



**Marks and Standards  
for  
Assessment  
on  
Taught Programmes of Learning  
for which  
Delegated Authority Has Been Granted**

Approved by Academic Council

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## Preface

Section 10 of the Regional Technical Colleges Act, 1993 and subsequent amendments in 2006 states that

*“Each college shall have an Academic Council appointed by the Governing Body to assist it in the planning, co-ordination, development and overseeing of the educational work of the college and to protect, maintain and develop the academic standards of the Programmes and activities of the college”.*

**Subsection 10.3 lists the particular functions (function is defined under Section 10.2 as powers and duties) of Academic Councils.**

Subsection 10.3 (d) makes it a function of Academic Council to “make recommendations to the governing body for the selection, admission, retention and exclusion of students”.

Subsection 3 (f) requires the Academic Council to propose to the governing body, subject to the requirements of HETAC (as an authority approved by the Minister for the purpose of having degrees, ordinary degrees, certificates or other educational awards conferred, granted or given) the form of regulations to be made by the governing body for the conduct of examinations and for the evaluation of academic progress.

The Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999 describes the relationship between HETAC and provider institutions. Section 23 subsection (1) (e) requires HETAC to ensure that:

- (i). *providers of programmes of education and training whose programmes are validated under Section 25*
- and*
- (ii). *recognised institutions to which authority to make awards has been delegated under Section 29 establish procedures for the assessment of learners which are fair and consistent and for the purpose of compliance with standards determined by the Council under paragraph (b).*

## Glossary of Terms

**MARKS AND STANDARDS:** These *Marks and Standards* are governed by the Institutes of Technology Acts 1993 – 2006, and in particular Section 10 of the 1992 Act. They shall come into operation on such day as the Registrar shall determine, and may from time to time be amended.

**INSTITUTE:** Throughout this document the term *Institute* shall be interpreted as referring to the Institute of Technology Tallaght.

**ACADEMIC COUNCIL:** *The Academic Council* has the meaning assigned to it under in Section 10 of the 1992 Act as amended by Section 11 of the 2006 Act and is the Academic Council in the Institute appointed by the Governing Body

**SCHOOLS AND DEPARTMENTS:** *Schools and Departments* are the basic academic and administrative units of the Institute and the centres of academic provision. Each *School* is managed by a *Head of School* who is responsible for the various programmes and other academic activities which make up the School's academic provision. Schools are subdivided into *Departments*, each with a *Head of Department*. These posts are key line management posts in the Institute and their holders have broad duties and responsibilities in relation to providing academic leadership in specialist areas.

**AWARD:** *An award* or qualification is conferred on a candidate who has completed successfully the specified subjects and the related assessments of a programme approved for that award.

**EXAMINATION BOARD:** *An Examination Board* comprises appropriate Institute Management, Internal and External Examiners for a programme, and External Awarding/Validating Body nominees, and has the function of determining the result and level of performance recorded in respect of each candidate for the ensemble of assessments comprising the stage/year of the programme.

**PROGRAMME:** In this Marks & Standards document a *Programme* means a programme of learning which has been approved through the Institute's Quality procedures. Programmes will include not only Level 6, 7, 8, and 9 taught awards but also Minor, Supplemental and Special Purpose awards. A programme is the approved curriculum followed by a cohort of students, leading to an award of the Institute. Each programme consists of Modules each of which is assessed and yields a grade which is recorded on the candidate's academic transcript.

**MODULE:** In this Marks & Standards document a *Module* means a defined quantum of learning which aligns to a syllabus which is found in a Programme approved through the Institute's Quality procedures.

**PROGRAMME BOARD:** *A Programme Board* is an academic body charged with the custody, care and development of a Programme, or Programmes of study.

**APPROVED PROGRAMME SCHEDULE:** *An Approved Programme Schedule* for each programme sets out the approved Examination modules and allocation of marks, together with

details of any special regulations applying to the programme in addition to, or in modification of, the general Marks and Standards.

**COURSEWORK:** *Coursework* is individual or group work presented for marking, the results of which contribute to a candidate's formal assessment for progression or for an award. Coursework takes the form of essays, reports, projects, dissertations, theses, three-dimensional, audio and audio-visual material; practical, laboratory, or task-oriented activities and their outcomes; such other individual or group learning activities as are appropriate for the programme.

**EXAMINATION:** The term "*Examination*" in these Marks and Standards should be construed to include reference, as appropriate, to written and oral examinations, assessment of coursework, project-work, etc., examination of theses, dissertations and similar work, and such other forms of assessment of candidates' performance as may have been approved or prescribed by the Institute in relation to any Programme of study or instruction, and cognate expressions should be construed accordingly.

**STAGE/YEAR:** A *Stage/year* of a programme is a single self-contained period of study, possibly including coursework assessment and normally leading to end of stage/year assessment.

**STUDENT OR LEARNER:** A *Student or Learner* is a person who has registered in the Institute on a programme leading to an award. Modes of study include Full Time, ACCS, Block Release, Part Time and distance education.

**SEMESTERS:** The academic year is broken up into two terms of fifteen weeks duration. These terms are known as *Semesters*.

## **PART A. Procedures for Examinations leading to Institute Awards**

### **A1. Applicability**

These General Marks and Standards shall apply to all examinations leading to Institute awards, to be held in the academic year 2017 and subsequent years, unless and until amended by the Academic Council.

### **A2. Responsibility for Examinations**

The Registrar or other appropriate officer nominated by the President for that purpose shall have overall responsibility for the conduct of examinations in the Institute and shall, in particular, ensure: -

- the proper conduct of examinations, including invigilation
- security in all matters pertaining to examinations
- that examination question, paper's solutions and appropriate marking schemes are prepared by Internal Examiners, sent in good time for approval by External Examiners and printed in good time for examinations
- that appropriate accommodation arrangements are made for each candidate for examinations
- that examination answer scripts are examined by Internal and External
- Examiners and that results for each candidate are made available for meetings of Examination Boards
- that accurate records in regard to continuous assessment are maintained and made available to External Examiners
- proper arrangements for the holding of meetings of Examination Boards
- that candidates are provided with the information relevant to them with regard to the conduct and regulation of examinations
- that minutes of meetings of the Examination Boards are maintained.

### **A3. Internal Examiners**

**A3.1** Institute staff who exercise an examination function shall, together with the persons indicated in A2 above, be deemed to be Internal Examiners.

**A3.2** The role of Internal Examiners shall be as follows: -

- To consult with the appropriate External Examiner(s) in the drafting of examination papers by providing to the External Examiner(s), in good time before the printing of examination papers, typewritten draft question papers, together with appropriate marking schemes, model answers, solutions and worked solutions to numerical questions involving quantitative data.



- To take account of all suggestions, criticisms, deletions, additions and amendments proposed by the External Examiner(s).
- To submit final examination papers and marking schemes, as approved by the External Examiner(s), to the President, or to other appropriate officer nominated for that purpose by the President.
- Prior to the meeting of the Examination Boards, to consult with the External Examiner(s) and to agree the grades/marks proposed to be awarded to each candidate
- To attend meetings of the Examination Boards and meetings to discuss examination results.

## **A4. External Examiners**

### **A4.1 Role**

External Examiners are appointed by the Institute in accordance with the Institute's External Examiner Policy (Annex) to ensure adequacy of standards at examinations. In particular, External Examiners should ensure that the appropriate standards with regard to Pass, Merit and Distinction/Honours are applied and that comparability of standards between Institutes should be achieved and maintained as far as feasible. (Please refer to Appendix 1 for fuller descriptions of the role of the External Examiner)

### **A4.2 Programme External Examiners**

External Examiners are normally appointed as Programme External Examiners, with responsibility for a Programme, or a range of Programmes. In these cases, the External Examiner(s) concerned should deal with all Modules in the Programme(s), and should approach the task with a view to ensuring that each candidate's performance in the Programme as a whole is properly assessed, without undue emphasis on individual module performance, subject to the requirements of the Institute's Marks and Standards Regulations.

### **A4.3 Specific Duties of External Examiners**

**A4.3.1** It shall be the duty of External Examiners to see the relevant syllabi and the drafts of all examination papers, marking schemes, model answers and worked solutions before the question papers are mass-produced. External Examiners shall have the right to make such suggestions regarding deletions, additions and amendments as appropriate.

**A4.3.2** The Institute requires that External Examiners see a representative sample of examination material presented by candidates (approximately 5% where feasible), including borderline cases. The sample, which should be drawn on a basis agreed between the Internal and External Examiner(s), should include sufficient material to

enable the External Examiner(s) to form a judgement as to the appropriateness of the marking at all levels of classification.

**A4.3.3** All External Examiners will be required to visit the Institute to which they have been assigned once in each academic year. This visit will, normally, take place at the time of determination of final results in Summer, and it should conform to the arrangements made in this regard by the Institute. In the case of programmes or modules in respect of which winter semester examinations are held in January or supplemental or repeat examinations are held in Autumn, or at such other times as may be approved by the Institute, the arrangements for attendance of External Examiners in the Institute will normally be made by the Institute. External Examiners should endeavour to discharge by correspondence as much of their work (including finalisation of examination papers or other tests) as it is feasible to perform in this manner.

