



**IRISH TIMES TRAINING**



# **Learner Handbook**

[www.irishtimestraining.com](http://www.irishtimestraining.com)

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## Welcome to Irish Times Training

Thank you for choosing Irish Times Training! I hope you enjoy and benefit from your time spent with us. Our objective is to ensure that you leave Irish Times Training (ITT) with the knowledge, skills and confidence to progress your career and have a solid foundation on which to build and continue to grow your potential.

We hope you will find that your studies are thought-provoking, challenging, interesting and exciting. We are committed to providing you with an active and immersive learning environment that facilitates you in engaging with both expert trainers and other learners, and to implement what you learn in your own life and workplace.

We are happy to help at any stage; before, during or after course completion. If you have any questions, please contact us. Full information on support services and relevant contact details are contained in this handbook.

A blue ink handwritten signature of David Magee, consisting of a stylized 'D' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

**David Magee**  
**Managing Director**

## Key Contact Details



### Student Support Officer

[courses@irishtimes.com](mailto:courses@irishtimes.com)

01 4727101

### Quality Officer

Aoife Redmond

[Aoife.Redmond@irishtimes.com](mailto:Aoife.Redmond@irishtimes.com)

086 011 2565

You will be introduced to your specific programme manager and trainer at induction, and they will share their contact details with you.

### **The Irish Times Training office and training rooms are located at:**

Irish Times Training  
The Irish Times Building  
24-28 Tara Street  
Dublin

### **General Irish Times Training details:**

[courses@irishtimes.com](mailto:courses@irishtimes.com)

01 472 7101

Opening hours for Irish Times Training are 8.30 – 17.00, Monday - Friday.

## **Commitments and Responsibilities**

### **ITT Responsibilities**

This is what you can expect from us:

- To learn in a safe and secure learning environment.
- To be treated with dignity and respect by staff and other learners.
- To be trained by people that are competent in the subject area.
- A well-managed and well-supported programme.
- To receive details of your programme of study, a published timetable, assessment schedules and criteria.
- Equality of opportunity in all aspects of your learning experience.
- The advice and guidance of a dedicated Student Support Officer.
- Ongoing feedback and support from your trainer.
- To be asked for your feedback on the programme and the learning experience.

### **Learner Responsibilities**

To get the most from this programme, we expect you to:

- Attend all sessions punctually and participate fully.
- Let the Student Support Officer know if you expect to be absent.
- Show respect to staff and other learners.
- Show respect for the equipment in the training venue.
- Tell us if you have special requirements.
- Notify us of any changes in your contact details.
- Follow health and safety guidelines.
- Raise any concerns or difficulties with the Student Support Officer or the Programme Manager in a prompt manner.
- Provide constructive feedback about the programme and the learning experience.

### **Learner Supports and Resources**

These are the supports available to you:

- Student Support Officer and Programme Manger
- Programme Resources
- Reasonable Accommodation
- Compassionate Consideration
- A Healthy and Safe Learning Environment

- Advice and Guidance on Transfer and Progression
- Feedback on Assessment and Progress
- Protecting Learner Personal Data
- Complaints
- Fee Payments/Payment Plans

If you are experiencing any difficulties which are affecting your participation on this course, please discuss this with your trainer in the first instance. If you need to, you can also contact the Student Support Officer or the Programme Manager.

### **Reasonable Accommodation**

We do our best to accommodate learners who have a disability/specific need when it is practicable and feasible to do so (*an accommodation is a modification of classroom or an evaluation procedure designed to address particular needs*). If you have any additional needs/requirements, please speak to your trainer or the Student Support Officer, in confidence, before or as soon as the programme begins. Please [see here](#) for full details of our Reasonable Accommodation Policy and you can find a submission form [here](#).

The following are examples of supports we can put in place:

- Additional time for exams or assessment
- Provision of additional equipment

### **Compassionate Consideration / Extenuating Circumstances**

There may be limited circumstances within the 2 week cut off point, where an extension may be sought at short notice by a learner, due to circumstances beyond their control. The learner may wish to have these circumstance taken into account by ITT.

Learners who believe that they fall under the compassionate consideration / extenuating circumstances category should contact ***student.support@irishtimes.com*** as soon as possible. A form will be issued to the learner by student support. In certain cases, additional information/documentation may be requested by student support.

