

QA 7 Support for Learners

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1 Academic Supports

1.1 Policy Owner

The policy owner is the Academic Committee.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy and associated procedure is to ensure the adequacy of the support available to learners. Learning resources are updated and expanded as necessary to reflect up-to-date approaches and learner needs as identified through feedback on teaching and learning.

1.3 Scope

This policy is applicable to all full time and part time Cenit College tutors, programme co-ordinators, learner support co-ordinator, training manager and the learners who enrol in Cenit College programmes.

1.4 Responsibilities

The **Academic Committee** are responsible for approving this policy and ensuring organisation wide compliance.

Programme Co-ordinators are responsible for informing learners of the consequences for absences at the induction to the programme.

The **Learner Support Co-ordinator** is responsible for co-ordinating all the academic and general supports for learners. This also includes supports offered under the Cenit reasonable accommodation policy.

1.5 Policy Statement

Cenit College seeks to ensure that the learner is always a priority. In doing so, Cenit College recognises that it is important to balance the promotion of classroom and self-directed learning and development along with fostering an environment that empowers learners and enables them to reach their potential. Cenit College strives to achieve this balance by providing adequate and appropriate academic supports to all learners *including those with disabilities*. This will (i) enable all learners to complete their studies (ii) achieve a stronger commitment to their studies, (iii) increase their participation and engagement and (iv) achieve standards that are reflective of their abilities.

Cenit College has adopted Universal Design for Learning (UDL) which ensures enhanced access, especially for those with disabilities. This is outlined in QA 5.1 Teaching and Learning.

Interaction can be both in and out of the classroom. Examples of in-classroom interaction includes:

- questioning.
- student information seeking.
- clarification and group work.

Out of classroom interaction includes:

- welcome communication after the programme has commenced.
- email messages.
- interacting at events.
- communicating at breaks ('corridor' meetings).
- speaking before and after class, scheduled meetings.
- support follow-up.

- learning and assessment feedback.
- post programme communication.

Online interaction takes the form of:

- welcome communication post commencement.
- online forums.
- emails or phone calls to 'check-in' with the learner.
- Webinars.
- encouraging communication in the form of clarification of learning topics.
- scheduling meetings with the learner.
- learning and assessment feedback.

The types of supports available to all learners who need them and are as follows:

Academic (outlined in section 1.6)

- 1-2-1 Tutor Mentoring
- Work placement supervisor support (as relevant)
- Study Skills
- Project supervisor support (as relevant)
- Reasonable Accommodation

General (outlined in section 1.7)

- Career Guidance
- Guidance and Counselling
- Technical support
- Attendance Support
- Pastoral Care
- Library Supports (online)

There are also blended learning specific supports:

- Learner handbook
- Contact information for tutors, IT support
- Information regarding the learning support that is available
- Guide to Moodle
- IT requirements
- Technical Support
- Any other information deemed necessary to support the programme of study

The blended learning supports are outlined in QA 3.6 Blended Learning Policy (Section 1.8.3.3 p21)

[1.6 Academic Support provided by Cenit College](#)

Cenit College recognises that in order for learners to fully realise their potential there may be a need for academic support.

1-2-1 Mentoring

The tutor may see the need to offer 1-2-1 mentoring to individuals as the need arises. This can be offered on an informal basis or where the learner needs longer term and more dedicated mentoring, an application can be made through the Learner Support Co-ordinator for such mentoring. Mentoring

on an ongoing basis can help to maintain a learner's motivation to learn and can prevent drop out, especially at-risk points during a programme.

Throughout the delivery of the programmes, the tutors will offer informal support to the learners as appropriate. This informal process can also serve to inform where college wide supports, and associated policies and procedures need to be initiated or improved.

The academic support is facilitated through communication of the supports, support staff, identification of the type of support needed, assignment of the correct form of support and a process that monitors and reviews the academic support services and the learners learning and assessment experience.

Study Skills

Study Skills is an online support offered by Cenit College. This service is supplemental to supports already incorporated into the programmes of study. The Learner handbook includes a section on study skills support. Communication of this support is also made throughout the programme delivery. This online support is available to the learner at all times during the programme and can be accessed on the Virtual Learning Support Hub. The skills on this virtual hub address:

- Time management
- Revision techniques
- General study skills
- Note taking
- Research skills
- Academic referencing
- Report writing

Access to the Learner Support hub is given to all learners enrolled on Cenit College programmes.

- The learning support co-ordinator looks after the learner support hub.
- A team of tutors and the learning support co-ordinator agree on the content of this learner support hub and the learning support co-ordinator uploads the content to the hub.
- On an annual basis this is reviewed by a team of tutors and the learning support co-ordinator.

Work placement Supervisor Support

Where work placement forms part of the learner's programme of study, Cenit College will ensure that a work placement supervisor is assigned by the host company to the learner.

These work placement supervisors are familiar with the programme of study and work placement requirements. They support the learners on their work placement on a 1-2-1 basis or in small groups. They provide information and guidance to support learners in completing their work placement and any related assignments associated with work placement. The work placement supervisor will:

- Be the main point of contact during the learner's work placement
- Conduct visits and contact the learner via phone or email
- Provide regular feedback and guidance to the learner throughout placement
- In case any learner experiences difficulty during their placement, the work placement supervisor will contact the programme lead.