#### **A4.4 Oral/Performance based Examinations**

**A4.4.1** Where oral/performance based examination constitutes a substantial part of the assessment procedure and is conducted in the absence of an External Examiner(s), the proceedings of any such examination or assessment conducted entirely by Internal Examiners should be recorded on video or audio-tape and an appropriate sample of the recordings sent to the External Examiner(s), or, if the External Examiner(s) so require, retained in the Institute for scrutiny by the External Examiner(s). Alternatively, where special circumstances so require, the Internal and External Examiner(s) together may examine a representative sample of the candidates concerned.

#### **A4.5 Visitation to the Institute**

**A4.5.1 When visiting the Institute, the duties of External Examiners shall be:**

- To review borderline cases and, if necessary, interview such candidates;
- To agree with the respective Internal Examiner(s) the proposed final marks/grades for consideration by the appropriate Examination Boards;
- To attend appropriate meeting(s) of the Examination Boards as required

**A4.5.2** Where examinations are held at the end of a winter semester or First or Second Terms, in addition to end-of-year examinations, External Examiners shall, normally, deal with examination material by correspondence.

#### **A4.6 External Examiners' Reports**

External Examiners are required to submit to the President or his/her nominee, not later than 1<sup>st</sup> October in each year, a full report on the examinations with which they are involved. One report per programme covering the academic year will normally be sufficient.

#### **A4.7 Communication between Internal and External Examiners**

External Examiners are required to acknowledge receipt of examination and assessment material received from the Institute. All communications between the Institute and External Examiners shall be by registered mail, or other secure means of delivery.

### **A5. Provisional Registration or Temporary Registration on Programmes or Modules of Learning**

**A5.1** Such candidates who have not complied with all appropriate Academic Council and Institute requirements will be regarded as not being fully registered on the Programme or Module in question. Any recommendations by an Examination Board in respect of the result of any such candidate will be regarded as provisional until such time as the candidate has complied with the appropriate requirements.

### **A6. Return of Examination Marks/Grades by Internal Examiners**

**A6.1** Should the Registrar or other appropriate officer nominated by the President for that purpose, for any reason, (personal, health, discipline, or otherwise) decide before, during or after the process of presenting a student's performance in one or more examination Modules to the purview of Academic Council, that it does not wish to so present the student, then it is the Institute's right and responsibility to withhold that student's results or part thereof from that purview (including the Examination Boards' meeting etc.). It is further a matter for the Institute whether it will present such a student again, and if it does so, under what circumstances e.g. as a first attempt or otherwise.

**A6.2** It is a function of the Internal Examiner to mark examination papers. Please refer to Appendix 2 for the Institute's Marking Policy and Marginal Regrade Policy.

**A6.3** Examination marks/grades, as agreed with the External Examiner(s), must be submitted by the Internal Examiner to the appropriate officer in the Institute according to procedures established by the Institute. Normally, a "Module Marks Sheet" should be signed by the Internal Examiner. The completed "Module Marks Sheet" should include the following for each candidate: -

- a) The allocation of marks for Written, Oral, Practical, Projects, Continuous assessment etc. in accordance with the terms of the Approved Programme Schedule currently in operation.
- b) The overall total of marks/grades awarded to each candidate and agreed upon by the Internal and External Examiners for that Examination Module

**A6.4** Individual Programme Boards in the Institute may, at the discretion of the Examination Board, require a “Component Marks Sheet” for a given Module.

## **A7. Meeting of Examination Boards**

**A7.1** After each examination the Internal and External Examiners shall meet together as an Examination Board under the Chairmanship of the President of the Institution or by a member of the Institute’s staff nominated for that purpose by the President. Only those Internal Examiners who have participated in the examinations for a given award (or examination stage leading to an award), together with the Registrar, Head of School and Head of Department concerned, and such approved External Examiners as the Institute shall deem appropriate, shall participate in the meeting of the Examination Board at which recommendations in relation to that award or examination stage are decided. An Examination Board may act notwithstanding the absence of one or more members, provided that the Chairman of the Board is satisfied that the meeting has been duly convened and that the members present at the meeting constitute an appropriate attendance for the proper discharge of the Board’s responsibilities.

### **A7.2 Semesterised Programmes**

In the case of programmes organised on the basis of semesters and in which an examination stage includes the results from more than one semester, the powers of the Examination Board shall include the consideration of, and the determination of recommendations in relation to, the results of all semesters not previously considered by such Board. The duties and functions of External Examiners in such programmes should be construed accordingly.

**A7.3** The proceedings and deliberations of the Examination Board are strictly confidential. The President or his/her nominee shall issue or cause to be issued examination results.

**A7.4** The dates of meetings of Boards of Examiners shall be decided annually by the President or her/his nominee so designated for that purpose.

**A7.5** Group meetings of Examiners, prior to the meeting of the Examination Boards, are permitted. The proceedings of any such meeting must be made available to the subsequent Examination Boards.

**A7.6 Broadsheets of Results**

At the meeting of the Examination Boards, a Broadsheet of Results shall be endorsed which shall record the total marks or grades awarded to each candidate in each Examination Module and which shall indicate, in relation to each candidate's overall result, as to whether the candidate has passed, or has passed with Merit (indicating the grade of Merit), or has passed with Distinction, or has passed with Honours (indicating the grade of Honours), or has failed. Any other overall result should be recorded in accordance with the following table:

<b>Result Code</b>	<b>Result</b>	<b><i>Effect on Number of Exam Attempts</i></b>
EXE	Exemption(s) Granted	<i>Counted as an attempt</i>
ABS	Absent from Examination	<i>Counted as an attempt</i>
FAIL	Fail	<i>Counted as an attempt</i>
DEF	Deferral of Result(s)	<i>Not counted as an attempt</i>
WDRW	Withdrew from Programme	<i>Counted as an attempt</i>
WHLD	Student's Result(s) withheld	<i>Institute to decide</i>

**A7.7** In the event of disagreement between Examiners with regard to the mark or grade which should be awarded to a candidate on any Examination Module, which shall not have been resolved between them prior to the meeting of the Examination Board, an External Examiner who continues to dissent at the meeting, may choose to have a dissenting opinion recorded in the Minutes of the Meeting of the Examination Board. The Examination Board shall have the authority to assign the grade awarded to a candidate in any Examination Module.

**A7.8 Overall Student Performance and Borderline Cases**

Meetings of Examination Boards must allow for full and frank discussion of overall student performance and borderline cases before a final decision is made. The final decision must be based on the cumulative evidence presented rather than on the view of one Internal or External Examiner. (Please refer to Appendix 4)

### **A7.9 Signing of Broadsheets**

The Broadsheet(s) of Results shall be signed by the Chairman and Secretary of the meeting, and by all of the Examiners (External and Internal) present at the meeting. The original Broadsheet document shall be lodged with the Registrar following the meeting of the Examination Boards.

### **A7.10 Provisional Lists of Results**

Where clear-cut recommendations emerge at a meeting of an Examination Board, the Chairman of the Examination Board may cause a provisional list of results to be issued by the Institute. The Institute may not issue a provisional result in the case of any candidate whose result is in dispute, indeterminate, the subject of a recorded dissenting opinion or the subject of referral to the President (or any such officer so nominated for that purpose by the President), or whose entry is regarded as provisional in accordance with Paragraph A5.1 or otherwise; the name of any such candidate may not be included in any provisional list of results issued by the Institute, nor should any information in relation to results be communicated to any such candidate pending a decision by the President (or any such officer so nominated for that purpose by the President) thereon.

### **A7.11 Academic Sanction**

The decisions of Examination Discipline Boards which refer to academic sanctions in particular Modules or Programmes will be recorded by the Registrar or appropriate officer so designated for that purpose by the President. Decisions of Examination Discipline Boards which have been modified upon Appeal will be recorded on the Broadsheet of Results (by the Registrar or appropriate Officer) when such decisions refer to academic sanction in particular modules or Programmes.

The Disqualification of candidates will be recorded on the Broadsheet of Results by the Registrar or appropriate Officer so designated by the President. In this context please refer to Section A.6.1 above.

### **A7.12 Recommendation of Results to the President**

A7.12.1 Refer to section A6.1 and A7.11 above.

A7.12.2 The following guidelines should be followed with a view to arriving at definite recommendations:-

- a) In the case of non-award examination stages, the candidate should, normally, be accorded the benefit of the doubt, given reasonable grounds, and the Examination Boards should endeavour to make a firm recommendation on the matter.
- b) In the case of final (award stage) examinations, Marks and Standards should be interpreted in such a manner as to require the candidate to have demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt an entitlement, on the basis of examination performance, to the result being sought.

#### **A7.13 Deferral of Examination Results**

An Examination Board may, in the case of illness or bereavement, or other special circumstance as determined by the President or his/her nominee, recommend that a final decision on a candidate's result be deferred to enable the candidate to complete specific outstanding requirements of the Programme or examination.

#### **A7.14 Post Examination Board Change of Grade**

Where a change of grade or changes of award level is deemed appropriate by the Registrar and to which an approved 'Change of Grade' form has been duly completed and validated, the Registrar will amend the Broadsheet of Results. Where systematic errors may give rise to a change of grade in a number of candidates' results within a cohort then every attempt should be made to reconvene the original Examination Board.

