

# CMIT Quality Policy and Procedures

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## 7. Learner Supports and the Learner Journey



College of Management and IT  
Southern Cross Business Park  
Bray, Co. Wicklow.

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## 7.1 Introduction

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### What is the purpose of this policy?

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- This policy sets out the supports which will be available and provided to learners completing a programme of study with CMIT.

### To whom does this policy apply?

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- This policy also applies to all staff, tutors, and those with a role in the provision of academic or pastoral support to learners.

### Who is responsible for implementing the policy?

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- The Academic Director or nominee is responsible for setting the criteria and overseeing the provision of academic support including the delivery of reasonable accommodation.
- The Student Services Director is responsible overseeing the provision of administrative and pastoral support.
- Employees, Faculty and Adjunct Faculty who are involved in the provision of support to learners.

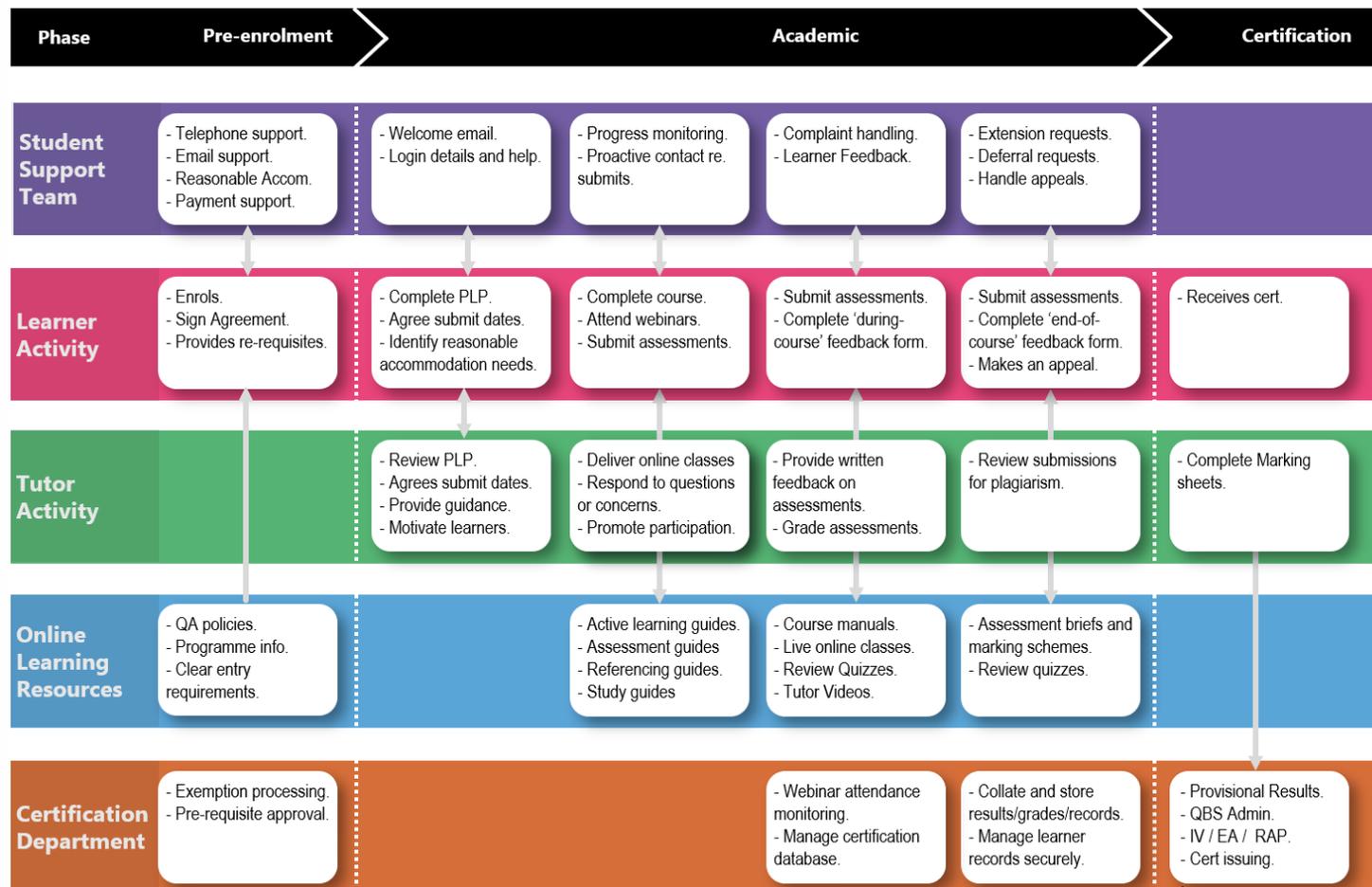
### Sections in this document

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- 7.1 Introduction
- 7.2 Learner Journey
- 7.3 Pre-enrolment supports
- 7.4 Academic supports
- 7.5 Reasonable Accommodation
- 7.6 Extenuating circumstances
- 7.7 Pastoral and other supports
- 7.8 Post completion supports

## 7.2 Learner Journey

This is a sample learner journey for learners completing QQI courses with CMIT.



### Abbreviations

QA – Quality Assurance.

PLP – Personal Learning Plan.

QBS – QQI's online certification system.

IV – Internal Verification.

EA – External Authentication.

RAP – Results Approval Panel.

## 7.3 Pre enrolment supports

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### Information

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- Clear, accurate and easy-to-access information is provided for all programmes to allow learners identify, select, and enrol on an appropriate programme.
- Entry requirements are clearly stated. These requirements include any specific requirements for assessment or participation in a programme. This will ensure prospective learners are aware of any specific requirements for successful participation and completion of a programme.
- Equipped to Participate Statements provide prospective learners with information on the knowledge, skill and competence required to participate in a CMIT programme leading to an award on the national framework at Level 5 and Level 6.
- Prospective learners can contact the college via phone or email to discuss programmes. There are dedicated staff in place who are fully trained and available to discuss programme selection with prospective learners.
