

ASSESSMENT AND STANDARDS

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10	20/06/2018	Academic Council (AC:DOC:158:10:01)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Document reviewed.
11	29/04/2022	Academic Council (AC:DOC:180:16:05)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment and Standards updated (Appendix 3) to include a requirement that Continuous Assessment (CA) with a weighting of 40% or more must be reviewed by External Examiner(s).
12	20/06/2022	Academic Council (Meeting No. 182; AC:DOC:182:14:03)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment and Standards updated to facilitate repeating for honours.

13	28/04/2023	Academic Council (Meeting No. 186; AC:DOC:186:09:02)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Award classifications and Broadsheet Annotations amended to allow for Structured Masters programmes.
14	20/06/2024	Academic Council (Meeting No. 194)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured Masters degrees reclassified as research masters. • Award classifications and Broadsheet Annotations amended.
15	20/06/2025	Academic Council (AC:DOC:200:06:04)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated to include a derogation from "pass by compensation" for the professionally accredited programme "Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Social Care" within the Department of Humanities, in accordance with CORU regulatory requirements.

Contents

GLOSSARY OF TERMS:	3
Part A Procedures for Examinations in Dundalk Institute of Technology	5
A1 Applicability	5
A2 Responsibility for Assessment	5
A3 Internal Examiners	6
A4 External Examiners	6
A5 Provisional Results	7
A6 Return of Examination Marks/Grades by Internal Examiners	7
A7 Meeting of Examination Board	7
A8 The Granting of Awards	9
Part B: General Assessment and Standards	11
B1 General Requirements for Assessment and Awards	11
B2 Approved Programme Schedule	11
B3 Marks Allocation	13
B5 Pass by Compensation	14
B6 Exemptions	15
B7 Requirements for Progression	16
B8 Award Classifications Systems	16
B9 Post Award Achievements	20
Part C Approved Programme Schedules	21
Part D Derogation - Pass by Compensation	21
Appendix 1: Broadsheet Annotations	22
Appendix 2: Deferral and Consideration	26
Appendix 3: External Examiners: Duties and Procedures	29
Appendix 4: Academic Appeals and Rechecks	38

GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

Institute: Throughout this document the term ‘Institute’ shall be interpreted as referring to Dundalk Institute of Technology.

President: The President has ultimate responsibility for Assessment and Standards in DkIT and is ex-officio a member of all Programme and Examination Boards

Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar: The VPAA-Registrar has particular responsibility for Academic Quality Assurance and is ex-officio a member of all Programme and Examination Boards.

Head of School: A member of staff of DkIT who oversees work of a School and who normally acts as Chair to the Examination Board Meeting. The Head of School is ex-officio a member of all Programme and Examination Boards within their School.

Head of Department: A member of staff of DkIT who oversees work of a Department and who normally acts a secretary to the Examination Board Meeting. The Head of Department is ex-officio a member of all associated Programme Boards.

Internal Examiner: A member of Academic Staff who prepares and marks the assessments.

Learner: A member of the Institute who is enrolled on a programme and submits themselves to assessment for the purpose of demonstrating attainment of the requirements of an award.

Programme Board: Meeting of Internal Examiners (and learner representatives) responsible for the management and delivery of a programme of study.

Examination Board Meeting: A special Programme Board meeting (with the exclusion of learners) for the purpose of determining examination results, composed of:

1. Chair (normally Head of School)
2. Internal Examiners
3. External Examiners
4. Examination Secretary (normally Head of Department)

Programme: A programme is defined in this document as a programme of learning which has been approved through the Institute’s quality assurance procedures. It is an approved curriculum, followed by a cohort of learners leading to an award of the Institute. Programmes are comprised of modules.

Module: A module is a quantum of learning with defined learning outcomes, indicative content, assessment strategy, resources and workload which has been approved through the Institute’s quality assurance procedures.

Assessment: Learner assessment (specifically assessment of learning) means inference (e.g. judgement, or estimation or evaluation) of a learner’s knowledge, skill or competence by comparison with a standard based on appropriate evidence.

Assessment Element: An assessment task and criteria, along with procedures for its conduct and grading scheme. Each assessment element is explicitly listed in the relevant module descriptor.

Failed Element: An assessment element which has a specific pass requirement, in addition to that for the module as a whole. Where a module has a Failed Element, this should be indicated on the Approved Programme Schedule (as a Special Regulation) and in the Module Descriptor.

Stage: A stage of a programme is a single self-contained period of study including an Examination. In the case of full-time programmes, a stage constitutes an academic year.

Semester: The academic year is divided into two or three terms of between twelve and fifteen weeks duration. These terms are known as semesters.

Examination: An Examination, as defined in this document, is a suite of assessment activities approved for a particular programme of study. Examinations are normally considered on a Stage basis.

Approved Programme Schedule: This is a description of a programme setting out the approved modules and any special regulations which apply to the programme.

Broadsheet of Results: The original signed sheet tabulating the results for each examination module and the overall examination result for each examination candidate. The Broadsheet of Results may be signed by:

1. Internal Examiner(s) participating in each examination module as listed on the Broadsheet and present at the meeting.
2. External Examiner(s) present at the meeting.
3. Secretary to the Examination Board.
4. Chair of the Examination Board.

Deferral: The consideration of a learner's results in one or more modules or individual assessment elements may be deferred by the examination board, as a result of the consideration of special circumstances.

Part A Procedures for Examinations in Dundalk Institute of Technology

A1 Applicability

These General Assessment and Standards shall apply to all assessments leading to awards of the Dundalk Institute of Technology, and describes procedures up to the ratification of results by the Academic Council. It describes the standards to be acquired by learners before a higher education award may be made by Dundalk Institute of Technology.

A2 Responsibility for Assessment

A.2.1 The President or other appropriate officers of the Institute, as indicated below, shall have overall responsibility for procedures covering the following areas in respect of the conduct of assessments in the Institute and shall ensure:

- The proper conduct of final examinations, including invigilation, duties which shall be the responsibility of the Examinations Office;
- The maximum security in all matters pertaining to assessment, responsibility for which shall be shared by Internal Examiners, the Examinations Office and Departmental Offices;
- Final examination question papers and appropriate marking schemes are prepared by Internal Examiners, sent in good time for approval by External Examiners and printed in good time for final examinations. These matters to be the responsibility of Departments;
- Appropriate accommodation arrangements are made for each candidate for final examinations. This to be the responsibility of the Examinations Office;
- Assessment materials, including final examination answer scripts, are examined by Internal and External Examiners and, that results for each candidate are made available for meetings of Examination Boards. These matters to be the responsibility of Departments.
- Internal examiners ensure that accurate records in regard to all assessments are maintained and made available to External Examiners. These matters to be the responsibility of Departments;
- Arrangements for holding meetings of Examination Boards are in accordance with the provisions of Section A7 below. These arrangements are the responsibility of Departments in consultation with the Examinations Office.
- Timely transmission of the recommendations of meetings of Examination Boards to the Academic Council by Departments and the Examinations Office takes place.
- Candidates are provided with the information relevant to them with regard to the conduct and regulation of assessments, publication of results, appeals, reviews and rechecks and confirmation of results by the Academic Council. These matters to be the responsibility of the Examinations Office.

