

QMS for Assessment Centres

and conducting of EISA

For Ministerial Training

on NQF levels 2 and 5

Administered by the ACRP

**(Association of Christian Religious Practitioners)**

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12. **INTRODUCTION**

**The National Certificate for Ministerial Training** on NQF levels 2 --- 5 is administered by the Association of Christian Religious Practitioners (ACRP) as the registered Assessment Quality Partner (AQP) with the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO).

**The Quality Council for Trades and Occupations** (QCTO) was established in terms of the Skills Development Act, Act No. 97 of 1998 as amended. In terms of section 26(H) of this Act, the QCTO is responsible for the quality assurance of occupational standards and qualifications and learning in and for the workplace.

The QCTO’s vision is to qualify a skilled and capable workforce.

The QCTO’s mission is to effectively and efficiently manage the occupational qualifications sub-framework in order to set standards, develop and quality assure national occupational qualifications for all who want a trade or occupation, and where appropriate, a profession. The QCTO sets standards through the model of qualifications, the provisioning as well as the assessment, which includes the EISA. The final External Integrated Summative Assessment (EISA) is conducted by an approved Assessment Quality Partner (AQP).

The purpose of **the final External Integrated** **Summative Assessment** (EISA) is to allow for qualifying learners to become officially recognised as practitioners of a particular trade or occupation.

The EISA is the final assessment developed and moderated by the Assessment Quality Partner (AQP) to assess learners’ competence in the compulsory components namely Knowledge, Practical and Workplace in a particular occupational qualification. The final assessment integrates all modules and is based on the Exit Level Outcomes (ELOs) of the qualification. The AQP will determine the most suitable form of assessment to assess the learner’s ability to do the job. The QCTO may perform sample external moderation of assessment instruments prior to the scheduled assessment date.

In managing and conducting the final EISA, the AQP must comply with the basic quality assurance principles of: Planning, Doing, Reviewing and Controlling.

The external assessment processes and instruments must be found to:

* Be fair, reliable, valid, ethical and transparent
* Be consistent across time, place and role players
* Deal effectively with assessment appeals and complaints
* Use assessment strategies and methods that are fit-for-purpose, and include a consistent level of higher cognitive challenges
* Be of the right design and implemented correctly at accredited assessment centres

The QCTO will ensure that the occupational qualifications are credibly assessed through the final External Integrated Summative Assessment (EISA). For the QCTO to issue certificates to qualifying learners, it has to satisfy itself that the relevant AQP has complied with all the quality assurance requirements stipulated in this document.

Each Assessment Quality Partner (AQP) is responsible for the development, organisation and implementation of the final External Integrated Summative Assessment (EISA).

**2 ACCREDITATION AND FUNCTIONS OF ASSESSMENT CENTRES**

The EISA process is managed by accredited Assessment Centres

**2.1 Criteria for the accreditation of assessment centres**

* The QCTO will accredit an entity as an assessment centre for a specified occupational qualification or part qualification if recommended by an AQP and if that entity satisfies the criteria listed below.
* The entity must:

a) be a juristic person registered or established in terms of South African law;

b) have a valid tax clearance certificate issued by the South African Revenue Service if applicable;

c) have a suitable and compliant MIS in accordance with QCTO specifications;

d) be safe, secure and accessible to candidates;

e) meet the relevant standards for occupational health and safety;

f) have the required physical resources (e.g. venue; equipment, machinery or protective clothing), specified by the AQP to assess learners’ competence regarding the occupational qualification or part qualification;

g) have appropriately qualified human resources as specified by the AQP; and

h) make provision for any other requirements specified for the relevant trade, occupational qualification or part qualification

