**TIPPERARY ETB EXTERNAL AUTHENTICATOR CONTRACT**

**Provider:** Tipperary Education and Training Board

**Address:** Head Office, Church Road, Nenagh, Co Tipperary

**Telephone:** [Relevant Contact No. to be inserted here]

**External Authenticator:** [Name to be inserted here]

**Date(s) of Authentication:** [Date(s) to be inserted here]

**Awards being Authenticated:** [Names and Codes of awards being authenticated to be inserted here]

The role of the External Authenticator (EA) is to provide independent authentication of fair and consistent assessment of learners in line with QQI requirements and National Standards.

**The EA’s remuneration includes the following:**

* Exercising the role with utmost integrity and professionalism when undertaking external authentication
* Communicating appropriately with Tipperary ETB
* Complying with QQI’s policies and procedures, specifically in relation to awards and assessment
* Complying with Tipperary ETB’s policies and procedures
* Performing External Authentication on the agreed date(s) of **[insert date here]**
* Providing constructive feedback to Tipperary ETB
* Providing, **within** **2 working days** of carrying out the duties of an EA in this centre, a signed external authentication report based on an independent evaluation of the process and procedures
* Adhering to the guidelines on the following pages

**EA Payment:**

Upon completion of the above contract:

* Remuneration will be paid to the EA in line with the Department of Education & Skills Recommended Rate
* A subsistence rate of €14.01 will be paid for any period over 5 hours and a rate of €33.61 will be paid for any period over 10 hours
* Travel will be paid as per current circular letter

**Please note:**

External Authentication will normally take place between normal working hours, Monday to Friday.

**Should any of the points listed above, or in the following EA Guidelines, not be implemented or adhered to, this may result in the payment to the EA being delayed or affected.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
External Authenticator On Behalf of Tipperary ETB

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Tipperary ETB is now required to operate PAYE/PRSI/USC system on payments made through Tipperary ETB. EAs will be required to complete a TETB Employee Starter form and PRD10 form.*

**TIPPERARY ETB EXTERNAL AUTHENTICATOR GUIDELINES**

**SECTION 1: THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE EA VISIT**

1. Confirming Arrangements: EAs are asked **to contact** *EACH* centre that they will be visiting **to confirm arrangements** about the date of their visit, as well as agreeing a time for the EA to access the building.
2. Changing Arrangements: In the case where an EA **needs to make a change** to agreed arrangements made with a centre, the EA **should contact** the affected centre **as soon as possible** to confirm new arrangements. EAs should not rely on one centre to contact another on their behalf.
3. Specific Requests: If EAs have **specific requests** in relation to the **layout** of assessment related documentation, they are asked to **discuss these** with the centre in a timely manner.
4. Meeting on Arrival: EAs, **on arrival** at the first centre, **will be met** by a designated person who will review the EA Contract and Guidelines and confirm details on the volume of work and the expected duration of the visit. Where there are multi-centre visits, EA’s will be met by a designated person from each centre to verbally highlight key duties and again to confirm details on the volume of work and the expected duration of the visit.
5. Exit Meeting: EAs are asked to meet with the centre designate before departure.

**SECTION 2: EA RELATED DOCUMENTATION**

1. Availability of Assessment Documentation: All relevant assessment documentation will be available **in the centre**. It will not be forwarded to the EA prior to the visit.

**SECTION 3: EA SIGNATURES**

1. Required Signatures: The EA must sign the following documentation:
   1. The EA **Contract**
   2. The **Authentication Report** by Learner Group by Minor Award Results sheet(s) for *each* class group being moderated. Where there is more than one Authentication Report by Learner Group by Minor Award Results sheet, the EA is reminded to sign each sheet relating to that class group and component
   3. The **Internal Verification** **Report** for the class group and component being moderated by the EA. In signing this report the EA is authenticating the findings and outcomes of the Internal Verifier
   4. The **External Authentication Report – the receipt of the EA Report by email will constitute an electronic signature**
   5. The **Learner Marking Sheet** for any portfolio s/he has moderated
   6. The EA **Sign-In and Out Record**

**SECTION 4: MODERATING THE ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

1. Provision of Equipment: Appropriate equipment to moderate assessment evidence produced in a multi-media format will be **provided where required**.
2. Sampling Strategy: TETB’s sampling **strategy must be applied** (See Appendix A).
3. Grade Changes: Where a learner has achieved a mark that is borderline between grades the EA is asked not toautomatically **upgrade or downgrade** the learner’s work. Tipperary ETB’s marking guidelines recommend that where a learner attains a mark that places them borderline between grades, that the assessor reviews the QQI Grading Criteria to confirm that the grade assigned is in line with the standard of work produced. Where the assessor identifies an anomaly, a review of the marking of the learner’s work must take place.
4. No Evidence = No Marks: EAs are asked to abide by the proviso that “**no evidence = no marks**”, as is recommended practice advised to assessors. The EA should, however, confirm with the appropriate personnel **that the evidence is/is not available** before implementation.
5. Changes to Learner Marks: Changes should only be made to learner’s marks in cases where the EA has noted a **totting error** or where the change to the learner’s marks is **to facilitate a change to the learner’s grade**.
6. Following Moderation: Once assessment material and documentation has been viewed, EAs are asked to return all the documentation and portfolios, in exactly the **same arrangement as it was presented**.

