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Profile

Irish Times Training (ITT), subsidiary of The Irish Times, has been in the professional development and education business for over 35 years working with a broad range of people and organisations to deliver the high quality business and management training. We work with junior, middle and senior executives from across business, government, large corporations and SMEs. A key part of the business focuses on delivering a wide range of business and personal development short training programmes to corporate clients. We offer a range of education and training options independently and with a number of key strategic partners; Ulster University, Boston College, Education and Training Boards, HSE, Skillnets and One Learn at the Civil Service.

Mission & Core Values

Our Mission

ITT strives to be a customer focused provider of quality training programmes that meet the needs of our clients and improves the performance of their businesses.

Core Values

Irish Times Training Values

Scope of Provision

QQI Programme Provision

Major, special purpose and minor awards at Levels 5 and 6 of the NFQ:
Irish Times Training Quality Assurance Manual 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ProgCode</th>
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<th>Level</th>
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Collaborative Provision

We deliver the following programmes in partnership with Ulster University. Ulster University is the first provider:

- BSc Hons in Management Practice
- MSc in Executive Leadership

We also deliver four Springboard+ courses from Level 6 to Level 9 in ICT, Capital Markets, International Business & Entrepreneurship in partnership with Ulster University.

Bespoke Training

We train circa 1,600 executives every year as part of our bespoke and in-company service, tailoring learning solutions to specifically meet the needs of our clients.

Open Programmes

As well as offering in-company and tailor-made training solutions to suit our clients’ needs, we also offer open programmes, mainly consisting of short unaccredited business and skills development programmes in Business, Finance, Management, Sales, Customer Service and Personal Development, training 3,500 executives per annum.
Quality is central to ITT’s ethos and values. A comprehensive corporate governance and Quality Assurance System (QAS) has been developed which reflects the size and profile of our organisation, facilitating strong internal and external oversight. It also reflects the learning from long standing relationships with well-established and respected academic institutions such as Ulster University and Boston College, integrating good quality assurance practices and creating a cycle of continuous improvement.

Hence, all our training activities are underpinned by our robust QAS. Each of our policies and procedures have been developed and implemented to ensure that training is delivered in accordance with appropriate standards and is consistently applied across all programmes.

The QAS separates the responsibilities between those who design and develop programmes and services and those who approve them. Good governance helps to ensure that our organisation operates responsibly, ethically and effectively.

Corporate Governance Structure

ITT is a wholly owned subsidiary of The Irish Times Group. The Irish Times Trust CLG is a company limited by guarantee which owns The Irish Times DAC. The Trust is regulated by the Memorandum and Articles of Association and controlled by a body of people (the Governors) under company law. The Trust is composed of a maximum of 11 Governors, who are appointed on the basis that they are ‘representative broadly of the community throughout the whole of Ireland’. The Trust is a key component in the governance structure of The Irish Times but is not involved in the day-to-day management of the Company.

The Irish Times DAC & ITT
Irish Times Board
The Irish Times Board is ultimately responsible for the strategy, financial management and overarching governance of the Irish Times Group.

The Board delegates the management function to the ITT Executive Group which is responsible for the design, development and delivery of the strategy, financial management and governance of ITT.

ITT Executive Group
The ITT Executive Group is made up of executives of both the Irish Times newspaper (IT), including the Irish Times Group Managing Director, the HR Director and the Group Chief Financial Officer, and ITT. ITT is represented by the Managing Director and the Finance Manager, as well as other team members when appropriate. The ITT Executive Group is Chaired by the Irish Times Group Managing Director and meets monthly.

The ITT Executive Group reports to the Irish Times Board.