Forms and any related documentation will be retained for the remainder of the academic year, after which they will be destroyed/deleted.

*\*Failure to supply additional documents will prevent the form from being considered. The nature of the documentation is detailed on the form*

### **Additional Supports for Online Learners**

We provide one-to-one and small groups tutorials for online learners who want to improve their skills, confidence and knowledge in using digital technologies to support their study.

A revised Induction pack, registration form and Zoom joining instructions are made available to learners in digital format in advance of the programme start.

## Quality in Irish Times Training

As a provider recognised by QQI, ITT has an agreed quality assurance system (QAS) in place; a system of policies and procedures implemented which help us to maintain and enhance the quality of our programmes and the learning environment.

### Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) and the NFQ

QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland) is the independent State agency responsible for promoting quality and accountability in education and training services in Ireland. It was established in 2012 by the [Qualifications and Quality Assurance \(Education and Training\) Act 2012](#).

#### What does QQI do?

- Maintains the ten-level NFQ (National Framework of Qualifications).
- Sets standards for awards made on the NFQ.
- Validates education and training programmes.
- Makes awards in the further education and higher education sectors.
- Provides advice on recognition of foreign qualifications in Ireland and on the recognition of Irish qualifications abroad.
- Publishes a directory of providers and awards in the NFQ.
- Reviews the effectiveness of quality assurance in further and higher education and training providers in Ireland.
- Authorises the use of an International Education Mark.

The information leaflet [QQI - Who We Are and What We Do](#) provides an overview of QQI services and the organisations it works with.

### The Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)



The NFQ is a ten-level system (1–10) giving an academic or vocational value to qualifications obtained in Ireland. Each level is based on nationally agreed standards of what a learner is expected to know and be able to do after receiving an award.

There are four types of awards:

- Major Awards: the principal class of award made at a level.
- Minor Awards: for partial completion of the outcomes for a Major Award.
- Supplemental Awards: for learning that is additional to a Major Award.
- Special Purpose Awards: for relatively narrow or purpose-specific achievement.

### **Access, Transfer and Progression**

Achievement of an award on the NFQ enables learners to transfer or progress to other programmes leading to awards at the same or higher levels of the NFQ. We provide learners with advice and information about transfer and progression opportunities following the successful completion of a programme with us.

To learn more about the NFQ, click [here](#) to view the QQI's *interactive PowerPoint Presentation* on the NFQ.

### **Assessment**

You will be given details of assessment and an assessment timetable by your trainer at induction. Depending on the programme, you will be assessed by one or more of the following assessment techniques; assignment, collection of work/portfolio, a learner record, a project, an examination or a skills demonstration.

You will be given an assessment brief by your trainer for each piece of assessment which sets out specific guidelines you must follow when completing the assessment and the criteria for the marking. Your trainer will advise you on how to layout, format, present and submit your assignments.

Please see Appendix I for details of the QQI grading system.

### **Learner Responsibilities in Assessment Process**

- Actively engage with the assessment activities.
- Act on feedback provided by trainers and request additional feedback if required.
- Fully understand assessment guidelines and assessment briefs and ask for advice and guidance if necessary.
- Submit assessments on time in the format requested.



- Apply for an extension in advance of the submission deadline if you cannot meet the submission deadline.
- Understand what constitutes academic misconduct and plagiarism.
- Submit your own work and use the Harvard system of referencing (if required).
- Keep copies of assessment evidence submitted.

### **Assessment Submission**

In order to ensure fairness in assessment, all assignments must be submitted on or before the dates set out on the assessment timetable unless otherwise indicated by the trainer to ***ittcoursework@irishtimes.com*** prior to, or by 1pm, on the date of submission. All learners must keep a soft copy record of their own work.

***Please note - Dementia Learners MUST submit the Reflective Journal as a whole document.***

### **Extension Request**

Assessment items submitted after the due date may be subject to a penalty unless an extension has been granted. Please see here for details of our Extension Request procedure. Requests for extensions must be submitted using the Extension Request form, 2 weeks in advance of the submission date with supporting evidence if relevant e.g. medical certificate in case of sickness. You can request an extension by emailing ***student.support@irishtimes.com*** ITT will notify the learner via email to inform them if the extension was granted or denied and a new submission date will be advised.

