



**Cork  
Counselling  
Services**  
Est. 1982

**Cork Counselling Services Training Institute**

**No Detriment Policy**

## **The aim of a 'no detriment' policy**

This policy is designed to ensure in so far as it is reasonable, that during the period of COVID19 pandemic, students will not be at a disadvantage in relation to core assessments and course requirements. It means that if academic performance is impacted during the phases of the COVID-19 pandemic, we will make every reasonable effort to provide students with supports while also ensuring learning standards are maintained and that student's overall grade or qualification will not be affected.

## **Introduction**

No detriment policies have understandably and wisely received much attention during the pandemic. Covid 19 has succeeded in challenging our conventional training methods and changing access to study or train with us. We have worked diligently to redesign each academic year programme to ensure that learning outcomes are met and there is an equivalent method of assessment, which allows students to demonstrate their learning and potential.

CCSTI are aware that Covid 19 may mean that students and their families may be directly, or indirectly, affected by the virus, either through illness /disability, social isolation demands and or an increase in caring responsibilities. Students may also have limited or no access to broadband, computer facilities or may be unable to engage in training due to accommodation limitations. We wish to support students in complying with infection control requirements and in recovering from the virus safely. We also expect that students behave with integrity (as per Fitness to Practice guidelines) while employing this policy.

CCSTI is unable to adopt a conventional no detriment policy as students do not have a running grade point average each year and both the professional and integrative nature of assessments make a blanket application of any algorithm impossible and unwise. Having said that we are determined that students will be accommodated to deal with the ongoing stress of the pandemic, insofar as it is reasonable.

This accommodation is achieved in collaboration with the student and trainers, using the structures of the pre-existing repeat criteria and general regulations, found within the relevant student handbook. The no detriment policy is also undertaken in conjunction with discussions at

the Assessment Board looking at individual circumstances (see Authority of an Assessment Board pp 5-6 this document).

This policy supports students for assessments and/or attendance at workshops taking place/submitted after 12<sup>th</sup> March 2019. It is important to acknowledge that students are still required to obtain a pass grade on all their course work.

### **About attendance:**

Provisions have been made for students to defer attendance at workshops and/or assessments.

### **About submissions:**

- Extensions are available to students on assignments, where requested.
- The normal extension date of two weeks to an altered submission date is more flexible. The extension date is set in collaboration with the student and reflects their individual circumstances.
- The normal requirement for evidence for late submission is removed.

### **Deferrals and interruptions**

- The normal requirement for evidence of mitigating circumstances has been removed. We accept the student's own written self-certification for deferral.
- Deferral and/ or extension dates for completion of all student placements are available and contact is maintained with placements on this issue.
- Deferrals for completion of personal therapy and/or supervision are available based on self-certification and application.

### **Parity of Marks**

- The Assessment Boards continue to review all module results to ensure parity with previous cohorts, identifying any significant changes in student performance over previous cohorts.
- Our regulations as they currently stand allow for discretion if it is felt that exceptional circumstances have affected a student's ability to achieve the module aims generally. In

such circumstances, marks may be adjusted for the entire cohort to counteract any adverse effect the pandemic may have had on performance.

- This means that, as is our usual practice, all marks released prior to the assessment boards are strictly provisional marks. The final assessment marks will not be released before any adjustments have been made and the assessment boards have concluded.

#### 2.21.4 Authority of an Assessment Board

Assessment Boards shall be responsible for determining all assessments that contribute to the granting of an award. No body other than an Assessment Board shall have the authority to recommend to the Institute the conferment of an academic award for a taught course. Similarly, no other body shall have the right to amend the decision of a properly constituted Assessment Board acting within its approved terms of reference and in accordance with the Institute's Academic Regulations and the regulations of the particular course, other than when the outcome of a review leads to an annulment of the decision by Assessment Board or results are modified as a result of cheating.

#### 2.21.5 Scope of Discretion

- a) Assessment Boards have the discretion to alter marks awarded to a group of candidates on a module assessment as part of their moderation of the process, in order to assure the standards of academic assessment. For example, an Assessment Board may consider any exceptional circumstances that affected all candidates, such as disruption of an assessment for all candidates in a particular location, or any issues relating to the delivery or assessment of the module that affected all students. Such changes may not be questioned or overturned as part of the review and appeal process.
- b) Assessment Boards may vary assessments for students with disabilities.
- c) Assessment Boards have discretion in reaching progression decisions for individual candidates taking into account the relevant regulations and any course regulations.
- d) Assessment Boards have discretion to award a posthumous award as appropriate.
- e) Assessment Boards do not have the discretion to vary prescribed maxima or minima or mandatory course requirements or to consider extenuating circumstances, except where authorised to do so by the Appeals Panel. This panel is comprised of the Marking Coordinator and one other independent marker.
- f) In exceptional cases the Appeals Panel may recommend to an Assessment Board that the results of any/or all assessments which the student has taken in the current year's programme be declared void if there is satisfactory evidence that the result was so affected by extenuating circumstances as to render it inequitable to treat it as an attempt.

If the student subsequently fails the assessment(s), the Assessment Board shall have the discretion to reinstate the previous marks.

#### 2.21.6 Students with disabilities

- a) When a candidate cannot, through disability, be fairly assessed by the methods prescribed for the course concerned, the relevant Assessment Board may vary those as they deem appropriate, bearing in mind the intended learning outcomes of the programme of study and course and the need to assess each candidate on equal terms with other candidates.
- b) In determining the nature of any variation in the methods of assessments, full account must be taken of the Institute's policies in respect of students with disabilities.

#### 2.21.7 Delegation of responsibility for assessments

- a) Assessment Boards, including any External Examiner(s) serving thereon, shall be responsible for the judgements of any subsidiary assessment committee and for the reassessment or deferred assessment of students.
- b) However, the Assessment Board has power to determine arrangements for delegating the responsibility for reassessment and deferred assessment to a sub-group of itself, which must include at least one External Examiner, except that:
  - i. such arrangements must be determined with the full agreement of all approved External Examiners prior to the sub-group acting under any delegation.
  - ii. agreement of all the approved External Examiners must be obtained for the granting of any award.