Responsibilities of the ITT Executive Group (in relation to ITT): (extract from the ITT Executive Group TOR)

- Strategic and organisational management of ITT.
- Responsible for quality and excellence in the organisation as a whole and has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the quality assurance system (QAS) is implemented; promoting a culture of quality throughout the organisation.
- Review and approve the strategic plan with supporting annual operational and implementation plans.
- Monitor and evaluate ITT’s performance against stated objectives.
- Provide financial oversight, allocate budgets and ensure the sustainability of ITT.
- Provide for the cost and resource requirements of maintaining a fit-for-purpose QAS.
• Review governance structures and composition, to ensure the continued effectiveness of the Executive Group, ARP and organisational team.
• Oversee the commercial arrangements and viability for all education and training and related activity to ensure its quality and a well-supported learning environment.
• Review ARP reports and recommendations and agree actions.
• Review and act on regular reports from the Managing Director on all relevant developments.
• Oversee ITT Risk Register.
• Oversee procurement.

**Academic Review Panel (ARP)**

The ITT Executive Group sets the organisation’s strategy and business goals. In recognition of the importance of separating commercial and academic oversight and decision-making and to provide for effective external oversight, the ITT Executive Group established the Academic Review Panel (ARP)

The ITT Executive Group established an Academic Review Panel (ARP) to oversee all academic activities, provide academic and quality assurance oversight to ITT programmes.

The ARP protects learner interests and monitors the implementation of the quality processes which are designed to maintain high standards of training provision.

The ARP is comprised of 7 representatives drawn from a range of Subject Matter Experts, Qualification Experts, Learner Representatives, Industry Representation and members of the ITT Executive Group. Members are appointed by the ITT Executive Group for a 3-year term. The ARP meets four times a year.

In recognition of the size and scale of ITT, the ARP acts as the de facto Self-Evaluation Panel. The Results Approval Panel reports to the ARP. The ARP reports to the ITT Executive Group. There is an external Chair. Currently the Panel it is chaired by Dorothy McKee, an experienced academic and business consultant. The Quality Officer provides administrative support to the Panel.
Responsibilities of ARP: (extract of TOR)

- Provide academic oversight to ITT.
- Oversee the monitoring and evaluation of ITT’s quality assurance system to ensure the quality of education, training and related activities and a well-supported learning environment.
- Support the design, development and evaluation of new programmes including consultations with employers.
- Review and act on regular reports from the Managing Director on all academic developments.
- Consider RAP reports and corrective actions.
- Act as the de facto Self-Evaluation Panel:
  - Evaluate the quality, scope, focus, direction and coverage of the programmes activities and make recommendations in support of the quality assurance process.
  - Formally evaluate the performance of each programme on an annual basis and highlight any potential risks to these programmes.
  - Consider the results of internal and external evaluation and self-monitoring, and accordingly make recommendations to the Programme Improvement Plan.
- Monitor the Programme Improvement Plan.
- Oversee the implementation of Protection of Enrolled Learners (PEL) arrangements to ensure legal obligations are met.
- Oversee the implementation collaborations/partnership arrangements.
- Monitor the provision of programmes in line with the validated programmes.
- Consider reports of all programme evaluation and monitoring activity.
- Lead programmatic reviews and self-evaluations.
- Act as the Programme Approval Panel.
- Review the risk register and risk management processes.
- Discuss issues identified by learners, staff and stakeholders and make recommendations.
- Recommend ways to enhance the learning experience.
- Examine the effectiveness of academic and general support services.
Sanction changes to delivery and minor changes to programmes within the bounds set by validation.

Oversee the design and development of suitable transfer and progression pathways for graduates.

Review governance structures and ARP composition, to ensure the continued effectiveness of the ARP itself.

Present an annual report to the ITT Executive Group.

**Results Approval Panel (RAP)**

As part of Irish Times Training’s governance process, The Results Approval Panel monitors the assessment procedure to ensure it is quality assured, comprehensive and reflective of QQI requirements.