**2.2 The Responsibilities of Assessment Quality** **Partner (AQP)**

* AQP advertise and/or identify institutions or individuals who have the necessary capacities to fulfil the functions of an Assessment Centre as specified in this document;
* AQP recommends the accreditation of Assessment Centres to QCTO;
* AQP enters into a contract with the Assessment Centres to fulfil the specified functions;
* AQP negotiates the budget for the operations of the Assessment Centres;
* AQP monitors the functions of the Assessment Centres on a continues basis;
* AQP may recommend the cancellation of the accreditation of Assessment Centres that do not function according to its contract;
* AQP reports on Assessment Centres’ operations and EISA results to QCTO.
	1. **Responsibilities of an Assessment Centre**
* An assessment centre must:

a) assess the occupational qualification or part qualification in accordance with the standards set by the delegated AQP;

b) comply with the QCTO and AQP assessment policies and procedures;

c) conduct integrated external summative assessments in accordance with the AQP requirements;

d) adhere to standards set by the AQP in order to maintain accreditation;

e) enter into a formal agreement with the relevant AQP;

f) if also a training provider, provide an assessment area separate from the training area;

g) only allow candidates registered for assessment and assessment practitioners conducting the assessment into the assessment area;

h) ensure that candidates are not assessed or moderated by the facilitator responsible for their training; and

i) have appropriately qualified human resources to conduct assessments as specified by the AQP.

**2.4 The functions of an Assessment Centre are**

* To arrange and conduct EISA occasions;
* To assure that EISA procedures are legitimate;
* To manage the assessment of EISA answer papers;
* To conduct or to arrange for the conduction of assessment and moderation of EISA answer papers;
* To report EISA results to AQP.
1. **PREPARATION FOR EISA SESSIONS**
	1. **Preparation of learners for EISA**
* Only learners who have successfully completed all modules of the relevant Learning Program offered by accredited Skills Development Providers (SDPs) may sit for the EISA.
* Learners may be awarded credits for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) competencies against the required Knowledge, Practical and Workplace components of the qualification. RPL is conducted by the SDP according to the standards and procedures prescribed by the AQP and forms part of the SoR issued by the SDP.
* SDPs have to report and give evidence to the Assessment Centre of RPL awarded to a particular learner at the completion of each module for which RPL was awarded.
* The Assessment Centre must arrange with an assessor to verify the RPL before it can be awarded to a learner.
* SDPs must supply learners with all relevant information concerning an upcoming EISA, including payment of fees, place and time and travel arrangements, assessment procedures, appeals procedures; and RPL arrangements;
* SDPs must registering learners who are to sit for EISA with AQP/Assessment Centres at least three months ahead of time;
* SDPs must in the meantime prepare their learners for the EISA, using the sample copy of the EISA paper that is published on the ACRP-AQP website;
* SDPs have to see that all SoR’s are published on the ACRP’s database and that all learners have paid their EISA fees at least 14 days ahead of the EISA date;
	1. **Functions of AQP in Preparation for EISA sessions**
* In February of each year AQP publishes two dates for upcoming EISA sessions, one in the middle of the year and one towards the end of the year;
* Three months before a published date, AQP informs the Assessment Centre of the areas and numbers of learners who have applied for EISA;
* AQP requests the relevant Assessment Centres to arrange for EISA sites and to appoint invigilators for each site.
	1. **Functions of the Assessment Centres in Preparation for EISA sessions**

**3.3.1 The Assessment Centre identifies and arranges for convenient assessment sites,** considering:

* the geographical distribution of EISA candidates;
* the number of candidates: ideal number for a particular site is between 10 and 20;
* the availability of public transport and accommodation if relevant;
* the availability of facilities required: convenient venue with desks, lighting, electricity if necessary;
* the availability of qualified invigilators;

**3.3.2 The Assessment Centre makes arrangements with identified assessment sites**:

* Assessment Centres are advised to compile a list of possible assessment sites beforehand;
* The Assessment Centre may request SPDs to assist in identifying convenient sites;
* The facilities of SPDs may be used where possible;
* The date, time and facilities required must be agreed upon with the management of the assessment site;
* In case financial compensation has to be paid for the use of the facility, it must be negotiated in fair terms;
* An agreement or contract regarding the use of the facilities must be signed with the management of the site;

