



An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna
Further Education and Training Authority

Apprentice Guide to Assessment



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Introduction to the guide

The purpose of this booklet is to provide you with information on assessment. It has been designed to answer frequently asked questions and address concerns that you, as an Apprentice, may have.

You should read it thoroughly, as it is important for you to be aware of all available information on assessment. If you have any questions or concerns about assessment that are not addressed in this guide, please contact your Instructor/Lecturer directly.

1. What is assessment?

Assessment is an important part of the learning process. It provides opportunity to provide feedback on learning and to determine if the intended learning outcomes of the course are being achieved. Assessments can be used for many different reasons. Firstly, they are used to provide information that tells you and your Instructor/Lecturer how well you are doing on the course/programme.

There are different ways to assess how well you are doing. Assessment enhances your motivation and also enables you a chance to improve on your performance if required. It also assesses the effectiveness of teaching. Secondly, they are used to tell if you have reached the standard required to be awarded a certificate.

Your Instructor/Lecturer will tell you how you will be assessed. If you reach the required standard you will pass the test.

What will I be assessed on?

You will be assessed on the content of the training course that you are doing. The content of the course will be based on an award standard that has been approved by Quality and Qualifications Ireland the awarding body. Your Instructor/Lecturer will tell you more about the awarding body or visit www.qqi.ie.

How will I be assessed?

There are lots of different ways to assess what you have learned.

Your Instructor/Lecturer will let you know what will be involved before you do the assessment. You may be required to perform an activity (e.g. practical, drawing or course work assessment) and you may also be asked to answer questions (theory test).

- If you are taking part in a practical test, you will be asked to make something or perform certain tasks
- If you are taking part in a drawing test, you will be asked to produce a drawing
- If you are taking part in a theory test, you will be asked to answer questions.

To pass the test you must reach the required standard. You will be told what the required standard is before you do any test. If you need further information about the test you will be taking, please ask your Instructor/Lecturer.

When will I be assessed?

You may be assessed during your training course/programme, and/or at the end of your training course/programme. Your Instructor/Lecturer will give you more information regarding dates.

If I have specific needs, how can they be met during assessment?

If you have a specific learning need, for example, difficulty reading or writing, you may have discussed this with the ETB's Training Advisor when you registered as an apprentice.

Once you start your training course, you must make sure that your Instructor/Lecturer knows about your specific learning needs. He/she will discuss the issue with you to establish if you need any additional supports during assessment and make sure that your needs are considered. If it is agreed that you can have supports during assessment, you will be told of the arrangements approximately two weeks beforehand.

2. Will I have to pay fees?

In general, you will not have to pay fees for your assessment. Your Instructor/Lecturer will let you know if any payments are needed.

3. Will there be mock tests to practice on?

Generally there are no mock tests however apprentices get an opportunity to undertake practice exercises to prepare them for the assessments.

4. How can I make sure that I do well?

In order to do well in your assessment, you should make sure to attend all of your classes and complete all of your course work. Listen to the advice of your Instructor/Lecturer. Participate as well as you can in everything. Don't be afraid to ask questions.

5. What will happen if I don't want to do an assessment?

As stated above, assessments are used to tell if you have reached the standard required for a certificate and are an important part of the learning process. Many people do not enjoy being assessed however if you do not do the assessment(s) you will not qualify for a certificate and your apprenticeship will be suspended until such time as you sit your outstanding assessment(s).

By attending all of your training you will be helped to prepare for your assessment. Your Instructor/Lecturer will be understanding and will give you as much encouragement and assistance to help you prepare for the assessment.

