



**msletb**

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna  
Mhaigh Eo, Shligigh agus Liatroma  
*Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim*  
*Education and Training Board*

## **Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board**

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### **MSLETB FET Secure Storage of Assessment Materials, Records and Learner Assessment Evidence Policy**

*Adapted from ETBI's Assessment Reference Documents for FET*

**DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET**

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This procedure is to be reviewed by 29/11/2024 by FET QA.

All feedback on this procedure can be sent to [qualityassurance@msletb.ie](mailto:qualityassurance@msletb.ie)

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# 1 Glossary of Terms

Centre	The Centre refers to any ETB College or ETB Education/Training Centre.
Centre Manager	The Centre Manager refers to the Centre Manager, Centre Director, Principal or the manager of any ETB College or ETB Education/Training Centre. In the event of the absence of a Centre Manager, an appropriate designated person should be assigned.
ETB	Education and Training Board
ETB Manager	The ETB Manager refers to any manager within the ETB.
Invigilator	<p>The Invigilator refers to the individual who supervises an examination.</p> <p>Ideally, an alternative invigilator other than the Learning Practitioner should supervise an examination.</p> <p>The Invigilator (appointed by the Programme Coordinator ) must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sign a declaration of impartiality</li> <li>• be appointed in line with the specific guidelines of the awarding body, if such guidelines exist.</li> </ul>
Invigilator	<p>The Invigilator refers to the individual who supervises an examination.</p> <p>Ideally, an alternative invigilator other than the Learning Practitioner should supervise an examination.</p> <p>The Invigilator (appointed by the Programme Coordinator ) must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ sign a declaration of impartiality</li> <li>■ be appointed in line with the specific guidelines of the awarding body, if such guidelines exist.</li> </ul>
Educator	The Educator refers to any teacher, tutor, instructor or assessor.
Programme Co-ordinator	The Programme Coordinator refers to Programme Coordinator , Programme Manager or other relevant manager of course or programme. In the event of the absence of a Programme Manager, an appropriate designated person should be assigned.

## 2 Definitions

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### 2.1 Assessment Materials

This refers to any documentation associated with the planning of an assessment (pre-assessment).

Examples of assessment material include (but are not limited to):

- Assessment briefs<sup>1</sup>
- Examination papers
- Solutions/marking schemes/model answers
- Practical/Skills Demonstration instructions
- Assessment related documentation (attendance records, room layout, invigilator's report etc.)

### 2.2 Assessment Records

This refers to any documentation which demonstrates evidence that the assessment has taken place (post-assessment).

Examples of assessment records include (but are not limited to):

- Completed attendance sheets
- Completed Invigilator report
- Completed seating plan
- Tutor verification
- Photo/audio evidence
- Signed assessment submission documentation
- Internal Verification reports
- External Authentication reports
- Appeals documentation (application forms, appeals outcomes, etc.)

### 2.3 Learner Assessment Evidence

This refers to any assessment evidence, created by the learner, which forms part of a module or programme assessment.

Examples of learner assessment evidence include (but are not limited to):

- Learner examination scripts
- Hard/soft copy of assessment evidence
- Artefacts

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<sup>1</sup> This assessment brief is the set of clear instructions given to the learner outlining the requirements and assessment/performance criteria of each piece of assessment.

## **3 Principles of assessment in relation to secure storage of assessment material and learner evidence**

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Quality assured assessment ensures that in criterion referenced assessment “learners are assessed and the assessment judgment is made based on whether the learner has reached the required national standards of knowledge, skill and competence for the award” (QCI, Revised 2018 p.5).

Central to quality assured assessment is the assumption that learners are assessed in a fair and consistent manner in line with the award standard. Quality assured assessment ensures adherence to the principles of assessment.

### **3.1 Validity**

Validity is a fundamental assessment principle ensuring that an assessment measures what it is designed to measure: the relevant standard of knowledge, skill or competence required for an award should be assessed.

Validity in assessment occurs when:

- Assessment is fit for purpose (i.e., a practical assessment assesses a practical skill)
- Learners can produce evidence which can be measured against the award standard.
- Assessors can make accurate assessment decisions.
- Assessment is accessible to all candidates who are potentially able to achieve it.

