Mobile Assessment Services: Quality Assurance Requirements

NCTVET

The National Council on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NCTVET) was established in 1994 through an amendment of the HEART Act. The organization was armed with the responsibility to work with employers from all sectors to create a workforce that is trained and certified to global standards.

The NCTVET has been tasked with the responsibility to develop standards, accredit programmes, develop assessments and award certificates to individuals who have demonstrated competence in vocational areas.

MOBILE ASSESSMENT SERVICES

How conforming it would be to be assessed right on spot without the hassle of sitting in a classroom for an entire semester or more. Mobile Assessment Services Unit provides a flexible way of assessing an individual’s skills while on the move. Individuals who are skilled but have no certificate get assessed on spot. Candidates who are being assessed through the mobile unit are expected on the day, to take their ID, TRN, birth certificate, qualifications and any additional material or tool needed to complete the assessment.

The Mobile Assessment Services strategy allows access to clients that are seeking assessment and certification on demand.

The NCTVET, as an awarding body, requires that programmes leading to certification in the National Vocational Qualification of Jamaica (NVQ-J), Job Qualification (a NVQ-J derivative) and Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) are assessed against the established quality standards.

It is a requirement for entities that offer mobile assessment services to be monitored and audited by NCTVET and subject to its sanctions in the event of non-conformity.

MOBILE ASSESSMENT SERVICES APPLICATION

An entity that is interested in providing Mobile Assessment Services (the Prospect) must indicate this to the NCTVET. Each entity that provides Mobile Assessment Services must apply to the NCTVET for authorization to offer such. Before the completion of application, the Prospect will be invited to participate in a scheduled workshop/sensitization session before being instructed to submit a completed Application.

The following are charges that are associated with applying for the status of an Authorized Mobile Assessment Services Provider:

- Registration: $3,000.00 per application
- Audit Activity: $12,000.00 - $18,500.00
- Annual Maintenance: $3,500.00 per year
- Traveling: $63.00 per kilometre

CONDUCT OF GAP AUDIT

An Audit of the entity will be conducted by the NCTVET to evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of its management systems. The entity is audited against the following criteria:

- Leadership Responsibility
- Support to Clients
- Qualification of Assessment Personnel
- Assessment Facilities
- Assessment Activities

Once an entity has successfully completed the audit, the status of Authorized Mobile Assessment Services Provider will be granted and remain valid for three (3) years, provided that all requirements are met and maintained. In order to maintain this status, the entity must continue to meet the established criteria for registration. Failure to comply will result in certain penalties and sanctions.

RENEWAL OF STATUS

The NCTVET will inform the Authorized Mobile Assessment Services Provider of the renewal date at least three (3) months in advance. An Authorized Mobile Assessment Services Provider that does not seek renewal or facilitate renewal audits, will have its status and all associated privileges withdrawn.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Once authorized, the entity must establish partnership with suitable ATOs to offer the intended assessment services. The partnering ATO must be accredited by the NCTVET for the relevant qualification(s).

PLANNING FOR ASSESSMENTS

Authorized Mobile Assessment Services Provider must prepare and approve a plan which outlines the assessment services offerings. This plan must be done at least each quarter of the calendar year. It must also indicate the approved schedule of its activities for each month. Before the commencement of assessment activities this plan must be submitted to the NCTVET and/or partnering ATO, at least fifteen (15) working days prior to assessment.

The schedule should indicate, at a minimum, the following:

- Skill areas to be assessed;
- Names and addresses for the practical sites and contact details of person(s) responsible for same;
- Assessors (at least 3 possible names for each skill area).

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Being an Authorized Mobile Assessment Services Provider comes with a huge responsibility. Each party involved must fulfill their role for assessments and other activities to take place effectively. In addition, each must play their part in ensuring that the Mobile Assessment Services Entity conforms to stipulated standards and guidelines.

THE FUNCTIONS/ACTIVITIES OF A MOBILE ASSESSMENT SERVICES ENTITY

As a Mobile Assessment Services Entity, it is expected that ‘assessment only’ services will be conducted which will utilize the Prior Learning Assessment strategies. The entity must not only facilitate a controlled environment to conduct assessments but must also facilitate the sitting of online assessments for both the theoretical and practical components. The Mobile Assessment Services Entity must also utilize registered assessors for the administration of assessments.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COORDINATOR OF THE MOBILE ASSESSMENT SERVICE ENTITY

In every Mobile Assessment Services entity, there must be a duly appointed Coordinator as member of the administrative staff. He or she will be tasked with several responsibilities. These responsibilities ensure that candidates are given equal opportunity to assessment of qualification offered in a safe environment. The Coordinator also ensures that reports are done and there is adequate communication with the NCTVET and or partnering ATO. He or she must also provide support for External Verifiers during visits.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ASSESSORS

Assessment in TVET is an ongoing process. As such, all Assessors engaged by a Mobile Assessment Services entity are required to continually assess the underlying knowledge and practical competency of candidates. The responsibilities of the Assessor include:

- Evaluating competency level of candidates;
- Preparing and maintaining assessment records;
- Planning, conducting, reviewing and recording assessment activities;
- Attending training workshops to maintain relevance and currency as required.

THE ROLE OF THE NCTVET (THE AWARDING BODY) / PARTNERING ATO

The NCTVET /partnering ATO must maintain the quality and integrity of the assessment and certification system for national and regional qualifications. The NCTVET is tasked with several tasks and responsibilities. As the awarding body, NCTVET has the responsibility to promote technical and vocational education while ensuring quality assurance procedures are met before awarding certificates. Both the NCTVET and the Partnering ATO are also tasked with maintaining accurate records of candidates and certification information. Audits should also be carried out to ensure compliance to the established criteria of standards. In addition, a register of approved Auditors, Assessors and External Verifiers must be maintained.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXTERNAL VERIFIER

The External Verifier acts on the NCTVET's and/or partnering ATO's behalf in ensuring that the quality of assessment is maintained. They also work to ensure that all candidates are given fair and equal access in the assessment process. The External Verifier conducts scheduled visits to monitor assessments at assigned locations. They also provide feedback of candidate's work and submit their reports and recommendations to the awarding body or partnering ATO.