Forms and any related documentation will be retained for the remainder of the academic year, after which they will be destroyed/deleted.

Each assignment must be accompanied by a QQI Cover sheet that confirms that the assessment work being submitted is your own work. We do not mark and grade assignments unless they are accompanied by this form. Please ensure that your name is on all submitted assignments and keep a copy for your own records (we do not return coursework).

### **Late Submission**

If a Learner does not have an extension request or compassionate consideration / extenuating circumstances request, penalties will be incurred for unauthorised late submissions after 1pm on the submission date.

Any work submitted past the date of submission will incur the following penalties:

Week One - 2.5% will be deducted from the total mark of the late work

Week Two - 5% will be deducted from the total mark of the late work

Week Three - 0% If there is no communication regarding your late submission with ITT, your assignment will be deemed as a fail. This will affect your overall mark and result in you being ineligible for QQI qualification.

### **Academic Integrity**

ITT expects learners to conduct their studies honestly, ethically and in accordance with accepted standards of academic conduct. Examples of academic misconduct include cheating in exams, plagiarism, presenting falsified or improperly obtained data or being assisted in the presentation of assessment tasks. It is our policy to investigate any form of suspected assessment misconduct/malpractice and penalise learners who are found guilty of academic misconduct. Learners may be disqualified from undertaking assessment or be asked to exit the programme.

### **Assessment Appeals**

If you are unhappy with the result of an assessment, please contact the Quality Officer who will explain how the assessment work was marked and graded. If you are still unhappy with the result, you can formally appeal the result. [You can download a copy of our Appeals Procedure here.](#)

### **Repeating an Assessment Activity**

If you are unsuccessful on the first attempt in an assessment activity, where possible we provide you with an opportunity to repeat the assessment activity to achieve a pass grade. Opportunities to repeat an assessment activity are dependent on the nature of the activity and the practical and/or operational issues involved.

You should contact the Programme Manager directly to organise the repeat of an assessment activity. An assignment may be resubmitted once; the second submission will be the final submission. The resubmission should be forwarded to your trainer within the time specified after receiving the feedback. If it is not received in this time frame, the trainer will award the marks for the first/original assignment.

The final approved result is the result we return to QQI.

### **Assessment Feedback**

Your trainer will give feedback on assessment and on your progress on a one-to-one basis and in groups at various stages throughout the programme. In addition, you can approach the trainers for advice and direction with assignments at any stage.

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## **Additional Procedures**

### **Deferrals**

If you encounter circumstances that prevent you from finishing your programme, please contact the Programme Manager to find out if deferral is an available option.

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

In order to ensure you get the most out of the programme and to help you achieve the best outcome possible, we expect 100% attendance. We also expect you to be punctual and to be present in the training room/virtual classroom before the training session begins. If you cannot attend for any reason, or have to exit the programme at an early stage, please contact the Student Support Officer to discuss. It is important to talk to us if you expect to be absent, or if you are having difficulty in keeping up.

### **Self-directed Learning**

As part of your programme, you are required to study, research and revise in your own time outside of the classroom environment. We refer to this type of learning as self-directed. The hours you spend in self-directed learning are as important as the hours you spend with your trainer. Your trainer will guide and advise you with regard to good self-directed learning practices and the hours you need to invest. As a general rule, you are expected to spend two hours in self-directed learning for every one hour you spend in the classroom.

### **Feedback/Programme Evaluation**

To help ensure that ITT is offering the best possible programmes, we ask learners to give us feedback which we incorporate into programme reviews and updates. Please complete the learner feedback form when it is sent to you by the trainer or by ITT. We also encourage you to provide informal feedback to your trainer at any point during the programme. We want you to let us know what you think.

## Complaints

If you are unhappy with any aspect of the programme or our service, please let us know. We have a formal complaints procedure which you can use if we cannot resolve your complaint informally. Please talk to your trainer in the first instance. We do all we can to ensure that complaints are resolved in a fair, timely and constructive manner. **You can access a copy of our Complaints procedure here and you will find a template form for formal complaints here.**

## Issuing Results and Award Certificates

We issue results once they have been approved and signed-off by our Results Approval Panel. Approximately six weeks later we issue award certificates by post. Please keep your award certificate safe and secure as they can be difficult and expensive to replace. You will have to contact QQI for a replacement or duplicate award certificate. We cannot issue replacement award certificates. We can issue you with a transcript of your results at any time, but this is not a replacement for an award certificate. To request a transcript of results, please submit a request to the Student Support Officer. There is a nominal fee charged for this.

