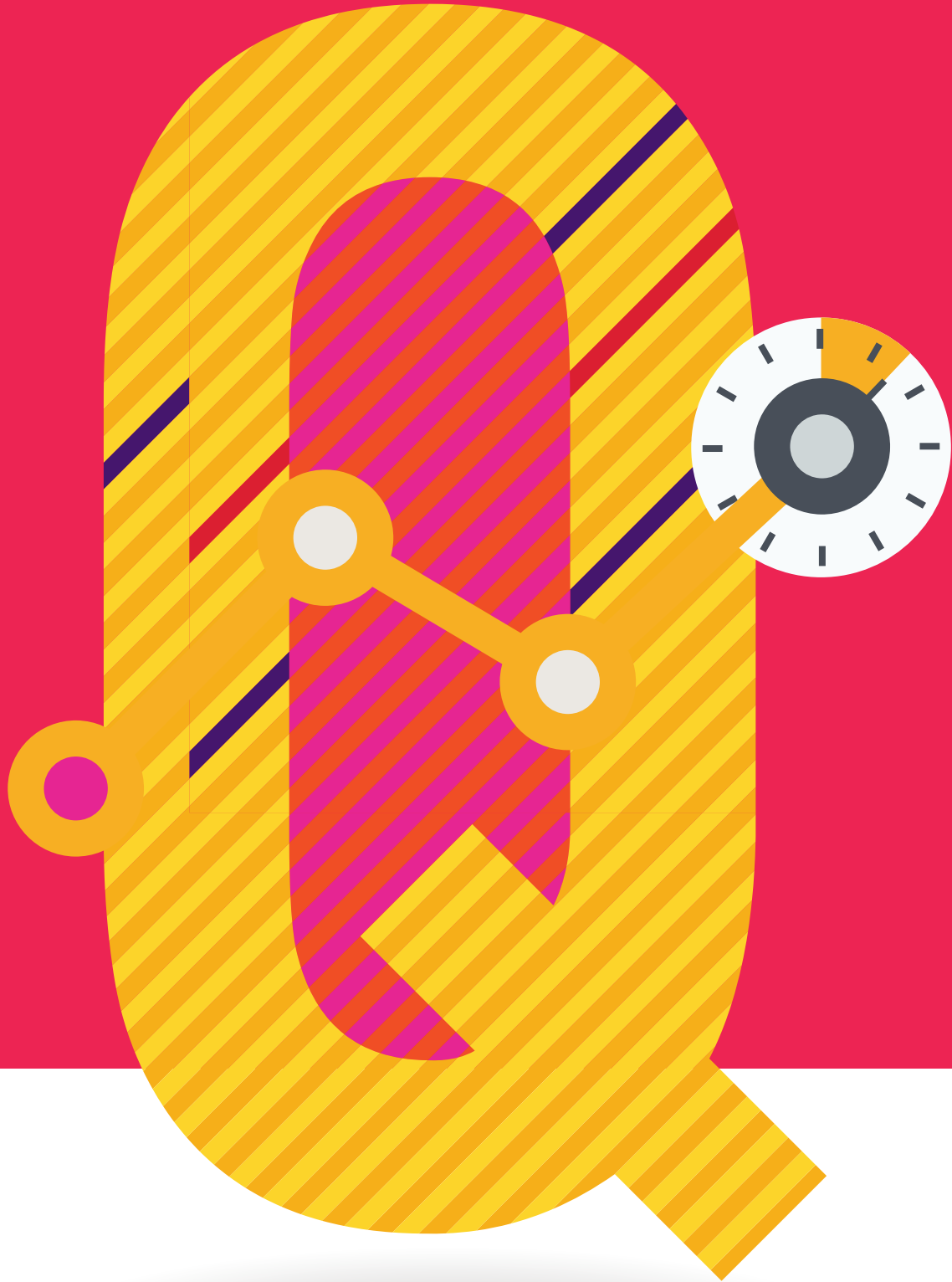


**ASSESSMENT  
DEADLINES:  
COMPASSIONATE  
CONSIDERATION**  
IN EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

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# ASSESSMENT DEADLINES: COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION



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# DEFINITIONS

## Compassionate Consideration

The Programme Coordinator can enable learners who:

- **have been prevented from undertaking a specific assessment activity** because of extenuating circumstances, to apply to defer the assessment i.e. to be allowed to complete the assessment activity on another occasion.

or

- **felt their performance has been seriously impaired** because of extenuating circumstances to apply to repeat the assessment i.e. to be allowed to sit the assessment activity at an alternative sitting. In extenuating circumstances a learner may feel that his/her performance has been seriously impaired and may apply for compassionate consideration due to extenuating circumstances. In such cases supporting relevant evidence/documentation must accompany the application (see Section 3.3). The application is then processed and either granted or declined. Where the application has been declined the original result of the assessment will apply. Learners have the right to appeal this decision (see Section 6).

