

Issued: July 21, 2014

Program: Standard Level Exams
To: ITA Training Providers
RE: OPSN 2014 012
Calculating and Reporting Marks for Apprenticeship Programs with
Standard Level Exams
Timing: Effective October 1, 2014

Background When the roll out of standardized level exams (SLEs) began in 2012, ITA requested that schools report only the in-school technical training marks to ITA; that schools NOT blend the in-school technical training marks with the SLE marks. Each SLE OPSN also indicated that apprentices who did not pass a level of technical training could repeat the portion that caused them to fail (e.g., in-school training or SLE), instead of repeating both.

While some schools have been able to accommodate this process, others have found it difficult to implement. It is critical that all schools calculate and report marks to ITA in the same manner, therefore, the purpose of this OPSN is to communicate a revised process that all schools are able to accommodate.

This OPSN covers three topics:

1. Change in how final marks are calculated and reported for technical training with SLEs
2. Service Levels for Marking SLEs
3. Change in options available to apprentices who fail a level of technical training that has an SLE

Calculating and reporting final marks for technical training with SLEs

1. Calculating and reporting final marks for technical training with SLEs

SLE marks are blended with in-school marks; the in-school mark is worth 80% of the final grade for a Level and the SLE mark is worth 20%. For all SLEs implemented to date¹, ITA issued Official Program Standards Notifications (OPSNs) with instructions to calculate and report marks as follows:

Current Process

- Training provider calculates the in-school mark and reports it to ITA
- ITA calculates the SLE mark and records it in ITA Direct Access
- ITA Direct Access blends the two marks to create the final mark for the Level and reports all three marks to the apprentice

Most schools have been following this practice, but unfortunately, the result in many cases is that the final Level mark for an apprentice may not be the same in school and ITA records. Following discussion with schools, it was agreed this is not ideal; to best serve apprentices and employers, school and ITA final marks should be the same.

As a result, it was determined that the process should revert to the pre-SLE practice of schools calculating and reporting final marks to ITA for Levels of technical training with SLEs.

New Process – effective October 1, 2014 (*refer to Figure 1*)

- Training providers calculate the in-school training mark according to the Assessment Guidelines
- ITA administers the SLE, records the mark in Direct Access, and reports it to the school. The apprentice is not notified when the SLE mark is entered
- Training providers weight and blend the in-school (80%) and SLE (20%) marks to produce a final mark for the Level. That final, blended mark is reported to ITA by the school and recorded in Direct Access
- Direct Access reports the school’s final mark for the Level to the apprentice as a single percentage score

Once the final Level mark is entered in Direct Access, the system performs a reverse calculation using the SLE mark to determine the in-school mark. All three marks are stored in the apprentice’s record, but only the final Level mark is reported on the ITA transcript.

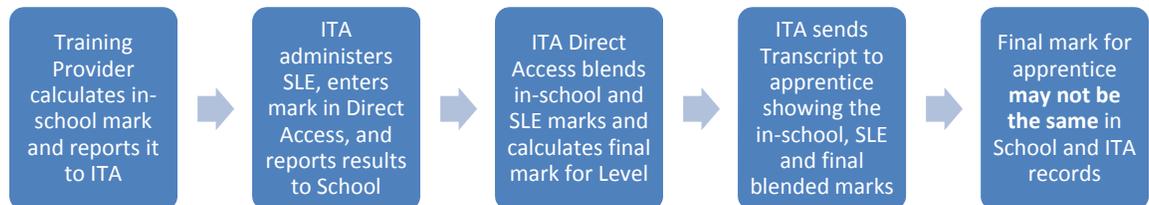
Note: Once the new process is implemented, ITA will initiate a project with schools to review and correct misalignment of technical training marks where required.

¹ Refer to <http://www.itabc.ca/exams/standard-level-exams> for list of programs that have SLEs implemented

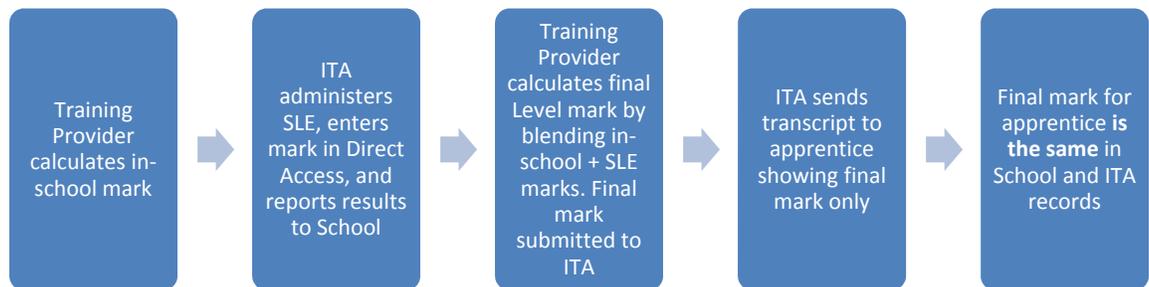
For program Levels that do not have SLEs, the process for calculating and reporting final marks remains the same. Training providers calculate the final mark according to the Assessment guideline and report it to ITA.

Figure 1. Comparison of old and new process for calculating and reporting marks for technical training with SLE

Current Process (as per OPSNs)



New Process – Effective October 1, 2014



Service Level for Marking SLEs

2. Service Level for Marking SLEs

Currently, SLEs are written online and on paper. Online SLEs are marked by the online system and marks are reported to schools same day, within hours of the exam session close. Paper-based SLEs are marked by ITA and marks are reported to schools within three (3) business days or less (depending on school location).

Note: ITA is working to improve service levels so that schools will receive SLE marks same day, whether written online or on paper. Testing of a new marking system for paper-based exams begins in Fall 2014, with full implementation planned for January 2015.

Options for Apprentices who fail a level of technical training with an SLE

3. Options for Apprentices who fail a level of technical training with an SLE

Previous SLE OPSNs state that apprentices who fail a level of technical training may raise their overall mark by only repeating the component that caused them to fail (i.e., the SLE or in-school training). This has proven difficult to implement.

New Process – effective October 1, 2014

ITA Policy PA3009, Achieving Credit for Levels of Technical Training, has been revised. Effective immediately, apprentices who achieve less than 70% on a level of technical training have the following two options *only* to earn level credit:

- Repeat the course **and** re-write the SLE (where one exists), **OR**
- Apply to challenge the level and pay the applicable fee.

Apprentices wishing to challenge a level of technical training they have failed are required to:

- Apply to ITA to challenge the Level, providing evidence of work experience and scope of trade appropriate to the level they wish to challenge
- Wait minimum 6-months after failing the Level to apply
- Provide evidence in writing of employer support to challenge the Level

Once approved to challenge a Level, the apprentice must achieve a mark of 70% or better on the exam to receive credit for the Level.

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