## Photocopying

The making of multiple photocopies of copyright material is an infringement of copyright unless the permission of the rights holders involved (i.e. the authors and publishers) has been obtained. Please keep this in mind and discuss with your trainer if you have any concerns with regard to infringement of copyright.

## Confidentiality, Privacy and Data Protection

Please ensure that the personal details you have on file for you are current and up-to-date and notify us of any changes as soon as they occur, particularly mobile telephone number and email address. **It is your responsibility to let us know about any changes to your contact details.** Please email the Student Support Officer with the details.

We maintain the personal data we hold on file in accordance with the requirements of data protection legislation. **You can access a copy of ITT's Privacy and Data Protection policy here.**

Recordings of online delivery, and audio and video programme content, may be used solely for internal class purposes by the trainers and registered learners, and only during the period in which the programme is offered. Audio and video learning materials are available to enrolled-learners only, and must not be shared outside of the online environment. The breakout room sessions during a live lecture are not recorded.

## Equality and Diversity

ITT is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity and to creating and sustaining an environment that values and celebrates the diversity of our staff and learners. Our Equality statement can be found on the ITT website [here](#).

## Health and Safety

Please adhere to the safety regulations of the training facility. We take all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of our learners and comply with health and safety legislation and regulation and standards of best practice. We expect learners to abide by our health and safety procedures. Details of these procedures are highlighted at induction.

The trainer will identify the nearest escape door and assembly point at induction. In the event of the fire alarm sounding, please follow your trainer's instructions, exit by the nearer fire escape door and make your way to the nearest fire assembly point.

### Health and Safety in an Online Environment

In addition to the standard induction, our trainers on online programmes discuss health and safety issues which can impact an online environment.

## Fire Safety Procedures

### Responsibilities in the Event of a Fire

In the event of a fire or other emergency requiring evacuation:

1. Ensure that the fire alarm is activated, and the fire brigade summoned,
2. Notify Reception of the nature of the emergency,
3. Calmly and quickly leave the building.

Under no circumstances are you to return to the building until you are instructed to do so by the fire warden. If someone refuses or is unable to leave the building (e.g. physical impairment), then this information, along with their location, should be reported to the person in charge of the evacuation.

**Important Note: At no time should you place yourselves in the position where your own life is at risk, e.g. by re-entering the building.**

## Appendices

### QQI Grading System for awards at Level 4-6

Pass 50 - 64%	Merit 65 - 79%	Distinction 80 - 100%
Achieved the learning outcomes as outlined in the minor award - a pass is the minimum acceptable standard.	Achieved the learning outcomes as outlined in the minor award - a merit implies a good standard has been achieved.	Achieved the learning outcomes as outlined in the minor award - a distinction implies that an excellent standard has been achieved.
Used the language of the vocational/specialised area competently.	Used the language of the vocational/specialised area with a degree of fluency.	Used the language of the vocational/specialised area fluently and confidently.
Attempted to apply the theory and concepts appropriately.	Expressed and developed ideas clearly.	Demonstrated a deep understanding of the subject matter.
Provided sufficient evidence that has relevance and clarity.	Demonstrated initiative, evaluation and analytical skills.	Demonstrated a high level of initiative and evaluation skills.
	Presented coherent and comprehensive evidence.	Demonstrated analytical and reflective thinking.
		Expressed and developed ideas clearly, systematically and comprehensively.
		Presented coherent, detailed and focused evidence.

#### Grading Classifications

Awards at level 4, level 5 and level 6 are classified as Pass, Merit or Distinction where a learner has achieved the standards for the award with the grading criteria.

A Pass is a grade awarded to a learner who has attained the minimum standard. To be awarded a pass grade a learner must have achieved a mark of between 50–64%.

A Merit is a grade awarded to a learner who has exceeded the minimum requirements. To be awarded a merit grade a learner must have achieved a mark of between 65-79%.

A Distinction is a grade awarded to a learner who has substantially exceeded the minimum requirements. For a learner to be awarded a distinction he/she must have achieved a mark of over 80%.

When a learner has not achieved the minimum standards for an award the grade is recorded as Referred.