### Examples of Extenuating Circumstances (Compassionate Consideration)

Extenuating Circumstances are situations or events which unexpectedly interfere with a learner's ability to complete or sit an element of

assessment. Extenuating circumstances which **may be considered** include, but are not limited to:

- recent physical injury or emotional trauma
- physical disability or chronic/disabling condition such as epilepsy, glandular fever, severe effects of pregnancy or other incapacitating illness of the learner
- recent bereavement of close family member or close friend
- personal injury certified by a medical practitioner
- domestic crisis
- certified mental health issue
- serious illness of a close family member
- serious illness of child or other family member for whom the learner is primary carer
- other extenuating circumstances

Examples of circumstances which are **unlikely to be considered** include, but are not limited to:

- typical symptoms associated with exam stress
- minor illnesses such as a common cold
- holidays
- IT and/or computer failure (excluding in an examination)
- English is not the first language of the learner

**Any application in relation to compassionate consideration requires the learner to provide supporting relevant evidence/documentation (see Section 3.3) of the extenuating circumstances.**

# DEFINITIONS

## Supporting Relevant Evidence/Documentation

Supporting relevant evidence/documentation refers to a:

- **Statement from a qualified professional practitioner.** Examples of statements from a qualified professional practitioner necessary for consideration of compassionate consideration include, but are not limited to:
  - Statement from medical practitioner (e.g. doctor, psychologist, etc.)
  - Statement from An Garda Síochána/legal professional
  - Statement from Programme Coordinator or Centre Manager (in extenuating cases, the Programme Coordinator or Centre Manager may be aware of circumstances whereby the learner may be unable to obtain a statement from another qualified professional (e.g. due to financial constraints) and may complete a statement for the learner while maintaining confidentiality (see Appendix 1)).or
- **RIP.ie or other source** (if requested)

**All evidence must be on headed paper and must be legible, stamped and dated.  
All evidence must relate to the specific application for extenuating circumstances being made.**

# PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT IN RELATION TO ASSESSMENT DEADLINES: COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION IN EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

Quality assured assessment ensures that, in criterion referenced assessment, “learners are assessed and the assessment judgment is made based on whether the learner has reached the required national standards of knowledge, skill and competence for the award” (QQI, 2013 p.5). Central to quality assured assessment is the assumption that learners are assessed in a fair and consistent manner in line with the award standard. Quality assured assessment ensures adherence to the principles of assessment.

The following sets forth the principles of assessment which apply to this document: these principles are based on the QQI (2013) principles for assessment.

## Principles of Assessments

### 1 Validity

Validity is a fundamental assessment principle ensuring that an assessment measures what it is designed to measure: the relevant standard of knowledge, skill or competence required for an award should be assessed.

Validity in assessment occurs when:

- Assessment is fit for purpose (i.e. a practical assessment assesses a practical skill)
- Learners can produce evidence which can be measured against the award standard
- Assessors can make accurate assessment decisions
- Assessment is accessible to all candidates who are potentially able to achieve it

### 2 Reliability

Reliability in assessment ensures that assessment measurement is accurate: the knowledge, skills and competence which the assessment measures should produce reliable and accurate results. Reliability in assessment ensures that results are consistent under similar conditions.

Reliability in assessment occurs when:

- The assessment is based on valid assessment techniques
- Assessment conditions are consistent
- Learner evidence is reliable
- Results are consistent over time across various assessors, contexts, conditions and learners



# PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT IN RELATION TO ASSESSMENT DEADLINES: COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION IN EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

## 3 Fair

Fairness in assessment supports the validity and reliability principles and provides equal opportunity to all learners. Fairness in assessment ensures: learners have access to appropriate resources/equipment in assessment; assessment design and implementation are fair to all learners; and policies and procedures exist to ensure fair assessment of learners.

## 4 Quality

Quality in assessment ensures that all assessment processes are quality assured.

## 5 Transparency

Transparency in assessment ensures that assessment policy and process provide clarity to all relevant stakeholders.

In order to ensure the fair and consistent assessment of learners, the following procedure should be followed in relation to compassionate consideration in extenuating circumstances. The provider's Quality Assurance System overarches these principles and ensures learner achievement is assessed in a fair and consistent way in line with the national standards for the award.

In order to ensure fairness and consistency across all assessment activities, learners may apply for compassionate consideration in relation to their assessment. Such compassionate consideration could include deferring an assessment activity or providing an extension to an assessment deadline, and will only be granted in extenuating circumstances with supporting relevant evidence/documentation (see Section 3.3). In these circumstances, the learner must not be unfairly disadvantaged as a result of extenuating circumstances. Furthermore, the learner must not gain significant advantage when compared with other learners.



# COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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## The Programme Coordinator

The Programme Coordinator is required to ensure all Learning Practitioners are made aware of their roles in relation to planning, conducting and concluding assessment (*Learning Practitioner Handbook*<sup>1</sup>). In the request for compassionate consideration, the Programme Coordinator, or designated person, is responsible for the management of the application process.

## The Learning Practitioner

The Learning Practitioner is required to inform learners of assessment deadlines in advance (*Learning Practitioner Handbook*<sup>1</sup>, notice boards, etc.). Where a learner misses an assessment deadline, the Learning Practitioner should **not** accept assessment evidence after that date and should inform the learner of the compassionate consideration process in which s/he can engage.

In the request for compassionate consideration, the Learning Practitioner is required to inform and meet<sup>2</sup> with the Programme Coordinator in order to process the learner application.

## The Learner

The learner is required to keep up-to-date with relevant assessment deadlines and consequences for missing same (*Learning Practitioner Handbook*<sup>1</sup>, notice boards, etc.).

In the event of extenuating circumstances, the learner is required to complete the application for Compassionate Consideration using the guidelines in this document and ***Compassionate Consideration Application Form*** (see Appendix 2).

The learner is required to provide relevant supporting evidence/documentation (see Section 3.3) of the extenuating circumstances which they felt:

**may have prevented or may prevent him/her** from either:

- **completing** an assessment activity (Learner Record, Collection of Work, Project, Assignment or Skills Demonstration), or
  - **missing** a practical assessment (Examination or Skills Demonstration)
- or

**seriously impaired or may seriously impair his/her performance** in:

- a practical assessment (Examination or Skills Demonstration).

This supporting evidence/documentation must be provided within a reasonable **defined timeframe** after the assessment deadline date of application, **within two (2) days and no more than two (2) weeks,**<sup>3</sup> after date of application

<sup>1</sup> The *Learning Practitioner Handbook* is currently under development

<sup>2</sup> In the case of Outreach or Distance Learning Programmes, the Learning Practitioner may be unable to meet with the Programme Coordinator and as such may communicate via phone and/or email.

<sup>3</sup> In exceptional cases, the Programme Coordinator or Centre Manager may extend this date due to the specific circumstances which may prevent the learner from obtaining the relevant evidence/documentation within the allowed timeframe.

# COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION PROCESS

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Where a learner requires compassionate consideration in relation to an assessment deadline the process outlined in Figure 1.1. should be followed

**Figure 1.1 Compassionate Consideration Process**



<sup>4</sup>In exceptional circumstances, the Programme Coordinator may extend this.

a) **Granted:**■ **Revised schedule for assessment activity:**

If the decision is that the compassionate consideration application has been granted, a revised schedule for the assessment activity is agreed between the Learning Practitioner and the learner. Every attempt to facilitate this in the current assessment period will be made. However, due to time constraints, the nature of the assessment activity, and/or resources, this revised schedule may roll into a subsequent certification period

- **Examinations:** Where a compassionate consideration application has been granted, in the event that the assessment activity is an examination, a new examination paper, marking scheme and set of solutions must be devised: the original examination paper will not be used

- **Learner Evidence (Assignment, Project, Learner Record, Collection of Work and Skills Demonstration):** Where a

compassionate consideration application has been granted, the learner evidence is accepted by the Programme Coordinator or Learning Practitioner and **should be marked and graded in accordance with the standards for the award**. The actual marks and grade awarded are determined solely on the basis of the evidence submitted in accordance with the standards for the award. **There is no mark/grade penalty under this procedure**

b) **Declined:**

- If the decision is that the compassionate consideration application has been **declined**, the Programme Coordinator or Learning Practitioner will refuse to accept the assessment evidence from the learner (Levels 4-6). The learner has the right to appeal this (see Section 6)

## COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION APPEALS

The learner has the right to appeal the decision in relation to compassionate consideration application decision. Appeals must be made within a **defined timeframe** one (1) working day of the decision (in exceptional circumstances the Programme Coordinator may extend this). All appeals must be made in writing using the **Appeals Application Form** (see Appendix 3).

### REFERENCES

QQI (2013) Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers. Available at: <http://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Quality%20Assuring%20Assessment%20-%20Guidelines%20for%20Providers%2C%20Revised%202013.pdf> [Accessed 28/02/2018]

## **APPENDIX 1: STATEMENT FROM PROGRAMME COORDINATOR OR CENTRE MANAGER**

In exceptional cases, the Programme Coordinator or Centre Manager may be aware of circumstances whereby the learner may be unable to obtain a statement from another qualified professional (e.g. due to financial constraints) and may complete a statement for the learner while maintaining confidentiality.

