

Assessor Code of Practice

1. Introduction

The Institute of Customer Service is the independent, professional membership body for customer service in the United Kingdom. This Code of Practice for Assessors sets out the standards of conduct, behaviour and competence to which those who have been accredited to assess Institute qualifications are expected to adhere. Where an individual is approved to undertake assessments in relation to Institute qualifications, they agree that such approval is conditional upon their acceptance to be bound by the requirements of this Code.

2. Breach

Evidence of a breach of this Code by Assessors will in most cases trigger a supporting review between The Institute and the Assessor in question. Assessors will be supported towards compliance and The Institute will provide advice where necessary to enable requirements to be met. However where an Assessor repeatedly breaches the requirements of this Code or fails to respond to Institute correspondence relating to such a breach, The Institute reserves the right to withdraw approval or accreditation.

3. Scope

This Code applies to all Institute approved Assessors in the course of their assessment of any Institute qualification.

4. Review

This Code will be reviewed annually.

5. The Code of Practice for Assessors

As an Institute Assessor you agree that you will:

A1 Ensure that you have undertaken the necessary Institute Assessor training and have the requisite skills to act as an Institute Assessor.

A1G: You may not undertake any assessment in relation to an Institute qualification (either combined or single) until you have completed The Institute Assessor training programme. You will need to achieve single sign off from The Institute in order to undertake single qualification assessments and full accreditation if you wish to undertake combined qualification assessments. Every reasonable effort should be made to achieve single sign off within 4/6 weeks of attending day two of the Assessor Development Workshop and accreditation within 6/8 weeks of gaining single sign off.

A2 Ensure that all assessments are carried out with objectivity and will not allow any personal or financial interest to influence the conduct of, or decisions made in Institute qualification assessments.

A2G: This requirement applies in relation to all assessments whether internal or external. All conflicts of interest should be declared using The Institute Conflict of Interest Declaration Form. A conflict of interest may arise in any situation where an Assessor's personal or professional experience has the potential to bias (either positively or negatively) the assessment outcome of any individual. As a general rule, you should not assess qualifications sought by individuals with whom you have a close personal, social or familial connection or in relation to whom there is any direct line management or coaching relationship.

A3 Undertake Continuous Professional Development (CPD) each year, including attending at least one Institute Assessor Forum event each year, in order to keep your professional knowledge and understanding up to date.

A3G: Continuous Professional Development (CPD) may be undertaken in a variety of ways, including seminars, conferences, training courses, refresher training, lectures, peer evaluation and private study of relevant materials such as journals and articles. The Institute produces research, the private study of which is capable of constituting CPD for the purposes of A3. This research can be downloaded from our website. It is recommended that you undertake at least 7-10 hours of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) each year which should comprise a mix of CPD relevant to your:

- skills as an Assessor and;
- customer service knowledge and skills.

You should keep a log of all your CPD activity which may need to be produced or referenced for the purposes of complying with Institute quality assurance processes. You must attend at least one Institute Forum event each year which constitutes 5 hours of CPD. Details of these fora can be found by visiting The Institute website. CPD will be monitored via The Institute's quality assurance process.

A4 Undertake Institute qualification assessments regularly.

A4G: The Institute strongly recommends that Assessors undertake at least 4 assessments each year to maintain skills and keep practice up to date. Assessments may be undertaken at any point during but should be as evenly spread as possible. In order to maintain quality and integrity of the assessment decision, Assessors should not usually undertake more than 4 assessments in 1 day.

A5 Comply with all Institute Assessor quality assurance processes on request.

A5G: The Institute reserves the right to contact you for the purpose of quality assuring your performance as an Assessor. Such processes may include (but are not limited to) review of your CPD log, review of the quality of your feedback, a sample of your assessment decisions, professional discussion and/or assessment observation. You should ensure that you comply fully with all quality assurance processes in order to protect the integrity of your assessments and Institute qualifications. A failure to comply with Institute quality assurance processes could result in your Assessor approval or accreditation being withdrawn.

A6 Protect the reputation of The Institute and avoid acting in any way which could bring The Institute into disrepute.

A6G: In the course of assessing any Institute qualification, you are a representative of The Institute and its professional standards. Your assessment work should be carried out with professionalism, integrity and objectivity in order to preserve both your professional reputation and that of The Institute as the national standards body for the field. Examples of behaviour or conduct which could bring The Institute into disrepute include: permitting plagiarism, assisting candidates in completing assessments, assessing in cases where there is a clear conflict of interest, and behaving in a discriminatory or unfair way. Should The Institute be made aware of behaviour contravening this requirement a full investigation will be conducted and, if proved, approval to assess Institute qualification/s may be withdrawn.

A7 Ensure that any personal data gathered, held or processed in the course of undertaking Institute assessment work, is dealt with in accordance with the provisions of relevant data protection legislation.

A7G: You are responsible for ensuring that any personal data entrusted to you is properly secured and not disclosed without the permission of the data subject. You should ensure that all assessment documentation is filed securely and once it is not needed anymore it is securely destroyed. In all your assessment work you should ensure that you follow your organisation's data protection policy and processes. The Institute requires that assessment documentation is securely kept by Assessors for a minimum period of 2 years, linked to the duration of The Institute's quality assurance cycle. For general advice and guidance on data protection you may wish to visit the Information Commissioner's Office website.

A8 Keep proper records of all assessments you have undertaken including the outcome and ensure these are made available on request by The Institute for the purposes of auditing or quality assurance.

A8G: You should ensure that you keep a record of each assessment you undertake in relation to an Institute qualification including, as a minimum, details of: candidate name, qualification/s undertaken, assessment timescales and outcome, date of assessment and rationale for your assessment decision. The Institute requires that assessment documentation is securely kept by Assessors for a minimum period of 2 years, linked to the duration of The Institute's quality assurance cycle. You should also keep notes of your QA review/s.

A9 Ensure that assessments are undertaken in accordance with equality legislation including the Equality Act 2010.

A9G: You must ensure that all assessment activity is undertaken fairly and without prejudice or discrimination. Assessments should be open to all eligible candidates and Assessors should be mindful of the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and other equal opportunities legislation. Where appropriate reasonable adjustments for disabled people should be made using your organisation's reasonable adjustments policy and process. The Institute's own Inclusive Access policy can be found at <https://www.instituteofcustomerservice.com/media/pdf/inclusive-access-policy-april2017-2153.pdf>.

A10 Inform The Institute of any major changes affecting your work as an Assessor for Institute qualifications, including notifying The Institute when you cease to act as an Assessor.

A10G: You will need to notify The Institute of any major changes to your circumstances affecting your status as an Institute Assessor. Such changes include:

- Change of employer or job role.
- Change of name or contact details.
- Ceasing to act as an Assessor (either temporarily or permanently).