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Version	Revision date	Revision by	Purpose
0.1	01/11/2014	Ray Carney	Policy development
0.2	11/11/2014	Standards Committee	Policy review
1.0	08/03/2015	Ray Carney	Publication version

1. Introduction:

- The policy of the Order of Malta Ireland is to ensure fair and consistent assessment of students.

2. Definitions and Abbreviations

The following definitions and abbreviations are used in this policy:

No abbreviations used in this version of the policy

3.0 Conduct of assessment

3.1 Conduct of the assessment must be:

- Clear and concise
- the method of assessment must be understood by both assessors and students alike
- Consistent with best practice and where appropriate, national standards must apply
- Designed to allow the student demonstrate achievement and individual accomplishment
- Fair and set at the relevant standard required
- Standardised – to ensure that the same standard and format of assessments apply countrywide

3.2 In keeping with openness and transparency for all stakeholders the students must be:

- Made aware of the standard expected and the method of assessment be it practical and/or written
- made aware of the marking system and the grades, which may be attained
- notified of how and when they will be informed of their results
- given details of the appeals process and how it can be found on Moodle

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3.3. When conducting an assessment, examiners/assessors must:

- be open to monitoring and random checking of assessments, which is undertaken by an independent assessor
- have the necessary qualifications and training to undertake assessment
- be aware of the Order of Malta access and equality policy and ensure where required special arrangements are in place for students

3.4 Planning for assessment

- The methods of assessment must be fair and consistent
- Each examiner must be matched to the required standard whether a National Standard or an internal Organisational Standard
- The assessment of each course is planned in advance and the requirements of students are taken into consideration when the assessments are being scheduled.

4. Information for students

4.1 It is essential for students to receive full and clear information on assessment processes as follows:

- Students are informed in writing of the method or methods of assessment when the initial details of the course are issued and again at regular intervals during the course
- Students are regularly informed of their own process throughout the course, and advised of areas where they need extra practice
- Under no circumstances should an instructor put a student forward for an exam which they feel they are likely to fail. The student must be informed of their need to improve their standard and the instructor should also endeavour to assign a mentor to the student at regional or unit level who will facilitate further practice prior to assessment
- The range and marking system is explained to the students and the specific ranges are made clear
- Where there is a policy of re-sits, the students are informed of the policy and time limits
- The appeals process is described and clarified to all students prior to assessments
- If any of the students have special requirements or disabilities it is their responsibility to notify the course director of this at the earliest possible opportunity. Every effort will then be made to meet those needs.

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5.0 Reasonable accommodation

5.1 There are minimum requirements for accommodation and equipment when conducting an assessment. It may also be necessary to provide additional accommodations for individual students:

- Facilities and accommodation (such as a warm comfortable seating area, toilets and refreshment facilities), which reach satisfactory standard, must be made available to all students before/during the assessment.
- Where a practical assessment is necessary – the equipment or other facilities must be made available to the students, in the unforeseen circumstances where unfamiliar equipment is being used for the assessment, the student must be given sufficient time to become familiar with the specific piece of equipment.
- Where possible, the technique for assessments will be reviewed and amended in the occurrence of a student with special requirements or disabilities to ensure the student can participate in an assessment.
- If any of the students have special requirements or disabilities where possible or feasible, those needs are adhered to.
- As our members are volunteers, assessments should be arranged at weekends or outside normal working hours, facilitating their needs.
- In the event of a student requiring additional help or support during training courses or assessments instructors should endeavour to provide for such assistance. If this is not adequate, the student may be referred to a mentor at regional or unit level who will provide individual assistance prior to the assessment.

6.0 Conduct of assessment

6.1 Consistency of marking between assessors

- The marking system for each course is made available and explained to assessors.
- The description for both practical and written assessments is clear, concise and uncomplicated.
- The assessments are subject to monitoring and random checking, which is undertaken by an independent assessor.
- Assessors must not be directly involved in the delivery of the course which is being assessed.

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6.2 Feedback to Students

- All students receive constructive feedback on their examinations and assessments, which informs their participation in the programme. This is usually carried out by the Course Director or an Instructor on the course.
- In the event of a student requesting an appeal of their assessment the appeals process is put in place.
- In the event of a student requesting a re-sit, if applicable the re-sit process is put in place.
- Students complete evaluation sheets on completion of each course, which may be reviewed by the Quality Assurance team after the examination and appropriate action then implemented.
- Any actions implemented are discussed at the annual meetings with chief examiners and Training Team Officers.

7.0 Student Appeals

7.1 A student has an entitlement to appeal an assessment decision. The process is laid out in the complaints and appeals policy, available on the moodle portal or from the course director. In summary the appeals process is as follows:

- Students are informed of the appeals process and allowed to proceed with an appeal where they consider they have been treated unfairly.
- Examiners are informed of the appeals process and the process is explained.
- An independent examiner who is familiar with the course, but not directly involved in the specific course will assess the outcomes and assessment.

When an appeal is completed – both student and assessor are notified of the outcome

7.2 Appeal Procedure:

- Appeals should be submitted in writing, signed the appellant, to the Course Administrator of the intention to appeal the result and the reasons for appealing.
- The Course Administrator must receive an appeal within 7 working days of the result being received. The grounds of the appeal should be listed under one of the following headings:

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1. Examination/assessment regulation of the Order of Malta Ireland has not been properly implemented, and where there is a prima facie case that this has had an adverse effect on a candidate's performance.
 2. Compassionate circumstances related to the candidate's examination/assessment situation, were not made known to the Course Director for a justifiable reason by the candidate prior to or during the examination/assessment concerned and of which the examination board were unaware.
 3. There has been an error in the recording of additional marks on a particular paper. (A candidate may **NOT APPEAL** against the academic/ specialised judgement of the examiners)
- Once returned, a third party not involved with the original marking will assess the relevant documentation.
 - A response will be issued to the applicant following the appeal within one month.

8.0 Results Approval

- 8.1 Following completion of a course, the results of each member are reviewed and agreed upon and the results sheet signed by the examiners/assessors.
- 8.2 Any issues arising are discussed in detail and a decision is recorded.

9.0 Corrective Action

- 9.1 Prior to/ during an assessment, if an examiner notices or is informed of any acts which do not comply with this policy or impact on the validity of the assessment, it is their responsibility to immediately inform the Chief examiner and take steps to ensure that the assessment does not continue in this way.
- In a situation where a question is raised in relation to an error, omission or deliberate acts by student or assessor and these such acts impact the validity of the assessment process, immediate action will then be taken to rectify the situation by the Course Director. The Assistant Director for Training will be notified without delay.
 - Appropriate action is initiated and signed off.
 - On a yearly basis the Assistant Director for Training and the Training Team will review all course feedback from student and Instructor, External Examiner reports and course materials and assessment methods. The minutes of this meeting are recorded and forwarded to the Director.

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10.0 Responsibility:

10.1 The staff responsible for this policy are:

- Assistant Director for Training for implementation
- Assistant Director for Standards for review and compliance
- Training Officers for implementation on courses under their remit
- Course Directors to ensure stakeholders are informed of this policy

11.0 Summary:

This policy underlines a commitment to providing open and transparent assessment of training with clear information on conduct and review of assessments along with guidance on student appeals of results.