**3,3,3 The Assessment Centre makes arrangements with the invigilator**:

* Competent invigilators must be identified immediately after particular Assessment Sites have been contracted;
* Assessment Centres are advised to compile a list of possible invigilators beforehand;
* Staff members of SPDs may act as invigilators, provided that they are not the facilitator of the particular candidates;
* It is advisable to use the same invigilators repeatedly for EISA, because that minimizes the need for training;
* If possible the same invigilator can be used at more than one assessment site. This will imply that EISA sessions may need to be held on different dates in different locations;
* Invigilators have to be informed of their duties and responsibilities in preparation for and the execution of the EISA session (see 4.2 below);
* In case there are candidates with disabilities, the invigilators have to be informed accordingly. For illiterate or blind candidates additional invigilators who can read the questions to candidates need to be appointed. Where invigilators have to write answers on behalf of candidates, the number of invigilators must be increased;
* The invigilators have to be contracted accordingly. This must include clauses on confidentiality and non-conflict of interest.

**3,3,4 The Assessment Centre notifies the relevant SPDs** and their learners as soon as the assessment sites were finalized of the following:

* The date time and place of the assessment site where the learners will be assessed. Candidates have to arrive at the assessment site at least 1 hour before the official start time. Candidates who arrive less than 15 minutes before start time will not be allowed to write. They will have to enrol again for the next EISA session;
* All relevant physical arrangements, like the availability or not of accommodation and the cost thereof;
* That candidates are responsible for all their travelling and other costs to attend an EISA
* That candidates have to assure that the fees to sit for EISA have to be paid beforehand and that candidates should present proof of payment at the assessment site, without which they will not be allowed to write;
* That candidates have to present their ID’s as proof of identity at the assessment site;
* The rules and ethics of EISA;
* That candidates have to prepare themselves for the EISA;
1. **OPPERATION OF ASSESSMENT SITES**

**4.1 Functions of the Assessment Centre**:

* The EISA question paper that was prepared by AQP for the particular EISA must be obtained from AQP;
* Enough copies of the paper must be made for the different assessment sites;
* The necessary record keeping documents, like an attendance register to be signed by candidates and other record keeping instruments to be completed and signed by the invigilators have to be included along with the question papers in the documentation sent to invigilators;
* Papers and documentation have to be packed in such a way that the record documentation can be removed from the parcel without opening the question papers;
* The documentation sent to invigilators must be mailed by registered post to reach the relevant invigilators at least 5 working days ahead of the assessment date; The invigilators have to be supplied with the tracking number of the posted item;
* In case it is agreed with an invigilator that copies can be made on site, papers may be sent electronically. All necessary precautions have to be made to ensure top confidentiality;
* Assessment centres have to insure that all question papers along with all completed answer papers and other documentation are being mailed by the invigilators by registered post to reach the Assessment Centre within 5 working days after the assessment;
* Assessment centres have to insure that invigilators and assessment sites are paid as per contract.