### **3.2 Reliability**

Reliability in assessment ensures that assessment measurement is accurate: the knowledge, skills, and competence which the assessment measures should produce reliable and accurate results.

Reliability in assessment ensures that results are consistent under similar conditions.

Reliability in assessment occurs when:

- The assessment is based on valid assessment techniques.
- Assessment conditions are consistent.
- Learner evidence is reliable.
- Results are consistent across various assessors, contexts, conditions, and learners over time.

### **3.3 Fair**

Fairness in assessment supports the validity and reliability principles and provides equal opportunity to all learners. Fairness in assessment ensures learners have access to appropriate resources/equipment in assessment; assessment design and implementation are fair to all learners; and policies and procedures exist to ensure fair assessment of learners.

### **3.4 Quality**

Quality in assessment ensures that all assessment processes are quality assured.

### 3.5 Transparency

Transparency in assessment ensures that assessment policy and procedures provide clarity to all relevant stakeholders.

Assessment is underpinned by the **principles of assessment** including the **fair** principle (equal opportunity for all learners) and **consistent** principle (consistency in approach to assessment across MSLETB, programmes and modules). As such, to ensure the fair and consistent assessment of learners, the following procedure should be followed in relation to secure storage of assessment materials.

## 4 Security and Storage: Roles and Responsibilities

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### 4.1 The Programme Coordinator/Centre Manager

The Centre Manager must ensure that:

- Staff is compliant with the assessment procedures of the provider, which reflects the requirements of the awarding body
- Assessment storage facility is secure with authorised access only
- A storage system is put in place which ensures that the location of assessment materials and evidence is known
- The secure storage and disposal of assessment evidence and materials is managed effectively.
- Educators understand and are compliant with the assessment procedures of the provider (which reflect the requirements of MSLETB's QA requirements to awarding body)
- Educators are made aware of their responsibilities in relation to the secure storage of both assessment material and learner assessment evidence
- Learners are made aware of their responsibilities for their assessment evidence and submission process for same

### 4.2 The Learner

The learner is responsible for the:

- Submission of assessment evidence in accordance with the assessment deadlines
- Retention of any receipting evidence in line with Centre policies and procedures
- Management of and the security and integrity of their own assessment work in advance of submission. At Levels 1-3, support will be provided by the Educator.
- Retention of backup copies of assessment evidence. In the case of original artefacts, it is advisable to ensure photographs are taken as backups are not possible.

It is recommended that learners should keep copies of all work submitted, where appropriate.

## **4.3 Secure storage of assessment material by staff**

### **4.3.1 Pre-Assessment**

Assessment material (assessment plan, assessment briefs, examination papers, solutions, marking schemes and model answers) are stored securely by the Educator or a designated member of staff for each programme module being taught in advance of the assessment/examination date. Additionally, relevant documentation (invigilator report, seating plan if required, attendance/sign in register etc), other relevant examination material and the correct number of examination papers are stored securely, with authorised access only.

### **4.3.2 Post Assessment**

On completion of an examination or supervised assignment all learner assessment evidence together with relevant assessment documentation must be stored securely, with authorised access only. Any breaches to the integrity of assessment evidence (e.g. loss/damage etc.) should be disclosed to the Centre Manager immediately.

## **4.4 Submission of Learner Evidence**

Each centre should ensure that a protocol exists for Educators to confirm the submission of work by a learner to a Educator: this protocol should be evidence based. For example, once work has been submitted, the learner may sign an assessment submission document which is countersigned in the presence of by the Educator.

- Where learner assessment evidence is submitted via email, email receipts should be provided by the Educator.
- Where learner assessment evidence is submitted electronically via an online platform which automatically generates a confirmation email (e.g. Moodle), the Educator is not responsible for receipting of this learner assessment evidence
- Where learner assessment evidence is submitted via an online platform which does not automatically generate a confirmation email the Educator is not responsible for receipting of this learner evidence. The receipt may be issued electronically (e.g., email).