At present it is not Cenit College's intention to validate programmes where work placement will be required. Should decide to do so in the future we will devise an explicit set of guidelines to govern

work placement. These will also detail how the work-based supervisor will be training on assessing the learner.

Project Supervisor Support

Some of Cenit College's programmes of study require a project. These projects can be either group or individual where a supervisor will be assigned. This project supervisor may be a tutor or an individual who is a subject matter expert in the area. They will supervise on a 1-2-1 or small group basis depending on the project requirements. While the project specific requirements may vary, the project supervisor at a minimum will:

- Provide support and guidance to the learner on their project for the duration specified.
- Recommend a project plan and provide assistance where needed.
- Provide assistance on research methods and study skills for the project.
- Monitor the learner throughout the project phase, create milestones and ensure these milestones are accomplished.
- Provide feedback on any drafts submitted and make recommendations – including any adjustments to the project schedule as necessary.
- Assess the project, presentation or other deliverables as specified.

Procedure for supporting learners during programme delivery:

1. Supports must be communicated to the learners and staff. This is achieved through:
 - learner handbook; learners are informed of academic supports that may be of recourse to them and the point of contact to initiate these supports.
 - induction and during the delivery of the programme of study.
 - online or blended programmes; learner handbook, a link to a support page at the start of the programme and reminders during the online delivery.
 - tutors and other staff; induction and interview stage and again on assignment to the programme of study.
2. Initiation of the need for academic support can occur in three ways:
 - (i) disclosure at the point of registration.
 - (ii) the learner may contact the tutor or programme co-ordinator. Generally, it is the tutor assigned to the programme (or module) who is the appropriate point of contact for academic support.
 - (iii) the tutor can often identify where a learner may benefit from academic support. It is the responsibility of the tutor to highlight to the Programme Co-ordinator any learner who needs academic support.

Indicators that a learner may need academic support may include the following:

- Poor attendance.
 - Poor classroom participation.
 - Under performing at both formative and summative assessments.
 - Non submission or late submission of assessments.
 - Various forms of academic impropriety such as cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying material etc.
 - The obvious distress of a learner.
3. Once the initial contact is made for support, the appropriate staff member will assign the appropriate support to that learner. Support can include (but not limited to); 1-2-1 mentoring,

assignment of additional time during or after the class, additional course work or pointing the learner to the existing supports available to them online.

4. Learner support will keep a record of support offered to any individual where it is requested. This is recorded on the *Learner Support Form*.
5. Learners will offer feedback on supports given through the *Programme Feedback form*.
6. As part of the programme review, support to learners will be included on the report.

1.7 General Supports

Cenit College recognises that learners need support on different levels and for different programme types. To this extent the college has a learner support office which not only offer academic supports but also other general supports. These supports are available to all learners *including those with disabilities*. Included in the general supports are:

- Career Guidance
- Guidance and Counselling
- Technical support
- Attendance Support
- Pastoral Care
- Library Supports (online)

Cenit College will do its best to provide these supports directly through the college itself and by its own staff. However, the college recognises that in certain circumstances the learner may benefit more from specifically professionally trained individuals, e.g. counselling. Where this occurs, the college will offer a suitable referral. To access these supports learners should contact learnersupport@cenitcollege.ie Details are available in the learner handbook.

Career Guidance

Cenit College provide a wide range of information, advice and opportunities that help to develop learner's skills, professional and personal development and future career prospects. Information regarding the colleges career guidance service is contained in Cenit College learner handbook and for blended learning in the learner support hub. This service is also communicated at induction. Career guidance is given through the following mechanisms:

- Informally and formally through a learner's programme of study.
- Resources for information is available in the learner handbook.
- Blended learning; a career guidance link posted at the start of the programme.
- 1-2-1 appointment with a career advisor can be arrange by contacting learnersupport@cenitcollege.ie.

The following career guidance services are offered:

- CV preparation including online network building such as LinkedIn
- Cover letters to accompany the CV
- Networking skills
- Interview skills
- Career paths
- Learning pathways
- 1-2-1 mock interviews

These are administered by the tutor during the programme of study. For blended and online learners, career guidance supports are offered online and can be accessed on Moodle. The learner support office can be contacted at learnersupport@cenitcollege.ie in all cases for further assistance.

The learning support hub contains information on some general career guidance.

Guidance and Counselling

Cenit College recognises that some learners may have the need to access guidance and counselling services for a variety of reasons. While professionally Cenit College is not equipped to offer counselling services internally, we can recommend some local councillors who are accredited and professionally trained for this service. Learners can contact learner support for further details of these services or for a referral. Learner support may touch base with the learner throughout the process of counselling having due regard for the learners right to privacy and no obligation to disclose any information.

IT (Technical) Support

Cenit College has an IT support department. This department will service any Cenit College equipment used by learners. The department is not obliged to service learner's personal equipment. Where there are issues with Cenit College equipment the process is as follows:

1. The learner should notify the tutor.
2. The tutor will verify the issue and access if they can fix the problem.
3. If the tutor is not able to fix the issue, they will log a ticket on our administration system with the following information:
 - Brief description of the issue
 - Date
 - Location
 - Urgency
4. The IT support office will assign the ticket to a technician who will arrange to fix the problem. Cenit aims to resolve all minor issues within 24 hours.
5. Once the problem is resolved the ticket is set to closed.