- Prospective learners, who are being funded to complete a programme, will be facilitated in a timely manner with any pre-enrolment documentation required i.e., programme information, application forms, quotations, invoices etc.

### Advice

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- The Student Support Team will support learners who are making an application for funding by explaining the process and ensuring application and approval documentation is processed in a timely manner.
- Interest-free payment plans are made available to learners to allow them to spread any associated costs. This facilitates learners gaining access to a programme where cost may be a barrier.
- Information on awarding bodies and accreditation is provided to inform learners of available accreditations.
- Quality policies are available to provide prospective learners with information on essential information prior to enrolment.

## 7.4 Academic Supports

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### Tutor Messaging

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- Learners are assigned a dedicated programme tutor for the duration of their programme.
- Tutors are subject matter experts, qualified to a minimum NFQ level 8 with experience working in their subject matter domain.
- Learners can contact their Tutor directly at any stage of their programme via a dedicated online messaging system.
- A Tutor Welcome message is sent to all learners following commencement of their programme.
- Replies to all messages are sent within one working day.
- Responses and response times are monitored for quality purposes and to ensure adherence to timescales.

### Tutor feedback

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- Learners are provided with individual, written, developmental feedback on all submitted assessment work during their programme.
- Tutors provide feedback within agreed response times.
- Formative feedback may be motivational, informative, or corrective.
- Formative feedback and will align with summative feedback / grades.
- Feedback is structured and provided on a task-by-task basis.

### Webinars /Online classes

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- Tutors provide live academic support to learners during tutor led webinars.
- They deliver course content, facilitate learning activities, and provide guidance on assessment work.
- There are dedicated questions and answer times during live webinars.
- Tutors are fully trained in how to deliver a webinar.
- Webinars are supervised to provide support to tutors, while delivering, and to monitor the quality and consistency of delivery.

## Referencing supports

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- Learners are required to reference assessment work in line with college policies.
- Clear written guidelines are provided to support learners in meeting these requirements.
- A dedicated referencing video is provided to explain guidelines and provide several examples to assist learners.

