Authenticating Candidate Evidence and Identification Policy

This Policy establishes guidelines for the process of validating Candidate identity and authenticating Candidate evidence. The process begins with initial provision of approved forms of identification for the purpose of enrolment on the qualification, progresses through stages of validating assessment, and concludes with submission of authentic Candidate work.

It is vital that all Candidates that register on an iPET Network qualification are the ones completing the evidence. This policy states the procedures that have been put in place to establish that the Candidate is the person who participates in, completes the qualification and receives the award of certificate. All Candidates are affected by this policy. It is the Training Providers responsibility to ensure that the checks detailed in this policy are carried out and confirmed for every Candidate registered on an iPET Network qualification.

Definitions

Identity fraud: Any Candidate who allows another person to impersonate them or in any other way commit identity fraud in any course, exam or other academic exercise will be dismissed from the course. This also applies to a Candidate who is found to impersonate another.

iPET Network - the Awarding Organisation

RPL - Recognition of Prior Learning

Policy

Authenticating Candidate identity is integral:

- To prevent impersonation of Candidates on the qualification and to protect and uphold the integrity and reliability of the qualification. Training Providers must use the iPET Network registration form and confirm they have seen valid proof of identification.
- When authenticating previous qualifications for RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) certificates or other evidence of previous qualifications must be an accurate reflection of a Candidate's achievements.
- To ensure compliance to quality procedures meeting iPET Network Quality Assurance requirements.
- To maintain credibility: through certificates, diplomas and certified forms, the Training Provider must declare that a Candidate named on these documents has personally achieved all relevant academic requirements. Qualifications are at risk if Candidates emerge as having achieved academically but have not acquired new and relevant knowledge or skills.
- To ensure Candidate achievement. Training Providers have a responsibility to their Candidates to facilitate learning and prepare individuals for the challenges in their qualification. This can only occur if the Candidate has successfully completed the course and achieved learning at the relevant standard of achievement.

Areas of concern

There are two main areas of concern where authentication of Candidate identification needs to be addressed:

- Plagiarism and cheating - it is necessary to determine if the work from a Candidate is authentic and unique. Details of identifying and dealing with instances of plagiarism are addressed in the Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Procedure.
- Impersonation – it is necessary to determine if the Candidate receiving the award of certificate is the person completing the evidence.

Responsibilities

Candidates have responsibility to provide appropriate evidence of identity and adhere to iPET Network rules relating to assessment of evidence.

The Training Provider has responsibility for upholding the validity of the qualification and that all staff members fully meet the requirements set out in this policy.

It is the Training Providers responsibility to obtain the necessary evidence and carry out the checks required as per the procedure below and this forms part of the Training Provider Manual and Training Provider Agreement with Terms and Conditions and Enforceable Agreement. Failure to comply may result in sanctions.

Procedures

iPET Network implements a number of procedures to ensure that a Candidate who gains an award for academic achievement is the person who actually completes the work.

Authentication is demonstrated by the following:

- All Candidates must provide supporting evidence of personal identification prior to the commencement of study in the form of photographic ID. Valid examples are current Passport or Photo ID driving licence. It is the Training Provider's responsibility to obtain, record and save this evidence either on an electronic system or manually but all data should meet the GDPR and Data Protection Act. Failure to obtain this evidence prior to the Candidate commencing the qualification will constitute malpractice of the process and sanctions may be given to the Training Provider. During the External Quality Assurance visit this area will be audited according to the External Quality Assurance plan.
- In the event of a Candidate not holding a current Passport or Photo ID driving licence, they must provide a photograph of themselves countersigned by a professional person. Counter signatories cannot be a close member of the Candidate's family and must work in (or be retired from) a recognised profession, or be 'a person of good standing in their community' i.e. Teacher, Member of the police, Doctor, Company Director Etc.
- Evidence of name change i.e. copies of marriage certificate or deed pole documentation and a copy of a recent utility bill (within 3 months) as proof of name and address.
- Candidates must provide copies of all previously certificated qualifications in any request of RPL.
- Each evidence submission has to include a signed declaration confirming that all the work being submitted is the Candidate's own work. This signature will be compared to ID signatures.
- For e-portfolio, secure log in details will be given to Candidates which must not be shared with anyone including their tutor to ensure the Candidate's work is their own and it is secure.

iPET Network implement a variety of assessment methods and Tutors have a right to question the content or meaning of any submitted assignments with the Candidate, to verify that a verbal level of understanding reflects the written content.

iPET Network operates a zero-tolerance approach where a Candidate who has registered as a Candidate is not the person completing the work. Any proven instances will result in the Candidate being disqualified and removed from the qualification instantly or risk the award of certificate being withdrawn, please refer to iPET Network Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Procedure for further details. There will be no refund of registration fees. All evidence must be recorded by the Tutor/Internal Quality Assurer and presented to iPET Network immediately.

Document Control

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	1	
13/01/2022	2	Annual policy review