Learners will have access to the learning management system and can obtain their lecture notes, assignments and any other class related information.

Learners on our classroom-based programmes will work on Cenit College's devices and equipment. These are all fully serviced by our IT support.

Cenit College offers access to free Wi-Fi throughout our campus buildings.

For online programmes our IT support services will offer technical support where learners have difficulty accessing courseware or downloading software needed to complete the programme. This service can be accessed through the Technical Support link (button) provided on the landing page.

Attendance Support

Cenit College maintains an attendance record of all learners on our programme administration system. At induction learners are informed of this. A weekly attendance report is prepared highlighting reasons for absences. The programme coordinator monitors the attendance report. Where learner attendances are poor, the programme lead may contact the learner and offer support to improve their attendance. Poor learning achievements are generally linked to poor learner attendance. Cenit College

has a responsibility to ensure that learners are given all the supports necessary to maximise their learning potential.

For online programmes the tutor will monitor the students access to the online programme. Where a programme has not been accessed within 5 working days or where access is low the learner will receive an email communication. If attendance does not improve the tutor will engage with the learner to improve attendance.

Pastoral Care

Cenit College provides a supporting and nurturing environment for all its learners. The College has a duty of care to all their students to ensure their learner journey is rewarding, personal and completed in a manner that does not cause undue stress to the learner. Tutors are the first point of contact in any programme. To this as part of our teaching and learning ethos, tutors are encouraged to teach and support with empathy. The learner may come to them with personal issues. Learners are encouraged to request private meetings with the tutor should they feel they have a need for one. Any information that is disclosed to the tutor can be shared with learning support (with the permission of the learner) should the tutor feel that the learner will benefit from any further support services.

From online programmes, the tutor will offer support to the learner. Like the classroom tutor, the tutor as part of our teaching and learning ethos, tutors are encouraged to teach and support with empathy. Any information that is disclosed to the tutor can be shared with learning support (with the permission from the learner) should the tutor feel that the learner will benefit from any further support services.

1.8 Pre-enrolment Support

Cenit College offers pre-enrolment support to learners enabling them to make an informed choice on their programme of study. Learners can contact the college as follows:

Tel: 01-901-2014

Email: enquiries@cenitcollege.ie

These contact details are available on the course page of the website. The enrolment officer will respond via email or if relevant speak directly to the learner assisting them with making an informed course choice or other enrolment questions.

1.9 Monitoring of this Policy

This policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Quality Assurance Manager and Academic Committee in accordance with our Policy on Ongoing Review and update on QA documents. The QA manager will conduct a monitoring of this policy through the annual QA audit.

Academic supports will be reviewed as part of the programme review process and review findings will be contained in the report sent to the academic committee. The Academic Committee through the reports received from the programme review committee will provide oversight and where relevant will make recommendations for improvement to the Board of Directors, through the training manager.

Monitoring mechanisms include:

- Learner Feedback forms and surveys
- Learner Support Forms
- Attendance reports

- Admission and retention records
- Review of post programme review report
- Review of the minutes from the programme review meeting
- Review of the minutes from the learner support meetings (including report on the uptake of learner supports)
- Recommendations from training managers, tutors, internal and external examiners.
- Communication of supports available (email for classroom and online).