#### **A8. The Granting of Institute Awards**

When the Registrar or other appropriate officer nominated by the President for that purpose endorses the recommendations of a duly constituted meeting of an Examination Board, the results thereby approved shall be final and appropriate awards shall be granted by the Institute on foot thereof.

## **PART B: General Requirements for Examinations and Awards**

### **B1 Introduction**

- B1.1** Only candidates who have satisfactorily attended or otherwise pursued or followed a programme of study or instruction approved by the Governing Body, and who have met all Programme requirements, including satisfactory completion of prescribed coursework and projects, within prescribed deadlines, shall be admitted to the examinations or other tests.
- B1.2** The granting of a higher certificate, ordinary degree, honours degree or other Institute award shall be on the basis of a candidate's performance in examinations or other tests of knowledge or ability, which have been approved and monitored by External Examiner(s) appointed by the Institute.
- B1.3** The term "examination" in these Marks and Standards should be construed to include reference, as appropriate, to written and oral examinations, assessment of coursework, project-work, etc., examination of theses, dissertations and similar work, and such other forms of assessment of candidates' performance as may have been approved or prescribed by the Institute in relation to any Programme of study or instruction, and cognate expressions should be construed accordingly.
- B1.4** All examination and assessment material must be available for scrutiny and approval as required by the Institute's External Examiner(s).
- B1.5** The Institute employs an alphabetical grading system on all of its programmes and modules. This alphabetical grading system appears in Annex 1 of this document.

### **B2 Approved Programme Schedule**

- B2.1** Where the Registrar or other Appropriate Officer nominated by the President for that purpose has approved an Approved Programme Schedule in relation to an approved Programme, the provisions of that Schedule are deemed to form part of the Marks and Standards applying to the Programme.
- B2.2** Any special regulation, which is indicated in an Approved Programme Schedule as applying to a particular Module, is deemed to apply to the examinations relating to that Module, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the provisions of the Marks and Standards herein. No special regulations shall apply unless the Registrar or other Appropriate Officer nominated by the President for that purpose has formally approved such regulations and incorporated them in the Certificate of Programme Approval issued in relation to the programme concerned.



### **B2.3 Examination Modules**

The Approved Programme Schedule for each approved programme sets out the approved Examination Modules for the Programme. An Examination Module may consist of one or more Components. Where an Examination Module consists of more than one Component, these are normally examined separately and the marks/grades scored in the several Components are aggregated to determine the candidate's overall performance in the Examination Module.

**B2.4** Examination Modules are categorised as Mandatory, Elective, Group Elective and Optional. The following provisions apply to the various categories of Examination Modules for the purpose of completing any examination stage leading to an Institute award: -

- a) **MANDATORY:** Each candidate must present in all Mandatory Examination Modules.
- b) **ELECTIVE:** Where the programme structure consists of one or more Mandatory Examination Modules and several Elective Examination Modules each candidate must present in all Mandatory Examination Modules and in a prescribed number of Elective Examination Modules. The number of Elective Examination Modules required is prescribed in the Approved Programme Schedule.
- c) **GROUP ELECTIVE:** Where the programme structure consists of one or more Mandatory Examination Modules and several Elective Examination Modules, each candidate must present in all Mandatory Examination Modules and in the required number of Elective Examination Modules in one of the Elective Groups prescribed in the Approved Programme Schedule.
- d) **OPTIONAL:** Performance in Optional Examination Modules is not taken into account in determining a candidate's overall result.

**B2.5** The Approved Programme Schedule indicates the Examination and combinations of Examination Modules approved by the Registrar or other Appropriate Officer nominated by the President for that purpose in respect of each programme. (No other Examination Module or combination of Examination Modules is approved for the purpose of proceeding to the award to which the Approved Programme Schedule refers).

**B2.6** Normally, no result shall be approved in respect of any candidate presenting in an Examination Module or in a combination of Examination Modules which has not been approved by the Registrar or other Appropriate Officer nominated by the President for that purpose.

### **B3. Distribution of Marks and Credits in Approved Programme Schedule**

**B3.1** The maximum mark for each Examination Module, and the allocation of marks to each Component and to each Examination Element, shall be as indicated in the Approved Programme Schedule.

**B3.2** The allocation of marks as between the various Examination Modules and as between the various elements and components within Examination Modules, is designed to ensure that the Programme aims and objectives are properly reflected and realised in the calculation of eligibility for Pass, Honours, Distinction and Merit.

**B3.3** The distribution of credits across and between modules is designed to ensure that the requisite knowledge, skills and competencies are reflective of the award standards for that particular level and type of award.

#### **B4. Minimum Pass Mark**

##### **B4.1 Continuous Assessment Marks**

**B4.1.1** In the case of a candidate repeating an examination, marks awarded on the basis of continuous assessment, practical, project or laboratory examinations, etc., shall, normally, be carried forward from the original examination to the repeat examination and shall be aggregated with the marks scored in the latter to determine the total marks to be awarded in respect of the repeat examination. However normally in the case of a candidate repeating an examination following a repeat attendance, the better mark awarded as a result of the repeat assessment and examination shall be considered.

**B4.1.2** In the case of a repeat candidate whose results are liable to be jeopardised by the carry-forward of poor continuous assessment marks, the institution may devise, having due regard to the provisions of the Approved Programme Schedule, alternative assessment arrangements. The results of such candidates at the repeat examination shall be based on the marks awarded for the alternative assessment combined with the other repeated examination elements where applicable.

##### **B4.2 Assessment of Joint Projects**

Where two or more candidates present a joint project, the individual contribution and performance of each candidate should be assessed, and individual marks/grades awarded accordingly.

##### **B4.3 Prior Learning Exemptions**

Exemptions are issued by individual Departments in the Institute to students with prior learning. Departments forward decisions regarding exemptions to the Registrar's Office and the Examinations Office. Prior to examinations, the School Secretary shall verify that all approved student exemptions are noted on the examination broadsheets.

## ANNEX 1: Alphabetic Grading Scheme

### 1. General

- 1.1 This Alphabetic Grading Scheme uses the 60 Credit Stage as described in NCEA's ACCS scheme as its basis. ([www.hetac.ie](http://www.hetac.ie))
- 1.2 This Scheme will apply to students following programmes on a full-time basis.
- 1.3 This Scheme will apply to students participating in the ACCS Scheme

### 2. Assessment and Grading Individual Modules

- 2.1 A grade, representative of the quality of a student's performance in particular modules, shall be awarded at the end of each stage or semester for which a student is registered.
- 2.2 Table An.1.1 lists the grades which can be awarded.
- 2.3 When assigning grades to modules, internal examiners should use the definition in Table An.1.1.

**Table An.1.1: Grades to be awarded to each Module**

GRADE	PERCENTAGE BAND	CREDITS AWARDED	INDICATIVE QUALITY OF PERFORMANCE
A	80 – 100	Yes	Excellent
B+	70 < 79	Yes	Very Good
B	60 < 69	Yes	Good
B-	55 < 59	Yes	Above Average
C+	50 < 54	Yes	Fair
C	40 < 49	Yes	Pass
D	35 < 39	Yes	Poor
F	< 34	No	Fail
I	Yes	Deferral of result or Incomplete	
X	yes	Student exempted from the learning of the modules because of previous equivalent learning	
W		Withdrew	
NP		Absent / Not Present	
WH		Withhold	

### 3. Assessment of Aggregate Performance

The aggregate performance of an individual student is represented by the student's Grade Point Average (GPA) for each stage or semester of the Programme followed. The GPA to be used when determining the classification of an award shall be the cumulative credit scores divided by the total credits for that stage.

In order to determine the GPA for a particular student, the following calculation is carried out.

- a) A Grade Point Value is assigned to the alphabetic grade a student or learner has gained for each module, as follows:

Alphabetical Grade	Grade Point Value
A	4.0
B+	3.5
B	3.0
B-	2.75
C+	2.5
C	2.0
D	1.5
F	0

- b) The Grade Point Value is multiplied by the Credits to arrive at a Grade Credit Score for each Module.
- c) The Grade Credit Scores are then added together and divided by the credits for the stage or semester to arrive at the GPA. **The GPA is calculated as follows:**

$$GPA = \frac{1}{60} \sum_{i=1}^n GPV_i c_i$$

$$\frac{1}{60} \{ GPV_1 c_1 + GPV_2 c_2 + \dots + GPV_n c_n \}$$

where  $n$  = number of Modules to be taken on Approved Programme Schedule and

$c_i$  = credit value of Module  $i$  and

$GPV_i$  = grade point value of alphabetic grade achieved by student in Module  $i$

Grade Point Average is calculated with full precision and rounded to two decimal places for presentation on a broadsheet. This gives a maximum rounding effect for a final GPA of +0.005.

- d) The Grade Credit Scores are then added together and divided by the credits for the stage or semester to arrive at the GPA. Credits gained as a result of being awarded an Exemption (X) in a course are not included in the calculation of a GPA.

- e) Where Programmes are structured in semesters, the GPA to be used when determining the classification of an award shall be the cumulative credit scores divided by the total credits for the stage.