6. Assessment techniques used in Apprenticeship Programmes

Examination - Practical:	This is the testing of specific knowledge and competence of practical skills acquired. It is conducted in a limited time period under restricted conditions – e.g. You may be asked to perform a task/ make something/ draw something that will demonstrate your learning under exam conditions.
Examination - Theory:	This tests your ability to recall, apply and understand specific theory and knowledge, this is also done within a specified time limit – typically you may be asked to answer questions or figure out a mathematical problem.
Portfolio/ Collection of Work:	<p>This enables the assessment of work produced by you over a period of time that demonstrates achievement of a range of learning outcomes. Your Instructor/Lecturer will provide the guidelines and instructions as the tasks you need to undertake, the format regarding the presentation of this evidence and relevant information on resources or materials required.</p> <p>In Apprenticeship the Portfolio is used throughout the phases so it is important that you are familiar with the time requirements as to when particular tasks are to be completed.</p>
Skills Demonstration:	This is used to assess a wide range of practical based learning outcomes including practical skills and knowledge, such as laboratory skills, interpersonal skills or communication skills. It may take place in the workplace (on the job training) or in a simulated environment (in Class-room environment), as appropriate.
Learner Record:	This is your own self-reported and self- reflective record describing particular learning experiences of activities and skills acquired. It can be in the form of a logbook, a diary, a selective record of events or experiences over a period of time, a learning journal or a lab notebook.
Project:	This type of assessment is usually carried out over a period of time and is a response to a specified brief. Projects may involve research, require investigation of a topic, issue or problem or may involve process such as a design task, a practical activity or production of an artifact or event.
Assignment:	An assignment is usually of short duration and/or may be carried out over a specified period of time in response to a specified brief. Typically it is a written essay or an investigation into a particular topic.

In all cases your Instructor/Lecturer will let you know what will be involved before you do the particular assessment.

This will include the following information:

- You will be told what the required standard is before you do any test – that is the learning outcomes to be tested and the range of evidence you are expected to produce.
- You will be given relevant information on resources and/or materials required for the assessment
- You will be told the assessment criteria including the available marks, how they are being allocated and the context in relation to the total assessment award.
- In some cases photographic evidence or video evidence may be required
- In some cases you may be asked to give your own account of the task (reflection)

If you need further information about any aspect of the test you will be taking, please ask your Instructor/Lecturer.

7. What should I expect on the day of assessment?

Throughout your training, your Instructor/Lecturer will help you to prepare for the assessment(s). He/she will give you details of what to expect and how best to approach the assessment. On the day of assessment, you will be given clear instructions by your Assessment Supervisor who will also hand out written instructions.

If supports have been arranged to meet a specific learning need, they will be in place for you on the day of assessment.

8. Who will mark the assessments?

Generally, your Instructor/Lecturer will mark your assessment.

9. How are results of assessments graded?

You may receive the following in relation to assessment outcome:

Pass (50-64%):	This means that you have achieved the minimum standard required.
Merit (65-79%):	This means that you have exceeded the minimum standard required and a good standard has been achieved.
Distinction (Above 80%):	This means that you have greatly exceeded the minimum standard required and an excellent standard has been achieved.
Referred:	This means that your level of achievement has not yet met the minimum standard required and further training/assessment is required.

You should talk to your Instructor/Lecturer to find out more information about the grades that are awarded for your course/programme.

10. When will I get my results?

Your Instructor/Lecturer will be able to give you provisional results and will tell you when to expect your official results. Generally, this will be as soon as possible after the assessment.

11. What can I do if I do not pass my assessment?

If you do not pass your assessment you will be given an opportunity to repeat/re-sit it as soon as possible. Five working days must pass between the first attempt and the repeat attempt of an assessment. Your Instructor/Lecturer will give you information about repeating/re-sitting assessments. He/she will also give you information about how best to prepare for your repeat/re-sit.

If you do not pass the same assessment on the third attempt then your apprenticeship will be terminated. You will have the right to appeal the termination of your apprenticeship and upon appeal you may be granted a 4th and final attempt. The apprenticeship rules do not allow for a company to re-register a person as an apprentice to the same craft following the termination of their apprenticeship.

12. What can I do if I am not happy with my results?

You have a right to view your assessment answer papers. Your Instructor/Lecturer will tell you more about how you can access your answer papers.