A3 Internal Examiners

A3.1 Institute staff, including the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar, Heads of School and Heads of Department who exercise an examination function shall, together with the persons indicated in A2. 1 above, are deemed to be Internal Examiners.

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

- To assess learners in accordance with the requirements of the approved Programme Assessment Strategy.
- To submit final examination papers and marking schemes in good time to Departmental Offices, to the President of the Institute, or to the person nominated thereby for this purpose.
- To consult with the appropriate External Examiner(s) in the drafting of final examination papers by providing to the External Examiner(s), in good time before the printing of final examination papers, typewritten draft question papers, together with appropriate marking schemes 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).
- Prior to the meeting of the Examination Board, to consult with the External Examiner(s) and to review the grades/marks proposed to be awarded to each candidate.
- To attend meetings of the Examination Board and subsequent consultation meetings with learners.
- The Internal Examiner is primarily responsible for the presentation of module results to the Examination Board having consulted with the External Examiner. Where unresolved disagreement as to a result arises between the Internal and the External examiner, it is the responsibility of the Internal Examiner to report this to the Examination Board.

A4 External Examiners

A4.1 The appointment of and duties of external examiners are set out in the DkIT External Examiners Duties and Procedures (Appendix 3 of this document).

A4.1.1 The role of External Examiners shall be to determine, in their expert judgement, whether;

- The standard of examinations is satisfactory,
- The standard of the learner performance meets the intended Learning Outcomes,
- The assessment and determination of awards processes have been consistent and fair,
- The learner performance on the programme as a whole has been properly assessed,

- The standard of assessment and performance is comparable to that in other institutions (if appropriate).

A4.2 Oral/Performance based Examinations

A4.2.1 Where oral/performance based examinations constitute a substantial part of the assessment procedure and are 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.

A5 Provisional Results

A5.1 Assessment results for candidates who have not complied with all appropriate Institute requirements will be regarded as provisional. 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.

A5.2 The Institute shall not grant an award to any candidate whose result is regarded as provisional.

A6 Return of Examination Marks/Grades by Internal Examiners

A6.1 Should the Institute, for any reason, (personal, health, discipline, or otherwise) decide before, during or after the process of presenting a learner's performance in one or more modules to the purview of the Academic Council, that it does not wish to so present the learner, then it is the Institute's right and responsibility to withhold that learner's results or part thereof from that purview. It is further a matter for the Institute whether it will present such a learner again, and if it does so, under what circumstances e.g. as a first attempt or otherwise.

A7 Meeting of Examination Board

A7.1 After each Examination the Internal and External Examiners shall meet together as an Examination Board which is accountable to the Academic Council, to consider all assessment findings (including the findings of repeat assessments) and to determine assessment results for each of the learners presented, including:

- grades for assessment elements;
- grades for modules;
- eligibility to progress from one stage in a programme to the next;
- eligibility for award; and
- classifications of the award, where applicable

The membership, who may participate and vote at a meeting of an Examination Board, consists of the following:

- Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar;
- Head of School;
- Head(s) of Department concerned;
- Such External Examiners as the Academic Council shall deem appropriate;
- In case of a non-award stage, Internal Examiners who have participated in the examinations for that stage.
- In the case of an award stage, Internal Examiners who have participated in the examinations for all examination modules contributing to the award classification.

Other individuals may attend as required but shall have no voting rights. The Examination Board shall be chaired by the Head of School or his/her nominee.

The Secretary of the Examination Board shall be the relevant Head of Department, or his/her nominee. The Examination Board may act notwithstanding the absence of one or more members, provided that the Chair 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.

Prior to the meeting of the Examination Board, the Head of Department, or his/her nominee, and groups of internal examiners may convene to ascertain that Institute Policy is applied and to inform the Examination Board. This meeting has no decision-making powers.

Provisional results are issued by agreement of the Examination Board.

- A7.2** The proceedings and deliberations of Examination Boards are strictly confidential; under no circumstances should any person attending a meeting of an Examination Board disclose to any other person a decision of the Board or any document, information or opinion considered, conveyed or expressed at the meeting. The Chair of the Examination Board may communicate appropriately with the Academic Council with regard to any matter requiring such communication, arising out of the proceedings of the Examination Board.

A7.3 Semesterised Programmes

In the case of programmes organised on the basis of semesters, and in which an Examination includes the results from more than one semester, 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.

A7.4 Scheduling of Examination Boards

The dates of Examination Boards shall be decided annually by the President or his/her nominee so delegated for that purpose.

A7.5 Broadsheets of Results

At the meeting of the Examination Board, a Broadsheet of Results shall be endorsed which shall record the total marks or grades awarded to each candidate in each 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 tables attached in Appendix 1. In the case of a candidate who fails, recommendations of exemptions, if any, should be indicated. A pass by compensation should be recorded in all Institute documentation in the same manner as passes other than by compensation. The annotation of results shall be in accordance with the Institute's requirements in this regard.

A7.6 Borderline Cases

Meetings of Examination Boards should allow for full and frank discussion of all borderline cases before a final decision is made (see Appendix 2). That final decision should be based on the cumulative evidence presented rather than on the view of one Internal or External Examiner. 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 by the Examination Board. The Examination Board shall have the authority to assign the grade awarded to a candidate in any module.

A7.7 The Broadsheet(s) of Results shall be signed by the Chair and Secretary of the meeting, and by all of the Examiners (External and Internal) present at the meeting.

A7.8 Disqualification of Candidates

Refer to section A6.1 above.

A7.9 Recommendation of Results to Academic Council

A7.9.1 Results shall be presented to the Academic Council for ratification. Refer also to section A6. 1 above.

A7.9.2 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 Board should endeavour to make a firm recommendation on the matter without referral to the Academic Council, unless a fundamental question of principle is involved.
- b) In the case of final (award stage) examinations, Assessment 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.

A7.10 Procedures for the granting of deferrals

Procedures for the granting of deferrals are set out in Appendix 2.

A8 The Granting of Awards

When the Academic Council 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.

A9 Revocation of Awards

The Academic Council may revoke any award made by the Institute and all privileges connected therewith if it shall be discovered at any time and proved to the satisfaction of the Institute that either:

- a) after investigation, the award is found to have been obtained by fraud or deception, including unfair practice and plagiarism;
- b) an award has been obtained due to an administrative error or irregularities in the conduct of an Examination Board
- c) Subsequent to award, an Examination Board, having taken into account information which was unavailable at the time its decision was made, determines that a classification should be altered.

Part B: General Assessment and Standards

B1 General Requirements for Assessment and Awards

- B1.1** Only candidates who have satisfactorily attended or otherwise pursued or followed an approved programme of study and who have met all programme requirements, including satisfactory completion of prescribed assessments within prescribed deadlines, may be admitted to the Examination and considered for an award.
- B1.2** The granting of an award shall be on the basis of a candidate's performance in assessments which have been set or prescribed in the Approved Programme Schedule and which have been approved and monitored by External Examiner(s) appointed by the Academic Council.
- B1.3** The term "Examination" is defined in the Glossary and includes as appropriate, written and oral examinations, performances, assessment of programme work, project-work, 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 Academic Council in relation to any programme of study or instruction, and cognate expressions should be construed accordingly.
- B1.4** All assessment material must be available for review as required by the Institute's External Examiner(s).