Learner Journey

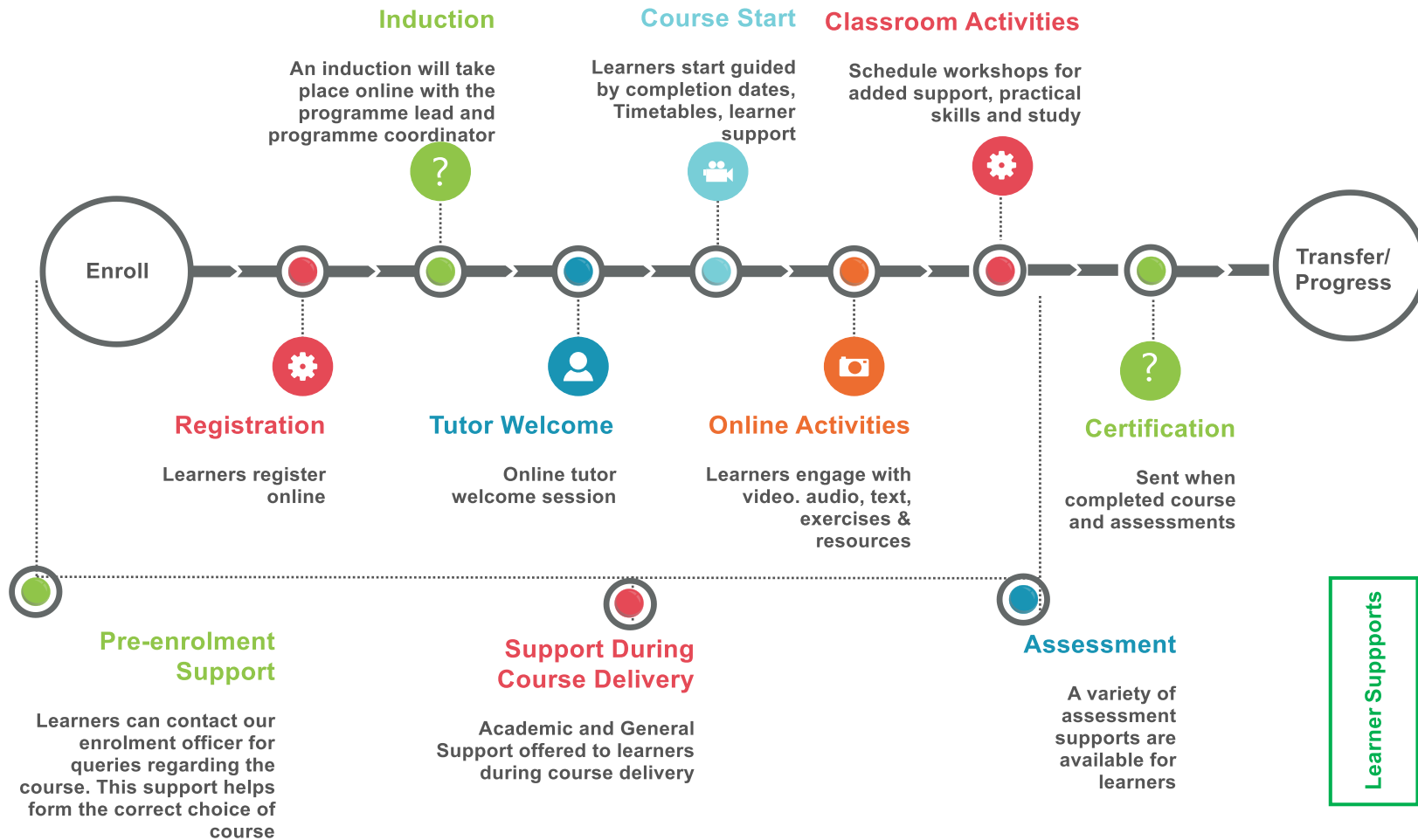


Fig 7.1 The Learner Journey and Supports

2 Personal Mitigating Circumstances

2.1 Policy Owner

The policy owner is the Board of Directors.

2.2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy and associated procedure is to ensure that guidance on the process is provided where learners have any personal mitigating circumstances that temporarily interrupt their ability to participate on their programme of study.

2.3 Scope

This policy applies to circumstances where a learner's programme of study is temporarily interrupted. It does not apply to long term disability or death. This policy applies to learners who are enrolled on accredited or non-accredited programmes.

2.4 Responsibilities

The Academic Committee are responsible for approving this policy and ensuring organisation wide compliance.

2.5 Policy Statement

Learners through the calendar and timetables are informed of key dates including holidays, assessment dates and other key dates. At induction and through the learner handbook learners are informed of the college policies on attendance, sick leave and holidays. Throughout their programme of study learners have access to all these policies and procedures. Learners are informed of the importance of full attendance to maximise their learning opportunities and potential. However, there are instances where students through unforeseen circumstances are required to be absent from class. These instances include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Bereavement of a close family member
- Temporary illness
- Injury
- Compassionate consideration for learners celebrating religious or cultural events.

2.6 Procedure

The procedure for applying for Personal Mitigating Circumstances (PMC) are as follows:

1. Learners must communicate their absence before 10am on the day of study to the tutor or programme lead. Communication can be via email to the tutor. For absences longer than 3 working days the learner must provide evidence for the absence.
2. Medical certification must specify the duration of the absence.
3. The training manager may assist the programme coordinator in deciding whether the absence should be counted against the learner for attendance.
4. Where a learner believes there is a personal mitigating circumstance as to why they could not attend, they must complete the *Personal Mitigating Circumstances form* as soon as practically possible. This should be no later than their first day when they return to college. This form must be accompanied by evidence and submitted to the tutor or programme coordinator.
5. The tutor or programme coordinator will send the form to learner supports, who will determine if the circumstances are PMC. The decision will be communicated to the learner via email within 5 working days of receipt of the form. If the PMC is rejected learning support

must give a reason why. Where more information is required, the learner will be given 5 working days to provide this information.

Approval of a PMC can result in the following:

- Extension for submission dates for assignments.
- Absent for assessment will not be counted as an attempt.
- Where the assessment has not been completed, alternatives are considered if appropriate or a deferral is awarded.

2.7 Compassionate consideration

Cenit College is aware of the multi-cultural society that we deal with. We do not schedule assessments during major religious or cultural holidays. Learners may playback any recorded lectures where they have missed the original session. Classroom based lecturers will make notes and other material available on our learning management system. Learners should follow the normal process for personal mitigating circumstances.

2.8 Monitoring

This policy will be monitored by programme leader at the end of each programme and included in the post programme review. The Learning Support office will report on all PMCs through their annual monitoring report. The monitoring mechanisms used are:

- Summary of PMC applications per programme or module
- Attendance records
- Learner support decisions made on PMCs.

3 Learner Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure

3.1 Policy Owner

The policy owner is the Academic Committee.

3.2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that a suitable and positive academic environment is maintained within the Cenit Group at all times. This means that the approach to the treatment of the general learner misconduct is consistent and fair. This code outlines what the Cenit Group accepts as reasonable behaviour and consideration for others and endeavours to lay down guidelines which will form the foundations of a solid academic community.

3.3 Scope

This policy is applicable to students enrolling on all Cenit College programmes from all accrediting bodies and for our own non accredited programmes. This policy also applies to staff and the Academic Committee (or whatever office/role we deem responsible for administering this policy).

