

Security Institute of Ireland

Learner Handbook

Code and Version
LH / V2 January 2019

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Learner Handbook

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1. Introduction

Purpose of Document

This document is published by the Security Institute of Ireland to provide learners with information on Security Institute processes. This document describes Institute processes generally. Details on specific course content are covered in individual information documents available from the Security Institute.

Mission Statement

The Security Institute and its members are committed to the enhancement of existing qualifications and the development of new and exciting qualifications to augment its current portfolio, and the provision of certification processing and support services of the highest quality to all its learners.

Equality Statement

The Security Institute is committed to ensuring that the learning environment is free from any form of harassment, bullying, discrimination or racism. All employees, learners, visitors and contractors have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. The Security Institute and its staff are committed to providing services, which offer reasonable accommodation to all learners going through the process. The facilitation of diversity is a vital part of our process and staff are committed to assisting learners through all aspects of the process equally.

Special Needs

Special needs include areas such as physical, sensory, learning or language issues. Where a learner feels they require accommodation for any special needs or facilities during delivery or assessment. They must inform the trainer or the Security Institute in advance of booking to ensure these arrangements are available and in place before taking up the programme. While every effort is made to accommodate, it is important that the standard required within the programme be maintained. Learners can discuss these issues with the trainer or any member of staff in confidence for further advice and guidance. If food is to be provided, we will also require advanced notice of any special dietary requirements.

Benefits of Certification

The Security Institute of Ireland are the recognised sector and certification body for the Private security industry in Ireland. Programme development is undertaken by the Academic Board of Governors in consultation with development committees and other stakeholders. The Security Institute carries out extensive national and international research to ensure content remains relevant and consistent with best practice international standards.

Dedicated industry developed and supported programmes provide greater opportunities for employment and advancement within the industry. Each programme has an industry driven development committee appointed by the Institute, the committee plays a role in both initial development and ongoing reviews.

Consultation

Requirements for qualifications and certification are identified by those operating within the relevant industry or sector, by public demand, or government, or regulatory authorities, or training organisations, or through study or research in the area.

Reporting to the Academic Board of Governors, programme development committees may be established to assist with developing standards and specifications for specific areas, through a process of consultation with those parties interested.

Programme Management Specification

A Programme Management Specification outlines the process. It states in a documented format all requirements leading to acquiring a qualification. This includes eligibility, entry requirements, experience, conditions, criteria or guidelines for competency of trainer, delivery, documentation, outcome(s) and the overall assessment criteria. The Institute will prescribe criteria in respect of the integrity of evidence of assessment gathered. This will include marking, collating, storage and security of such evidence. Programme Management Specifications are the property of the Security Institute.

Information Documents

Besides this generic handbook the Institute publishes a preliminary notice document summarising the course details and a more comprehensive course specific information document. The relevant programme information documentation should be read in conjunction with this handbook.

2. The Security Institute

Security Institute Background

The Security Institute, which was the first organisation of its kind in Ireland, was founded in February 1981. This was in response to the ever-increasing demand that “something should be done” in the area of control, education and recognition of those professionals employed in the security field. Its members are committed to the enhancement of existing vocational qualifications and standards as well as the development of new and exciting vocational qualifications and standards to augment its current portfolio.

The Security Institute are the sector body for training and certification within the private security industry in Ireland. Its scope in certification is broad and includes vocational education and training of all persons working in the private security industry within and external to Ireland. This scope is extended to other persons external to the private security industry who feel the qualifications available may benefit their employment or personal development. The Security Institute is a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Quality Assured centre.

Legal Status

The Security Institute is a registered trade name of The Security Institute of Ireland, a limited company registered in Dublin, Ireland in February 1981, having being granted a licence by the Minister for Industry, Commerce and Tourism. The Institute is registered in the Companies Registration Office in Ireland as registered company number 81738. The Institute is owned by its members and has no shareholders or share capital.

A Board of Directors elected by Institute members manages the affairs of the Institute. The Board appoints a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and senior officers. They also establish various committees to assist with the efficient running of the affairs of the Institute of behalf of its members.