B2 Approved Programme Schedule

- B2.1** Where the Academic Council has adopted an Approved Programme Schedule in relation to an approved programme, the provisions of that Schedule are deemed to form part of the Assessment and Standards applying to the programme.
- B2.2** Any special regulation, which is indicated in an Approved Programme Schedule as applying to a particular programme, is deemed to apply to the examinations relating to that programme, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the provisions of the General Assessment and Standards herein. No special regulations shall apply unless the Academic Council has actually adopted such regulations and incorporated them in the Approved Programme Schedule issued in relation to the programme concerned.

B2.3 Modules

The Approved Programme Schedule for each programme sets out the approved modules to be assessed in the programme. A module may consist of one or more element. Where the module consists of more than one element, these are normally examined separately and the marks/grades scored in the several elements are aggregated to determine the candidate's overall performance in the module.

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

MANDATORY

Each candidate must present and pass in all mandatory modules.

ELECTIVE

Where the programme structure consists of a combination of mandatory modules and elective modules, each candidate must present and pass in all mandatory modules and in a prescribed number of elective modules and achieve the required number of credits. The number of elective modules required is prescribed in the Approved Programme Schedule.

GROUP ELECTIVE

Where the programme structure consists of a combination of mandatory modules and more than one elective module groups, each candidate must present and pass in all mandatory modules and in the required number of elective modules in one of the Elective Groups prescribed in the Approved Programme Schedule and achieve the required number of credits for the stage or award.

OPTIONAL

Performance in Optional Modules is not taken into account in determining a candidate's overall result in the determination of an award.

- B2.5** The Approved Programme Schedule indicates the modules, and combinations of modules, approved by the Academic Council in respect of each programme. No other module or combination of modules is approved by the Academic Council 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 a module or in a combination of modules which has not been approved by the Council.

B3 Marks Allocation

- B3.1** The maximum mark for each module, and the allocation of marks to each assessment element, shall be as indicated in the Approved Programme Schedule.
- B3.2** The allocation and weighting of marks and credits as between the various modules, and as between the various elements and components within modules, is designed to ensure that learning outcomes are realised in the application of compensation and in the calculation of eligibility for Honours, Distinction and Merit.
- B3.3** The maximum marks available in each module shall be 100 marks.
- B3.4** The minimum mark required for a pass in any module shall be 40% of the maximum marks available for that module. In any case where the Approved Programme Schedule provides for a minimum pass mark other than 40%, the minimum pass mark must be indicated clearly on the Broadsheet of Results and in the Approved Programme Schedule; in default of such indication, the minimum pass mark is assumed to be 40%.
- B3.5** In each module which consists of component modules the marks awarded to each candidate shall be the total of the marks scored in the various examination elements.

B4 Allocation of Marks to Assessment Elements

- B4.1** In the case of a candidate who has omitted to perform a satisfactory proportion of continuous assessment tests in any module, or who has been awarded such low marks for continuous assessment that a pass in the module as a whole is unlikely, the Institute should advise the candidate of this situation in good time to enable the candidate to take appropriate action before the final examination.
- B4.2** Candidates may be required to repeat one or more assessment elements of a module. They shall normally be required to repeat the final examination, where this exists. However if the candidate has achieved a pass mark in the final examination element, they may be required only to repeat the recoverable continuous assessment elements. In some cases they may be required to repeat both the final examination and recoverable continuous assessment. The decision regarding the assessment elements to be repeated by the candidate shall be at the sole discretion of the Examination Board.

Marks scored on the basis of elements not repeated, in addition to marks already scored for non-recoverable continuous assessment (where applicable), shall normally be carried forward from the original examination to the repeat examination and shall be aggregated with the marks scored in the latter and/or with marks scored in repeat assessment elements to determine the total marks to be awarded in the repeat examination. Under no circumstances may any assessment element be waived.

In the case of a candidate repeating elements of a module, normally a maximum period of two full academic cycles following the first attempt shall be allowed in which the candidate must gain a pass mark in the module. After such time the candidate will be required to repeat the module in its entirety. In this context, a cycle means a full delivery of a programme stage.

- B4.3** In the case of a candidate repeating assessment elements during a repeat attendance, all marks from previous attempts are waived.

The same principles shall apply equally in the case of modules delivered and assessed via traditional classroom-based modes and via online and electronic modes. The defining factor shall be the fee paid by the repeating learner.

B5 Pass by Compensation

- B5.1** A candidate who fails to attain the required pass standard in one or more modules in an Examination, may, nevertheless, at the discretion of the Examination Board, pass the examination by compensation.

Performance at the first attempt in modules in a given stage (of at least 30 credits) may be used to compensate in the same stage, provided no module in the stage has been failed outright. A pass earned in this way is referred to as a pass by compensation and is credit bearing.

- B5.2** Compensation may be applied on the following basis, at the discretion of the Board of Examiners:-

- 1) The results of all modules in the stage are from first attempts.
- 2) The marks obtained in the module(s) listed on the approved programme schedule, being considered for compensation must not be lower than 35%, where the pass standard is 40%; in the case of modules where the Approved Programme Schedule provides for a pass standard other than 40%, the minimum compensation level shall be as specified in the Approved Programme Schedule, and shall normally be at a level which is 5% (of the maximum marks) below the pass standard.
- 3) The pass standard must be reached in the remaining modules requiring to be passed.
- 4) The stage-aggregate of credit-weighted excesses of percentage marks (above the pass standard) is greater than or equal to twice the stage-aggregate of credit-weighted deficits of marks (below the pass standard) and the potentially compensatable results account for no more than one-third of the credit for the stage: i.e. 20 credits in a 60-credit stage or 10 credits in a 30-credit stage.
- 5) A candidate who has been granted exemptions at a previous examination, and is presenting in the remaining modules, may not pass the repeat examination by compensation. Such a candidate may, however, by waiving exemptions in accordance with Paragraph B6.5 below, opt to present in all modules requiring to be passed at that stage and thereby be eligible for consideration for the exercise of compensation.
- 6) Compensation may be applied only to enable a candidate to pass a stage (at the award stage, a learner who passes by compensation remains eligible for honours, etc.). It may not be applied to grant exemptions or additional exemptions.

B6 Exemptions

B6.1 Subject to normal programme update and modification via periodic programmatic review or otherwise, modules passed shall accrue for the purposes of award and need not be retaken. This shall not apply in respect of any sub-unit of a module or to an individual assessment element.

B6.2 The Institute reserves the right to discontinue assessment of modules which have been discontinued or substantially changed. Assessment of discontinued or substantially changed modules will normally be made available to eligible candidates for a maximum period of one full academic cycle following the discontinuation of the module or parent programme. On the expiration of this period the means by which a candidate may progress shall be a matter for appropriate Head of School and/or Head of Department and/or Programme Board to determine. In this context, a cycle means a full delivery of a programme stage.

B6.3 Additional Exemptions

B6.3.1 Additional exemptions may be granted to a candidate in respect of additional modules passed by virtue of further attempts at the examination. In order to complete the examination stage concerned, the candidate must obtain a clear pass in all required modules.

B6.3.2 In recording exemptions on the Broadsheet of Results, in respect of attempts subsequent to a candidate's first attempt at the examination, only the additional exemptions gained should be considered and recorded accordingly.

