

**Results Approval
 Policy & Procedure**

DATE APPROVED	22nd September 2021
POLICY PREFIX	ED
POLICY NUMBER	20
VERSION NO	V1
REVIEW DATE	May 2024

Approved By: Academic Committee **Date:** 29/06/2021
 QA Committee

Approved By: Tony O' Brien **Date:** 22/09/2021
 CEO

This policy pertains to **Northridge House Education and Research Centre at St Luke's Cork**, hereafter referred to as **the Centre**.

1. Purpose of Policy

The Results Approval Panel is the final step in the Quality Assurance process as outlined in the Centre's policy of Fair and Consistent Assessment of Learners & Learners Support Policy (ED 9). Results approval occurs after external authentication (EA) and before the Learner's work is submitted to QQI through the QBS for Certification. The Results Approval Process (RAP) applies to all assessments leading to a QQI award to Learners. All Learner results are provisional until approved by the Results Approval Panel

2. Definitions

QQI – Quality & Qualifications Ireland

External QQI Authenticator – External individual who according to the QQI Guidelines for Providers, is to ensure fairness, consistency and validity of assessment and ensure accurate and quality assured learner results.

3. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all Learners undertaking QQI courses and to all tutors delivering QQI courses.

4. Policy Statement

Results Approval is the process to ensure that results are fully quality assured and signed off, prior to submission to QQI for certification. The process involves:

- A results approval panel is convened (a minimum of 3 people. IV, DOE and one other person with specific experience in assessment).
- Provisional results, Learner evidence, IV plan, EA plan, IV report and EA report are all available.
- The Panel discuss each set of results including any concerns and suggests appropriate corrective or improvement actions, if required.
- A report is compiled by the panel to include:
 - Formal proposals.
 - Recommendations of IV & EA reports.

- Approval of provisional results presented to the meeting.
 - Request certification through QAI.
 - Issue results to learners flagging the opportunity to appeal; and
 - AOB
- The report is then signed and dated by all members.
 - Retain the IV, EA & RAP reports and submit to QAI on request.

Role of the Results Approval Panel:

The Results Approval Panel must ensure that all assessments submitted to it are comprehensively reviewed and that an Internal Verification of the Learner's work, and the results have taken place.

An internal verification report must be completed for each group of Learners being examined.

The role of the Results Approval Panel is to ensure that:

- Results are quality assured and signed off by authorised personnel prior to submission to QAI.
- Appropriate decisions are made about the outcome of the assessment, verification, and authentication processes.
- Assessment procedures are observed and there is evidence of consistency amongst tutors; especially in situations where modules are taught by multiple tutors.
- There is ample evidence of record keeping and thorough application of assessment and administrative procedures.
- Records must be available to be presented as prescribed (see Tutor Handbook
- All suspected irregularities have been highlighted and reported to the DOE.
- Issues arising from the IV are noted and will be reviewed at the results approval panel meeting.
- Any recheck outcomes which are unsatisfactory to the learner are reviewed– assign actions or sign off decisions.
- In the absence of particular item/s of evidence as described in the assessment brief the Results, Approval Panel may in exceptional circumstances consider the assessor's report if appropriate alternative evidence is presented.

Terms of Reference for Results Approval Panel

Membership: The Results Approval Panel is composed of a minimum of 3 individuals will sit on this panel – two of whom are quality/education experts to ensure the assessment decisions are valid. The Chair of the Results Approval Panel will be the Director of Education who has oversight of programme development, delivery, and review.

Panel members will include Tutors, Course Leaders, and the Director of Education. The Chair is responsible for appointing members to the Results Approval Panel and will ensure that the panel membership is compiled to ensure impartial decision making to avoid any conflicts of interest. The course Tutor will not be part of the Panel

Results Approval Panel members will be directed to carry out their duties without bias and will make their decisions based on the documented information provided to the panel. Final results will be approved and signed off by members of the RAP panel. The External Authenticator is not eligible for membership of a Results Approval Panel.

Decision Making

Minutes of the Results Approval Panel (RAP) will be produced outlining the issues discussed and decisions reached. These minutes will form part of the assessment record and must be retained by the Centre and be made available for auditing and monitoring purposes.

The contents of the minutes are confidential and must not be circulated to unauthorised personnel.

The results approval form is completed for all the relevant learners and signed off by assessment personnel and the chair of the results approval panel.

Only the fixed members of the panel are asked to approve results. The fixed members of the panel should make every reasonable attempt to reach consensus on all results approved at the RAP meeting.

In the event that fixed panel members are unable to reach agreement opposing views will be noted and recorded at the request of those in disagreement.

In situations where the approval of results decision is evenly split, the Chair of the panel will have the casting vote.

Instances of malpractice or irregularities must be brought to the attention of the Academic Committee through the chair of the RAP panel in line with Fair and Consistent Assessment of Learners procedures as set out in the QAI Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (April 2016) in compliance with the qualifications and quality assurance (education and training) Act 2012 (revised updated to 18 November 2014).

In compliance with GDPR guidelines all documents provided to panel members during the Results Approval Panel meeting must be returned to the Chair at the end of the meeting and will be disposed of appropriately

Results Approval Process:

The Director of Education convenes a Results Approval Panel meeting as required but typically bi-annually. Meetings are arranged to tie in with the approved assessment process and certification planning.

Each group presented for approval will have the following documents available for inspection:

- Internal verification reports
- External authentication reports
- Tutor assessment checklist
- Learner Meeting Records
- Attendance Records
- Course Evaluations
- DOE report.

The panel will discuss each set of results and will focus on areas of concerns and make suggestions for appropriate corrective measures if required.

Other personnel may be invited to attend for a particular section of the results approval meeting as appropriate.

The panel will consider the reports and approve the final results.

All panel decisions are recorded in the RAP meeting minutes template and the chairperson will arrange for relevant parties to be notified in line with QA protocols.

The Chair will arrange for the relevant personnel and learners to be informed of the approved results.

The Summary Assessment and Results Approval process is completed and signed off by the Chair on behalf of the fixed panel members who approved the results.

Minutes are prepared in a timely manner and kept on file.

The Summary Assessment forms are signed by the Chair of the Results Approval Panel and are then authorised to be entered into the QBS as final results by authorised personnel.

The Chair will ensure that any non-conformances identified are notified to the Quality Panel for the assignment of appropriate actions.

A meeting template is provided to ensure consistent reporting and follow through of agreed actions.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The DOE ensures that any non-conformances identified are notified and recorded and are notified to the Academic Committee for ongoing quality improvement.

The Academic Committee are responsible for

- reviewing the findings of the results approval panel
- considering any recommendations made when undertaking the programme review

The Centre Administrator is responsible for

- Uploading (or amending) and submitting the final results via the QBS system following the results approval panel meeting
- Issuing a statement of results for each student
- Providing information on how to appeal

6. Associated Documentation

- QQI Programme Validation Manual (2016) and adheres to the QQI Programme Review Manual (2016/17)
- QA policy
- Tutor Handbook
- Learner Handbook

7. Referenced Policies

Quality Assurance Policy

8. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or as required.