## Assessment guidelines

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- Learners are provided with clear instructions in relation to all aspects of completing their assessment work.
- Assessment guidelines are provided which include formatting requirements and a statement of the learner's responsibility when completing assessment work.
- Assessment briefs are detailed and include clear labelling, marks per task and required minimum word counts to assist learners in completing their assessment work.
- The Programme Descriptor is made available to the learner which contains details of the programme and its national learning outcomes.

## Study skills

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- Learners are provided with guidance on study skills and how to participate in Active Learning.

## Academic Director

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- The Academic Director is available by appointment to discuss specific academic queries with learners which are not suitably resolved by the Student Support team

## 7.5 Reasonable accommodation

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### Nature and scope of Reasonable Accommodation

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- CMIT is committed to providing learners with disabilities equitable access to complete a programme of study as far as can be provided. This is in accordance with the Disability Act, 2005 and the Equality Status Act 2000.
- Reasonable Accommodation procedures are in place and published to ensure that all learners are aware of this policy and how to access reasonable accommodation if required.
- In the context of assessment, reasonable accommodation is the term used for the adaptation of assessment as necessary to cater for the needs of learners whose personal situation means that the assessment would otherwise be unfair, for example, learners with a disability, and/or other learners covered by equality legislation.
- In the context of participation, reasonable accommodation is the term used to describe any additional supports, arrangements put in place for a learner to ensure they can access, engage, and complete their programme without experiencing disadvantage due to their disability.

### Reasonable accommodations provided

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- The following describes the reasonable accommodations available for QQI and ILM learners of CMIT. This list is not exhaustive, as additional flexibilities can be arranged if available and appropriate.
  - **Visual assistive technologies:** CMIT's eLearning platform is compatible with 'assistive technologies' which enables learners with visual disabilities to participate in a programme of study.
  - **Electronic files** are provided (where possible) to facilitate computer 'screen readers.' Samples may be sent to prospective learners, in advance of enrolment, to ensure compatibility.
  - **Additional time** may be agreed for learners who, due to their specific disability, are unable to complete the programme within the timeframes allowed. This could include deferring, or pausing, a programme.
  - **Pastoral support:** A dedicated student support team is in place to provide pastoral support to learners during their programme of study. This can include guidance and support in managing course timeframes, setting planned assessment submission dates, clarifying instructions and requirements etc.

- **Waivers for spelling and grammar** may be granted for learners who are required to sit a written examination. These waivers will not be granted in circumstances where learners are completing typed assessments with access to spell-check features and are not under time constraints of an exam scenario.
- **Additional time** may be granted for learners taking a timed examination. This is available based on 10 minutes for each hour of the exam.
- **Readers / scribes** may be made available for learners taking a timed examination.
- A **dedicated room** may be made available for learners taking a timed examination. This may also be used to support a learner who requires scheduled rest breaks during a written exam.
- **Submission of assessment work by an alternative means** e.g., audio files may be considered in a case where a visually impaired learner does not have access to adequate 'talk to text software.'
- **Altering an assessment:** e.g., altering a programme schedule, altering the format of assessment, or waivers in relation to assessment presentation. However, changes to the learning outcomes will not be considered.
- **Deferring an examination:** The decision to defer an exam may be approved to facilitate a learner e.g., undergoing treatment for a long-term medical condition.

## Principles and criteria for allowing for providing Reasonable Accommodation

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- Reasonable accommodation is provided to remove disadvantage. It does not provide advantages.
- This policy applies to students enrolled on a QQI or ILM programme.
- All students are treated equitably.
- Learning outcomes, as specified in the validated award, must be achieved.
- It is necessary to have an appropriate evidence base to inform the judgements which can be made.
- All information provided in relation to reasonable accommodation will be treated in strict confidence and in accordance with the principles of GDPR. Such information will be limited to the personnel directly involved in administering and evaluating the circumstances.
- Retrospective applications are considered only in exceptional cases where there are valid reasons for non-submission within the usual timeframe.