The RAP is made of:

- The Managing Director
- The Quality Officer
- The Programme Manager
- Relevant Trainer/Subject Matter Expert

The External Authenticator sometimes attends if available

**Role (extract from TOR of RAP)**

The role of the Results Approval Panel (RAP) is to ensure that:

- All assessment results are comprehensively reviewed, fully quality assured and signed off by the Chair prior to submission to the relevant awarding body.
- Appropriate decisions are taken regarding the outcome of the assessment, verification and authentication processes.
- All assessment procedures are adhered to.
- Appropriate evidence and records are available.
- Any suspected irregularities are notified to the appropriate person.
- Non-conformances are identified, notified and logged on our Programme Improvement Plan which is reviewed at the next meeting of the Panel.

**Meetings**

- The RAP usually meets, as required in line with QQI certification periods, six times per year.
- A meeting quorum is 80% or more of the members.
- Decisions are made by consensus (i.e. members are satisfied with the decision even though it may not be their first choice). If consensus is not possible, the Chair makes the final decision.
- The Quality Officer provides administrative support which includes:
  - Drafting agendas and supporting papers in consultation with the Chair.
  - Preparing meeting notes and information.
  - Writing up minutes and the RAP report and distributing them to members of the Panel in a timely fashion.
Organisational Structure

ITT has full-time staff of 12 and a panel of over 50 trainers and subject matter experts who are contracted when needed. All trainers are accomplished facilitators with broad industry experience and a proven track record in delivering training. As part of this panel, there are a number of trainers with extensive experience in academic programme design and development. Furthermore, we have access to shared resources, including Finance, HR, and IT, through the Irish Times core team.

All of our trainers are accomplished facilitators with broad industry experience and a proven track record in delivering training. As part of this panel, there are a number of trainers with extensive experience in academic programme design and development.

Trainer Responsibilities:

- Maintain the highest ethical standards in all matters relating to learners, acting in the learners’ best interests at all times
- Act in a professional manner that inspires the respect, trust and confidence of learners
- Deliver programmes according to the Programme Descriptor and the agreed timetable
- Maintain a safe and learner-centred training environment
- Implement ITT’s quality assurance system.
- Be familiar with award specifications issued by QQI or other awarding body for programmes being delivered (if applicable)
- Work with the Programme Manager to prepare, revise, review or update learning and/or assessment materials or processes.
- Induct learners at the beginning of a programme
- Advise learners about the format, layout, and submission of assessments
- Ensure learners are aware of requirements with regard to referencing/bibliography (if applicable)
Irish Times Training Quality Assurance Manual 2021

- Keep an attendance record and submit it to the Programme Assistant
- Provide learners with formative and summative feedback on assessment
- Meet learners on a one-to-one basis as required.
- Update the Programme Manager on progress and flag any areas of concern
- Mark and grade all assessment evidence and prepare assessment portfolios for Internal Verification
- Engage in ongoing review and evaluation of programmes and services to learners and evaluation of own performance as a trainer and assessor
- Avail of opportunities for continuing professional development (CPD) and keep up-to-date with developments in subject area
- Be familiar with the contents of both the Learner Handbook and the Trainer Handbook
- Maintain programme and assessment documentation and any personal data collected from learners in a secure manner in compliance with ITT’s data protection procedures
- Safe and secure storage of assessment evidence at all times
- Alert the Programme Manager at the earliest possibility opportunity if not available as scheduled
- Attend programme team meetings if requested

Management Team

The ITT Executive Group delegates responsibility for the day-to-day management of ITT to the ITT Management Team.

Membership

- Managing Director
- Finance Manager
- Business Development Manager
- Marketing Manager
- Programme Managers
- Operations Manager

The ITT Management Team meets monthly or more frequently if required to:

- Review operational activities and planning
- Review programme delivery
- Consider quality assurance issues
- Develop and update policy
- Review and approve expenditure
- Consider human resource issues.
- Review and update on relevant legislation

The Managing Director

Managing Director - Devolved QA Responsibilities

- Responsible for quality assurance, the quality of programmes and services, and the promotion of a culture of quality and an appropriate learning environment within ITT.
- Ensure that the QAS is resourced and implemented
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- Ensure the Quality Officer has the time, training and resources to coordinate the implementation of the QA system to a high standard
- Recruitment of trainers with input from the Programme Manager and Quality Officer
- Oversee the management of the Risk, Incident/Accident and Complaints Registers
- Membership of the ARP, programme boards, the results approval and other relevant panels
- Regular reporting to the ARP
- Management of contracted and collaborative provision arrangements and relationships
- Management of communications and relationships with awarding bodies