#### **4. Award Classifications**

- 4.1** Institute awards other than Honours Degrees, Higher Diplomas, Graduate Diplomas and Masters may be made at Pass, Merit (Merit Grade 1, and Merit Grade 2) or Distinction classification.
- 4.2** To be eligible for consideration for an award at Pass classification, a candidate must:
- a. satisfy all the examination requirements, credits and other requirements for the programme as specified in the Approved Programme Schedule  
and
  - b. Pass the stage examination as a whole, by attaining a GPA of at least 2.0, with no Fails.
- 4.3** To be eligible for consideration for an award at Merit, Distinction or Honours classification a candidate must:
- a. Satisfy all the examination requirements, credits and other requirements for the programme as specified in the Approved Programme Schedule  
and
  - b. Have attained a GPA in the award stage of the programme in accordance with the requirements in Table An.1.2  
and
  - c. Pass the award stage examinations at the first attempt or having been successful in his/her application to retain a Merit/Distinction or Honours Award Classification, converted an outstanding single F grade to a C or higher grade at the next sitting of that module examination as per section 4.9 below.
- 4.4** Normally, Merits and Distinctions and Honours may be awarded on the results of the final award stage examination only; however any weighted contributions from previous years' examinations must be defined in the Approved Programme Schedule.

**Table An.1.2: GPA required for award classification**

<b>Certificate / Ordinary Degree Classification</b>	<b>GPA Required</b>	<b>Honours Degree / Higher Diploma / Grad Dip / Masters (taught) Classification</b>	<b>GPA Required</b>
Pass	2.00	Pass	2.00
Pass with Merit – Grade 2	2.50	2 <sup>nd</sup> Class Honours – Grade 2	2.50
Pass with Merit – Grade 1	3.00	2 <sup>nd</sup> Class Honours – Grade 1	3.00
Pass with Distinction	3.25	1 <sup>st</sup> Class Honours	3.25
		2 <sup>nd</sup> Class Honours (Masters taught only)	3.00

#### **4.5 Honours Bachelor Degree, Higher Diploma and Graduate Diploma**

- 4.5.1** The award of Honours Bachelor Degree, Higher Diploma and Graduate Diploma may be made at Pass or Honours classifications (First Class Honours, Second Class Honours Grade 1, and Second Class Honours Grade 2).
- 4.5.2** In order to be eligible for consideration for the award of an Honours Bachelor Degree, Higher Diploma and Graduate Diploma at Pass classification, a candidate must: -
- a. Satisfy all the examination and other requirements set for the programme  
and
  - b. Pass the final stage examinations
- 4.5.3** To be eligible for consideration for the award of an Honours Bachelor Degree, Higher Diploma and Graduate Diploma at Honours classification, a candidate must: -
- a. Satisfy all the examination requirements, credits and other requirements for the programme as specified in the Approved Programme Schedule  
and
  - b. Pass the final examinations as a whole, in accordance with these Marks and Standards or having been successful in his/her application to retain a Merit/Distinction or Honours Award Classification, converted an outstanding single F grade to a C or higher grade at the next sitting of that module examination as per section 4.9 below  
and
  - c. Attain, at the final examination, a GPA in accordance with the requirements in Table An.1.2.

- 4.5.4** An Award with Honours may not be considered unless the candidate has passed the final examination: -
- a. In the case of full-time candidates, at the first attempt, and in one sitting or having been successful in his/her application to retain a Merit/Distinction or Honours Award Classification, having converted the outstanding single F grade to a C or higher grade at the next sitting of that module examination as per section 4.9 below,
- or
- b. In the case of part-time candidates, by virtue of passing in each required examination module at the first attempt. In such cases the Examination Module marks/grades to be included in the average result shall be those obtained at the candidate's first attempt at the respective Examination Module or having been successful in his/her application to retain a Merit/Distinction or Honours Award Classification, converted an outstanding single F grade to a C or higher grade at the next sitting of that module examination as per section 4.9 below.

**4.5.5** Normally, an award with Honours may be recommended on the results of the final examination only; however any weighted contributions from previous years' examinations shall be indicated in the Approved Programme Schedule.

**4.5.6** At non-final examination stages, candidates' results may be declared with Honours, where the standards set out in Paragraphs 4.5.2 to 4.5.3 above have been met in relation to the examinations appropriate to the stage; such declaration is without prejudice to the final classification of a candidate's degree award, if any.

## **4.6 Master's Degree (Taught)**

**4.6.1** The Degree of Master (Taught) may be awarded at Pass or Honours classifications (First Class Honours and Second Class Honours)

**4.6.2** To be eligible for consideration for the award of a Master's Degree (Taught) at pass classification, a candidate must: -

- a. Satisfy all the examination and other requirements for the programme
- and
- b. Pass the final examination as a whole in accordance with these Marks and Standards.

**4.6.3** To be eligible for consideration for the award of a Master's Degree (Taught) at Honours classification, a candidate must: -

- a. Satisfy all the examination and other requirements for the programme
- and

- b. Pass the final examination as a whole in accordance with these Marks and Standards or having been successful in his/her application to retain Merit/Distinction or Honours Award Classification, converted the outstanding single F grade to a C or higher grade at the next sitting of that module examination as per section 4.9 below

and

- c. Attain, at the final examination, a GPA in accordance with the requirements in Table An.1.2.

**4.6.4** An award with Honours may not be considered unless the candidate has passed the final examination: -

- a. In the case of full-time candidates, at the first attempt, and in one sitting or having been successful in his/her application to retain a Merit/Distinction or Honours Award Classification, converted an outstanding single F grade to a C or higher grade at the next sitting of that module examination as per section 4.9 below.

or

- b. In the case of part-time candidates, by virtue of passing in each required examination module at the first attempt. In such cases the Examination Module marks/grades to be included in the average result shall be those obtained at the candidate's first attempt at the respective Examination Module or having been successful in his/her application to retain a Merit/Distinction or Honours Award Classification, converted an outstanding single F grade to a C or higher grade at the next sitting of that module examination as per section 4.9 below.

#### **4.7 Master's Degree (Research)**

The Degree of Master (Research) is of Honours standard and is awarded without classification. In the case of successful candidates, the Broadsheet of Results should be annotated "Recommended" and signed by the Examiner(s) concerned.

#### **4.8 Doctor of Philosophy**

The Degree of Doctor of Philosophy is awarded without classification. In the case of successful candidates, the Broadsheet of Results should be annotated "Recommended" and signed by the Examiner(s) concerned.

#### **4.9 Application to retain Honours (or Merit/Distinction) award classification**

The Honours, Merit and Distinction award classifications are normally granted when a student meets the requirements for award classification in one sitting (see Sections 4.1 to 4.6 inclusive). Thus students may not repeat modules to increase their GPA in order to achieve a higher award classification. However students may apply to have



an honours (or merit or distinction) classification awarded under the following specific conditions:

1. Students must formally apply to the Institution to avail of this policy. Applications are made on the standard Repeat Examination Registration Form
2. Student must have achieved a GPA of  $\geq 2.50$  at sessional examinations (i.e. at first attempt). For taught Master Degree programmes Student must have achieved a GPA  $\geq 3.00$ .
3. The Project or Dissertation is a module that cannot be repeated to achieve honours award
4. Modules must be normally repeated at the next available opportunity (unless a Deferral by the normal Deferral Mechanism is applied for and granted)
5. There is only one repeat attempt to achieve an honours award. (If a student fails a repeated module then the maximum award classification is PASS)
6. Only one "F" grade can be repeated up to a maximum of 10 credits
7. A minimum of a "C" grade must be achieved in the repeat attempt to be considered for an honours classification. If a "D" grade is achieved then the overall degree classification is PASS
8. Final Award Classification is based on initial GPA achieved at sessional (i.e. first attempt) examinations
9. Students who have deferred one or more final session exams and have one 'F' grade up to a maximum of 10 credits are also eligible to repeat the failed module and be considered for merit/distinction or honours award classification at the same time as sitting their deferred exams. The overall GPA for award classification will be calculated based on the first attempt result in each module

## **5. Post Award Achievements**

An individual holder of a QQI or Institute Award may present for a further award at the same level within the same generic area of study but with a different area of specialisation. If the area of specialisation is not adequately different and/or if the quantum of new work to be undertaken is not sufficient for the granting of a second award, the applicant should be registered as an ACCS candidate or on a Supplemental Programme and shall receive single subject certification or a Special Purpose Award which will specify the nature and extent of new studies satisfactorily completed.

## **6. Borderline Cases**

Notwithstanding the above provisions, an Examination Board may consider as a borderline case, any candidate presenting for an award, whose GPA is within 0.05 of any of the above thresholds, provided the candidate has achieved full credits in all the prescribed Modules. (Please refer to Appendix 4)

Where a candidate's GPA is below the minimum pass threshold or the number of credits gained are insufficient for a particular award as a result of Grades D or F in particular Modules then:

- a. Only those Modules where a grade D or F has been recorded can be repeated
- Or
- b. If any of the Modules referred to in (a) above are elective Modules then other Modules may be taken to enable a student to pass in the examination as a whole.