3.4 Responsibilities

The Academic Committee are responsible for approving this policy and ensuring organisation wide compliance. They will be supported by the Quality Committee, Programme Board, and all academic staff including disciplinary committee and tutors. All the above roles were consulted on this policy.

3.4.1 Learner Responsibilities

All learners are expected to be familiar with this policy and all other relevant Policies: Specifically, for the code of conduct they need to:

1. Be aware of the code of conduct expected by the College and behave accordingly.
2. Ensure they are up to date with any of the amendments to this code.
3. Ensure they uphold the principals of honesty, integrity, respect, and responsibility in all their activities within the learning community.
4. Ensure they participate in all programmes of study that they have chosen to undertake.
5. Fulfil all assessment requirements for their programmes of study.
6. Ensure that they must maintain appropriate behaviour when representing Cenit College in any capacity.

3.4.2 Board of Directors

The role of the Board of Directors is to ensure:

1. The disciplinary procedures are applied in a fair and consistent manner.
2. That they are available for advice at any stage of the process from advice on the category of offences to the actual disciplinary process.
3. That any member appointed to the disciplinary committee has the appropriate training and expertise and is impartial in their judgement.
4. Any individual appointed to investigate an incidence in accordance with the disciplinary procedure is appropriately trained and provided with the appropriate brief for the task at hand.
5. That all documents and records associated with the disciplinary process and appeals process are managed and stored appropriately.

3.4.3 Members of Staff

All members of staff will:

1. Be fully aware of this Policy and all college policies and adhere to them all times.
2. Communicate the code of conduct to the learners.
3. Endeavour to deal with incidents of a minor nature informally and understand how to do so
4. Be aware that if advice on anything within the disciplinary process needs to be sought that they do so.

3.5 Policy Statement

This policy contains the learner code of conduct. This policy also outlines and defines the categories of general misconduct and the respective means of prevention and detection and associated penalties. Additionally, this policy will also outline the function of Cenit Colleges Disciplinary Committee in dealing with alleged acts of general misconduct. This policy is also related to QA 6 Assessment - specifically Issues Rising in an Exam Policy and Assessment Malpractice.

Disciplinary procedures will only be initiated by written complaints sent to the Learner Support office (learnersupport@cenitcollege.ie). Anonymous complaints will not be considered. The individual subject to the disciplinary process (complainee) should be informed on the identity of the complainant unless revealing such identity would present a risk to the complainant. The complainee is also entitled to receive details of the allegations made against them and are entitled to the right of responding.

Where the breach of conduct is of a very serious nature, Cenit College has the right to suspend the learner (without prejudice) until the process has concluded. During this time Cenit College will not be liable for delays to the learner in completing the program of study or funding arrangements.

The procedures associated with this policy is an internal Cenit College procedure and does not include any engagement with legal representatives. Any party attending a meeting as a result of the implementation of this policy has a right to be accompanied by a support person. This support person should not be a legal advocate. Accompanying parties can be one of the following: (i) friend, (ii) family member, (iii) fellow learner or (iv) associate. If there is an intention to bring a support person, this intention must be confirmed in writing to Cenit College within 24 hours of attending the meeting. This written communication must confirm the identity of the support person and their relationship to the named party.

At each stage of the procedure there will be a written record. Records will be retained except where it is deemed that no offence as occurred. In such an instance all records will be destroyed within 24 hours or 1 working day.

3.6 Learner Code of Conduct

As members of the Cenit College learning community, the learners have an obligation to familiarise themselves with all the College policies and procedures including the Learner Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy. The Cenit College Learner code is founded upon the following principals:

1. Dignity and Respect
2. Legal and ethical conduct
3. Responsibility
4. Academic Integrity

3.6.1 Dignity and Respect

Cenit College promotes a culture which ensures that the dignity and respect of everyone is upheld. The College supports the right to study in an environment which is free from discrimination, bullying, harassment. All members of the Cenit College learning community (staff and learners) are expected to show mutual respect and refrain from conduct which infringes the rights of others. This code of

conduct will not reduce any individual's legal rights, rather it will contribute to a positive learning community.

Under this code of conduct learners are expected to:

- Conduct themselves in a manner that ensures respect for the Cenit College learning community and respect for Cenit Colleges facilities and property. This includes the property and facilities of all locations where they attend as part of their college programme of study (i.e. site visits, work placements etc.). Learners should not use Cenit College property and facilities unless they are authorised to do so. Furthermore, learners must demonstrate such respect while they represent Cenit College in any capacity.
- Communicate with Cenit College learning community in a respectful and courteous manner. This includes formal communications such as through feedback and surveys. Such communication must be non-confrontational, and utilise body language, terminology and tone that is both respectful and appropriate to the occasion and communication medium.
- Be informed of our definitions of bullying, sexual harassment, or other forms of harassment and not act in any manner that conforms to this sort of behaviour.

3.6.2 Legal and Ethical Conduct

All Cenit College learners should behave in a legal and ethical manner. This means that learners are expected to;

- Act in accordance with the law and Cenit College policies and procedures.
- Behave in an ethical manner. Ethics is defined as "Moral principles that govern a person's behaviour" while carrying out of an activity.
- Embrace diversity, equality and inclusiveness and excellence in education.
- Be accountable for their own actions.
- Declare conflict of interests.
- Manage conflicts.

