



Assessment Framework

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STEP 
ADVISING FAMILIES ACROSS GENERATIONS

Contents

1. Introduction	4
1.1 CLTI policies and procedures	4
1.2 Assessment overview	4
2. Assessment principles	5
2.1 Educational principles	5
2.2 Ethical principles	6
2.3 Regulatory principles	6
3. The practice of assessment	8
3.1 Submission of assignments	8
3.1.1 Purpose of the submission policy	8
3.1.2 Scope of the submission policy	8
3.1.3 The policy on submission	8
3.1.4 Extending deadlines	9
3.1.5 Penalty for late submission	9
3.1.6 Submission of summative assessment	9
3.2 Examinations	10
3.2.1 Scope of examinations policy	10
3.2.2 Fairness	10

3.2.3 Admission to examinations	10
3.2.4 The use of dictionaries in examinations	10
3.3 Marking	11
3.3.1 Introduction	11
3.3.2 Scope of marking policy	11
3.3.3 Purpose of the marking policy	11
3.3.4 Definitions	11
3.3.5 The assessment policy	11
3.3.6 Importance of marking	12
3.3.7 Professionalism in marking	12
3.3.8 Anonymous marking	13
3.3.9 Checking marks	14
3.3.10 Scrutiny of marking	14
3.3.11 Marking different forms of assessment	15
3.4 Retaining learners' work	15
3.5 Accessibility of assessment	16
3.5.1 Reasonable adjustments	16
3.6 Religious observance	17
3.7 Assessment decisions (awarding regulations and guidelines)	18
3.8 The issuing of results	18

1. Introduction

This document sets out the principles, practice and conduct of assessment and provides information regarding assessment decisions for STEP learners.

The policies and procedures contained herein apply to all learners registered with CLTI irrespective of their mode, level, or place of study.

1.1 CLTI policies and procedures

This document should be read in conjunction with the following CLTI policy documents available on the CLTI website:

- CLTI Assessment boards
- CLTI Appeals procedure
- CLTI Complaints procedure
- CLTI External Examiners
- CLTI Policy on mitigating circumstances
- CLTI Policy on reasonable adjustments
- CLTI Policy on academic malpractice

1.2 Assessment overview

The assessment methods for a qualification are dependent upon the level, format and sometimes jurisdiction of the programme studied.

The different methods of assessment are designed to offer learners the broadest possible opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of the topics studied at whichever level they are studying.

The assessment methods for each programme are presented in programme-specific fact sheets and made clear to learners prior to enrolment.

2. Assessment principles

Assessment is the process of forming a judgement about a learner's attainment of knowledge, understanding and/or skills. The processes of assessment are required to conform with CLTI's regulations, policies, procedures, and guidance.

Each programme of study will include a series of assessment tasks, which together make up the 'assessment scheme' for the programme.

The scheme is summarised in the assessment handbook for the relevant programmes and detailed in the programme factsheets. The assessment scheme satisfies the following three principles, described further below:

- **Educational:** the processes of assessment will help learners learn, or reinforce previous learning, or both.
- **Ethical:** the processes of assessment will be fair and transparent, and must not discriminate according to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion or belief, age, social class, or disability.
- **Regulatory:** the processes of assessment will conform to CLTI's expectations detailed in its regulations, policies, procedures, and guidance.

Online assessment will be carefully considered in relation to these principles.

2.1 Educational principles

Assessment tasks are an integral part of the syllabus and teaching and learning processes.

There will be an appropriate mix of formative and summative assessment throughout the programme.

Excessive and unnecessary assessment will be avoided (and intended learning outcomes will not normally be assessed repeatedly).

The timing and amount of assessment will be structured to facilitate deep learning.

Feedback to learners must follow stated CLTI procedures, and, where possible, will contain a balance of positive, encouraging comments as well as constructive feedback for future improvement.

All peer-to-peer learner interaction and all staff contact with learners are potential opportunities for feedback to and from learners.

Peer review and assessment (i.e., assessment of learners' work by other learners) will be encouraged, to provide rapid formative feedback, promote understanding of programme content and consolidate learning.

Innovation in online assessment, marking and submission of assessed work is encouraged.

2.2 Ethical principles

Assessment tasks and marking criteria will focus on the intended learning outcomes for the programme, module, or unit.

The assessment scheme will allow learners to demonstrate their achievement of all the intended learning outcomes, where practical, by the end of the programme.

Learners will be informed in advance about the assessment tasks and grading systems for their programme.

Learners will be helped to understand the requirements of assessment, e.g., through guidance, discussion with course tutors and/or specimen assessment materials.

Learners will be made aware of the procedure to follow if they wish to query, or appeal, an assessment decision.