An Academic Board of Governors is in place and responsible for academic standards and academic quality. The Governors advise the Board of Directors on criteria for qualifications, certification and credentials.

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Effective Date

The date from when the programme is available for delivery, assessment and certification after the programme has been validated or approved.

Review Date

All programmes have as an integral part of their design, a review date. Review dates are important as critical aspects of qualifications may require revision. Review dates are agreed with the Development Committee. The period will range from one year to a maximum of five years. Review dates are calculated from the effective date.

Contact Information

The Security Institute of Ireland
W6D Ladytown Business Park
Naas, Co. Kildare
Ireland

W91 HY36

Telephone: 353 (0) 45 409 222

E-mail: admin@sii.ie

Website: www.sii.ie

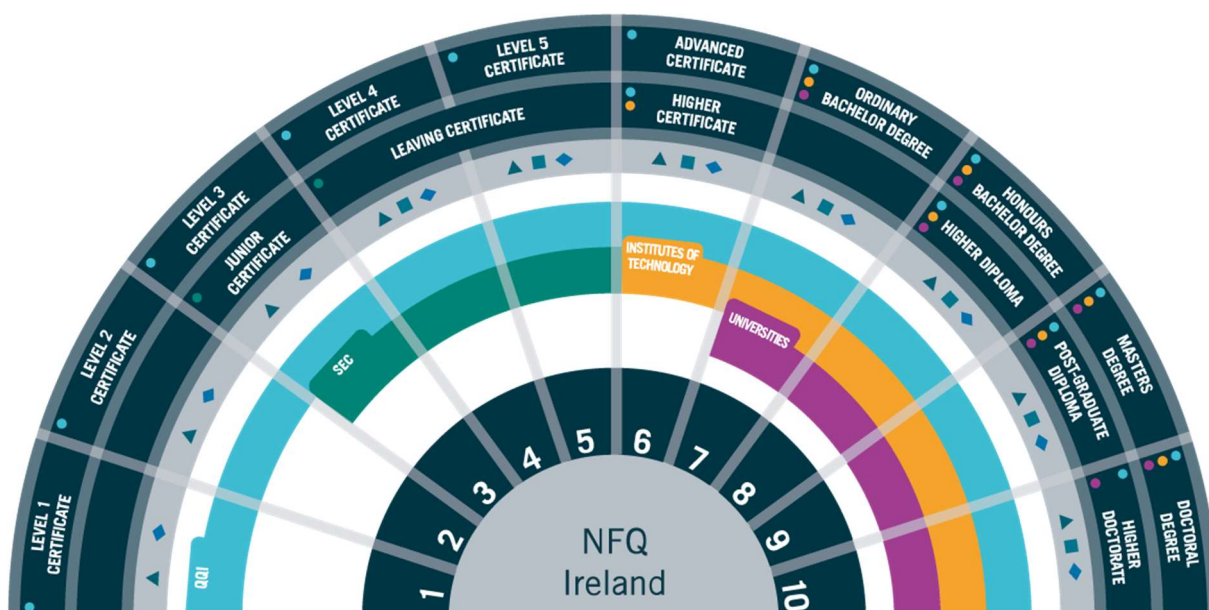
Appeals and Complaints are addressed to “The Secretary” at the above address.

3. Acquisition

National Framework of Qualifications

In Ireland, the National Framework of Qualifications is the single nationally and internationally accepted entity through which all learning achievements may be measured and related to each other in a coherent way and which defines the relationship between all education and training awards.

The framework has 10 levels, reflecting all learning from introductory to doctorate levels.



Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) was set up in October 2012 under the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012. QQI takes over the functions formally performed by FETAC, HETAC and NQAI. QQI are also responsible for the external quality assurance of the Irish University sector, a function previously performed by the IUQB. Under the new Act the QQI are custodians of Irelands 10-level National Framework of Qualifications.

QQI are now responsible for ensuring that training providers develop and implement assessment procedures in a fair and consistent way.