**4.2** **Functions of Invigilators**:

* The invigilators must ensure that they have received the relevant documentation for conducting the EISA in time. If the documentation has not been received 4 working days ahead of the assessment date, the invigilator must enquire from the Post Office about the status of the document. If need be, the Assessment Centre must also be contacted in order to assure that the question papers are received in time;
* The invigilator must contact the management of the assessment venue two days before the set date to assure the availability and readiness of the venue;
* In case there are candidates with disabilities, invigilators have to make the necessary arrangements. For illiterate or blind candidates to whom questions have to be read, a separate venue must be arranged where they can be assessed without disturbing the rest of the candidates. In case invigilators have to write answers on behalf of candidates, additional venues must be arranges where each candidate can be accommodated individually.
* On the day of the EISA the invigilator must arrive at the venue at least one and a half hour before he published start time;
* Before candidates arrive the invigilator has to assure that everything is in place, that there are enough desks and other equipment available;
* Desks in the assessment venue must be arranged so that there is at least one meter distance in all directions between desks;
* It is advisable that invigilators take extra pens in case need arises;
* The invigilator must remove the documentation from the parcel without opening the question papers;
* As candidates arrive, their identities and proof of payment must be checked and ticked off on the attendance register and they have to sign the register; (Addendum 1)
* Candidates must arrive at the assessment site at least 1 hour before the official start time. Candidates who arrive less than 15 minutes before start time will not be allowed to write. They have to sign an acknowledgement of late arrival along with the invigilator and two independent witnesses; (Addendum 2)
* Candidates must be seated 15 minutes before the start time and the invigilator must explain procedures,
* That cell phones must be put off and all possible incriminatory material be removed;
* Announce the duration of the session, including start and end time;
* That once question papers were handed out, total silence must be kept and no communication of whatever nature between candidates may occur;
* That no illegal action will be tolerated. If a candidate is found to be acting suspiciously, he/she will be warned by the invigilator;
* That when a candidate is caught in committing any illegal act, he/she will be asked to hand in his/her answer paper and to leave the venue. He/she must wait outside till after the assessment session for further procedures;
* That candidates have the right of launching a complaint about procedures immediately after the assessment session;
* That candidates have the right of appeal against steps taken against them or against assessment results within 10 days after the outcome has been communicated to the candidate;
* That candidates must read questions properly and make sure that they answer what is asked as concisely and to the point as possible;
* That candidates must raise a hand when anything on the question paper is unclear. In that case the invigilator will come and explain what is unclear. If the issue is of such a nature that all candidates will benefit from the explanation, the invigilator will do so in the group at large.
* That candidates may leave the venue only after they have finished the answer paper. No one will be allowed to leave before at least half the time set for the paper has passed.
* That candidates will be informed of the time left 15 and again 5 minutes before the cut off time;
* That candidates must hand in their answer papers as well as the question papers when they leave the venue.
* Opportunity for questions of clarifications must be allowed;
* Question papers are then opened in the presence of the candidates;
* Question and answer papers are handed out and candidates may start writing immediately;
* The invigilator must continuously move amongst the candidates while they are writing;
* When a candidate raises his/her hand the invigilator must go and enquire what is at hand. When need be the invigilator must explain what is unclear. If the issue is of such a nature that all candidates will benefit from the explanation, the invigilator must do so in the group at large.
* Cases of misconduct must be handled as described below (par 5);
* After the session the invigilator must make sure that all question and answer papers were handed in and kept safely;
* In case more than one paper has to be written on the same day, ample time should be allowed between sessions, at least two hours if possible;
* Candidates who wish to launce complaints must be given opportunity to do so in writing and sign it along with the invigilator; (Addendum 3)
* Candidates who are accused of misconduct must give the invigilator opportunity to put the complaint in writing. He/she must then sign it along with the invigilator;
* The invigilator must complete and sign the quality control checklist; (Addendum 5)
* The invigilator must then complete and sign the report form; (Addendum 6)
* All documents along with question and answer papers must be put in a sealed envelope and mailed by registered post to the Assessment Centre within two working days after the assessment.
1. **HANDLING OF IRREGULARITIES[[1]](#footnote-1) AND APPEALS**

**5.1: Appeals received from Service Provider level:**

* Appeals by learners on the assessment and assessment process or other irregularities on Service Provider level must be handled by the Assessment Centre;
* The Assessment Centre must make sure that all necessary steps have been taken internally with the SDPs to resolve the matter;
* In case of issues relating to assessment, the Assessment Centre must appoint assessors to investigate and make a final ruling;
* The Assessment Centre must communicate the final ruling to the parties involved and keep written records of the process and ruling;
* In case of issues relating to the conduct of SDPs, the Assessment Centre must report it to the AQP;

**5.2: Appeals received from EISA level:** (Addendum 3);

* Appeals by learners on the assessment and assessment process at the EISA must be investigated by the Assessment Centre;
* The Assessment Centre must make the necessary enquiries from the invigilator in question and allow him/her to respond in writing;
* The Assessment Centre must appoint two assessors to give independent views on the complaint and the response of the invigilator;
* The Assessment Centre must communicate the final ruling to the parties involved and keep written records of the process and ruling;
* The Assessment Centre must report the matter to the AQP for a final ruling;

**5.3: Reports of misconduct by candidates at EISA level:** (Addendum 4);

* Reports of late arrival at EISA and resulting refusal to sit for EISA must be verified by the Assessment Centre and forwarded to AQP;
* Reports of misconduct by candidates at EISA must be forwarded by the Assessment Centre to AQP who is to handle the matter;
1. **CONDUCTING ASSESSMENT OF EISA SCRIPTS**