B6.4 Incomplete Work Experience, Clinical Placement or Major Projects

Where a learner has not adequately completed work experience or clinical placement for reasons within the control of the learner, the Institute shall normally limit the number of repeat attempts to be made available to the learner in conformance with the policies of the appropriate School, Department and Programme Board. This may also apply to major projects or elements where the capacity of the Institute to support the learner is limited. In all such cases the Approved Programme Schedule will indicate, as a special condition, the elements to which this applies as will the module descriptor. Departments will inform learners of their policies and procedures in relation to these issues in advance of them undertaking such elements of a programme.

B6.5 Waiver of Exemptions

A candidate to whom exemptions have been granted, and who presents for further examination in any or all of the exempted modules, shall be deemed to have waived the exemptions granted. A candidate exercising such right of waiver may be granted the benefit of compensation at the repeat examination in accordance with the provisions of Section B5 of the General Assessment and Standards. The waiver of exemptions cancels the original result(s) which cannot be restored for the purpose of further attempts at the examination.

A candidate who elects to re-attend a module and thereby to waive exemptions is deemed to have waived continuous assessment results as well as final examination results already achieved in that module. An award classification higher than a pass shall not be made to candidates re-attending modules for which exemptions have been waived.

B7 Requirements for Progression

- B7.1** A Candidate should not be admitted to a second or subsequent examination stage without having accumulated the specified minimum credits as indicated on the programme schedule for that stage and must have completed all the requirements of the previous stage. In the absence of an explicit statement on the approved programme schedule, the candidate must achieve a minimum of 55 credits to progress, provided the outstanding 5 credits are not for module(s) that are prerequisites for module(s) for the subsequent stage. The Academic standing of candidates who achieve 55 credits but not 60 credits and who are deemed eligible to progress to the next stage shall be indicated on the broadsheet as AP (Approved to Progress).
- B7.2** Where, in exceptional circumstances, it is proposed to admit a candidate to a second or subsequent examination stage, who has not fulfilled the requirement set out in the immediately preceding paragraph, the Institute should inform the Academic Council, and seek its prior approval, at least seven days before commencement of the stage of the programme leading to the second or subsequent examination stage.
- B7.3** The performance in a second or subsequent Examination, by a candidate who has been admitted under this procedure, will not be considered for progression (or award) unless the candidate has completed the requirements of the previous examination stage.

B8 Award Classifications Systems

DkIT conforms to “Sectoral Convention 1 on Award Classifications”. Classification of awards shall be criterion-referenced as distinct from norm-referenced. Permissible award types can be found in the DkIT Awarding Policy.

The following tables describe the classifications available for major awards made by DkIT on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). They also specify the required boundary values for Grade Point Average (GPA) and Percentage Point Average (PPA) where the acronyms are defined by Sectoral Convention 4.

B8.1 The Award Classification System

Classification of Higher Certificates (Level 6) and Ordinary Bachelor's Degrees (Level 7)	GPA boundary values	PPA boundary values	Description 2009-2010 and following
Distinction	3.25	70%	<i>Indicative descriptor:</i> Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in most respects is significantly and consistently beyond this.
Merit Grade 1	3.0	60%	<i>Indicative descriptor:</i> Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in many respects is significantly beyond this.

Merit Grade 2	2.5	50%	<i>Indicative descriptor:</i> Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in some respects is significantly beyond this.
Pass	2.0	40%	<i>Definitive descriptor:</i> Attains all the minimum intended programme learning outcomes.

Note: Where grades are shown in percentages, this should always be recorded as “X”.0

B8.2

Classification of Honours Bachelor’s degrees (Level 8) and Higher Diplomas (Level 8)	GPA boundary values	PPA boundary values	Description 2009-2010 and following
First-class Honours	3.25	70%	<i>Indicative descriptor:</i> Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in most respects is significantly and consistently beyond this.
Second-class Honours Grade 1	3.0	60%	<i>Indicative descriptor:</i> Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in many respects is significantly beyond this.
Second-class Honours Grade 2	2.5	50%	<i>Indicative descriptor:</i> Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in some respects is significantly beyond this.
Pass	2.0	40%	<i>Definitive descriptor:</i> Attains all the minimum intended programme learning outcomes.

B8.3

Classification of Postgraduate Diploma (Level 9)	GPA boundary values	PPA boundary values	Description 2009-2010 and following

Distinction	3.25	70%	<i>Indicative descriptor:</i> Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in most respects is significantly and consistently beyond this.
Merit	3.0	60%	<i>Indicative descriptor:</i> Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in many respects is significantly beyond this.
Pass	2.0	40%	<i>Definitive descriptor:</i> Attains all the minimum intended programme learning outcomes.

B8.4

Classification of Master's Degree (Taught) (Level 9) Master's Degree (Research) (Structured Masters) (Level 9)	GPA boundary values	PPA boundary values	Description 2009-2010 and following
First-class Honours	3.25	70%	<i>Indicative descriptor:</i> Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in most respects is significantly and consistently beyond this.
Second-class Honours	3.0	60%	<i>Indicative descriptor:</i> Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in many respects is significantly beyond this.
Pass	2.0	40%	<i>Definitive descriptor:</i> Attains all the minimum intended programme learning outcomes.

B8.5

Classification of Research degrees Master's Degree (Research) (Level 9) Doctoral Degree (Level 10)	GPA boundary values	PPA boundary values	Description 2009-2010 and following
Unclassified (recognised as equivalent to an honour classification for progression and employment purposes)	N/A	N/A	<i>Definitive descriptor:</i> Attains all the minimum intended learning outcomes for the relevant research degree programme.

B8.6

Other unclassified awards Non-Major (Minor, supplemental and other unclassified)	GPA boundary values	PPA boundary values	Description 2009-2010 and following
Unclassified	2.0	40%	<i>Definitive descriptor:</i> Attains all the minimum intended programme learning outcomes.

A 'Pass' classification of an award is a positive statement of achievement. All awards, other than research degrees, minor awards and supplemental awards, shall be classified. However, in exceptional cases, where classification is not feasible, an award may be issued as an unclassified award.

Special-purpose awards which have a volume of at least 60 credits and are comparable to a major award (at the same NFQ level) may be classified in accordance with the convention for the relevant major award. Otherwise, awards of this type shall be unclassified.

The regulations relating to research degrees, including section B8.5 regarding the award classification of such degrees, are as set out in the DkIT Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis (DCU Awards) and Academic Regulations for Masters Degrees by Research and Thesis (DkIT Awards; NFQ Level 9).

B8.7

An award at Merit or Distinction or Honours classification may not be considered unless the candidate has passed the final examinations at the award stage, by virtue of passing in each required module normally at the first attempt, and in one sitting (subject to B8.11).

B8.8

Normally, Merits and Distinctions and Honours may be awarded on the results of the final stage examination only; however any weighted contributions from previous years' examinations shall be indicated in the Approved Programme Schedule. In this context, the provisions of B8.7 shall only apply to modules in the award stage.

B8.9

Calculation of the award classification shall be based on the credit weighted mean value of the allowable grades of the modules designated for this purpose. Normally these modules shall be 60 credits from the award stage of the programme. Where the designated modules differ from this it should be indicated in the Approved Programme Schedule.

B8.10

A learner may claim exemption from a module whose grade would otherwise contribute to the award classification, provided that he or she can demonstrate the attainment of the relevant knowledge, skill and competence. In cases where the attainment cannot be graded fairly and consistently, only an unclassified award shall be available.

