Quality Assurance Handbook PART A1

POLICY No.18: Results approval and classification of awards policy

18. Purpose of policy

This policy explains FIT's expectations that govern the ratification of grades and awards and subsequent certification processing with QQI, and wider accrediting stakeholders where required.

18.1 Policy scope

Tutors should access this policy, as well as Apprentices, FIT staff, Approved Delivery Partners , and broader regulatory, and accreditor stakeholders when necessary. This policy outlines FIT's expected timelines for the discharge of various activities and is closely aligned with the Examination Board Terms of Reference and the External Examiner Terms of Reference.

18.2 Overarching considerations

QQI espouses several principles that support the fair and consistent assessment of apprentices. They include:

1. Learners are responsible for demonstrating their learning achievements
2. Assessment underpins standards based on learning outcomes

3. Assessment promotes both effective learning and teaching
4. Assessment procedures are credible
5. Learners are well-informed about how and why they are assessed
6. Assessment methods are reviewed and renewed where necessary to adapt evolving requirements.

FIT is conscious that, in apprentices' progress towards the programme endpoint and to ensure confidence in the operation of the apprenticeship programme, it is vital to make timely provision for the ratification of grades and awards and the subsequent delivery of the outcomes to Apprentices. This process is based upon outcomes that are the culmination of a process that establishes fair and consistent assessment of Apprentices as per the relevant QQI policy requirements.

18.3 Policy statement

Tech Apprenticeships include several constituent modules that are aligned with the applicable QQI Award standards. Apprentices must successfully complete all on- and off-the-programme elements, meeting all minimum module level assessment requirements. The completion of all on- and off-the-job modules provides the basis for calculating the award classification of the overarching QQI L6 Advanced Certificate Award.

Following the module delivery and after a maximum of fifteen working days, the tutor provides module-level grades to the Apprentices, allowing for summative feedback to apprentices that aids their progress. Module grades and module appeals periods are considered to have elapsed when the Examination Board convenes to finalise the awards.

The Registry Team, under the leadership of the Registrar, will then collate all module-level assessment materials, ensuring that each intake cohort's assessment documentation is checked for consistency against a set standard. In addition, External Examiners, as per QQI requirements, will sample assessment material from each assessment. In the case of Tech

Apprenticeships, an External Examiner will review assessment material samples from each intake cohort, making recommendations to the convened sitting of the final award Examination Board as to the appropriateness of the grades awarded for an intake cohort.

The Examination Board, on behalf of the Academic Council, will ratify the module-level assessment grades and award outcomes. QQI Level 6 apprenticeship/advanced certificate award outcomes are classified into four categories: Fail, Pass, Merit, and Distinction. Following the convening of the Examination Board, the Registrar will notify the apprentices of their final results, allowing them five working days to appeal the results. However, such appeals cannot challenge a decision of the Board of Examiners, but can merely draw attention to a grade input error, or miscalculation of an award classification, in the module assessment process. The Examination Board will make recommendations as whether to raise the award classification, i.e., fail to pass, pass to merit, or merit to distinction, in cases where the Apprentice outcome is on the borderline between two classifications.

Once the appeal period has elapsed, the Registrar or delegate will contact each graduate apprentice and seek from them completion of a form that confirms their current address , date of birth, and PPS number. With this form the apprentices give data subject approval to allow their details to be provided to QQI to have their certification processed. Once FIT receives this document, the Registrar or delegate will upload all certification/Award outcomes to QQI's QBS results entry system for processing by QQI. FIT will also compile a 'Qualification Supplement' to accompany the provision of the Certificates(s) to graduate apprentices. FIT's Registrar ensures that all Certificates and Qualification Supplements are sent to Apprentices via registered post. Apprentices who have not met the full award requirements will be provided with a list of completed programme module components, including, where appropriate, any aligned City and Guilds Certificates. To ensure timely certification processing, FIT endeavours to align it as closely as possible to QQI's QBS close-off dates.

18.3.1 Qualification Supplement - background

Across Europe, Higher Education institutions adopt the Diploma Supplement format designed to support the recognition of academic qualifications. The Supplement is an essential tool of the European Higher Education Area for graduates to ensure that higher education institutions, public authorities, and employers in their home countries and abroad, recognise their degrees. It does not, however, represent a Curriculum Vitae and is not a substitute for the original qualification Certificate.