Assessment is the process resulting in the judgement of a learner’s achievements in accordance with the outcomes required by learning programs

**6.1** **Preparation for assessment of scripts**:

* Assessment Centres are advised to compile a list of possible assessors beforehand;
* Once the number and level of candidates who are to sit for the EISA is known, the Assessment Centre must appoint enough competent assessors;
* Assessors must comply with the criteria below (6.3);
* Staff members of the Assessment Centre or staff from Service Providers may be contracted, provided that the Assessors are independent, that is: they have no relation with the candidates or their SDPs;
* The time frame for completion of assessments must be agree on with Assessors;
* A Contract which includes a commitment to the criteria for Assessors, must be signed with each Assessor;
* Assessment Centres must conduct memorandum discussions (including pre-marking) for all assessments prior to the commencement of the marking of assessments. This is to ensure standardization and consistency across the board between assessors;

**6.2 Administration and Procedures**

* On receipt of assessment scripts, the responsible administrative officer at the Assessment Centre must verify the contents of parcel, check that all documentation has been duly completed and that the scripts correspond to the names on the register of attendance;
* In case of any discrepancies or irregularities, the invigilator must be contacted immediately per phone to discuss the problem. The Assessment Centre officer must compile a report, stating the complaint and the measures taken to rectify it. The report must be filed along with the relevant documentation and the invigilator must be supplied with a copy.
* The assessment scripts, the memorandum and relevant documentation must be dispatched to the Assessors in a secure manner;

**6.3** **Criteria for Assessors**:

* External assessors must have at least an NQF level 6 qualification in Theology or equivalent;
* External assessors must have at least three years proven experience in Christian Ministry;
* External assessors must successfully complete an assessors training programme recognised by the Assessment Quality partner.
* Assessors must be people of integrity who will be honest, fair, objective, consistent and meticulous in their judgment;
* Assessors must assess according to the memorandum, but with proper discretion;
* Assessors are responsible for judging the competence of a learner in meeting required standards;
* Assessors must have a thorough knowledge of the field and material contents of the subject to be assessed as well as the required standards;
* Assessors must be able to detect plagiarism, evaluate logic and relevancy of answers;

**6.4** **Assessment procedures:**

* It is advisable that Assessors mark a particular section of all the EISA scripts before proceeding to the next section. This will serve consistency in evaluation and help to detect where there are problem areas in the knowledge and performance of candidates;
* Assessors must be informed of the disabilities of particular candidates and have to take that into consideration with discretion;
* Assessors must adhere to the memorandum and constantly keep the outcomes for the particular section in mind;
* Assessors must identify lack of clarity, shortcomings and problems in the way that questions were formulated and in the memorandum. They must communicate that in writing to AQP via the Assessment Centre and make suggestions for improvement;
* Assessors should cross-check their own assessments to enhance consistency;
* Assessors must fill out the relevant score sheets and report forms and sign it;
* Assessors must return all scripts, memoranda and report documents to the Assessment Centre within the agreed timeframe.
* Assessment Centre must check that all items were returned and properly completed.
1. **CONDUCTING MODERATION**

Moderation is the process which ensures that assessment of prescribed outcomes was conducted in a reliable and accurate manner and that all processes were executed according to quality assurance standards

**7.1** **Preparation for Moderation**:

* Assessment Centres are advised to compile a list of possible Moderators beforehand;
* Once the number and level of candidates who are to sit for the EISA is known, the Assessment Centre must appoint enough competent Moderators;
* Moderators must comply with the criteria as those for Assessors (6.3);
* Staff members of the Assessment Centre or staff from Service Providers may be contracted, provided that the Moderators are independent, that is: they have no relation with the candidates or their SDPs or were not involved in the assessment process;
* The time frame for completion of assessments must be agree on with Moderators;
* A Contract which includes a commitment to the criteria for Moderators, must be signed with each Moderator;
* Assessment Centres must conduct briefing sessions with Moderators before moderation is done;
* The assessment scripts, the memorandum and relevant documentation must be dispatched to Moderators in a secure manner;

**7.2: Moderation procedures:**

**7.2.1: Moderation of assessment scripts:**

* The moderator has to moderate the assessment documents of the learning group that was assessed by the assessor and thus monitor consistency of assessment records:
* The following is a guide to the number of scripts to be moderated.