B8.11

Honours classification or any classification higher than pass shall normally be made based on first attempt grades of all designated award stage modules. Necessary procedures to allow consistent treatment of a repeat grade as a first attempt grade, where exceptional mitigating circumstances exist, shall not compromise this principle.

A student will be permitted to repeat a failed module(s) contributing to the award grade in order to achieve an honours classification subject to the following conditions:

- Only one repeat attempt will be permitted which must be at the next available examination sitting.
- A maximum of 10 ECTS credits can be repeated.
- The calculation of the award classification will be based on the first attempt grades.
- No capping of module marks will be applied to the repeat sitting.

B9 Post Award Achievements

DkIT conforms to "Sectoral Convention 5 (Post-Award Achievement required for an additional major award at the same level)". Subject to the following conditions a graduate holding a higher education and training award may be present for and, if successful, achieve a further major award at the same level within the same generic area of study. This must involve the attainment of new learning outcomes (i.e. post-award achievement). If the area of specialisation of the post-award achievement is not substantially different, and/or if the associated credit is insufficient for granting a new major award, the applicant may be granted a minor, special-purpose or supplemental award.

The following table sets out the minimum volume of newly certified learning required of a candidate who is seeking to qualify for an additional major award at the same level within the same generic area of study. Note that repeating learning that is substantially equivalent to previously certified learning is not included in the calculation of post-award credit in the following table.

Award currently held	Additional award sought	Post-award credit for newly certified learning
Higher Certificate	Higher Certificate	A minimum of 60 credits at Level 6
Ordinary Bachelor's Degree	Ordinary Bachelor's Degree	A minimum of 60 credits at Level 7
Honours Bachelor's Degree	Honours Bachelor's Degree	A minimum of 120 credits, at least 60 of which are at Level 8
Master's Degree	Master's Degree	A complete programme

Part C Approved Programme Schedules

The Approved Programme Schedules for each Programme must be read in conjunction with Assessment & Standards. Where an apparent conflict arises, Assessment & Standards prevail.

Part D Derogation - Pass by Compensation

Department	Programme	NFQ Level	ECTS	Rationale
Department of Humanities	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Social Care	8	240	<p>CORU, the multi-profession regulator for health and social care, established under the Health and Social Care Professional Act 2005 (as amended) has published the criteria for Social Care programmes of education.</p> <p>Each programme of education must ensure that any graduate has met all Standards of Proficiency while studying as part of the named programme listed on the by-law for Social Care. The Standards of Proficiency are attached to each module in the programme. Therefore, to ensure learners meet the requirements, as set out by CORU, pass by compensation will not apply to the programme.</p>

Appendix 1: Broadsheet Annotations

Results which indicate overall success in a stage or award

Award Classification	Meaning	Appropriate Use
DT	Distinction	Level 6 and 7 Major Awards, Level 9 Postgraduate Diploma.
H1	First Class Honours	Level 8 and 9 Major Awards (Master's Degree (Taught), Master's Degree (Research)(Structured Masters))
H2	Second Class Honours	Level 9 Masters (Master's Degree (Taught), Master's Degree (Research)(Structured Masters))
21	Second Class Honours Grade 1	Level 8 Major Award
22	Second Class Honours Grade 2	Level 8 Major Award
M1	Merit Grade 1	Level 6 and 7 Major Awards
M2	Merit Grade 2	Level 6 and 7 Major Awards
MR	Merit	Level 9 Postgraduate Diploma
PS	Pass	Levels 6, 7, 8 and 9 (Master's Degree (Taught), Master's Degree (Research)(Structured Masters))
RC	Recommended	Levels 9 and 10 postgraduate research degrees (Master's Degree (Research) (with the exception of Master's Degree (Research)(Structured Masters) and Doctoral Degree as provided in the DkIT Awarding Policy), DkIT Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis (DCU Awards) and Academic Regulations for Masters Degrees by Research and Thesis (DkIT Awards; NFQ Level 9).
Non-Major Awards		Unclassified with the exception of Special Purpose Awards with a volume of at least 60 credits. Classified in accordance with the convention for the relevant major award.

Negative or partially successful results

Academic Standing	Meaning	Appropriate use
AP	Approved to progress	This is used where a learner has gained 55 credits in a non-award stage examination and where they carry no deficiency from a previous stage. Although learners may progress to the next stage they cannot progress further without clearing the credit deficiency

CD	Credit deficit	This result is entered where a learner cannot progress, because of an un-cleared credit deficit. This arises where a learner does not clear a credit deficit from a previous stage and has gained 60 credits in the current stage. This should only be used where the learner has passed the current stage but has an outstanding AP on the previous stage. It should not be used where the learner has less than 60 credits.
CG	Credits Gained	This is used where credits have been gained on either a micro-credential or an individual module.
EX	Exemptions granted	This is used where additional credits have been gained at the examination session. It indicates that the learner must gain further credits in order to progress. Where a learner is repeating and does not gain additional credits then EX should not be used . In these circumstances FL should be used
FL	Failure to gain additional credits	This is used to indicate that a learner has failed to gain any additional credits at this sitting. It is used in two circumstances (i) where on the first sitting a learner receives no credits. and (ii) on subsequent sittings where they gain no additional credits.
IN	Incomplete	Where a learner has not attempted all the required modules in the stage

Results where a final decision cannot be made

Overall Result	Meaning	Appropriate use
AB	Absent from examinations	Where a learner has not attended for any final examinations but has not formally withdrawn an AB should be entered for that learner. Examination results are not considered or released to learner
EB	Examination Board decision	This indicates that the examination Board must make a decision. It is not a valid decision and must be replaced by the examination board
DE	Result deferred	This should only be used where a learner has been granted a deferral in one or more modules and where they have passed all other examinations sat at that sitting, if any. Results which are not deferred should be considered. If a learners is deferred in a module or modules and has failed any other module the results should be FL or EX as appropriate
WD (after 31 st Oct)	Withdrew from a programme	Where a learner has formally withdrawn from the programme in a semester this result is entered. Any results on broadsheet from completed semesters should be considered. Partial results from the current semester where they appear should not be considered. A learner who withdraws cannot gain any credits for that semester and must re-attend complete semester if they wish to return. Results of completed semesters should be sent to learner.
WH	Withheld	<p>This indicates that the learner results should be withheld. This is appropriate where disciplinary or fee issues are involved. The decision to withhold can be taken by Registrar's Office or by the Department/School. The individual results should be considered and marks adjusted so that a final result can be calculated by banner and can be issued when and if the results are cleared for release</p> <p>Withheld result should not be entered until after the decision is made with regard to the presented results and it is not best practice for the Exam Board to be aware prior to consideration of results.</p>

Module Results

Overall Result	Meaning	Appropriate use
PS	Pass	Credits have been awarded for that module
FL	Fail	No credits have been awarded for that module
I	Deferred	This should be used where a learner has been deferred in a module or modules due to illness etc. or where the module cannot be assessed as it is incomplete for reasons outside the control of the learner. This might arise in work experience modules where the period of the work experience extends past the examination board meeting. Where this arises due to circumstances within the control of the learner the learner should have a FL results for that module. This should only be used as a module result.
X	Exempt (due to prior learning)	This indicates that a learner is exempted from this module due to recognised prior experience. This experience may be relevant work experience or a module from a different programme. (Exemptions due to prior attempt appear on the broadsheet as allocated marks.)
00 / NP	Not Present	This indicates that a learner has no marks for a module.
PB	Programme Board decision	Indicates a change to the broadsheet made by the programme board prior to the examination board meeting. Only corrections to the broadsheet can be made at this stage.