The assessment process will not be biased according to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion or belief, age, class, or disability.

Learners and staff will evaluate the effectiveness of the assessment methodology and methods on a continuous basis.

Where assessment takes place online, clear protocols and instructions will be given to the learners before the assessment takes place.

2.3 Regulatory principles

The assessment scheme will provide enough evidence of a learner's achievement to enable robust decisions to be made about their progression through the programme and the award of the intended qualification.

Assessment tasks will allow learners to demonstrate achievement appropriate to the level of the intended award in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ).

Assessment tasks will be managed across the programme, to achieve appropriate variety in assessment tasks, avoid unnecessary concentrations of assessment at particular times, and reflect intellectual progression through the programme.

Assessment will be conducted in accordance with CLTI regulations, policies, procedures, and guidance, as set out in this assessment framework and elsewhere.

3. The practice of assessment

3.1 Submission of assignments

This section sets out CLTI's policy on the process of submission and the penalties associated with late submission.

3.1.1 Purpose of the submission policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure consistent application of CLTI procedures in order to ensure an equality of experience for learners across all programmes.

In addition, the policy provides transparency in the way submission procedures are articulated to learners.

3.1.2 Scope of the submission policy

This policy refers to all written work (assignments) submitted for summative assessment. Summative assessment is defined, for the purposes of this policy, as that which contributes to the final unit mark.

The policy does not apply to purely formative assessment that does not contribute to a final unit mark, nor to assessments that learners must attend to complete, such as oral interviews and written examinations.

3.1.3 The policy on submission

CLTI will publish procedures on submission of work for summative assessment and is responsible for ensuring that these are appropriate across all programmes and in accordance with this policy.

The CLTI procedures and guidance for the submission of summative assessment must be clearly publicised to learners, via handbooks and CLTI's learning platforms.

CLTI will publish deadlines for the submission of all assignments at the beginning of each semester.

Learners are responsible for managing their time in order to meet published deadlines.

3.1.4 Extending deadlines

Deadlines may be extended in accordance with the policies on mitigating circumstances and reasonable adjustments.

3.1.5 Penalty for late submission

Meeting the deadlines for assessments is a requirement and serves to develop skills of time management while also avoiding unfair advantage for late submissions. CLTI will implement a sliding scale to penalise late submission. Work submitted after the deadline will be marked but the mark awarded will reduce progressively for each day, or part thereof, by which the work is late.

The penalties applied for late submissions will be clearly publicised to learners, via the assessment handbook

3.1.6 Submission of summative assessment

All typed summative assessment material, will be submitted online, and will be subjected to plagiarism detection software.

CLTI will advise all learners that plagiarism detection software is used, and learners will be directed to information, advice, and guidance on academic writing, avoiding plagiarism and the penalties arising from academic misconduct.

Online submission may affect the application of the anonymous marking policy. All efforts will be made by CLTI to preserve the anonymity of learners who submit assessments online.

CLTI will develop contingency plans, in the event of technical difficulties for the submission of assessed work and ensure learners are informed.

3.2 Examinations

This section sets out CLTI's policy on examinations.

3.2.1 Scope of examinations policy

This policy refers to all formal examinations that take place as part of a learner's programme of study.

The policy sets out the practical arrangements for learners' participation in examinations.

3.2.2 Fairness

In support of the principle that the processes of assessment will be fair, CLTI has a policy on examinations designed to ensure that learners do not obtain unfair advantage for themselves or cause unfair disadvantage to other learners.

3.2.3 Admission to examinations

Learners must pay all appropriate fees in order to complete an examination.

3.2.4 The use of dictionaries in examinations

Language translation dictionaries may not be used in examinations.

Learners are not allowed to use specialist dictionaries unless a specific instruction to the contrary is given in the rubric of the examination.

Learners with disabilities are allowed to use electronic dictionaries or similar aids if they have received formal approval from CLTI.

3.3 Marking

3.3.1 Introduction

This document sets out CLTI's policy on marking.

3.3.2 Scope of marking policy

The policy applies to the marking of all work.

3.3.3 Purpose of the marking policy

The purpose of the policy is to ensure equality and fairness in the treatment of learner and consistency of practice in relation to marking procedures across all CLTI examinations.

3.3.4 Definitions

The 'marker' is the first marker. Their role is to mark in accordance with the model/ expected answers, the marking scheme and expected CLTI outcomes.

An External Examiner reviews a sample of assessed work in accordance with CLTI regulations, standards, and the marking guidance (see CLTI's Guidance on External Examiners).

3.3.5 The assessment policy

All assessment must be marked by a marker and reviewed by an External Examiner.

All assessment tasks will be designed relative to the intended learning outcomes, and examinations will be accompanied by guidance for the purposes of internal examination and review by an External Examiner.