**SECTION 5: FEEDBACK**

1. Verbal Feedback to Assessors: EAs are required to provide verbal feedback to assessors and other appropriate staff, if requested by the centre. This would be particularly helpful for new assessors and/or where there are grade changes made or where issues have arisen around how the learners are assessed and/or their work marked.
2. Document Verbal Feedback: Where verbal feedback is given, a record of this feedback should also be included in the written report of the EA.
3. Feedback to RAP: EAs will be required to be available to Tipperary ETB’s Results Approval Panel in order to provide clarity to the panel should an issue arise in the course of the panel’s work. The panel may wish to speak to the EA or, on occasion, may request the EA’s presence at the panel meeting.

**SECTION 6: THE EA REPORT**

1. TETB EA Template: TETB’s EA **report template** must be used by all EAs. This template is available for download from [www.tipperaryetb.ie](http://www.tipperaryetb.ie).
2. Word Processed: All sections of the report must be **word-processed**.
3. Receipt of EA Report: EA Reports must be forwarded to the relevant centre within **2 working** **days.**

**SECTION 7: EA REPORT CONTENT**

In completing the report, EAs are asked to remember the following:

1. Separate Reports: Where an EA works across a number of centres, it is necessary for the EA to produce **separate EA reports, per centre. All sections** of the report **must be completed including sections on identifying good practice and areas for improvements**
2. Written Commentary: The comments provided should be **comprehensive, constructive, and clear** and **based on fact.** Comments should be **specific as to how it fits in line with QQI documentation, QQI component specifications and Tipperary ETB’s validated programmes**. This request is to aid consistency in how EAs are completing their reports.

Note: EAs are asked **NOT to comment** **on evidence of learner feedback** in their report. Evidence of learner feedback is not presented to the EA. Providing feedback to learners is a procedure that is implemented across Tipperary ETB. Evidence to attest to the fact that learners receive feedback that informs their participation on a programme is evaluated as part of the Self Evaluation process implemented by Tipperary ETB.

1. Matching Entries: Ensure for **every component** **moderated** that there is a **matching entry in the EA report.**
2. Rationale for Grade Changes: Where a **grade change** is made please indicate a **reason** for this change in the EA report.
3. References to Learners**: Do not refer to learner’s names** in completion of the report. If there is a need to refer to a learner, please **use the initials of the learner only.** Centrescan cross-referenced learner initials with the details on the Authentication Report by Learner Group by Minor Award Results sheet(s).

**APPENDIX A  
SAMPLING STRATEGY FOR INTERNAL VERIFICATION AND EXTERNAL AUTHENTICATION**

Assessment portfolios for ALL minor awards will be internally verified per annum.

Assessment portfolios for ALL minor awards will be externally authenticated over a two-year period. All major awards will be internally verified and externally authenticated per annum.

The sampling strategy for Tipperary ETB will be applied by the Internal Verifier and the EA.

If there are 12 or less assessment portfolios, a minimum of four portfolios will be internally verified (for the sampling part of internal verification) and a minimum of 6 portfolios externally authenticated (to allow for the cut-off points between the grades to be established).

If there are more than 12 assessment portfolios for a Minor Award, the sample will

be generated in line with the following table:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Number of assessment portfolios for a minor award | Number of assessment portfolios to be sampled |
| 13 → 50 | 8 |
| 51 → 100 | 10 |
| 101 → 200 | 14 |
| 201→ 300 | 17 |
| 300 → 400 | 20 |

Where the same minor award is offered in a number of locations in Tipperary ETB, these portfolios may be combined for the purposes of sampling. If this is the case, the assessment portfolios will be clearly identified per location and per assessor so the Internal Verifier and the EA can ensure the sample chosen includes assessment portfolios from each location and each assessor.

Where one assessor is delivering the same programme module to more than one learner group; for the purposes of Internal Verification and External Authentication, all the learner portfolios for these groups may be combined and the sampling strategy applied.

Assessment portfolios selected by the EA must include the following in the sample, as appropriate, to allow the EA to determine the cut-off points between the grades:

* The lowest Pass & the highest Unsuccessful
* The lowest Distinction & the highest Merit
* The lowest Merit & the highest Pass

The remaining number of assessment portfolios will be randomly chosen, across all the grade bands, until the sample quota is reached.