## Procedure for requesting Reasonable Accommodation

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- Upon commencement of a programme, learners are required to complete a Personal Learning Plan (PLP). The PLP contains a notification of the availability of reasonable accommodation and provides learners with an opportunity to request accommodations.
- Learners are requested to make a formal statement of circumstances which have affected them, outline the impact of these circumstances, and support this statement with appropriate written verification. This verification must comprise a statement from an appropriate professional or other recognised person verifying the circumstances described in the application and indicating their impact on the student's ability to meet the demands of the programme.
- The Academic Director and Student Services Director review the application and confirm if the grounds for the request and the evidence provided are valid and verifiable. The appropriate type of reasonable accommodation will be determined, based on the individual learner's needs and evidence provided.
- Following this decision, the Academic Director will advise the learner of the outcome.
- All decisions are ratified at a meeting of the Academic Board.
- The decision may be appealed as part of the Appeal process.
- The Academic Director maintains a log of all learners with requirements and any reasonable accommodation provided

## 7.6 Extenuating circumstances

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### Nature and scope of Extenuating circumstances

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- Learners are expected to meet the academic demands of their chosen programme. However, they may experience a range of serious and unanticipated difficulties, which adversely affect their ability to study, complete assessments or attend their required classes and other learning activities.
- The definition of extenuating circumstances is the occurrence of unforeseen events which have affected their ability to study or complete assessments which has resulted in assessment deadlines being missed or adversely affected performance in any assessments undertaken.

### Outcomes of Extenuating circumstances

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- The following describes the extenuating circumstances available for learners of CMIT. This list is not exhaustive.
- No mitigation – where students are required to complete the assessment as normal, which will be graded as normal.
- An extension /deferral – a revised deadline for completing the programme or completion of an assessment.
- Use of a repeat opportunity as a first fair attempt.

### Principles and criteria for allowing for Extenuating circumstances

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- Extenuating circumstances include serious illness, hospitalisation, accident, family bereavement, inability to complete on-the-job work experience due to unforeseen circumstances, or other serious personal or emotional circumstances.
- Extenuating circumstances do not cover events which are foreseen, e.g., sporting, or personal commitments.
- This policy applies to students enrolled on a QQI or ILM programme.
- All students are treated equitably.
- Learning outcomes, as specified in the validated award, must be achieved. It is necessary to have an appropriate evidence base to inform the judgements which can be made.
- All information provided in relation to extenuating circumstances will be treated in strict confidence and in accordance with the principles of GDPR. Such

information will be limited to the personnel directly involved in administering and evaluating the circumstances.

- Applications for extenuating circumstances must be made as close as possible to the assessment(s) affected and within the programme duration as specified on enrolment.
- Retrospective applications are considered only in exceptional cases where there are valid reasons for non-submission within the usual timeframe.

## **Procedure for requesting Extenuating circumstances**

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- Learners are requested to make a formal statement of circumstances which have affected them, outline the impact of these circumstances, and support this statement with appropriate written verification.
- This verification must comprise a statement from an appropriate professional or other recognised person verifying the circumstances described in the application and indicating their impact on the student's ability to meet the demands of the programme.
- The Academic Director reviews the application and confirm if the grounds for the request and the evidence provided are valid and verifiable. The appropriate type of accommodation will be determined, based on the individual learner's needs and evidence provided.
- Following this decision, the Academic Director will advise the learner of the outcome.
- All decisions are ratified at a meeting of the Academic Board.
- The decision may be appealed as part of the Appeal process.
- The Academic Director maintains a log of all learners with requirements and any accommodations provided.
- All decisions are ratified at a meeting of the Academic Board.
- The decision may be appealed as part of the Appeal process.

## 7.7 Pastoral and other learner supports

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### Student Services Director

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- The Student Services Director oversees the delivery of pastoral support to learners during the programme.
- Pastoral support is guidance and support which focuses on the learner's welfare and their personal needs, rather than their purely academic needs.

### Student Support Team

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- There is a dedicated Student Support Team in place to offer pastoral support to learners during their programme.
- The Student Support Team provides guidance and assistance on programme queries such as access and navigation, contacting the Tutor, technology issues, and administration queries.
- The Student Support Team are also available to support learners who may have difficulties which prevent them from completing their course. They are fully trained to direct the learner to the appropriate support option.
- The Student Support Team are available by telephone or email during business hours.