Where possible, all written assessments must be marked anonymously.

CLTI will adopt procedures for checking that all sections of each piece of assessed work have been marked, that partial marks have been added-up correctly, and that total marks have been transferred correctly to assessment board reports.

CLTI will have procedures in place for applying a penalty if the word count exceeds the specified limit. Penalties will be articulated clearly to the learner in assessment briefs and learner handbooks.

CLTI will have procedures in place for the provision of feedback on assessments.

CLTI have procedures for providing clear and useful feedback to indicate how marks have been assigned.

3.3.6 Importance of marking

The awarding of marks is an important process as this provides a judgement of how well learners have completed an assessment task. The resulting marks are then used for feedback and decisions on awards.

It is important that learners are given the right mark: one that is an accurate reflection of their response to tasks and rewards them appropriately.

There are three factors that determine whether marks are 'right'. One is whether marks are awarded at the appropriate level, the second is if the marks are awarded fairly and consistently across a cohort of learners, and the third is whether the absolute marks are appropriate. This aspect of marking is handled and confirmed by External Examiners and assessment boards.

The final arbiter of the awarding process is the assessment board. The board has input from External Examiners for each discipline, allowing continuous review of marking standards and moderation.

3.3.7 Professionalism in marking

It is assumed that assessments have been properly designed in accordance with CLTI principles and the intended learning outcomes for a programme. With this in mind, the primary reassurance that the mark is 'right' is provided by the professional expertise and competence of the marker and with the advice of the External Examiner.

The design of questions for assignments and for examinations must meet CLTI's requirements for validity and reliability, comparable with other assessments set at the same programme level. They must be manageable with the resources and time

available and should minimise the potential for bias in accordance with CLTI's ethical principles.

Markers' guidance and grade descriptors will offer appropriate general advice on the range of expected responses and what would constitute different levels of performance; the extent to which this is practical will depend on the discipline, the level and the type of assessment question employed.

3.3.8 Anonymous marking

All work will be marked anonymously wherever possible, in order to provide reassurance that marking is fair. Similarly, decisions on progression and awards must be made anonymously.

Once marks have been awarded, it is of paramount importance that the right mark be assigned to each learner. This is facilitated by associating the marks with learner names as well as registration numbers, for subsequent processing.

Where CLTI develops new forms of assessment, anonymous marking may not be possible, but it is required for all formal written assignments and examinations. In other cases, reasonable efforts will be made to achieve anonymity.

Choice of an assessment task will be governed by its suitability for assessing the intended learning outcomes rather than its suitability for maintaining anonymity.

If relevant additional information about a learner comes to light at any stage, it will be made available to examiners, even if that may compromise anonymity.

The policies and procedures on mitigating circumstances and reasonable adjustments distinguish between a stage for determining whether a learner has established sufficient grounds for mitigation or reasonable adjustment and a subsequent stage for determining what mitigation or adjustment will be applied.

Assessment boards must make their decisions from an anonymous mark list.

3.3.9 Checking marks

CLTI has procedures for checking that all sections of each piece of assessed work have been marked, that marks have been totalled correctly and that total marks have been transferred correctly to a mark list.

When following correct procedure, it should also be possible to identify cases where an individual learner mark on one assessment deviates significantly from those for other assessments or for other learners within a cohort.

In cases where a learner has not followed set instructions on an examination paper and has answered an incorrect number of questions the following guidance is given:

- a. where a learner has attempted too many questions, examiners will mark all responses to all questions and credit learners with the marks awarded for their best responses
- b. where a learner has failed to attempt sufficient questions, they will be awarded zero for the unanswered questions
- c. where a learner has answered too many questions within a section, the best responses will be credited.

In cases where a learner has not followed set instructions for an assignment question and has exceeded the stated word count, penalties will be applied.

3.3.10 Scrutiny of marking

It is sometimes desirable to provide additional scrutiny beyond the level of a moderation review to provide reassurance that marking has been carried out appropriately. The nature and intensity of the scrutiny will focus on the perceived risk. This will depend on a number of dimensions, which may be present separately or together.

- a. The assessment board may wish to consider whether there are any issues relating to the nature of the assigned task(s); for example, where there is significant variation between assessment outcomes for the same cohort, or there are any questions raised relating to the fitness for purpose of the assessment.

3.3.11 Marking different forms of assessment

For online assessment, the policy on marking applies in full. Nonetheless, the choice of assessment tasks will be governed by their suitability for assessing the intended learning outcomes rather than their suitability for maintaining anonymity.