Graduate apprentices must be able to fully show their award to other providers to gain access to broader programmes of education and training. Accordingly, FIT ensures that each graduate apprentice receives, along with their Certificate(s), a document that fully confirms the award attained and its associated NFQ level. Also included is necessary information, including their Solas Apprentice Registration Number. FIT titles this document a Qualification Supplement rather than a Diploma Supplement to avoid confusion about the type of Award. FIT utilises the format of the Diploma Supplement in the Qualification Supplement, which contains eight sections that provide the following information:

1. The holder of the qualification
2. Their Solas Apprentice Registration Number
3. The qualification type and its originating institution
4. The qualification level
5. The content of the course and results obtained (transcript of results)
6. The function of the qualification
7. Certification of the supplement; and
8. Any other relevant details.

18.3.2 Qualification Supplement template (Cybersecurity example)

PART A	
1. INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE HOLDER OF THE QUALIFICATION	
1.1 Last name	BLOGGS
2. First name	JOE
3. Date of birth (DD/MM/YYYY)	00/00/1983
4. Apprentice Registration Number *(SOLAS Register of Apprentices)*	123456789
2. INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE QUALIFICATION	
2.1 Name of qualification	CYBERSECURITY APPRENTICESHIP
2.2 Name of award	ADVANCE CERTIFICATE IN CYBERSECURITY
2.3 Awarding authority	QUALITY AND QUALIFICATIONS IRELAND
2.4 Coordinating Provider	FAST TRACK INTO INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CLG
2.5 Main field(s) of study	ICT/CYBERSECURITY
2.6 Languages of instruction/exams	ENGLISH
3. INFORMATION ON THE LEVEL AND DURATION OF THE QUALIFICATION	

3.1 Level of qualification	NATIONAL FRAMEWORK OF QUALIFICATIONS (LEVEL6) 
3.2 Official duration of programme	TWO YEARS
3.3 FET credits aligned	172
4. Access requirements	H6/O7 IRISH LEAVING CERTIFICATE OR EQUIVALENT
4. INFORMATION REGARDING THE FUNCTION OF THE QUALIFICATION	
4.1 Access to further study	THIS AWARD SHOULD MEET THE EDUCATIONAL ACCESS CRITERIA FOR ENTRY TO A LEVEL 6,7, OR 8 ICT MAJOR AWARD

PART B

5. INFORMATION ON PROGRAMME COMPLETED AND RESULTS OBTAINED	
5.1 Mode of study	FULL-TIME (APPRENTICESHIP)
5.2 Programme learning outcomes	THE AIM OF THE CYBERSECURITY APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME IS TO ENABLE THE APPRENTICE TO SECURE AND RETAIN EMPLOYMENT IN AN ICT SECURITY ROLE. THE APPRENTICE SHOULD BE ABLE TO COMBINE TECHNICAL, COMMUNICATIONS, PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT SKILLS TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THEIR EMPLOYER AND SHOULD BE ABLE TO ACT AUTONOMOUSLY OR AS PART OF A TEAM AS THE OCCASION DEMANDS
5.3 Grading System	WEIGHTED AVERAGE PERCENTAGE

5.4 Classification of Award	THIS AWARD IS CLASSIFIED AS FOLLOWING: **PASS 50-59** **MERIT 60-79** **DISTINCTION 80-100**

6. TRANSCRIPT OF RESULTS

PART C

7. CERTIFICATION OF THIS SUPPLEMENT

7.1 Date (DD/MM/YYYY)	00/00/22
7.2 Registrar signature	 Andrew Finn *(on behalf of FIT)*
7.3 Signatory authority	ANDREW FINN IS APPOINTED BY THE TECH APPRENTICESHIP ACADEMIC COUNCIL AND EXAMINATION BOARD TO SIGN THIS DOCUMENT.

7.4 Official stamp	
7.5 FIT contact details	**Address** **7A BELLEVUE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE,** **GLASNEVIN,** **DUBLIN 11.** **Website** **www.fit.ie** **Email** **Apprenticeparticipation@fit.ie** **Phone** **00353(0)18825570**

Document History		
Document Name	**Results Approval and Classification of Awards Policy**	
Policy document number	**FIT-POL-018**	
Version reference	**V3.0**	
Document owner	**FIT Registrar**	
Roles with related responsibility	**Registrar and Director of Academic Affairs**	
Approved by	**Academic Council**	**20/09/2022 (active)**
Revision cycle	V1.0: document created 05/22	
	V2.0: logo updated (04/24)	
	V3.0: full policy and language use review (10/26)	