**STATEMENT**

**FROM PROGRAMME COORDINATOR or CENTRE MANAGER**

**Re APPLICATION for COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION**

To be completed by the Programme Coordinator or Centre Manager

<p><b>Programme Coordinator or Centre Manager Name:</b></p>
<p><b>Learner Name:</b></p>
<p><b>Course/Programme:</b></p>
<p><b>Module(s):</b></p>
<p><b>Declaration:</b></p>
<p>I can confirm that there are confidential extenuating circumstances which pertain to this learner which have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ prevented him/her from undertaking a specific assessment activity</li> <li>or</li> <li>■ seriously impaired his/her performance<sup>5</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>Signed:</b> _____ <b>Date:</b> _____</p>

<sup>5</sup> In extenuating circumstances, a learner may feel that their performance has been seriously impaired and may apply for compassionate consideration due to extenuating circumstances. In such cases, relevant evidence/documentation must support the application > (see 3.3) and the application for same must be granted. Where the application has not been granted, the original result of the assessment will apply.

## APPENDIX 2: COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION APPLICATION FORM

### APPLICATION FORM COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION in extenuating circumstances

**Part A:** This section must be completed by the Learner

**Centre Name:**

**Learner Name:**

**Learner Address:**

**PPS Number (only  
necessary if requested for  
identification purposes):**

**Course/Programme:**

**Module(s):**

**Learning Practitioner:**

**Types of Assessment:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Examination          | <input type="checkbox"/> Project            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Skills Demonstration | <input type="checkbox"/> Learner Record     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assignment           | <input type="checkbox"/> Collection of Work |

**Assessment Due Date(s):**

**Reasons for requiring the extension:**

## COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION in extenuating circumstances

**Part A (continued):** This section must be completed by the Learner

**Relevant supporting  
evidence/documentation included (see 3.3)**

*Relevant supporting evidence/documentation  
must be included in your application*

Yes  No

**Details of supporting relevant evidence/documentation:**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

**This application form must be submitted to the  
Programme Coordinator or designated person**

## COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION in extenuating circumstances

**Part B (Office Use):** This section must be completed by the Programme Coordinator

<b>Programme Coordinator Name:</b>	
<b>Receipt date of application:</b>	
<b>Learning Practitioner Name(s):</b>	
<b>Application prior to or after the assessment activity/deadline:</b> <span style="float: right;">Prior to <input type="checkbox"/> After <input type="checkbox"/></span>	
<b>Criteria:</b>	<b>Details:</b>
Details of extenuating circumstances	
Severity of circumstances	
Application from learner	
Relevant supporting evidence/documentation	
Nature of the assessment activity	
<b>Application:</b>	Granted <input type="checkbox"/> Declined <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Declaration:</b>	
I can confirm that:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A meeting with the <u>Learning Practitioner</u> to discuss the Compassionate Consideration application has taken place</li> <li>■ There is sound evidence to grant or decline the application for Compassionate Consideration based on criteria above</li> <li>■ If granted, the granting of Compassionate Consideration will not give the learner in question an unfair assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the assessment</li> <li>■ I will inform the learner in writing of the decision regarding Compassionate Consideration</li> </ul>	
<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

## COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION in extenuating circumstances

**Part C (Office Use):** This section must be completed by the Programme Coordinator and returned to the Learner

*This section should accompany relevant assessment material when submitted.*

**Learner Name:**

**Date of Decision:**

**Outcome:**

Granted     Declined

**If granted, details of extended deadline etc.**





## APPENDIX 3: APPEALS APPLICATION FORM

(ASSESSMENT DEADLINES: SHORT-TERM EXTENSION/COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION)

### APPEALS APPLICATION FORM

(Assessment Deadlines: Short-term Extension/Compassionate Consideration)

**Part A:** This section must be completed by the Learner

**Nature of Appeal:**

- Assessment Deadlines: Compassionate Consideration  
 Assessment Deadlines: Short-term Extension

**Centre Name:**

**Learner Name:**

**Date of Application:**

**Reason for Appeal:**

**Reason why decision was declined:**

**Details of supporting evidence provided:**

**Date of Application:**

**Part B: (Office Use)** This section must be completed by the relevant ETB Manager

**Name:**

**Receipt date of application:**

**Application:**

I can confirm that a review of the Application has been completed and that the Appeal is:

- Granted     Declined

**Reason:**

**Signature:**

**Date:**

# ASSESSMENT DEADLINES: COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION

IN EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES



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