assessor both in hard copy format and emailed to your assessor.

In addition to creating the newsletter/poster, you must complete the attached document outlining a rational for choosing one technology over another in different contexts and for different messages.

Rationale for choosing one technology over another in different contexts and for different messages

Please list below the communication technology you used to complete the skills demonstration and give one reason for using that particular technology, for example, what Internet Browser did you use, which search engine, which email provider, etc.

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Appendix 5B: (Alternative assessment – assignment)

ASSESSMENT BRIEF

Module /Component Title:	Communications
Module/Component Code:	5N0690
Assessment Technique:	Assignment (Changed from Skills Demonstration)
Title:	ICT Practical
Weighting:	10%
Level:	5
Learning Outcome	9 and 11 (full text is provided on the last page of this brief.

Guidelines/Scenario

You are required to complete an assignment as outlined. The assignment has been designed to give you an opportunity to take responsibility for the quality of your own work and use your initiative to design, draft, amend, proof and complete. All evidence/documents must be submitted by email on the date specified.

Assessment Criteria:
- All tasks should be completed to a high standard and should clearly convey that you have a clear understanding of the process (5 Marks)
- You should show evidence of planning, evaluating and proofing.   (5 Marks)
.
Date Brief Issued: _____   **Date** and Time Received: _____
(Confirm by replying to e-mail)

When completed, sign this declaration:

I, _____, acknowledge that I understand that it is vitally important to maintain the integrity of this assessment. In adhering to this, I confirm that the attached assignment is my own original work and was carried out without external support.

Learner Signature: _____ Date:_____

Date and time submitted: _____(E-mail)

Assessor Signature:_____ Date Received:_____

Assignment instructions for Part 1:

You are required to create a one-page newsletter/poster relevant to your vocational area of study. The newsletter / poster should provide information to your client group (e.g., an Early Childhood Care and Education learner may produce a newsletter/poster that provides information to the parents of the children under their care, or a Nursing studies learner may create a newsletter/poster that provides information on a health related illness).

The newsletter/poster must contain the following:

- A minimum of 2 photographs that you have taken and edited yourself.
- A minimum of 2 images/graphics/logos that you have downloaded from the Internet and edited yourself.
- Information relevant to your topic. This information must provide instructions and suggestions and be free from spelling or grammatical errors. Some of this information must be obtained from the Internet and referenced accordingly.

You should adhere to the following stages in your assignment:

1. You should sketch and plan your newsletter and submit to your assessor for comment. Include your images and name the source.
2. Upon receiving comments from your assessor you should prepare a draft of your newsletter, showing that you have responded to the comments received.
3. Save your first draft, showing date and time. You should also save the original images in a separate file, with reference to your source.
4. Critically analyse, proof and amend your newsletter/poster. Save the final version.
5. Submit both the draft and final document to your assessor. Include the original images and name all references / sources.

Assignment Instructions for Part 2:

Complete a short report (500 words) outlining your rational for choosing one technology over another in different contexts and for different messages. The title for your report is: **Rationale for choosing one technology over another in different contexts and for different messages.**

Completing these two assignments will provide evidence that you have achieved Learning outcomes 9 and 11 which are outlined below:

9. Use drafting, proofreading and editing skills to write a range of documents that follow the conventions of language usage (spelling, punctuation, syntax), to include creative writing, business proposals, correspondence, reports, memoranda, minutes, applications

11. Choose the appropriate communications technology to give and receive requests, instructions, suggestions, discussion and feedback in both work and leisure, to include a rationale for choosing one technology over another in different contexts and for different messages.

References

- QQI – Guiding Principles for Alternative Assessment.
  https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Guiding%20Principles%20for%20Alternative%20Assessment%20%28COVID-19%29.pdf

- QQI (2020) Covid-19 – Updates from QQI. QQI. Available from
  https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/COVID-19---Updates-from-QQI.aspx [April 6th 2020]

- QQI (2020) Building Confidence: Supports and Arrangements for the Tertiary Education Sector. QQI. Available from
  https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Building%20Confidence%20-%20Tertiary%20Education%20System.pdf [March 31st 2020]

- QQI (2020) Measures to Mitigate Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on Programmes leading to QQI Awards. QQI. Available from
  https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Mitigating%20Impact%20on%20QQI%20Awards.pdf [March 31st 2020]

- FESS has put together some guidance for providers and centres offering programmes leading to QQI Awards.
  https://www.fess.ie/guidance-on-programme-delivery-and-assessment-of-learners-in-light-of-disruption-due-to-covid-19

- QQI (2003) National Framework of Qualifications Grid of Level Indicators. QQI. Available from
  https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/NFQLevelindicators.pdf [April 6th 2020]

- The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning (NFETL) – 10 Points to Consider in Choosing Alternative Assessment Methods.   https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/wp-content/uploads/10-Points-to-Consider-in-Choosing-Alternative-Assessment-Methods.pdf

- 10 Ways to Ensure Online Assessment is Accessible and Inclusive - National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.
  https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/resource/10-ways-to-ensure-online-assessment-is-accessible-and-inclusive/