## 7. Examples of Calculation of GPA

### 7.1 Calculation of GPA for an award stage at Higher Certificate Level

Module	(A) Credits	(B) Grade	(C) Grade point value	(D) Grade point score (A x c = D)
Construction Technology	10	D	1.5	15
Site Management	5	C	2.0	10
Civil Engineering Design	10	C+	2.5	25
Mathematics	5	B	3.0	15
Advanced Surveying	10	B	3.0	30
Quality Management	15	C	2.0	10
Project	15	B	3.0	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>			<b>150</b>

The candidate's GPA is calculated as:

Total Grade Score                      150

Total Credits                              60     = 2.5   Pass with Merit Grade 2 (see Table 1.2)

### 7.2 Calculation of GPA for an award stage at Level 6 where the candidate has an exemption in one module

Module	(A) Credits	(B) Grade	(C) Grade point value	(D) Grade point score
--------	----------------	--------------	-----------------------------	-----------------------------

(A x c = D)				
Construction Technology	10	D	1.5	15
Site Management	5*	X	-	-
Civil Engineering Design	10	C+	2.5	25
Mathematics	5	B	3.0	15
Advanced Surveying	10	B	3.0	30
Quality Management	15	C	2.0	10
Project	15	B	3.0	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>			<b>167.5</b>

The candidate's GPA is calculated as: -

Total Grade Score     $\frac{167.5}{60-5^*} = \frac{167.5}{55}$

Total Credits        = 60-5\* = 55 = 3.05 Pass with Merit Grade 1 (Table 1.2)

### 7.3 Calculation of GPA for an award stage of a Level 6 programme structured in semesters with unequal credits in each semester.

Module	(A) Credits	(B) Grade	(C) Grade point value	(D) Grade point score (A x c = D)
<b>SEMESTER 1</b>				
Mathematics	4	C	2.0	8.0
Mechanics	4	B-	2.75	11.0
Civil Engineering Design	3	B	3.0	9.0
CAD	3	B	3.0	9.0
Information Technology Automation	4	C	2.0	8.0
Electrical Engineering	3	D	1.5	4.5
Thermodynamics	3	C	2.0	6.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>			<b>55.5</b>

Candidate's GPA for Semester 1    =  $\frac{55.5}{24} = 2.31$

*pto*

Module	(A) Credits	(B) Grade	(C) Grade point value	(D) Grade point score (A x c = D)
<b>SEMESTER 2</b>				

Mathematics	4	C+	2.50	10.0
Mechanics	3	C+	2.50	7.5
Energy Systems	3	B+	3.50	10.5
Engineering Management	3	A	4.00	12.0
Control Systems	4	D	1.50	6.0
Project	12	A	4.00	48.0
Instrumentation	3	C+	2.50	7.5
Fluid Mechanics	4	B-	2.75	11.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>			<b>112.5</b>

$$\text{Candidate's GPA for Semester 2} = \frac{112.5}{36} = 3.13$$

$$\text{Candidate's GPA for the Award Stage} = \frac{55.5 + 112.5}{60} = 2.80$$

Pass with Merit Grade 2

## Appendix 1

### External Examiner Policy

1. In keeping with its commitment to quality assurance and to ensure consistency of standards across the Institute it is the policy of the Institute to appoint, via its Academic Council, External Examiners to its taught and other programmes.
2. The Institute will strive to ensure gender balance at an Institute level in the appointment of External Examiners.
3. External Examiners will normally be appointed to the award years of programmes only.
4. External Examiners shall be appointed for a period of not less than 3 years and not more than 5 years, renewable annually by mutual consent. Extension beyond 5 years will only be given in exceptional circumstances and for a period not exceeding 2 additional years. External Examiners who have previously held an External Examinership at I.T. Tallaght may be considered for non-consecutive reappointment after a period of 3 years has lapsed since the completion of his/her last contract with the Institute.
5. External Examiners who have completed two examinerships should not be nominated for a third term of office.
6. It is desirable that External Examiners should not hold a similar post at more than one other institution.
7. Each programme will have a minimum of two External Examiners appointed. One External Examiner must be an academic and one ideally a practitioner. Where an External Examiner retires from his/her main employment within a period of his/her external duties he/she shall be allowed to complete his/her period of contract with the Institute by mutual agreement.
8. Programme Boards will initially nominate External Examiners. The Head of School will present the nominations to Academic Council. Nominations will be presented to the Academic Council not less than six months in advance of the External Examiner's expected commencement date.
9. External Examiners should not have been employed by or studied at the Institute for a period of three years prior to his/her appointment as External Examiner.
10. In order to allow proper performance of his/her duties individuals should not normally
11. hold more than two External Examinerships at Certificate, Ordinary Degree or Degree level within the Institute.
12. Following Academic Council approval the Registrar shall supply each External Examiner with the following documentation:
  - The relevant policy document on external examination and an External Examiner's
  - contract.
  - The Programme documentation relating to the Programme/module(s) for which

- he/she is External Examiner
  - Any relevant report forms.
  - Generic samples of External Examiner reports.
13. External Examiners will be required to visit the Institute at least once per year and the
14. visit will normally coincide with the summer examination boards.
15. External Examiners will be required to produce an annual written report on their findings. This report will be forwarded to the appropriate School and Registrar's Office no later than October 1<sup>st</sup> each year. The School will supply copies of these reports to the relevant Internal Examiners.

### **Guidelines for the nomination of External Examiners**

External examiners **must** have:

- In the case of Level 8 programmes or below, formal academic qualification to at least honours degree level in an appropriate discipline or professional body membership at an appropriate level.
- In the case of Level 9 taught programmes, formal academic qualification to Masters in an appropriate discipline or Professional body membership at that level.
- At least three years relevant industrial, commercial or academic experience.
- A willingness to devote time to their role
- A willingness to arbitrate on or adjudicate on problem cases
- A willingness to respond quickly to requests for comments on examination papers and production of final reports within tight time deadlines

**and ideally have**

- experience of employing/working with graduates from those or similar programmes for which they are external examiners
- good written and verbal communication
- relevant lecturing or examination-setting experience
- Programme design experience
- a willingness to comment and give advice on assessment methods in use
- a willingness to discuss with the Institute staff how Programmes/modules might be improved.

### **Duties of the External examiner**

1. External Examiners are normally appointed with responsibility for a specific programme or a module or a range of modules over a number of programmes. External Examiners should deal primarily with the final year(s) of the programmes and should approach the task with a view to ensuring that each candidate's performance is properly assessed, subject to the regulations and standards applicable generally for the award.
2. It shall be the duty of External Examiners to see the relevant syllabuses and the drafts of all examination question papers, marking schemes, solutions and worked solutions before the question papers are mass-produced. External Examiners shall have the right to make suggestions regarding deletions, additions and amendments as appropriate.
3. Academic Council requires that External Examiners see a representative sample of scripts and other material presented for assessment, e.g. projects, practical work, Programme work, particularly for those years of a programme which contribute directly to the final award and classification.
4. The sample, which should be drawn on a basis agreed between the School and External Examiner(s), should include sufficient material to enable the External Examiner(s) to form a judgement on the reliability and consistency of marking and on the levels of classification including borderline cases and proposed cases of failure.
5. The External Examiner(s) should certify the agreed final marks for each candidate on the appropriate documentation (e.g. white sheet and broadsheet).
6. External Examiners may be consulted about relevant matters in respect of Examination Appeals submitted to the Appeals Board.
7. All External Examiners will be expected to visit the Institute once in each academic year. This visit will normally take place at the time of determination of final results at the summer examination board. The School, in consultation with the Registrar's office, if required, will arrange additional visits. External Examiners should endeavour, therefore, to discharge all correspondence, using registered post, as much of his/her work (including completion of Examination papers and/or other tests) as it is feasible to perform in this manner

## Appendix 2

### Institute Marking Policy

Lecturers must record on the examination scripts the marks against all aspects of the student's work as described in the marking scheme and model answers.

1. All questions which are attempted are marked.
2. In marking a question:-
  - a. All the solution/answer is marked
  - b. All rough work is marked
  - c. Marks are allocated according to the marking scheme for the best attempt
  - d. All second attempts, deleted or crossed out questions or elements of a question are taken into account when it benefits the student
  - e. Deleted or crossed out work which does not benefit the student is not taken into account
  - f. Where a choice of question is provided and the number of questions attempted exceeds the number required, the highest scoring questions will be used in calculating the total marks for the paper.



## Appendix 3

### Marginal Regrade Policy

The decision to adjust or not to adjust a marginal grade is an academic judgment. The following guidelines are provided in an attempt to offer a more consistent approach to this decision making process.

Criteria to be taken into account in the consideration of marginal regrades.

1. The provisional grade must fall within the upper 20<sup>th</sup> percentile of the provisional grade band i.e.

<b>Upgrade under consideration</b>	<b>Marks greater than or equal to</b>	<b>Marks less than</b>
F to D	33.00	35.00
D to C	39.00	40.00
C to C+	48.00	50.00
C+ to B-	54.00	55.00
B- to B	59.00	60.00
B to B+	68.00	70.00
B+ to A	78.00	-

**AND**

2. The academic performance, in the view of the Internal Examiner, would be more accurately reflected in the higher grade. The consideration of academic performance precludes any deliberations of ad misericordiam or special personal circumstances of the student. Such deliberations may be made at Examination Board Meetings.