3.6.3 Responsibility

All Cenit College students are expected to act in a responsible manner and should be familiar with the standards of behaviour that are expected of them.

Learners are expected to

- Abide by Cenit College student regulations, policies and procedures including this Learner Code of Conduct.
- Respect the authority of Cenit College staff in their operational duties and co-operate with them.
- Ensure that their behaviour does not have a negative impact on Cenit College or themselves and conduct responsible behaviour while being a student of Cenit College.
- Ensure they are responsible while representing Cenit College on any occasion including while on work placement or site visits.

3.6.4 Academic Integrity

Cenit College and its wider academic community is built on values that promote honesty, fairness, responsibility, good behaviour and ethics. These principals form the foundation for Academic Integrity. Learners are expected to practice these principals of Academic Integrity while attending Cenit College programmes of study or representing the college in an academic capacity. Learners are expected to:

- Read the examination regulations and not breach them in any way.
- Not present other people's work as their own and acknowledge where the information comes from through citations and other mechanisms. This includes not engaging in plagiarism.
- Ensure all data reported on and information contained in their work is correct and not falsified for their own means.
- Act in an ethical manner in all their academic endeavours.
- Ensure they attend their classes and engage in all required academic activity.

3.7 Types of Misconduct

Cenit Group has defined three types of misconduct:

- Academic misconduct
- General misconduct
- Unlawful misconduct

3.7.1 Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct includes any action or attempted action that may result in creating an unfair academic advantage; this includes plagiarism, copying, possession of unauthorised materials during an assessment and collusion (unauthorised or unattributed collaboration with others in a piece of assessed work).

Academic misconduct can be broken into three broad categories:

- Breaches of Examination Regulations
- Plagiarism
- Other

Breaches of Examination Regulations

Examples of breaches of the Examination Regulations can include the following:

- Copying or cheating in anyway in any examination or assessment.
- Use of notes or notes or other unauthorised material in an examination.
- Use of or intended use of a mobile phone or other electronic device during an examination unless it is authorised to do so.
- Allowing an individual to take an examination on a student's behalf.
- Unauthorised removal of question papers, examination scripts or unauthorised materials from the examination.
- Any other breaches or actions that might jeopardise the integrity of an assessment.

Plagiarism

For details of misconduct under Plagiarism see QA6 Assessment Section 13.4.2 p.64.

Other

Examples of other Academic Misconduct instances include:

- Using falsified Cenit Group documents such as verification of results, final results and certificates etc.
- False data or information as part of an assessment or project.

3.7.2 General Misconduct

This includes a broader set of activities that are not covered under Academic misconduct. The list below includes some examples but is not exhaustive:

- Misuse of IT services and equipment.
- Misuse of controlled substances such as drugs and alcohol along with smoking in non-smoking areas (This is incorporated into the Cenit Health and Safety Policy).
- Refusal to comply with any disciplinary procedures.
- Disruptive behaviour.
- Activities that pose a health and safety risk.
- Behaviour that is violent (including assault), indecent, abusive, threatening or offensive, including bullying, harassment or sexual harassment. This includes behaviour and actions that take place face-to-face, online or through messaging platforms.
- Damage to property.
- Theft or other dishonest behaviour.

3.7.3 Unlawful Misconduct

Where the misconduct is deemed unlawful it will be referred to the Garda Síochána. An internal file will be opened within Cenit College with the notation that it has been referred as such. In such an instance Cenit College reserves the right to suspend a learner pending the outcome of legal proceedings.

3.8 Disciplinary Procedure

This disciplinary procedure applies to the categories of general misconduct listed above. For details of Academic Misconduct disciplinary process (including Plagiarism) please refer to Policy QA 6 Assessment Section 13.5.

Cenit College recognises that there may be incidents that are classified as minor misconduct, and these will be dealt with by the class tutor. In these circumstances the class tutor may call upon the Program Lead for advice. Generally, no disciplinary case is opened for minor misconduct incidents.

1. Reporting the Complaint
 - a. Any alleged incident of misconduct should be reported to the lecturer/tutor, Program Coordinator, or e-Tutor.
 - b. Where it is felt that there is a case of General Misconduct a disciplinary case will be opened by the programme Coordinator. The Learner Misconduct Incident form will be completed along with any evidence to support the incident.
 - c. This will be submitted to the Training Manager.
2. Investigating the Complaint:

The Training Manager will determine that:

 - a. The complaint is justified, and a penalty needs to be applied – in this case the learner is notified and advised of the appeals process. This should be done within 10 working days of the reporting of the incident. The record remains on file for the duration of the learner's studies with the Cenit College and is then closed.
 - b. Further investigation is needed. In this instance the Training Manager will appoint an independent investigator or conduct the investigation themselves. The investigating individual will meet the parties to the complaint. Each party is entitled to bring along a support person. The investigator will prepare a report, including supporting

evidence. Upon consideration of the report, the Training Manager will decide if there is a case to answer to or refer the case for a disciplinary hearing.

- c. The complaint is not an offence.
- d. The complaint is justified and of a magnitude that it should be referred to a disciplinary committee. In all cases that result in the learner having to appear in front of a disciplinary committee, the learner will be notified in writing. This notice will contain a date, time, and venue for the hearing. The hearing is 5 working days after the notice is issued. A copy of the student code of conduct will also accompany this notification. The learner must respond to the notification in writing, stating that they will attend and if there will be a support person accompanying them to the hearing.