You also have a right to query your result. You can ask to have your results reviewed, or in special circumstances you can ask for an 'Appeal', which involves a more detailed investigation into your assessment performance. You should speak to your Instructor/Lecturer who will tell you how to appeal your results.

13. Will I get a certificate for every assessment I pass?

No, but you will receive written confirmation of the result. When you pass all the assessments for each phase, you will receive a letter confirming your results which will include a label for your Apprenticeship Logbook. The label will list the modules which you passed. Your Instructor/Lecturer will give you more details.

14. What are the rules on assessment day?

You will need to be aware of the SOLAS Apprenticeship Assessment Rules before sitting your assessment(s). These rules will be available from your Training Centre. Please ask for them if you have not received them. If you break assessment rules, the Training Centre will view this as a very serious matter.

Note: The following list is not exhaustive

You should be aware that:

- You must not bring mobile phones or other communications devices into the assessment room
- You must complete the assessment without help from anyone else (unless you have been granted additional support due to a specific need)
- You must not help other Apprentices or interfere with their work
- You must stop all work when the time for the assessment is over
- You must not remove assessment papers, answer booklets, graph paper, rough paper etc. from the assessment room, even when the assessment is over.

You cannot cheat. The Training Provider defines the offence of cheating as:

- Getting an assessment paper ahead of its release
- Copying any assessment material without permission, e.g. assessment papers, model answers Apprentice instructions, etc.
- Having, using, or attempting to use unauthorised material in an assessment, namely: mobile phones, books, notes, electronic aids or other materials
- Giving or getting help from another Apprentice or any other person, where such help is forbidden
- Copying the words of others (plagiarism). If you use the words or ideas of someone else in your assessment, you must state clearly that they are not your own original words/ideas and state where they came from.

15. What will happen if I break assessment rules?

If you break any assessment rules, you may have all or part of your assessment cancelled. The awarding of a certificate will depend on the outcome of an investigation into your behavior during assessment. You may also be stopped from taking future assessments in the Training Centre and your apprenticeship may be suspended. (SOLAS Apprenticeship Assessment Rules)

16. What should I do if I am sick or there is a family emergency in the lead up to an assessment or on the day of assessment?

If you are sick or have an emergency on the day or days leading up to assessment, you should let your Instructor/Lecturer know as soon as possible. He/she will advise you of what you should do.

17. What will happen if I don't turn up for an assessment?

If you do not turn up for an assessment without a valid reason, this will be counted as an attempt at the assessment. Your Instructor/Lecturer will give you further information.

18. What should I do if I become sick during assessment?

You should let your Assessment Supervisor know and he/she will help you to deal with your situation.

19. Assessment Dos and Don'ts

Do:	Don't:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make sure that you know WHEN and WHERE your assessment is going to be held ▪ Prepare as well as you can ▪ Arrive in good time (<i>at least 20 minutes early</i>) ▪ Bring ID with you ▪ Read the rules carefully ▪ Turn off your mobile phone ▪ Listen carefully to the instructions ▪ Leave your bags, coat, books etc. in a designated area ▪ Quietly raise your hand if you want to gain the attention of the Assessment Supervisor ▪ Remain silent during written assessments ▪ Try to relax! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be persuaded by anyone else to do their assessment for them ▪ Disturb other Apprentices ▪ Cheat ▪ Break the rules ▪ Leave the assessment room unless you have been given permission from the Supervisor/Assessor ▪ Eat, drink or smoke in the assessment area. If you need to eat/drink for a medical reason, you must let your Instructor/Lecturer know as soon as possible (<i>preferably at the start of your training course/programme</i>); every effort will be made to meet your requirements.

20. Assessment Rules within the Institute of Technology

When attending your apprenticeship training with an Institute of Technology (IoT) , you will be subject to the IoT own assessment rules. These rules are available from the IoT before you sit your assessment(s).