## Appendix 4

### Modification of Results

The Academic Council of the Institute of Technology Tallaght, under Section 13.5.3 of its constitution, has established subcommittees entitled Examination Boards.

This appendix highlights some Operational Guidelines for these Examination Boards in relation to the modification of a student's result.

#### **Operational Guidelines**

Borderline cases are defined in the Institute's Marks and Standards.

Meetings of the Examination Boards should allow for full and frank discussion of all borderline cases before a final decision is made. The Chairperson of the Board shall moderate the discussion. Where possible the final decision should be arrived at by consensus and that decision should be based on the cumulative evidence presented rather than on the view of one Internal or External Examiner. In the absence of consensus the decision will be determined by a vote. All members of the Examination Boards in attendance at the meeting are entitled to vote. In the case of a tied vote the Chairperson will have a casting vote.

In the event that a student is upgraded to a higher award level, module results will be adjusted so that the overall GPA attained by the candidate is that minimum required for the higher award as specified in the Institute's Marks and Standards.

Where the Examination Boards changes the results of a candidate as a result of its deliberations, this decision should be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. An appropriate decision code from the following codes shall be recorded on the Broadsheet of results to explain a decision of the Board as indicated in Appendix 7.

## Appendix 5

### Policy on Continuous Assessment

1. Continuous assessment work comprises class tests, essays, homework, projects and reports. It is structured to assist and direct students in their study programmes. It should be used by students to help them identify their academic strengths and weaknesses, and the areas where they must take remedial action.
2. Continuous assessment work must be the unaided work of the student. Copying from another student or from work previously submitted or direct copying from an unattributed source is academic cheating/plagiarism. This is regarded as a very serious offence. It can lead to disqualification by the Examination Board, with the penalties outlined in the disciplinary regulations of the Institute, or expulsion/suspension from the course. See also definition of plagiarism.
3. Continuous assessment work shall be carried out as required by the Approved Programme Schedule and as directed by the Lecturers of the Institute.
4. Each student shall present the work on the date required and in the form required. Work for continuous assessment will not be accepted from a student for grading after the due date except in exceptional circumstances and with the permission of the relevant lecturer or Head of Department.
5. The mark obtained by a student for an element of continuous assessment work should be provided to the student within a timely period and certainly no more than 3 weeks after the submission of the material for assessment.
6. The students will have all their CA marks prior to the commencement of the sessional examinations.
7. Students shall be informed regularly of their academic standing in continuous assessment work. Their attention is drawn to the requirement of a minimum pass mark in continuous assessment work before overall results are considered by the Examinations Board.
8. Feedback to the student in relation to Continuous Assessment material should be given in a timely fashion.
9. Feedback should be meaningful to the student and should serve to inform the student about the merits and demerits of their work with the view to further improvement.
10. Since what constitutes meaningful feedback for continuous assessment work may be unique to each module in a programme, each Programme Board is requested to:
  - Identify the feedback mechanisms appropriate to the module
  - Determine the relevant timescales, within which feedback should be provided, which are appropriate for each module in a programme.
11. Should it be the case that no such comprehensive Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) currently exist then each Programme Board should design, develop and implement SOPs for

- a) The timely issuing of CA results
  - b) The timely provision of meaningful feedback on all CA work
12. Each Programme Board should provide the Registrar with these SOPs as soon as is practical.
  13. When the SOP has been developed and agreed by the Programme Board, the main provisions should be summarised and included in the Programme Handbook.
  14. Where the Lecturer/Teacher is concerned about the academic standing of a student in continuous assessment work, he/she will advise the student of this verbally.
  15. If the cause for concern continues, the student shall be advised of this in writing by the Head of Department or School.
  16. If the cause for concern still persists, the Registrar shall notify the student in writing. In general this would mean that the student is unlikely to pass either the Summer or Autumn Examinations of the course. Students in this case are normally advised that it is in their own interest to withdraw from the examinations.
  17. An Internal or External Examiner may hold a viva voce examination on any piece of continuous assessment material submitted and the mark for the viva voce may be the mark for that continuous assessment element of the course.
  18. Students must retain their portfolios of continuous assessment work for presentation to Internal and or Externs Examiners, if and when required.
  19. Mandatory or optional Business/Industrial visits may be organised by the Head of Department or School as part of class work, and written reports may be required from students as part of continuous assessment work.
  20. The current Recheck, Review and Examination Appeals Policy and Procedures detailed in the current Student Handbook are implemented for the purpose of appealing results for Continuous Assessment work.

## Appendix 6

### Processes for Viewing of scripts by students and provision of feedback to students, Recheck/Re-mark, Review and Appeal

#### Viewing of Scripts by students and Provision of Feedback to students

The Institute policy is that, during the five day period following the issuing of examination results, students should be afforded the opportunity of discussing their results with appropriate staff. Such consultation should aim to:

- a. Give guidance to students regarding future performance, repeats etc.

or

- b. discuss results being questioned with a view to explaining how answers should have been structured.

This opportunity to discuss results is made available through Heads of Department to students. The policy covers all grades. Students are advised to avail of such procedures. These procedures provide an opportunity to avail of feedback, not an opportunity to question marks.

The hallmark of this procedure is that it is INFORMAL. It is at the discretion of the lecturer involved to decide what format it will take. However, there is an obligation to show the student the script. The student is not entitled to ask for a copy of the script. The above procedure does not prevent lecturers from meeting and giving advice to any student should they wish to do so. If a student wishes to dispute results after having availed of such consultation, then he/she may do so through the Institute's Recheck/Re-mark or Review process.

Students are encouraged to avail of feedback from lecturers before requesting a recheck/re-mark or review. In the case of continuous assessments and projects feedback can be obtained from lecturers throughout the course on a continuous basis.

#### Recheck/Re-mark

A recheck/re-mark is where a student suspects there has been an error in the determination of their result. Students wishing to seek a recheck/re-mark should do so through the Registrar's Office on the appropriate form. Such forms must be submitted within five working days of the publication of results as notified by the Registrar's Office. Requests received by post must be postmarked within the five day period.

A fee is charged for a recheck/re-mark which is refunded in the event of a successful outcome to the process for the student.

The recheck/re-mark process shall be carried out by the lecturer and normally involves establishing that all answers, part-answers and/or other assessment materials have been assessed and totaled correctly. This involves the lecturer reading the script again and modifying the results where appropriate in line with the marking scheme. Marks allocated can be increased or decreased.

## **Review**

A request for a review must be received by the Registrar or other Officer nominated by the President for that purpose not later than five working days after the examination results have been published. Requests received by post must be postmarked within this five day period. Only a written request for a Review from the person concerned will be considered.

Reviews should be overseen by an academic committee or equivalent within the academic department. The relevant external examiner should be notified and/or consulted if any change in classification is decided by the academic committee following review. Re-checks should be managed directly by the responsible academic unit.

A Review will automatically include a recheck/re-mark. A fee is charged for a Review which is refunded in the event of a successful outcome to the process for the student.

## **The Grounds for Review**

Before a Review procedure is initiated a detailed submission in the format specified by the Institute must be received from the candidate.

The submission must identify the element or elements of the examination for which the Review is being sought. It must also specify the grounds on which the Review is sought and must contain all information which the candidate requires to have taken into account in the Review.

The grounds for review should be specified under the following four headings which are the only grounds on which a review will be permitted:-

- (i). The examination regulations of the Institute have not been properly implemented
- (ii). The regulations do not adequately cover the candidate's case
- (iii). Compassionate circumstances related to the candidate's examination situation which was made known to the Institute by the candidate, in writing to the appropriate School Secretary, prior to or during the examination concerned of which the Examination Boards was unaware.
- (iv). Significant performance related information which the appellant believes was not considered by the Examination Boards.

## **Final Appeal within the Institute**

The student can appeal the decision from the Review within five working days from the receipt of the letter/email notifying them of the outcome of the review to the Registrar stating the reasons for the appeal. The reasons stated cannot be the same reasons provided at the Review stage.

### **Guidelines for Dealing with an Impasse Arising at an Examination Board Meeting**

1. It is the policy of IT Tallaght to ensure that student academic performance is assessed in a fair, consistent and transparent manner consistent with the award standards pertaining to the individual student programme.
2. Regular monitoring of student / class performance by the Programme Board will support early identification of unfolding issues. This is the required situation as it permits early intervention and remedial action appropriate to the situation.
3. Programme boards, which include student representation, will meet toward the middle of each semester to consider overall student performance, participation, and other factors that may impact on student performance. Where a significant performance related issue is identified, it will be notified as soon as practicable to the Head of Department by the Programme Board Chair for action within the relevant Department / School.
4. On occasion, issues may come to light at Examination Boards that fail to be resolved through its normal processes and which impair the ability of the Examination Board to arrive at a decision on a set of results relating to a particular programme or element therein.
5. Where an impasse occurs at the Examination Board meeting, the Chair may:-
  - a) Make the final decision or
  - b) Adjourn the meeting for one day to allow for reflection on, and review of the issue.
6. If the reconvened Examination Board cannot still make a final decision, the Chair may refer the issue to a sub-committee of Academic Council convened to consider that specific issue.
7. The sub-committee members will be drawn from Academic Council but independent of the affected Department and will comprise of: a Head of Department, a Head of School, a Student Representative, an Academic Staff member, and the Registrar. Additional relevant independent expertise may be sought by the sub-committee where the situation requires it.
8. The Academic Council sub-committee can determine that the referred issue does not constitute something beyond the normal remit of the Examination Board and is one that must be dealt with through the normal examination board process.
9. The Committee will consider the referred issue and provide final binding decisions on actions to be followed. The Registrar will report the decisions back to the School / Departmental Examination Board where the issue originated.
10. It is not the function of the Academic Council subcommittee to determine results of the examinations but to determine how best to deal with the referred issue.
11. Where a satisfactory resolution to the issue cannot be identified through the internal processes of IT Tallaght, it may be referred to an External Independent Group (EIG).