If less than 10 – > 100 %

If less than 100 –> 25 %

Above 100 –> 10 %

* The moderator must make sure that assessments done by assessors are complying with the standard of the curriculum; that assessors’ judgements are consistent across the spectrum; that it is fair and reliable;
* The moderator must verify the results awarded by the assessor;
* In relevant cases the moderator must make recommendations in writing to via the Assessment Centre for the re-assessment of learners;

**7.2.2: Moderation of assessment processes:**

* Moderators must evaluate performance of assessors; in case the moderator disagrees with the assessor’s judgement or procedures, reasons for disagreement must be specified and documented;
* Moderators must give advice to assessors and make suggestions for the improvement of assessment documents and evaluations;
* The moderator must report to AQP on the level of competence of assessors and, where applicable, make recommendations for their re-training or removal as assessors;
* Moderators must examine all reports by invigilators and assessors to verify the credibility and quality of the whole EISA process;.
* Where need be, investigations must be conducted;
* Moderators must make suggestions for the improvement of processes where need be;
* In case of irregularities are of the nature that it jeopardise the validity of the assessment or the EISA, the Moderator must immediately report it to AQP via the Assessment Centre;
* Moderators must handle appeals against assessment results or processes.
* Moderators must complete and sign the relevant documents to verify that the EISA complied with quality criteria and forwarded it to AQP via the Assessment Centre, along with all assessment papers and other documents.
1. **REPORT OF RESULTS**
* The SDPs keep a record of the results of internal assessments and publish Statement of Results (SoR) on the AQP/ACRP database;
* AQP informs the Assessment Centres of the candidates who acquired all SoRs and thus qualify for EISA;
* The Assessment Centres record the final EISA results after assessment and moderation processes have been completed;
* The Assessment Centres forward the final EISA results to AQP;
* AQP keeps a record of the results and evidence of the final EISA;
* AQPs report all final learner achievements to the QCTO for certification within 21 working days from the date the EISA was conducted, in the format determined by the QCTO.
1. **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

The operation of Assessment Centres and EISA carry financial consequences:

* Administration of all processes by the Assessment Centres;
* Remuneration of Assessment Centres staff, of invigilators, assessors and moderators;
* Hiring of Assessment sites;

**Procedures**:

* Assessment Centres must present and negotiate a budget to AQP;
* AQP includes this budget as part of its budget that is presented to ACRP;
* Once the number of candidates, of Assessment Sites, invigilators, assessors and moderators for a particular EISA session has been determined, the Assessment Centre applies for the amount required for that session;
* At the end of the financial year Assessment Centres must give full financial report to AQP and refund surplus or claim for shortfalls.
1. **QUALITY MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES**

All parties, the SDPs, Assessment Centres, invigilators, Assessors, Moderators and AQP must comply with all the quality management procedures as it is stated in this document. When any party is found to have violated these procedures, QCTO may withdraw its accreditation.

**11 Addenda**

Documentation to be included in the package sent to invigilators at assessment sites for EISA

1. Question and answer papers according to the number of candidates.
2. Table of responsibilities, including announcements and explanation of procedures to candidates (as also contained in the contract with invigilators). **P 2**
3. An attendance register **(Addendum 1) P 5**
4. An acknowledgement of late arrival (**Addendum 2) P 7**
5. Register of candidate’s complaints (**Addendum 3) P 9**
6. Register of misconduct (A**ddendum 4) P 10**
7. A quality assurance check sheet (**Addendum 5) P 11**

Invigilator’s report template; (**Addendum 6) P 12**

1. An irregularity refers to any event, act or omission and any alleged event, act or omission, which may undermine or threaten to undermine the standard, integrity, credibility, security, or the fairness of the assessment and assessment process and its resultant outcomes. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)