Other functions include, to:

- Make and promote awards
- Determine national standards
- Validate providers' programmes
- Monitor and evaluate the quality of programmes
- Ensure fair and consistent assessment of learners
- Ensure access, transfer and progression

Private Security Authority (PSA)

The private security industry in Ireland is a regulated industry. The Private Security Authority (PSA) is the regulatory body. One function of the PSA is to assign training qualifications in respect of licensing of individuals. Where there are mandatory requirements prescribed by the PSA, these are contained in the relevant Candidate - Programme Specific Information Document available from the Security Institute.

Access

Information documentation is available to learners to assist with identifying their suitability for entry and completion.

Transfer

Transfer refers to a learner's ability to transfer from one programme leading to an award to another, including at the same level of the framework, having received recognition for knowledge, skill or competence acquired.

Progression

Progression refers to a learner's ability to progress to another programme leading to an award at a higher level on the framework, having received recognition for knowledge, skill or competence acquired.

Other Training and Development Options

Each specification will provide guideline information to learners on other training options, additional to normal progression routes. This information will include suggestions on supporting skills, other beneficial skills and specialist skills which learners may find useful when planning a career in the security industry.

Fee Protection

The Institute is committed to ensuring that all learners achieve their desired status. Where any part of the acquisition process is not completed due to issues within the control of the Institute, procedures are in place designed to ensure that the learner is facilitated or refunded. Refunds are made to the original payee only. This policy is in respect of prepaid fees only and does not extend to any other costs or expenses such as travel or accommodation etc. This process does not affect any individual's statutory rights.

Learner Responsibility

Qualifications are individual achievements and the substantial responsibility to comply with the conditions of Certification rests with the individual learner throughout the process. The learner identifies the qualification most suited to their needs.

It is the responsibility of the learner to ensure correct choice of qualification, satisfactory completion of documentation, signatures, meeting deadlines, providing information, providing evidence, appropriate behaviour, co-operation, payment of fees, training and assessment support. A PPSN or similar national identity number is required from all learners. The Security Institute, employers or trainers may all advise, support and assist the learner.

Learners are expected to cooperate and engage fully with the process. This includes satisfactory completion of documentation including signatures, providing information and meeting coursework deadlines. learners may be asked to sign a declaration to this effect on registration.

The Security Institute reserves the right to withdraw any learner from the process at any stage where in its view the learner has provided false or misleading information, has engaged in plagiarism or fails to comply with the conditions of certification.

Rights of the Learner

A Learner is the named individual applying for course. The Security Institute is committed to preserving the rights of all learners.

Notwithstanding legal rights and other protection referred to in each specification, each learner has the right to be treated equally and with dignity and respect. The Institute has in place procedures for monitoring the processes leading to certification including delivery and assessment of training requirements.

Any learner may appeal or request reconsideration of any adverse decision relating to their desired status. All appeals must be in writing and forwarded to the Secretary of the Security Institute. Procedures are in place to deal with complaints from learners relating to fees paid, quality of service, assessment, evaluation and treatment in respect of the Institute, its policies or procedures.

Complaints in respect of course delivery should be made in the first instance to the course trainer. The Security Institute has an interest in quality of course delivery leading to Certification and will also investigate complaints in respect of course delivery.

Learner Safety

Training and other Institute staff will do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of those attending any premises used to deliver this course. Trainers will outline the specific fire, emergency and any other general classroom environment risks. Learners must cooperate with all safety requirements. Training staff will also provide information on breaks, canteen, toilet, car parking and other relevant comfort and welfare facilities.

Learner Supports

Supports are in place to assist learners. These include a comprehensive suite of training manuals or course notes, published works on the topics and additional phone and internet support.

Cancellations or Deferrals

The Institute reserves the right to cancel or defer any part of the process where it deems it necessary or not in the best interest of learners, e.g. quality reasons. Where alternative arrangements cannot be made, a full or partial refund, depending on the stage when the process was interrupted, may be claimed.

Claims are addressed to The Secretary, Security Institute of Ireland, Ladytown Business Park, Naas, Co. Kildare, Ireland. The claim must include full details and proof of the payment made. Refunds will be made to the original payee only e.g., where a company has prepaid an employee fee, the company can reclaim the fee and not the employee.