Appendix 2: Deferral and Consideration

1.1 Deferral of full semester or stage - full deferral

A full deferral is where a learner temporarily exits from a programme due to circumstances beyond their control.

This arises where a learner has missed such a proportion of the semester that it is not reasonable to expect them to reach the outcomes for the semester or where they cannot attend any of the final examinations.

The effect of an overall deferral is that the learner's results for **that** semester are not considered at the examination board and that they may re-attend without further fee and that their missed examinations are not considered as a 'sitting'.

1.2 Granting of a full deferral

The granting of a full deferral has implications beyond the examination system the decision to grant a deferral can be taken by a School.

- 1.2.1** Where a full deferral has been granted the schools should enter **I** as the module result in all appropriate modules. If a learner defers the first semester this applies to all modules in the stage. If a learner defers the second semester then this applies normally only to the second semester results.

1.3 Deferral in individual modules (I) – Partial Deferral

- 1.3.1** A deferral in an individual module may also be granted by the School. This arises where a learner **misses** an examination or examinations for reasons beyond their control. *(It does not normally apply where learners under perform for similar reasons in an examination.)*

A learner who has not completed a **Clinical or Work Placement** for reasons beyond their control should also be offered a deferral in that module.

- 1.3.2** Learners must apply in writing for a deferral of a module prior to the Examination Board Meeting. Consideration may be given to learners who by the nature of the circumstances cannot apply in good time.
- 1.3.3** Decisions in relation to a deferral of an individual module should normally be taken by the Examination Board (the decision may be taken at or before the Examination Board). Anecdotal evidence should not be accepted.
- 1.3.4** Where a deferral is granted in a subject (**I**) should be entered for the module result.

1.4 Examination Board Decisions where a deferral, either full or partial is granted

1.4.1 Where a module is deferred the Examination Board should consider any other results presented for that learner.

- (a) where the **learner has passed all modules with the exception of those deferred and the value of the deferred modules** is greater than 5 credits the overall result should be recorded as **DE**.
- (b) where the learner has passed all modules with the exception of those deferred and the value of the deferred modules is less than 5 credits the overall result should be recorded as **AP**.
- (c) where the learner has not passed all other modules the results should be EX or FL as the case may be.

1.4.2 Results for those who have been granted deferrals should be released except where the whole stage has been deferred.

1.5 Incomplete Work Experience or Clinical Placement

1.5.1 Where a learner has not adequately completed work experience or clinical placement for reasons within the control of the learner then a result should be recorded for that module either an FL or a failing percentage.

1.5.2 Where a learner has not completed the work/clinical experience **for personal reasons outside the control of the learner** then that module should be deferred and an **(I)** result entered for that learner

1.5.3 Where a learner has not completed work/clinical experience **due to non provision of adequate places by the Institute** then the learner should be deferred and an **(I)** result entered for that module

1.5.4 Decisions of incomplete work placement should be taken in advance of the Examination Board meeting by the Heads of Department or by those with responsibility for the management of the work placement.

2. Consideration

- 2.1** Where a learner is very close to a boundary on a module or an overall average. It should be considered whether the precision of marking allows such a marginal result. In general, the benefit of the doubt should go with the learner. It is relevant in those cases where the learner has got prior consideration in module marks.
- 2.2** It is best practice not to leave learners within the consideration zone.
- 2.3** For individual modules internal and external examiners and/or the examination board should consider learners on 38 or 39 marks and those on or above 34 marks.
- 2.4** Examination Boards should consider overall averages where they fall within 1.0% of a grade boundary.
- 2.5** In the event of the examination board adjusting results, individual marks should be changed to reflect this and the reasons recorded as an examination board decision.

Appendix 3: External Examiners: Duties and Procedures

Scope

This document details the procedures by which Dundalk Institute of Technology selects External Examiners for its programmes and the duties and responsibilities associated with the core activity of External Examining on its programmes.

This document should be circulated to:

- All External Examiners
- All members of the Academic Council.
- All members of the Institute with responsibility for the proper conduct of examinations

This document will be available:

- To all internal examiners.
- Under the FOI Act to any persons contacting the Registrar's Office.

The Institute recognises that:

External examiners act as independent and impartial advisors providing the Institute with informed comment on the standards set and learner achievement in relation to those standards. External examining is therefore an integral and very important part of institutional quality assurance.

The main purposes of external examining are:

- To verify that Learning Outcomes as assigned to a programme / module to which the external examiner has been appointed have been met.
- To assist DkIT in the comparison of academic standards with relevant external awards standards.
- To ensure that DkIT's assessment processes are valid, reliable, fair and consistent and are in line with DkIT regulations.

It shall be the external examiners' task to appraise both the examination process and continuous assessment process on a continuing basis and report to senior management on whether particular learners' performances have been judged properly against the Institute's awards standards and further, whether the assessment process has measured Learning Outcomes appropriately and whether the examination process has been conducted fairly.

It shall be the Institute's task to respond to any observations made by the External Examiners in an appropriate manner.

1. Nomination

- 1.1** The Academic Council of Dundalk Institute of Technology approves the selection criteria, terms of office and appointment of persons to act as External Examiners to its programmes. The Council shall also approve such procedures as may be required, including these procedures, relating to the appointment, role and duties of External Examiners.
- 1.2** The Academic Council shall request the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar (henceforth referred to as Registrar) to seek nominations for persons to act as External Examiners. The Council and / or the President may also nominate persons to act as External Examiners. Normally, the process of nominating External Examiners will be delegated to the Heads of School/ Department, as described in 1.3 to 1.7 below.
- 1.3** The Head of School/Department may seek recommendations for nominations through a School/Department Board and/or Programme Board
- 1.4** The Head of School/Department may consult with persons proposed for nomination in order to seek her/his consent to be nominated and determine her/his availability to act as External Examiner. Such consultation shall be without commitment to appointment as External Examiner.
- 1.5** The Head of School / Department may communicate with the Heads of School/Department from other H.E.I.s with a view to arriving at suitable arrangements in relation to the appointment of External Examiners to more than one Institute. These discussions should take account of agreed limitations on the number of Institutes to which an External Examiner may be simultaneously appointed. Such consultation shall be without commitment to appoint any specific person as External Examiner. Reciprocal arrangements between H.E.I.s should be avoided.
- 1.6** The Head of School/Department shall take into account the need for continuity in the External Examiner process from one year to the next.
- 1.7** The Head of School/Department shall normally recommend persons nominated for appointment as External Examiners to the Academic Council of the Institute prior to the end of the academic year preceding the appointment.

2. Approval

- 2.1** The Academic Council shall consider nominations for appointment as External Examiners as motions in the name of the President, Registrar, Heads of School/Department, or those nominated by the Council itself, if appropriate.
- 2.2** The Academic Council shall satisfy itself that persons nominated for appointment will normally satisfy the criteria for appointment as detailed in Appendix 1. In exceptional circumstances, where it is proposed to nominate a person who does not satisfy these formal criteria for appointment, this shall be clearly noted on the External Examiner nomination form and reasons given for the nomination.
- 2.3** The Academic Council shall approve the appointment of such and as many persons

as it deems necessary to act as External Examiners of the Institute for such periods as it decides, in accordance with Section 4 of these procedures. Approval of appointments of External Examiners will normally be completed by the end of the academic year proceeding their term of office.

