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1. **Introduction**

    1.1. Assessment design and practice should, where appropriate, encourage innovative approaches. However, it is important to note that all assessments in Blended Learning Programmes must be aligned with IICP College's Quality Assurance Manual and take cognisance of QQI Assessment and Standards (Revised 2013)[1]. This requires that all College assessments, whether presented by electronic or other means, must be accurate, fair, reliable, confidential, secure, rigorous, fair and fit for purpose. Any innovation, particularly in a digital environment, will carry risks, and this is particularly important to consider in assessment innovation because of its potential impact on learners.

    1.2. Programme Boards and programme staff are responsible for ensuring that these risks are managed with any new assessment method.

2. **Scope**

    2.1. This policy applies to online assessments in Blended Learning Programmes.

3. **Policy**

    3.1. The principles of Assessment Design applicable in a face-to-face environment are equally applicable in an online environment. Assessment Development must ensure that the focus remains on constructive alignment of learning outcomes, assessments, content and learning activities. This means that some modules or module components will not be suitable for online assessment.

    3.2. The design of assessments for new programmes or programmes undergoing review must occur in accordance with IICP College's QAM. It should be noted that there are

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[1] QQI (2013). Assessment and Standards (2013). Retrieved from:
https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Assessment_and_Standards%20Revised%202013.pdf

limitations to the extent to which existing programmes can be modified outside of Programme Validation or Revalidation.

3.3. Online assessment must ensure that learners and staff (including support staff) are familiar with the tool, system or delivery platform to be used. This applies equally to formative and summative assessments. This is best achieved through providing opportunities for staff and learners to familiarise themselves with the relevant tool or system well in advance of the provision of an assessment of a similar format.

3.4. IICP College has a responsibility to promote equality of opportunity and to take steps to ensure that its assessments are accessible to its diverse learner population. Any online assessments should be designed and piloted with accessibility in mind, and any possible difficulties taken into account and an alternative to the online assessment provided where necessary as a reasonable adjustment.

3.5. General guidelines for the interpretation and detection of and penalties for plagiarism are provided through the QAM Policy 3.3 Academic and Professional Integrity Policy and Policy 3.4 Academic and Professional Impropriety Policy and Procedure. It is the responsibility of programme development teams (for new programmes) and Programme Boards to determine how the issue of plagiarism will be most effectively addressed when information technology is used in the delivery of assessments.

4. **Procedures**
   4.1. The online platform used by the College for recording and communicating marks is Moodle. Where required the Academic Technology Team can provide a programme of training and development for members of staff involved in the marking process.

   4.2. Feedback to learners is provided in accordance with QAM Policy 4.5 Learner Information Provision and Feedback in Assessment. Feedback for electronic submissions is usually provided electronically via Moodle.

   4.3. Data Protection and Security: In accordance with IICP College's Data Protection regulations, where IICP College engages a third party for Processing activity, the College takes steps to try to ensure that personal data is processed by such third parties in compliance with Data Protection Regulations (See QAM Policy 9.2 Data Protection Processing Principles).

   4.4. Copyright and Intellectual Property: All online assessments must comply with QAM Policy 3.12 Policy and Procedure on Moodle Copyright and Usage.

4.5. <u>Recheck, review and appeal</u>: Any recheck, review or appeal relating to an assessment result involving online assessment must be in accordance with Policy 5.7 Examination Results Review, Recheck and Appeal.

4.6. <u>Technical Issues:</u> In the event of system failure which renders it impossible for learners or a learner to complete an assessment, a member of the Programme Team will contact the Academic Technology Team to attempt to resolve the problem. If the issue cannot be resolved within a reasonable time then an extension may be granted to the learners involved.

4.7. <u>Managing Risks</u>
    4.7.1. Technological Risks
        4.7.1.1. In order to ensure that the technology is appropriate to the assessment, advice should be sought from the Academic Technology Team during the design stage.
        4.7.1.2. Trial testing should be carried out prior to the implementation of the assessment.
        4.7.1.3. Following first use, a thorough evaluation should be carried out to ensure the assessment has enhanced learning and not disadvantaged learners. The results of this evaluation should be available to the Examination Board.
    4.7.2. Academic Risks
        4.7.2.1. Fostering ethical practice is a core principle of all IICP programmes. IICP College takes proactive steps to engage learners in a community of ethical practice. In addition to the Learner Code of Conduct which governs all learners, those on core programmes are bound by the IACP Code of Ethics.
        4.7.2.2. Alongside fostering ethical practice, IICP College takes steps to discourage and prevent Academic and Professional Impropriety. Regulations regarding academic impropriety, including plagiarism and cheating, are covered under the General Assessment Regulations in IICP College's QAM. These regulations include the definition of plagiarism and the processes required to deal with suspected cases. Information sessions are also provided in all academic programmes. Lecturers are encouraged to inform their learners of how to avoid plagiarism, the mechanisms that are used to prevent it and the sanctions in place for plagiarising.
        4.7.2.3. Learners are encouraged to attend the College's Academic and Professional Development Programme, "By-Your-Side", where they receive additional input on Academic and Professional Writing, including writing conventions, writing processes, and referencing and citation.