This policy is in respect of prepaid fees only and does not extend to any other costs or expenses. This process does not affect any learner's statutory rights.

4. Assessment

Malpractice

Malpractice may involve learners engaging in for example plagiarism, fabrication, cheating or behaving in any way such as to undermine the integrity of the assessment process. It is the policy of the Institute to withdraw a learner from the process at any stage where in its view it has been demonstrated that the learner has engaged in malpractice of any type.

Institute management may withdraw a learner from the certification process where it is satisfied that malpractice took place at any stage of the assessment process.

Malpractice allegations are investigated, where deemed appropriate, by a committee established by the Secretary. Investigations will be conducted efficiently so as not to disadvantage the learner. Learners will be given the opportunity to formally present their case. The committee will submit a written report to the Secretary of their decision on the matter. The Secretary will communicate this decision in writing to the learner within 14 days. Notwithstanding the legal rights of the learner the Committees decision is final.

Non-Return of Coursework

The Institute reserves the right to deem the process as incomplete in the event of a learner's failure to return evidence required for assessment. This includes projects, assignments, evidence of group participation.

Late Return of Coursework

The Institute reserves the right to deem the process as incomplete in the event of any learner's failure to return coursework required for assessment beyond the agreed deadlines. Trainers have discretion in extending or reviewing deadlines and learners are advised to contact the Institute in the event of any problems meeting deadlines. Each case is decided on individual merit and learners will be given the benefit on compassionate grounds or other extenuating circumstances. There are no penalties or capping of marks or grades for agreed late submissions.

Repeats and Resubmissions

Learners may request the opportunity to repeat a written examination or resubmit a piece of coursework. Institute management will review the initial marks awarded and discuss this with assessors and the learner before a final decision is made.

It is Security Institute policy to afford all learners a second opportunity to attempt assessment. Arrangements for repeats and resubmissions are subject to scheduling considerations.

Study Guide

There are four main headings for study to support classroom aspects:

- Home Study
- Further Research
- Skills Practice
- Assessment Preparation

Home Study

Home study consists of studying the course notes and manuals and any material provided by trainers. Course schedules are designed to use the classroom and directed learning environment to discuss and test practical outcomes. A substantial body of supporting knowledge is included in the manual provided, not all of this content is presented in the classroom environment, requiring learners to allocate time for study outside of the classroom.

Further Research

Classroom lectures, presentations, discussions and supporting notes will focus on core skills and knowledge. Learners should look to expand independently on these core areas, particularly where they may have a special interest on personal development leading to higher levels or progression. Learners are advised to look at other ideas on the topics discussed and apply that knowledge to their particular area of interest.

Skills Practice

Where a course identifies a number of practical skills, such as communication skills, these are discussed and demonstrated in the classroom in an individual and groupwork / workshop context, however practice in the home or workplace is a very important part of skills acquisition.

Assessment Preparation

Preparation such as study, practice and further research may be required to support skills demonstrations. Learners are advised that when planning self-directed aspects of the course they should prioritise the assessment requirements and be clear on marking criteria and submission deadlines. Learners should consider the advantages of a study plan to suit their own particular circumstances.

Project Referencing

This is the process of acknowledging information sources used in any piece of coursework submitted. Information used from books, magazines or newspapers must be acknowledged both within the body of the piece and as part of a bibliography at the end of your piece. It is not necessary to reference material from your own experiences or information that is common knowledge or not attributable to a particular individual or source.

Referencing within a piece of work

Where the work or part of the work of another is quoted / used within the main body of your piece it must be referenced at that point. A short version, name and year only of the source, is inserted in brackets at the end of the sentence where the information is used. Where a direct quote is used, this quotation is put in brackets and the reference is extended to include the page number of the source.

The full referencing is included in the bibliography for every source used. A bibliography is included at the end of every piece submitted, even when only one source of information is to be acknowledged.

Referencing within a bibliography

Referencing from books is done by author(s) names by surname first, then first name(s) initials only, followed by the year of publication, then the title of the book. Where direct quotes are used, include the page number.

Example: Broder, J. F., 1984, Risk Analysis and the Security Survey, p.34.

