



An Roinn Cosanta
Department of Defence



Assessment Policy

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Further info	civildefence@defence.ie
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Policy Summary	This policy outlines the policy in respect of Assessments, Remediation
Changes Made	No significant changes have been made to this policy

Assessments

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1. Introduction

Assessment and Awards in Civil Defence refers to assessments and awards in respect of all services and training provided through the Civil Defence College. Each Certifying body has specific requirements. In respect of PHECC Responder programmes, the Civil Defence College adheres to the processes outlined in PHECC PUB034 - Responder Examination Handbook - V.4.

2. Purpose

The policy of the Civil Defence College is to ensure fair and consistent assessment of learners. To ensure assessments are based on the PHECC Education and Awards Standards

3. Scope

The scope of this policy covers the assessments, learners and assessors. It will cover the preparation of assessments, verification process and how to appeal a result.

4. Role of Civil Defence in Assessment Process

Assessment principles:

- Valid, Reliable, Fair, Clear, concise and the method of assessment must be understood by both assessors and learners alike.
- Consistent with, where appropriate – national standards and best practice must apply.
- Designed to allow the learner demonstrate achievement and individual achievement.
- Fair and set at the pertinent standard required.
- Standardised – to make certain that the same standard and format of assessments apply countrywide

The learners are:

- aware of the standard expected and the method of assessment be it *theory, practical and/or written*.
- conscious of the marking system and the grades, which may be attained.
- notified of how and when they will be informed of their results.
- given clear, concise and written details of the appeals process.

The assessors must:

- ensure assessment paperwork is securely stored with restricted access.
- 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 Civil Defence equality policy and ensure, when required special accommodations are in place for learners.
- while PHECC Responder standards allow for the instructor to manage the assessment, the Civil Defence College recommend that where possible a Civil Defence instructor not directly involved during the course should complete the assessment.

5. Planning Assessments

Co-ordinated planning of assessment

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

Information to Learners

- Learners 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.
- The range and marking system are explained to the learners and the specific ranges are made clear.
- Where there is a policy of re-sits, the learners are informed of the policy and time limits.
- The appeals process is described and clarified to all learners prior to assessments.
- If any of the learners have special requirements or disabilities, reasonable effort is made to meet those needs.

Security of assessment related processes and materials

- The assessments and materials used are retained by the Civil Defence College until required by the assessors.
- Assessors are informed of their responsibility in relation to the security of assessments.
- Guidelines are given to assessors as to how they may determine that the learner evidence is reliable and genuine.
- The secure recording, storage and access of our learner's assessment records.
- All records are stored in accordance with the record management policy.

Assessment performed by third parties

- Prior to third parties being involved in the delivery or assessment of courses within Civil Defence, their current qualification status verified.
- Agreement between the Civil Defence College and the third party is reached in relation to the assessment and the required standard.
- Learners and third-party assessors are made aware of the assessment, marking and appeals process.
- The assessment must be consistent with National Standards and Best Practice required by the certifying agency.

6. Facilities and Accommodation

Reasonable accommodation

- Facilities and accommodation, which reach suitable standard, must be made available to all learners.
- Where a practical assessment is necessary – the equipment or other facilities must be made available to the learners, in the unforeseen circumstances where unfamiliar equipment is being used for the assessment, the learner must be given adequate time to become familiar with the specific piece of equipment.
- General accommodation for assessments must be of an acceptable standard, and learners must be allocated the space and environment of a good standard.

- If required, the technique for assessments will be reviewed and amended in the occurrence of a learner with special requirements or disabilities to ensure the learner can participate in an assessment.
- If any of the learners have special requirements or disabilities where possible or feasible, those needs are adhered to as per the *Equality & Access to Training Policy*
- As most of our students are volunteers we arrange most of our training at weekends or outside normal working hours, facilitating their needs.
- In the event of a learner requiring additional help or support during training courses or assessments there is a facility to provide for such assistance.

7. Marking System

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.

8. Remediation and Resits

Remediation is when a student is allowed to repeat the Theory or Practical element of the examination – on the day of they completed the assessment.

In respect of practical assessments, if student results are within a certain percentage of the pass mark, they are offered an option to repeat the assessment on the day.

In relation to Multiple Choice Questions, students who are unsuccessful are invited to retake the assessment within a defined period. Or if the MCQ is being taken in-person the student can be allowed retake the examination on the day.

Assessors are required to submit both sets of papers (MCQ and/or Practical Skills Assessment) as evidence that remediation was completed.

Resits are offered if the results were less than 50% of the pass mark, or if a student is unsuccessful following remediation. Students are allowed complete remediation and/or resits only once.

9. Internal Verification

- Internal verification is carried out by an appropriately qualified person who has relevant knowledge of requirements as decided by the Civil Defence College and the Certifying Body.
- At present PHECC courses are primarily delivered by volunteer instructors, the internal verification is currently carried out by the College Principal, or one of the College Instructors. Internal verification for Rescue 3 and /or QQI courses is carried out by a qualified Civil Defence College Instructor
- The present system of using banks of questions has been agreed by the Civil Defence and the existing Instructors and the External Specialist Agencies.
- Following completion of a course the Internal Verifier mark the assessments.

9. Feedback.

Feedback to Learners

- All Learners 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 learner requesting an appeal of their assessment the appeals process is put in place.
- In the event of a learner requesting a re-sit, if applicable the re-sit process is put in place.
- Students' complete evaluation sheets on completion of each course, which are reviewed by the Internal Verifier after each examination and appropriate action implemented.
- Any actions implemented are discussed at the annual meetings with assessors and Civil Defence Officers

10. Appeals

Please refer to **Civil Defence Appeals Policy**

11. Results

Results Approval

- Following completion of a course, the results of each student are reviewed and agreed upon and the results sheet signed by all.
- Any issues arising are discussed in detail and a decision is recorded.

Corrective Action

- In a situation where a question is raised in relation to an error, omission or deliberate acts by learner, staff or contracted trainer and these such acts impact the validity of the assessment process, immediate action will then be taken to rectify the situation by the College Principal.
- Appropriate action is initiated and signed off.
- On a yearly basis the instructional staff of the Civil Defence College will review all course feedback from Learners and Instructor, External Examiner reports and course materials and assessment methods. The minutes of this meeting are recorded and maintained in the Civil Defence College.



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