3. Appointment

3.1 Following approval of nominations by the Academic Council of the Institute, the Registrar shall issue a letter of appointment to the External Examiner, along with a contract to be signed by the External Examiner and President of the Institute (or his/her nominee), which shall include, *inter alia*:

- External Examiners: Duties and responsibilities – (this document)
- Term of office
- Reporting relationships and requirements
- Fees payable by the Institute
- Conditions relating to other appointments
- Termination of contract procedures
- Conflict of Interest declaration.

3.2 The External Examiner shall be appointed from the date of signing of the Contract by the External Examiner and the President or his/her nominee.

3.3 The term of office shall normally be for a period of three to five years as determined by the Institute. In exceptional circumstances, the appointment may be extended by one further year. The circumstances shall be advised to the Academic Council prior to the proposed extension taking effect

3.4 Normally, the term of office shall commence on the 1st October each year.

3.5 The Registrar shall maintain a register of External Examiners appointments and periods of tenure. This register will be published on the DkIT website.

3.6 Should it be necessary to terminate the contract of appointment, the Head of School/Department shall recommend termination of the contract to the Academic Council for approval detailing the reasons for the proposed termination. The President shall notify in writing an External Examiner whose contract has been terminated. The External Examiner may resign at any time by writing to the Registrar.

3.7 Following appointment, the Registrar shall ensure that the External Examiner receives access to adequate additional documentation to enable him/her to understand the examination systems operated by the Institute. Such documentation might include:

- Quality assurance policies and procedures
- Assessment and examination procedures
- Examination rules and regulations
- Policies in relation to equal opportunities.
- Schedule of Examinations

3.8 In addition the Head of School/Department shall ensure that the External Examiner is provided with (or with links to) adequate documentation to enable her/him to carry out the functions of External Examiner, including:

- Programme / module documentation including Module Descriptors, Approved Programme Schedules and any special conditions pertaining to any programme.
- Staff lists indicating module / programme allocations
- Draft examination papers and related material including marking schemes.
- Previous examination papers as appropriate
- The assessment brief for continuous assessment components with a weighting of $\geq 40\%$ of the module mark.
- Completed continuous assessment components as appropriate.

3.9 On appointment the Institute may invite the External Examiner to visit the Institute to become familiar with its operations; to discuss his/her responsibilities as External Examiner and to determine the requirements of the External Examiner.

4.0 Number of External Examiners

4.1 The Institute shall ensure that sufficient External Examiners are appointed so that it can be satisfied that:

- The standard of its programmes and learner performance can be adequately moderated and
- The assessment, examination and determination of award processes are being fairly conducted.

4.2 External Examiners may be appointed on a Departmental basis, programme basis, or module basis as determined by the needs of the Institute.

4.3 Where External Examiners are appointed on a Departmental basis, there should be sufficient External Examiners to adequately assess the core academic areas on programmes delivered by the Department. Such External Examiners will moderate one or more programmes. The Institute shall determine the distribution of activities among the Departmental External Examiners.

4.4 Where External Examiners are appointed on a programme basis, there shall be at least two External Examiners appointed for each programme.

4.5 Additional External Examiners may be appointed who have expertise in particular module areas, as determined by the Institute, and may be involved with particular modules at programme level within a School or Department, or on an Institute-wide basis.

4.6 Where External Examiners are required to act as a team, the Institute shall ensure that such External Examiners have an opportunity to meet prior to a final Examination Board meeting.

4.7 It is not normally a requirement that a discipline specific expert be appointed to cover every aspect of programme. The emphasis should be on ensuring the programme as a

whole is adequately moderated.

- 4.8** Discipline specific External Examiners shall only be appointed in exceptional circumstances and by express approval of the President.

5. Role of External Examiner

- 5.1** External Examiners shall normally attend the Institute at the time of final determination of results and/or at such other times as may be determined by the Institute in consultation with the External Examiner for the purpose of assessing the standard of the programme and / or the standard of learner performance.
- 5.2** External Examiners shall determine, in their expert judgement, whether:
- The standard of examinations is satisfactory
 - The standard of the learner performance meets the intended Learning Outcomes.
 - The assessment and determination of awards processes have been consistent and fair
 - The learner performance on the programme as a whole has been properly assessed
 - The standard of assessment and performance is comparable to that in other institutions (if appropriate).
- 5.3** External examiners shall ensure that, during their proposed tenure, all significant elements of the programme(s) with which they are involved have been adequately assessed. The Institute recognises that not all elements need be considered at each academic session. The Institute requests that the External Examiner shall pay particular attention to the award years of each of the assigned programmes.
- 5.4** In order to ensure that quality is assured:
- External Examiners shall have the right to inspect all draft examination papers and continuous assessment components ($\geq 40\%$ of the module mark) that are related to the programme to which they are appointed and to propose modifications and amendments prior to final printing. An external examiner is normally requested by the Head of Department to review specific examination papers or continuous assessment components related to the programme.
 - The External Examiner shall have the right to inspect any or all programme work, project work and assignments which form part of the continuous assessment material for any learner and which affects the final module mark.
 - The Internal Examiner and the Head of Department are responsible for ensuring that such material is collated in good time.
- 5.5** Where it is provided for in the Approved Programme Schedule, and an External Examiner wishes to carry out a *viva-voce* on candidates, they shall notify the Institute in good time to permit the candidates to be notified. Such notice should be a minimum of two weeks' notice.
- 5.6** External Examiners shall normally visit the Institute at the time of Examination Board meetings and/or at such other times as may be determined by the Institute in

consultation with the External Examiner. External Examiners may also be requested to attend a meeting in the Institute or other location for the purposes of:

- (a) Induction of new appointees as External Examiners.
- (b) Discussion of issues in relation to External Examiners in the context of Quality Assurance.
- (c) Other general matters relating to examinations.

5.7 In addition to providing feedback to Academic Departments and Schools, External Examiners shall submit a full report to the Registrar in accordance with Section 7 of this procedure. Any differences of opinion which occurred with the Internal Examiner should be identified in this report.

5.8 An External Examiner shall declare any circumstances, which may constitute a conflict of interest with the Institute or with an Examinee.

5.9 Where a conflict of interest is identified, the External Examiner may not be involved in any consideration of that particular Examinee.

6. Boards of Examiners

6.1 Meetings of Examination Board are held for the purpose of deciding individual learner results at such times as the Institute may determine. The meeting to determine examination results is termed the Examination Board meeting. The Minute of such meeting shall be the Broadsheet of Examination results. The conduct of Boards of Examiners at DKIT is outlined in Section A7 of DkIT Assessment and Standards.

6.2 The External Examiner should normally attend the Institute on the day prior to the meeting of the Examination Board, or at such other times as may be agreed by the Institute and the External Examiner, for the purpose of:

- Reviewing the overall performance of candidates, particularly borderline cases
- Reviewing the proposed results for the programme as a whole
- Reviewing module performance with Internal Examiners
- Reviewing marked scripts, project work or continuous assessment material, as required or requested.
- Carrying out viva-voce examinations, if required.