Where incidents involve more than one learner the Training Manager may decide to have the entire group attended the same disciplinary hearing. All learners will be given individual notifications and must respond to this notification individually.

3. Disciplinary Hearing:

The disciplinary committee, the learner along with their support person will attend the disciplinary hearing. The disciplinary committee is entitled to go ahead with the hearing if the learner does not attend. The following will take place at the meeting:

- a. The learner will be informed of the purpose of the meeting and asked if they have read the Student Code of Conduct and the alleged complaint.
- b. The learner will be asked if they understand the process. If they do not, then it must be explained to them.
- c. The committee will ask the learner if they accept that this was a misconduct. If so then the appropriate penalty will be applied.
- d. If the learner denies the allegation, then:
 - i. All evidence will be discussed.
 - ii. The committee may ask questions to which the learner should respond.
 - iii. The learner will also have the opportunity to present further submissions.
 - iv. The committee will privately discuss the meeting and the appropriate penalties.
 - v. Decisions taken by the committee are by a simple majority.
 - vi. The meeting can be abandoned where the student or their support person renders compliance with the process impracticable.

The outcome of the disciplinary hearing will be notified to the learner within 5 working days of the date of the hearing. Should the disciplinary committee decide that the allegation is valid then the learner will be notified in writing of the following:

- a. The decision that general misconduct has occurred.
- b. The penalty imposed.
- c. The right to appeal and the appeals timeframe.

3.9 Appeals Procedure

The learner has the right to appeal the decision of the disciplinary process. The procedure is as follows:

1. Appeals should be submitted to the Training Manager using the Appeals form, within 5 working days. The appeal submission should include:

- A completed appeals application form (Appeals Form).
 - Verifiable evidence which addresses the appeal criteria.
 - A fee of €50. In the event of a successful appeal, the fee will be refunded.
2. The Training Manager assesses the application for appeal to establish if it is complete and meets the grounds for an appeal. The learner will be notified if there are grounds for appeal or not.
 3. Where the appeal is considered valid the appeal will be heard by the Appeals Committee. It is at the Chairperson of the Appeals Committee discretion, for learner to be in attendance. See QA1.1 Governance and Management of Quality (Section 1.6.7) for details of the membership, roles, and responsibilities of the Appeals Committee.
 4. The appeal will be considered impartially, (i.e. those reviewing the appeal will not have been directly involved in the original decision) and based on the written submission of the appellant.
 5. The outcome of an appeal should be communicated in writing to an applicant within 15 working days from the date of the appeal was made unless exceptional circumstances arise.
 6. A record will be maintained of the appeal which details, the decision, the rational for that decision and any supporting evidence.
 7. The outcome of the appeal is reported to Managing Director.
 8. The applicant may communicate dissatisfaction with an outcome to the Managing Director whereupon any communication from the Managing Director is final.