This should consist of a Senior Academic or retired Senior Academic of another Institute or University, an Academic or retired Academic from another Institute or University, and a Student representative from another Institute or University. Academic Council may pre-approve an independent chairperson of the EIG, namely the Senior Academic or retired Senior Academic.

12. Where the Examination Board disagrees with the findings of the internal sub-committee of Academic Council, they may appeal the outcome to the EIG.
13. The EIG considers the matter and reports to the Registrar, who then informs the relevant Head of Department, Head of School, Examination Board, including relevant External Examiners on how to deal with the matter. This decision is final.



## Appendix 7: Results Codes for Examination Boards

Where the Examination Board changes the results of a candidate as a result of its deliberations, this decision should be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The following codes shall be recorded on the Broadsheet of results to explain a decision of the board.

Grade Change Code	Grade Change code Description	Reason to change a candidate's result at the Examinations Board meeting
AA	Appeal Accepted (Registrar's Office)	
AE	Entry Error	
CC	NOT IN USE-Composite Calculation	
CR	NOT IN USE-Capped Result	
DA	Ex-Board Medical Grounds	Medical Grounds (Certified) which may have adversely affected the candidate's performance
DB	Ex-Board-Ad misericordiam	<i>Ad misericordiam</i> grounds (e.g. bereavement) which may have adversely affected the candidate's performance
DC	Ex-Board-Doc Pers Circ	Documented personal circumstances (made known to HOD in advance of the Board meeting) which may have adversely affected the candidate's performance
DE	Adj reflect overall performance S1-S2	Adjustment of the result of a candidate in a module/s in order to reflect overall performance in the module/s throughout the semester or significant improvement over two semester
DF	Ex-Board-borderline Award	Based on the cumulative evidence that the candidate, being borderline for a level of award, merited an upgrading of the grades entered on the Examination Results Broadsheet thus allows a higher level of award be achieved.
DG	New letter to be approved	Based on the cumulative evidence that the candidate, being borderline for a level of award, no upgrading of the grades entered on the Examination Results Broadsheet (in order to allow a higher level of award be achieved) occurred. Results, therefore, remain unchanged leaving the candidate borderline.

<b>Grade Change Code</b>	<b>Grade Change code Description</b>	<b>Reason to change a candidate's result at the Examinations Board meeting</b>
DH	Ex Board –Module Grade Adj.	Results achieved in a module/s by a substantial number of candidates, in the opinion of the Board, were too harshly/too generously graded and the grades of those students were adjusted accordingly.
DI	Ex Board –Disciplinary/Infrin	The grades were modified as a result of the Examinations Disciplinary/Infringement Board or Disciplinary Appeals/Infringement Appeals Board
DJ	defunct	The weighted average GPA is taken into consideration.
DK	Ex Board Other reasons	Other reason(s) –Please specify in the minutes of the meeting of the Examination Boards
ER	Exam Board Revision (Board)	
FE	Faculty Error	
LC	Late sub-component submission	

## **Appendix 8: The Use of Electronic Dictionaries, Electronic Aids and hard copy Dictionaries**

1. Programme Boards should advise the Registrar if hard copy dictionaries should be available to candidates in specific examinations.
2. The use of such authorised hard copy dictionaries shall be explicitly indicated on the front cover of the examination paper.
3. Students are not be allowed to take in their own hard copy dictionaries into the examinations
4. Electronic Dictionaries or Electronic Aids (other than approved calculators) are not permitted in the examinations.

## **APPENDIX 9: Regulations for the Submission and Examination of Taught Masters Level 9 Theses**

**These regulations identify the minimum criteria applicable to dissertations for taught Level 9 Masters Awards within IT Tallaght.**

**The regulations recognise that the exact nature of the presentation of the dissertation may vary according to discipline.**

The form and method of presentation of the candidate's work shall be proposed by the sponsoring Department and Supervisors and shall be appropriate in nature to the nature of the work (e.g. in the case of certain disciplines it may take the form of an exhibition or a performance).

The length of the thesis is normally around 10,000 to 15,000 words, but this will be discipline specific. The content of the thesis should be sufficient to demonstrate that the candidate has fulfilled the criteria for the relevant award as outlined in Section 4.

A thesis is a written document prepared by the student under the guidance of the supervisors. It can also encompass the student's peer-reviewed papers and other publications, models, designs, artistic compositions, business plans, audiovisual and/or multimedia materials, etc., depending on the discipline.

The dissertation is submitted normally through the medium of English as agreed between the postgraduate student and the Supervisor(s).

The thesis presented for examination must be the student's own work and must not have been previously submitted, either in whole or in part, for a separate award from this or any other Awarding Body. A declaration statement to this effect must be included at the start of the thesis (See Section 9.2.2). The declaration must be signed by the student and Supervisor(s).

If the work carried out is part of a collaborative project, the thesis should clearly show the student's specific contribution and the extent of collaboration involved.

Point 1.2 below provides the template for the thesis cover and general layout. The following regulations shall apply to the presentation and examination of theses for the Degrees of Master (Taught).

## **1. Thesis Format**

### **1.1 General Formatting**

The thesis should be in typescript or print (12-point type) on A4-size paper single sided, with pages numbered consecutively. The main text should be typed or printed in one and one half or double spacing; footnotes and quotations should be typed or printed (10-point type) in single spacing. On each page there should be a left-hand margin of at least 40mm and a right hand margin of at least 20mm. Each such page should also have a page number.

Photographs or diagrams, if any, should, where feasible, be incorporated digitally within the text. Where this is not appropriate or practicable they should be fixed firmly in place. They should be provided with reference numbers and legends.

Where the thesis consists of more than one volume, the pagination should indicate the relevant volume number as well as the page-number on each page.

Appendices should be named alphabetically, and each appendix paginated consecutively but separately from the main text and from each other.

Page numbers should be located centrally at the bottom of the page and about 20mm above the edge of the page.

### **1.2 Thesis Cover**

The covers of the copies of the thesis initially submitted are soft. The copies of the thesis finally submitted are hard-bound, with inscriptions on the cover and spine as specified below.

The hard-bound cover is required to be of dark (navy) blue colour. In all cases the cover should be of sufficient strength that it may stand upright unsupported on a shelf.

The front cover must be gold-embossed with the following inscription:

- Full title of the thesis (in 20 point type) together with any subtitles
- Name of the candidate
- Award for which the thesis is submitted
- Full name of the Institute
- Year of submission
- Volume number and the total number of volumes, if more than one.

The spine of the hard-bound cover thesis is also required to be gold-embossed, in a smaller type if necessary, with the following:

- Name of the candidate

- Award for which the thesis is submitted
- Year of submission
- Volume number, if more than one.

### 1.3 Thesis Layout

The elements of the thesis should be set out in the following order.

#### 1.3.1 Title Page

The title page of each volume of the thesis should contain the following information:

- Full title of the thesis, with any subtitles, in 20 point type; if there is more than one volume, the total number of volumes and the number of the particular volume;
- Institute logo
- Full name of the author with, if desired, any qualifications or distinctions;
- Award for which the thesis is submitted
- Names of the supervisors, including titles and full qualifications;
- Name and address of the Institute, including the name of the sponsoring Department
- As the last line on the page, the statement
- Month and year of submission of thesis.

#### 1.3.2 Declaration Statement

The following declaration (to fit on one page) with the appropriate signatures must be included:

##### **Declaration**

I hereby certify that the material, which I now submit for assessment on the programmes of study leading to the award of Masters Degree is entirely my own work and has not been taken from the work of others except to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my own work. No portion of the work contained in this thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification to this or any other institution.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Candidate

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

#### 1.3.3 Acknowledgements

Personal acknowledgements and/or dedications may be included by the candidate directly after the declaration page. Where possible these should be kept to one page and be of a tone appropriate to a higher degree.

#### **1.3.4 Abstract of Thesis**

The thesis should include a single-page abstract not exceeding 300 words. The abstract should be printed or typed in single spacing and should indicate the author and title of the thesis in the form of a heading.

#### **1.3.5 Abbreviations List**

At this stage a list of abbreviations and symbols used in the thesis should be provided, where necessary, together with their meanings, definitions and/or the terms they represent. The abbreviations or symbols should be listed alphabetically and each one followed by its full term or definition as appropriate.