Records of learners' assessment progress are held individually by each Educator.



## **4.5 Secure Storage of Learner Assessment Evidence by Staff**

Learner assessment evidence is the **personal data of the learner**. Storage arrangements for both hard and soft copy evidence must have regard to MSLETB's Data Processing Policy and Record Retention Schedule. Learners have a right of access to their personal data. Right of access to assessment evidence is in addition to an appeal of an assessment result or assessment process as per centre policy. Learners do not have a right to correct errors in their assessment answers. However, they do have the right to have processing errors corrected.

### **4.5.1 Learner Assessment Evidence: Hard Copy and Practical/Artefact**

In order to ensure best practice exists, providers must provide a secure room or secure locked facilities, with authorised access, to facilitate the storage of all hard copy learner assessment evidence over the course of the programme and until after all assessment QA procedures have been carried out. Educators must comply with the MSLETB's Data Processing Policy while they are in possession of assessment evidence.

### **4.5.2 Learner Assessment Evidence: Soft Copy**

In order to ensure best practice exists, centres are expected to provide storage for learner assessment evidence on a computer network or online platform (with backup capacity) which is accessible to the Programme Coordinator and Educators. The learner assessment evidence is then made available for the Internal Verifier and the External Authenticator.

Appropriate security should be in place for networks and online platforms and login details made available for the IV and EA with live/active accounts that can be accessed even after the programme has ended (External Authenticators are to be setup with MSLETB EA Email accounts which can then be deactivated once the Certification period is completed). Instructions on how to access said accounts may also need to be provided for IV and EA. No non-MSLETB approved removable media such as CD, DVD, USB drive or SD cards etc. that contain data or files may be used without consulting with MSLETB ICT Support.

All personal data stored on MSLETB mobile devices must be protected by encryption software. It is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure that the data is encrypted, and the encryption software is up to date as per [MSLETB Encryption Policy](#).

### **4.5.3 Marking and Grading**

In order to ensure best practice exists, where possible, space should be made available for the Educators to mark and grade assessment evidence in a secure location within the Centre. Additionally, each Centre should ensure that a procedure exists for the Educators to sign out assessment evidence for marking and grading. The Educator is responsible for assessment evidence until the evidence is signed back in.

#### **4.5.4 Internal Verification/External Authentication**

In preparation for the internal verification process, the Centre Manager or Programme Coordinator must ensure that learner assessment evidence is tracked using the provider's tracking process (evidence of the signing in and out of assessment evidence).

During the internal verification process, all Educators must adhere to the tracking system so that learner assessment evidence is stored securely at all times.

On completion of the internal verification, learner assessment evidence is moved into the allocated rooms/storage facilities with authorised access (using the provider's tracking processes) for relevant programme in order for External Authentication to take place.

During the External Authentication process, only authorised staff should have access to the allocated rooms/storage facilities.

On completion of External Authentication, learner assessment material should be moved to the appropriate secure storage space using the provider's tracking process, to facilitate ease of access in the event of learner appeals.

On completion of the appeals process and when results can no longer be challenged it is advised that all assessment evidence be safely destroyed as per MSLETB's Record Retention Schedule 2022 and MSLETB's Records Retention Schedule 2017 unless otherwise agreed between the learner, the provider, and the internal assessor. The retention schedule and the funding body's retention requirements will outline what records can be safely destroyed or kept for audit purposes.

#### **4.6 Duration of Storage**

All learner evidence and assessment material (including application forms, learner contracts, exam sign-in sheets, course evaluations, etc.) will be retained until after the appeals process concludes unless stated otherwise by the awarding body or due to a funding requirement (eg ESF funded programmes), after which it will be disposed of securely (e.g. shredded/deleted from the relevant drive) by the Provision. All records retained must be retained in line with current legislation and GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) and per MSLETB's Record Retention Schedule 2022 and MSLETB's Records Retention Schedule 2017.

Learners can request to retain hardcopy/artefacts but must notify the centre before the end of the appeals process. It is up to the Learner to collect the material in a timely manner.