For e-portfolios, the policy on marking applies in full. Nonetheless, the suitability of documents submitted for assessment must be considered prior to marking, in order to assess whether they meet the requirements for evidence of achieving the intended learning outcomes. Tasks will be designed to ensure that the only evidence submitted is relevant for the learning outcomes identified through the relevant assessment objectives.

Procedures must also be adopted to ensure that work is marked appropriately and checked in accordance with a marking scheme. Feedback must also be given for the assessment in an appropriate form

3.4 Retaining learners' work

In order to safeguard the security and objectivity of assessments, learners' work must be available to examiners not only when it is first marked but also when marks are being reviewed. For this reason, CLTI retains learner work after it has been submitted.

Submitted work is retained so that assessment boards can reach well informed judgements about awards and progression of learners.

Beyond the requirements stated above, CLTI will only retain assessed work according to its own identified needs, e.g., to meet regulatory requirements, or in support of the development of assessments.

All assessed work which is retained will be kept in a secure location and organised so as to enable effective management. At the end of the retention period, all retained work will be disposed of as confidential waste.

3.5 Accessibility of Assessment

CLTI is committed to ensuring that its assessments are accessible to all learners and recognises that some assessments may be more challenging for some learners due to permanent or temporary impairment or disability.

3.5.1 Reasonable Adjustments

CLTI is committed to ensuring that all training does not discriminate against learners with a disability, and assessments are a fair test of an individual's knowledge and proficiency. If someone has a disability or learning difficulty, the usual format of training delivery or assessments may not be suitable and in certain circumstances adjustments may need to be made for them. This approach is intended to allow an individual to show their ability and knowledge without being disadvantaged by the training delivery method or the assessment format itself.

Adjustments to assessment for a learner with a disability may take one of two general forms:

Modifying the circumstances under which the standard assessment is taken, or providing an alternative form of assessment that is equivalent to the assessment undertaken by the other learners within a programme of study.

Most adjustments will consist of modifying the circumstances under which the existing assessment is taken.

In a very small number of cases the effects of the learner's disability are such that an alternative form of assessment is required. Devising an alternative assessment is an academic matter: it must assess the same intended learning outcomes as the standard assessment and meet the same academic standards, while giving learners the opportunity to demonstrate their academic achievement despite their disability.

Once appropriate adjustments have been made, the work will normally be marked in the same way as any other piece of work.

When appropriate adjustments have been made, the marks will be treated in the same way as those of other learners; no further compensation will be made unless there is additional documented mitigating evidence.

For more information, please see our reasonable adjustments policy on our website.

3.6 Religious observance

CLTI will make every effort to avoid timetabling assessments or other compulsory activities on religious days or festivals for those learners whose commitment to the observance of their faith would otherwise cause them to miss the assessment or other activity.

Nonetheless, CLTI is able to accommodate the needs of learners only if their requirement for particular religious observance is strict. CLTI will not take any notice of casual preferences or of social or domestic reasons.

CLTI's policy covers only aspects of religious observance that occur at times known in advance. Other aspects that are unforeseeable or unpreventable (such as the death of a close relative when specified forms of mourning are required) will be handled under the arrangements for considering mitigating circumstances.

Deadlines for handing in assessed work will not normally be extended to allow for religious observance, and learners must, therefore, schedule their work accordingly.

If religious observance affects a learner's attendance at normal teaching and learning activities in ways that will cause problems, they should discuss the issue with CLTI.

Similar principles apply if religious observance affects attendance at an examination.

Deadlines for submission of assessed work will not normally be extended to allow for religious observation.

CLTI will make every effort to accommodate legitimate religious requirements.

3.7 Assessment Decisions (awarding regulations and guidelines)

All final results (award of a grade) must be reviewed and approved by an assessment board prior to release to the learner(s).

The policies and procedures related to assessment boards are available on the CLTI website.

Decisions as to which piece of assessed work needs to be retaken, where a choice exists, will be determined exclusively by the assessment board.

Learners granted the right to re-take an assessment must attend the re-take at the next available sitting. The right to defer is not automatic.

Where a learner fails to pass the course after exhausting all re-take opportunities, they may be offered a certificate of attendance.

Where mitigating circumstances have been accepted by the assessment board for a learner who has failed an assessment component or the overall assessment, amendments to the awarding classification can be made by the assessment board but the mark awarded will remain the same.

Where a learner has achieved a pass mark in an assessment, they may not repeat that assessment with the objective of trying to increase the mark for that piece of work.

The assessment board shall have the power to determine whether a learner is required to repeat one or more pieces of assessed work.

3.8 The issuing of results

Results are published online via the CLTI website.

Results must not be divulged over the telephone neither should they be communicated via a third party, except, as an in-house contractual requirement.

Contact us

For full details of the programme visit:
www.cltint.com

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