The Registrar/Head of School/Department shall provide the External Examiner with suitable statistical information, where available, to assist in this process.

6.3 The Internal Examiner shall indicate on the Module marks sheet any proposed adjustment to the marks/grades as proposed by the Internal or External Examiner and agreed by them. Efforts should be made to achieve consensus between the Internal and External Examiners in relation to such proposed amendments. If the proposed amendments are not agreed, either the Internal Examiner or the External Examiner may bring these to the attention of the Examination Board.

6.4 Where the External Examiner proposes adjustments to a group of learners as a whole, they shall consult with the Internal Examiner and Head of School/Department in advance of the meeting of the Examination Board. Efforts should be made to achieve consensus in relation to such proposed amendments.

- 6.5** The External Examiner shall attend the meeting of the Examination Board as a full member with the same voting rights as other members of the Board.
- 6.6** The External Examiner may comment on such matters relating to individual learner performance, module performance, or programme performance, as they deem necessary. The Examination Board shall give due consideration to such comments.
- 6.7** The External Examiner may request to have her/his dissenting opinion on any matter recorded on the Broadsheet of Results. If the External Examiner has a dissenting opinion this may be put into their report to the Registrar and may be brought to the attention of the Academic Council by the Registrar.
- 6.8** The External Examiner shall sign the Broadsheet of Results. Such signature indicates that the External Examiner participated in the Examination Board as a member of the Board, and conveys no further status on the significance of individual learner results.

7. Reporting Arrangements

- 7.1** The External Examiner shall provide a report to the Registrar of the Institute by 1st July of each year, or at such other times as may be specified by the Institute following the assessment/examinations on a standard report form provided by the Institute. This report will be called the External Examiner's Report.
- 7.2** The External Examiner may, in addition, submit a special written report to the Registrar on such other matters as they deem appropriate, and may request that such matters be treated on a confidential basis.
- 7.3** The Registrar shall make available a copy of the pro forma External Examiner's Report to the President.
- 7.4** The Registrar will provide the appropriate Head of School/Department, with the pro-forma External Examiner's Report. A memo may be attached with comments or a request for further information or follow-up on any issue.
- 7.5** The Head of School/Department shall provide a copy of the External Examiner's Report to the relevant Internal Examiner(s) and a summary of the External Examiner's report as an agenda item to the relevant Programme Board. The Head of School/Department shall return the Programme Board Response (where relevant) as the minute of this item to the Registrar's Office.
- 7.6.** The External Examiner's comments and Programme Board Response are recorded in the Annual Programme Board Report. Schools/Departments may respond to the External Examiner where appropriate, e.g. in the case of factual inaccuracies or where actions have been taken as a result of the External Examiner's recommendations.

Criteria for Nomination

The overarching criterion for nomination of an External Examiner is that they can provide an independent, knowledgeable, informed viewpoint in regard of the ongoing assessment of learners on a programme of study.

The External Examiner should therefore be a person of academic or professional distinction, suitably qualified, whose association with a programme of study at DKIT could be considered to enhance the standing of the programme.

In order that no perception of impropriety or conflict of interest may arise, the External Examiner must be financially and socially independent of DKIT (see section 11 below).

1. External examiners may be drawn from academic life and, where appropriate, from business, industry and professional practice. External Examiners should be professionally qualified where this is the normal practice for the industry.
2. External examiners drawn from business, industry or professional practice should be in current practice and of senior standing in their fields.
3. External examiners should normally be suitably qualified with a minimum of an honours degree (NQAI Level 8) or equivalent. They should have both current and relevant experience in the areas of industry, education or research or professional practice.
4. External examiner nominations /appointments should be such as to ensure maximum objectivity in relation to the institutions to which they are nominated.
5. Academics may be nominated from H.E.I.in Ireland and abroad. DkIT will seek to draw nominations from a variety of institutions, and within a single discipline will seek to avoid multiple nominations from the same institution.
6. Normally, an External Examiner drawn from academic life should hold an academic qualification, in the appropriate discipline, to a higher level than that of the programme(s) to which he/she has been nominated. Such persons associated with NQAI Level 8 and Level 9 programmes in their own institutions may be nominated as external examiners to Level 8 and Level 9 programmes at Dundalk I.T.
7. Dundalk Institute of Technology should take due cognisance for the desirability of gender balance when nominating panels of external examiners.
8. It is viewed as inappropriate for individuals to canvass Dundalk Institute of Technology on their own behalf for the purpose of seeking a nomination as an external examiner.
9. External examiners shall not normally be appointed for a period exceeding 3 years on any programme. The Academic Council of Dundalk Institute of Technology may recommend a period of up to 5 years for specific programmes.
10. External examiners who have served for two appointment periods or more should not normally be considered for re-nomination until a minimum of three years has elapsed.
11. In order to ensure the independence of the role of external examiner, restrictions must be

placed on the selection of External Examiners.

- Persons who are currently employed or contracted or hold office at Dundalk Institute of Technology (including RDC) in any capacity, shall be ineligible for appointment as External Examiner.
- Persons who might be likely to financially gain as a result of decisions as an External Examiner are ineligible for appointment.
- Members of the Governing Body of DkIT are ineligible.
- Spouses, partners and children of persons in these categories are likewise ineligible.
- All such persons shall be ineligible for appointment as External Examiner until a period of six years has elapsed after terminating the formal relationship with DkIT.
- In the event of a spouse, partner or child accepting employment at DKIT or its subsidiaries, the External Examiner must resign their commission.

Appendix 4: Academic Appeals and Rechecks

Academic Appeals

Following receipt of provisional results of an Examination, learners may:

1. Request an administrative check of their marks in one of more assessment elements (Recheck), or
2. Appeal their marks in one or more assessment elements, where there are grounds to do so as specified below. All Appeal requests incorporate a Recheck, irrespective of whether the appeal is granted.

Academic Consultation

Following the issuing of results of an Examination, academic staff members are available to discuss assessment results with learners on the dates and times published. **Learners are strongly advised to attend these sessions if they intend to apply for a recheck or appeal of their results.**

Recheck

This is the administrative operation of checking the recording and calculation of assessment marks.

Appeal

A learner may request an appeal of the decision of the Examination Board only on the following grounds:

- That the Examination Board did not give sufficient weight to any extenuating circumstance notified to the School prior to the holding of the Examination Board Meeting.
- That the assessment was not conducted in accordance with the relevant Institute regulations.
- That there was a material administrative error or irregularity in the assessment procedure, which made a real and substantive difference to the Candidate's results.
- That the assessment mark given was substantially at variance with the pattern of the Candidate's previous performance levels in the module concerned. A substantial variance would normally represent a difference of not less than 20% of marks available for that element.

Where the Registrar is satisfied that the grounds listed above are not established, the original mark or grade shall stand.

Appeals should be made in writing to the Registrar, who, if satisfied that a appeal of the academic decision is warranted on one or more of the above grounds, shall authorise that the assessment material on which the mark or grade was based, shall be forwarded to the appropriate, approved external examiner for review.

No further appeal is permitted.

A fee will apply for rechecks and appeals as determined from time to time by DkIT.

Learners who have failed or have gained exemptions and who are applying for rechecks or appeals, should also register for the repeat Examination.