Referencing from a magazine or article is done by author(s) names by surname first, then first name(s) initials only, followed by the year, title of the article, title of the magazine or publication.

Referencing from the Internet is done by author(s) names by surname first, and then first name(s) initials only, followed by article title, date downloaded / referred to, then full web page address.

Referencing from an individual person such as an interview with a subject matter expert is done by replacing the book or article title with the term “personal comment” or the abbreviation “pers. comm”.

Where an organisation such as the Private Security Authority is the source and no individual is credited, insert the organisation in place of the author.

5. Certification and Credentials

Security Institute Certification

Qualifications are validated by Security Institute Certification. Certificates are only issued to those who have achieved the qualification under the criteria of the Programme Management Specification.

Within Security Institute processes, there are five categories of certification as follows:

- Statement of Achievement
- Certificate
- Advanced Certificate
- Diploma
- Advanced Diploma

Certificates will uniquely identify the qualification title, name of individual, unique certificate number, date of issue and date of expiry. Certificates are only issued subject to the Institute's terms and conditions. The Security Institute reserves the right to withdraw or suspend certificates.

The Certification process includes, where required, procedures for ongoing monitoring and re-certification (renewal). All Certificates remain the property of the Institute and must be returned on request. Errors and omissions are subject to correction by the Institute only. Certificates validating a qualification do not imply or infer membership of the Security Institute of Ireland.

Certificates state the title of a qualification; this title does not infer that the holder or certified person is at that level or engaged in that occupation.

Quality and Qualifications Ireland Certificates

The Institute will process all coursework and results in a timely manner for QQI certification. QQI certification is subject to conditions including learners correct PPSN, Date of Birth and other information. The Institute will not accept responsibility for delays where the information provided is inaccurate, cannot be interpreted or does not match information already held on QQI records.

All enquiries in respect of results and certification should be made in the first place to the Security Institute and not QQI.

Framework Mapping

A number of jurisdictions have now developed national frameworks which are used to determine levels of education. There is no common agreement on exact frameworks however, the EU has developed a framework which member states and others may use to map national levels against. The Security Institute for the purpose of providing learners with a guideline as to the level of skills and knowledge detailed in each standard will give an opinion as to the corresponding level mapped against the EU framework.

National Registers

It is the policy of the Institute to maintain a series of registers for certain categories of professional persons. This is subject to approved criteria. Criteria for entry onto a register may include a recognised qualification, experience and terms and conditions.

Personal Credentials

Personal Credentials attest to a qualification or achievement, The Security Institute promotes the use of credentials by qualified persons by the use of initials after their name. A range of higher-level qualifications lead to relevant credentials such as Member of the Security Institute abbreviated to the initials **M.Sec.I.I.** or Diploma in Security Management abbreviated to **Dip.Sec.** Individual standards and information documents clearly state where credentials may be used by qualified persons. The use of these credentials is subject to terms and conditions.

Expiry Dates

The Security Institute is committed to ensuring that the qualifications of all certified persons remain current and relevant. Therefore, all Certificates issued have an expiry date. This is linked to processes for refresher and upskilling, designed to ensure that all qualifications remain relevant.

Review Dates

Specifications and Standards may have as an integral part of their design, a review date. Review dates are important as critical aspects of qualifications may require revision.

Re-Certification

A process of re-certification is in place, this ensures that qualifications remain current and relevant. The Academic Board of Governors and / or other parties with an interest will review the Specification requirements in advance of the expiry date and make recommendations on conditions for re-certification.

Re-certification may require upskilling, refresher training or evidence of continued activity within the scope of the revised Specification. Where the Institute is satisfied that the qualification remains current and relevant the process of re-certification will be implemented. Re-certification will be subject to terms and conditions including the updating of certified persons information and payment of appropriate re-certification fee.

The general terms and conditions that apply to Certification also apply to re-certification.

6. Quality Management

Quality Management System

The Security Institute has in place a Quality Management System (QMS) to assist with monitoring on a scheduled basis the acquisition and assessment of all qualifications.