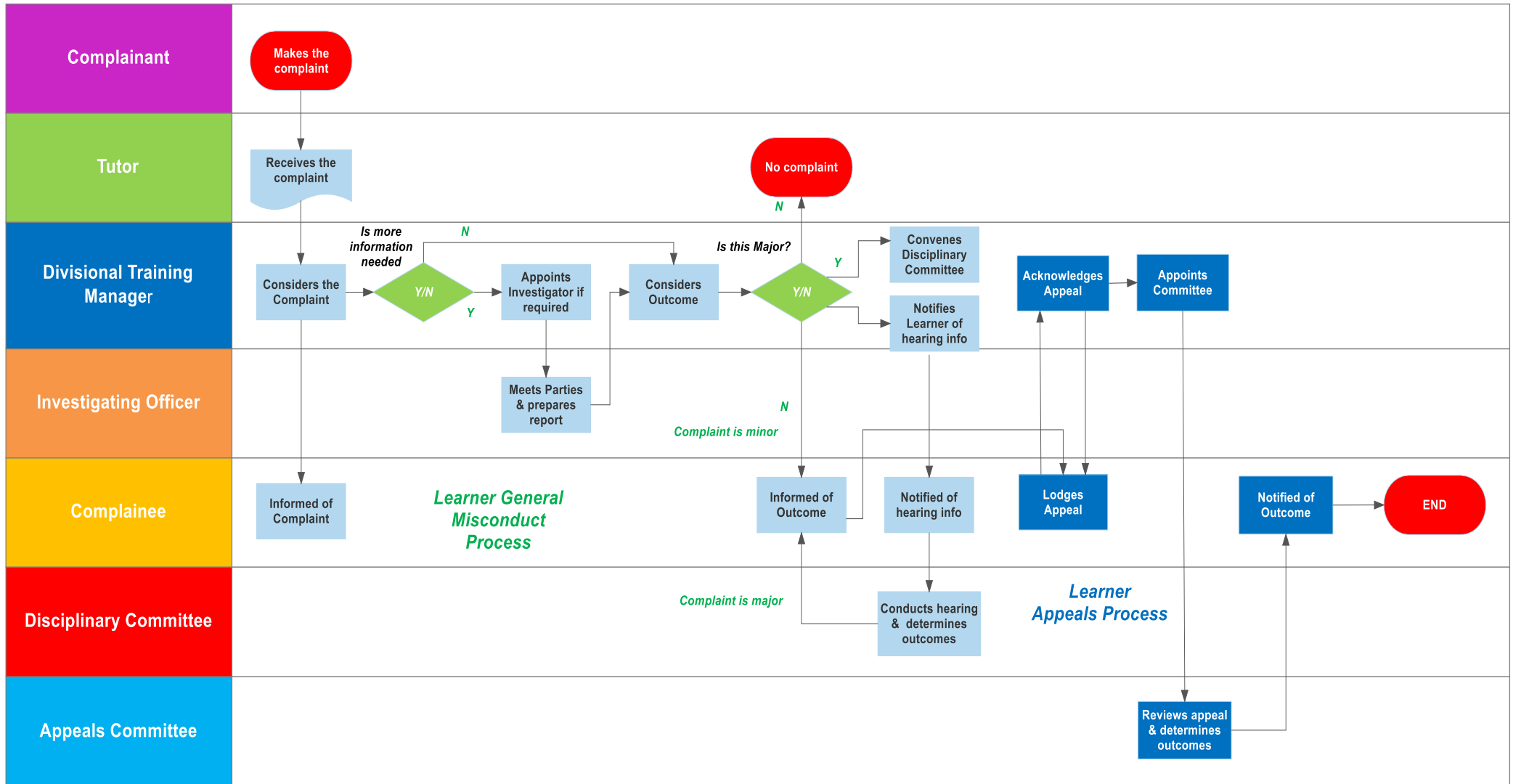


Fig 7.2 General Misconduct Disciplinary and Appeals Process

3.10 Penalties for General Misconduct

The penalty applied is determined by the nature of the misconduct. All communications of the penalties applicable to each incident will be communicated in writing to the learner and will contain the offence and the penalty. The learner will also be reminded of the Learner Code of Conduct in Cenit College. The table below outlines the penalty applied to the level of misconduct. However, the disciplinary committee reserves the right to judge a single incident as a gross misconduct depending on the severity of the incident.

The penalties for general misconduct are detailed in figure 7.3 below:

PENALTIES FOR GENERAL MISCONDUCT

MINOR MISCONDUCT

1st Incident

Written warning & a record of the incident is held internally in Cenit College for the duration of the programme.

2nd Incident

2nd written warning. & A record of the incident is held internally in Cenit College for the duration of the programme.
Learner informed that any further incidents will lead to suspension or expulsion from the programme.

Example of Minor Misconduct

- " Use of abusive language
- " Minor breaches of code of conduct or health & safety
- " Disorderly conduct
- " Minor damage to college property & equipment
- " Violations of class regulations
- " Littering

MAJOR MISCONDUCT

Example of Major Misconduct

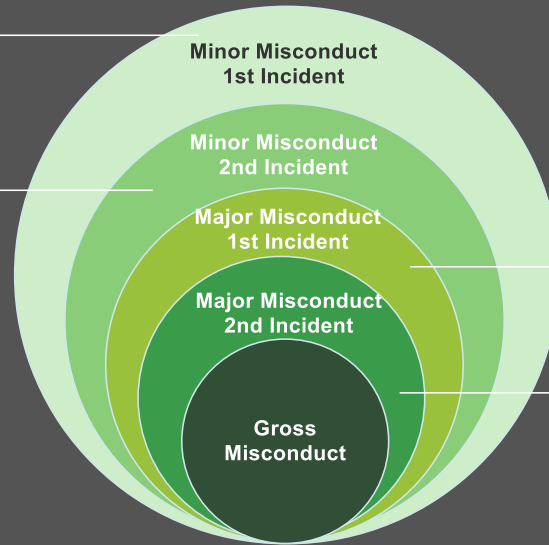
- " Smoking/drinking/drugs on college premises
- " Major breaches of code of conduct or health & safety
- " Major damage to college property & equipment
- " Bullying & Harassment
- " Fighting
- " Theft
- " Repeated minor incidents

1st Incident

Learner will be suspended for two weeks.
A permanent record of the incident is placed on the learners file.

2nd Incident

Learner will be suspended for at least two weeks, depending on the severity of the incident. A permanent record of the incident is placed on the learners file.
Learner may be expelled depending on the severity of the incident.



GROSS MISCONDUCT

The learner will be expelled from the college

Examples of Gross Misconduct

- | | |
|---|---|
| " Repeated major incidents | " Gross indecency/immoral behaviour |
| " Severe breaches of code of conduct or health & safety | " Severe damage to college property & equipment |
| " Intimidation & threatening of college staff, students or visitors | " Forgery and misuse of college documents |
| " Assault | " Possession & supply of illicit drugs |
| " Sexual Harassment | |

Fig 7.3 Penalties for General Misconduct

3.11 Monitoring

Monitoring will occur as part of the annual QA audit to ensure that the procedures are carried out in accordance with the above policy and to ensure currency of the policy.

The monitoring mechanisms will include a review of all incident reports and correspondence along with minutes of the meetings from all the discipline and appeals committees.

4 Version Control

Version	Date	Description	Originator	Approved by
Version 1	20/01/2022	Approval of Policy	QA	Academic Committee
Version 1.1	21/11/2023	3.9 Updated the appeals procedure	QA	Academic Committee