#### **1.3.6 Table of Contents**

There should be a table of contents which includes the number and title of each chapter of the thesis, numerically referenced chapter subsection headings, references and appendices with corresponding page numbers. Thesis page numbering should begin directly after the table of contents. A table of illustrations, figures etc. may also be included where it is deemed appropriate.

#### **1.3.7 Chapters in Sequence**

The main headings for the chapters themselves and for the main sections of the chapters should be given in upper case. Subsidiary headings, used for subsections of associated paragraphs, should use upper case (initial subsidiary heading).

#### **1.3.8 References/Bibliography**

References should be thorough and comprehensive. It is essential that a consistent single form or style of referencing is used throughout the thesis. It is recommended that the style of referencing used be consistent with any pre-determined Departmental format. The form used should accord with the norms and accepted standards for the discipline and should be agreed with the Supervisor(s). Within the text, every reference should enable the reader to identify the work cited and locate the specific passage referred to.

Footnotes and indented quotations, where included, may be single line spaced. The footnotes in each chapter should be numbered consecutively.

A list of the references should be included in a separate section located at the end of the main body of the text chapters and before any appendices. Any separate bibliography should be included after the specific references.

### **1.3.9 Appendices**

Appendices may be included where necessary. An appendix consists of supporting material of considerable length, or of lists, documents, commentaries, tables or other evidence, which, if included in the main text, would interrupt the flow of the narrative. The style of appendices should be consistent with the style of the main text. Long appendices may be divided into sections, which should be entered in the table of contents under the main headings for those appendices.

Any appendices should be positioned after the references and bibliography.

### **1.3.10 Index**

If considered necessary, an index is the final element in the thesis and is located at the end of the thesis document. It is an alphabetical listing of key words/phrases/concepts, together with a list of page numbers where those words appear in the thesis, given after each.

### **1.3.11 Unbound material**

If material that constitutes part of the thesis can not be conveniently submitted in bound form, the unbound material and its packaging shall both be marked with the student's name, initials and award for which the work is submitted, in such a way that it can readily be linked with the thesis. Reference to any such unbound material shall be made in the thesis in a fashion in keeping with the international norms and standards of the discipline, together with appropriate instructions for its use.

### **1.3.12 Access to Postgraduate Thesis**

All copies of the thesis and all accompanying materials finally submitted become the property of the Institute. One copy is normally lodged with the Registrar (for the Institute library). If sufficient reason exists by way of commercial or other sensitivity of information contained within the thesis, the Supervisor or the Head of School may request that restricted access only be allowed to the thesis material. In such cases the thesis is held in the School and does not go to the library. The Supervisor will inform the Institute library directly of this and complete the appropriate form.

## **1.4 Submission Process**

In order to submit a thesis for examination the candidate must be fully registered (appropriate fees paid in full) on the Level 9 register of the Institute.

The candidate should present two hard bound copies of the thesis to their Supervisor.



Refer to **The Approved Thesis and Submission Schedule** for the Level 9 programme for the steps to be followed regarding the submission of the thesis and to obtain additional information on the examination of the thesis.

## **1.5 Generic Dissertation/Thesis Assessment Guide**

This guide presents the learning outcomes, marking scheme, marking criteria, and quality requirements for the dissertation

### **1.5.1 Learning Outcomes**

Generic learning outcomes for the dissertation include the following:

1. Develop specialised knowledge and a systematic understanding of a chosen research topic
2. Critically review the state of the art in the field and formulate a research question following that review
3. Place the research question in the context in the state of the art in the field
4. Devise a method of solution to address the research question, implement it, critically analyse the results, and derive conclusions
5. Identify possible follow on work
6. Effectively communicate the research undertaken in a written thesis/dissertation and through oral presentations and demonstrations
7. Develop research skills and an ability to think and work independently in a research context

### **1.5.2 Marking Scheme**

The thesis/dissertation will be assessed in terms of its deliverables i.e.:

- The thesis
- An oral examination at the end of research

The following marking scheme can be applied to the written deliverables:

- Literature Survey – 20%
- Method of Solution and Implementation – 60%
- Analysis, Conclusions and Future Work – 20%

### **1.5.3 Marking Criteria**

The dissertation will be assessed in terms of the following criteria:

- The clarity of the research question and the background to the research
- The complexity of the research undertaken
- The knowledge and understanding of the central ideas and concepts
- The survey of the state of the art
- The placement of the research question in the context of the field in general
- The evaluation of the relevance of the research to the wider field of knowledge
- The objectives of the research and how they have been achieved
- The method of solution chosen and the rationale used in its choice
- How the method of solution has been implemented
- The analysis of results, conclusions made, and insights arrived at
- The demonstration of a critical understanding of the significance, and limitations, of the research conducted
- The contribution of the research to the field, the advancement of knowledge in the field
- The identification of possible follow on work
- The quality of the written deliverables in terms of economy, precision, clarity, structure and style
- The completeness of the work with respect to the research question
- The level of initiative and independent learning demonstrated by the student throughout the research

## Quality Requirements

The following are generic indications of quality requirements for the various grade classifications which can be awarded for the thesis/dissertation:

### **Grade: A 80% – 100%**

Indicative quality of performance: Excellent

Excellent knowledge and understanding of the central ideas and concepts with detailed factual support. A clear and relevant line of argument presented and the relationship of the argument to the wider field of knowledge is made explicit and evaluated. All the learning outcomes are satisfied at a high level. Evidence in support of the argument drawn from critical reflection on personal experience and an extensive range of source material, intelligently collected, analysed and synthesised, leading to original and interesting insights and the advancement of knowledge. Demonstrates a critical understanding of the significance and limitations of the research. The ideas are communicated with economy, precision and clarity. Excellently presented with appropriate bibliographical details.

### **Grade: B+ 70% – 79%**

Indicative quality of performance: Very Good

Very good knowledge and understanding of the central ideas and concepts with detailed factual support. A clear and relevant line of argument presented and the relationship of the argument to the wider field of knowledge is made explicit and evaluated. All the learning outcomes are satisfied, many at a high level. Evidence in support of the argument drawn from critical reflection on personal experience and an extensive range of source material, intelligently collected, analysed and synthesised, leading to original and interesting insights and the advancement of knowledge. Demonstrates a critical understanding of the significance and limitations of the research. The ideas are communicated with economy, precision and clarity. Very well presented with appropriate bibliographical details.

### **Grade: B 60% - 69%**

Indicative quality of performance: Good

Good knowledge and understanding of the central ideas and concepts with supporting factual detail allied to an ability to critically assess the reflective significance of these ideas to the wider field of knowledge. All the learning outcomes are satisfied and some are more than satisfied. Evidence of extensive reading with perceptive and critical insights gained from the reading and the intelligent integration of evidence drawn from a range of sources including personal experience. Demonstrates a good critical understanding of the appropriateness of the research and its relationship to the topic. The work is appropriately structured, the lines of argument clear and well supported by evidence. Presentation is good, with appropriate bibliographical details.

**Grade: B- 55% - 59%**

Indicative quality of performance: Above Average

Above average level of knowledge and understanding in terms of central ideas and concepts with supporting factual detail allied to an ability to make explicit the relationship of these ideas to the wider field of knowledge. All the learning outcomes are satisfied. Evidence of sufficient reading focussing on a range of source material with an ability to critically assess the ideas contained within the material. Demonstrates a good critical understanding of the appropriateness of the research and its relationship to the topic. The work is appropriately structured, the lines of argument clear and well supported by evidence. Above average presentation with appropriate bibliographical details.

**Grade: C+ 50% - 54%**

Indicative quality of performance: Fair

Fair level of knowledge and understanding in terms of central ideas and concepts with supporting factual detail allied to an ability to make explicit the relationship of these ideas to the wider field of knowledge. A substantial number but not all of the learning outcomes are satisfied. Evidence of sufficient reading focussing on a range of source material with an ability to critically assess the ideas contained within the material. Demonstrates a good critical understanding of the appropriateness of the research and its relationship to the topic. The work is appropriately structured, the lines of argument clear and well supported by evidence. Fair presentation with appropriate bibliographical details.

**Grade: C 40% - 49%**

Indicative quality of performance: Pass

Insufficient level of knowledge and understanding in terms of central ideas and concepts and supporting detail. A substantial number but not all of the learning outcomes are satisfied. Evidence of reading and some but insufficient critical engagement with the views encountered. Limited in terms of structure, comprehensibility and presentation. Appropriate bibliographical details.

**Grade: D 35% - 39%**

Indicative quality of performance: Poor

Poor level of knowledge and understanding in terms of central ideas and concepts and supporting detail. The work does not address the majority of the learning outcomes. Evidence of reading and some but insufficient critical engagement with the views encountered. Poor in terms of structure, comprehensibility and presentation. Poor bibliographical details.

**Grade: F <= 34%**

Indicative quality of performance: Fail

Inadequate grasp of the topic and its central ideas and concepts. Little evidence of appropriate reading. The work does not address the majority of the learning outcomes. No attempt to identify significant dilemmas relating to topics. Lacks structure, coherence and an adequate level of presentation. Unacceptable level of written English. Inadequate bibliographical details.