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Quality Assurance

The Security Institute has agreed its Quality Assurance policies and procedures with Quality and Qualifications Ireland. The following are the main areas for Quality Assurance policies and procedures under this process:

- Communications
- Equality
- Staff Recruitment and Development
- Access, Transfer and Progression
- Programme Development, Delivery and Review
- Fair and Consistent Assessment of Candidates
- Protection for Candidates
- Sub-contracting / Procuring Programme Delivery
- Self-Evaluation of Programmes and Services

Trainer Report Form

All trainers complete a comprehensive report form at the end of each individual programme. This form is reviewed by Institute management.

Trainer Professional Development

All trainers entered on the National Register of Approved Trainers attend courses and complete upskilling and refresher sessions on both training techniques and subject matter areas as part of their continuous professional development. Trainer upskilling is a mandatory requirement within the Institute.

Learner Feedback Form

The Institute may request learners to complete a feedback form. This form is a vital tool in helping to monitor and improve service levels. While it is not mandatory, learners are encouraged to complete the form and to do so honestly and accurately. The form need not be signed or marked in any way to identify any individual. This feedback is reviewed by Institute management.

Appeals

All learners have the right to appeal any decision made by the Institute. The appeal may be in connection with, but not limited to, refusal of entry, methods of acquisition and all processes involved in acquiring the qualification or directly in respect of the actual results deemed to have been achieved. Where a learner feels that any of the above has affected their desired status or expectations they should appeal.

Appeals on marks or grade awarded can only be made based on original coursework submitted for assessment; no new evidence may be added. Appeals must be made within 14 days of the results decision.

Appeals should be in writing and outline as much detail as possible relevant to the matter being appealed. Information required includes full name, address and telephone numbers of the learner.

A summary of the reasons for the appeal should be supplied. Appeals are addressed to The Secretary, Security Institute of Ireland, Ladytown Business Park, Naas, Co. Kildare, Ireland.

The Secretary will review the nature and details of the appeal and may contact the appellant and / or others involved for further information or clarification. Full implementation of the appeals process requires a review of all aspects of the issue by a committee established by the Secretary.

Learners will be given the opportunity to formally present their case. The committee will submit a written report to the Secretary of their decision on the matter. The Secretary will communicate the decision in writing to the appellant within 14 days. Under normal circumstances, appeals will be completed within 90 days. Notwithstanding the legal rights of the learner, the Committee's decision is final.

Complaints

All learners have the right to make a complaint in respect of any aspect of their engagement with the Institute. The complaint may be in connection with any part of the process involved in acquiring the qualification. Complaints must be made within 14 days. Complaints should be in writing and outline as much detail as possible relevant to the matter complained of. Information required includes full name, address and telephone numbers of the learner.

Complaints are also addressed to the Institute Secretary.

The Secretary will review the nature and details of the complaint and may contact the complainant and / or others involved for further information or clarification.

Full implementation of the complaints process requires a review of all aspects of the issue by a committee established by the Secretary. Complainants will be given the opportunity to formally present their case. The committee will submit a written report to the Secretary of their decision on the matter.

The Secretary will communicate this decision in writing to the complainant within 14 days. Notwithstanding the legal rights of the learner, the Committee's decision is final. Learners are encouraged to raise any issues of immediate concern with the trainer.

Registration Form

Registrations are only accepted on the registration form supplied by the Security Institute. Registration is subject to the terms and conditions on the registration form.

7. General Information

Data Protection

The Security Institute complies with data protection rules in respect of data collection, data control and data storage. All relevant learner information will be securely stored in hard copy and electronically on a computer database

The Institute reserves the right to disclose relevant information to regulatory or statutory authorities on request.

Interpretation and Jurisdiction

Learning outcomes presented in each standard are stated in general terms which are not specific to any jurisdiction. It is the role of trainers and assessors to interpret these outcomes and ensure that they are relevant to the jurisdiction in which the qualification is to be applied.

Fees and Funding

It is the ultimate responsibility of learners to ensure that all fees or funding relating to acquiring a qualification, certification and/or re-certification are in place and paid promptly. It is the policy of the Security Institute to withhold Certificates where payment has not been received. The Institute also reserves the right to remove any person from a National Register where payment conditions are not met.