### Certification Administration Team

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- Queries in relation to certification or confirmation of course enrolment / completion are directed to the Certification Administration Team.
- Requests for letters of enrolment / completion can be requested using the easy to access dedicated form.
- The Certification Administration Team provides information to learners on the certification process and key dates for certification following successful completion of their programme.

### Progress

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- There are several processes in place to monitor learner progress during a programme. The aim is to identify learners who are not making progress, contact them, provide necessary assistance, and encourage completion of assessments.

- Learners who have not submitted their personal learning plan are contacted within the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of enrolling.
- Learners who have not submitted their remaining assessments are contacted at relevant points and requested to submit their assessments.
- The Tutor, or a member of the Student Support Team, will contact the learner to advise of programme timeframes and identify if additional support is required.
- A monthly review of final submissions is completed to identify learners who have an outstanding resubmission request from their tutor which was not actioned prior to course expiry. If required, learners may then apply for additional time to complete their programme.
- Learners completing programmes which require mandatory attendance at live online webinars are contacted if non-attendance is recorded which could impact completion of their programme within the timeframes allowed.
- Learners completing Major Awards, which comprise of multiple modules, are tracked. Learners who are not meeting programme timelines are contacted by the Student Support Team to discuss the options available to them to successfully complete their course.

## ELC - Student Fast Track Application Form for Temporary Permission to Practise

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- In line with the DCEDIY announcement published 10<sup>th</sup> December 2021 learners currently registered on an approved level 6 programme may apply for a Temporary Permission to Practise letter which will allow them to apply for temporary job opportunities.
- A learner must meet the following criteria:
- Is currently enrolled with CMIT on the level 6 Early Childhood Care and Education (6M2007) programme.
- Has completed 50% of the modules required.
- Has successfully completed the Work Experience module.
- Requests to complete the Student Fast-Track Application Form for Temporary Permission to Practise must be sent by email to [cert@cmit.ie](mailto:cert@cmit.ie).
- On receipt of a request, the Academic Director will review the learner's course progress against the above criteria.
- If the learner meets the criteria the form will be completed and returned to the learner.
- If the learner does not meet the criteria, they will be advised by email detailing which criteria has not been met and advising them to send their request again when the requirements have been met.

# Complaints

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## Complaint's policy

- We treat every complaint seriously.
- We deal with any complaint quickly and politely It is as easy as possible to make a complaint where the need arises.
- We treat any clear expression of dissatisfaction with our operations which calls for a response as a complaint.
- We respond accordingly – for example, with an explanation or apology where we have got things wrong, and with information on any action taken, etc.
- We learn from complaints, monitor them, and use them to improve our operations as part of our continuous improvement process.

## Procedure for making a complaint

- Complaints should be made to the Quality Assurance Executive in writing by email, to [info@cmit.ie](mailto:info@cmit.ie), or by post to CMIT, Southern Cross Business Park, Bray, Wicklow A98 K2P4.
- All complaints will receive an initial reply within 2 days.
- Following a full review, a response will be issued within 14 days, with the aim of resolving all complaint.
- All complaints will be logged in a register.
- All active complaints are reported to the Quality Committee.
- If a learner is not satisfied with the response received, they may get escalate by writing to the Student Services Director, at [info@cmit.ie](mailto:info@cmit.ie) who will respond within 14 days.

## 7.8 Post completion supports

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### Certification

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- The Certification Administration Team provides learners with any required information in relation to certification for their completed programme.
- Letters of completion can be requested via a dedicate online form available to all learners.

### Verification of qualifications

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- Requests to verify programme and certification status must be submitted by email to [info@cmit.ie](mailto:info@cmit.ie) with proof of learner consent to disclose.

### Replacement certificates

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- Learners may request a copy of QQI Results via a dedicated online form.
- Learners who were certified prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2016 will not be able to request a replacement certificate but they may request a Record of awards from QQI.
- Learners who were certified after the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2016 may request a replacement certificate from QQI.
- Details on requesting a record of awards or replacement certificate including costs and a link to the QQI request form are published on the CMIT eLearning site.
- ILM, ABC Awards and CMIT replacement certificates can be requested directly from the college and the request form and fee for same is published on the CMIT eLearning site.