Departmental Functions

Finance

The Finance Manager is part of the Irish Times group and works closely with the Managing Director. He is supported by the accounts team in the Irish Times who manage the day to day invoicing and payments. He is responsible for overseeing the financial arrangements of all academic programmes, producing ‘programme schedules’ to ensure their viability at the programme design stage and compiling monthly reports to monitor their continued viability. He reports on the budget at the monthly management meetings.

Marketing

The marketing function is led by the Marketing Manager and supported by a Marketing Executive. The Marketing Executive manages all social media platforms. The marketing function manages the website and all programme-related marketing materials and programme brochures, working closely with the Programme Managers and the Quality Officer who are responsible for approving all programme-related and quality assurance reports Pre-publication.

Business Development Function

The business development function includes the Business Development Manager, Account Manager, and Sales Executive. The Account Manager assists in the recruitment for open and Springboard programmes. The Sales Executives are responsible for recruiting learners on the Digital Marketing and Train the Trainer programmes. They work closely with the Programme Managers to ensure that learners are aware of all programme details

Quality Officer

The role of the Quality Officer is to manage and coordinate the implementation of the ITT Quality Assurance System and ensure that all stakeholders understand their responsibility in relation to quality.

Responsibilities

- Day-to-day operation and management of all training-related QA systems
- Act as the primary point of contact for internal and external stakeholders in relation to quality matters.
- Monitor, evaluate and improve quality systems an on-going basis
- Coordinate the implementation of the QA system.
Irish Times Training Quality Assurance Manual 2021

- Roll out information on the QA system and any updates/changes to relevant stakeholders.
- Ensure that all members of staff and contracted trainers are aware of their role in ensuring quality provision.
- Maintain the QA manual.
- Monitor the effectiveness of QAS and produce the annual quality report.
- Act as the Internal Verifier.
- Membership of the Results Approval Panel.
- Provide administrative support for governance committees
- Maintain and report on the Risk, Incident/Accident and Complaints Registers.
- Monitor and report on progress in implementing quality improvement plans.
- Implement programme review, learner and tutor evaluation and feedback processes.
- Maintain Learner and Tutor Handbooks.
- Ensure that training premises, facilities and resources are fit-for-purpose.
- Make arrangements for provision of reasonable accommodation/compassionate consideration.
- Manage all self-evaluation and review processes
- Evaluate and enhance learner supports as necessary
- Compile, prepare and present QA reports as necessary including regular reporting to the Academic Review Panel

Quality Advisor

A support and advisory role relation to quality assurance and the implementation of the QAS with specific responsibility for;

- Evaluating the level of success of implementation of the QAS
- Training and updating users of the QAS
- Training and supporting the Quality Officer
- Keep abreast of awarding body requirements and advise ITT accordingly
- Work with the Quality Officer to produce the annual quality report and monitor the implementation of agreed improvements.
- Offer support and advise on validation documents for new programmes

Programme Manager

Key Roles and Responsibilities:

- Review and update programme content, lesson plans, assessment instruments, programme handbooks and other programme resources annually.
- Source and make available relevant learning materials.
- Approve programme information for accuracy prior to publication
- Monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of learner supports and services, identify gaps and bring these to the attention of the Quality Officer.
- Work with the Quality Officer to identity potential programme-related risks.
- Oversee the implementation of agreed arrangements with training partners and/or collaborators
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- Manager the relationship with programme trainers on a day-to-day basis.
- Support other members of the programme team
- Confirm that all responsibilities assigned in MOAs are carried out
- Membership of the ITT Management team and the Academic Review Panel
- Coordinate programme and programmatic reviews.
- Monitor trainer performance and performance appraisal
- Manage and oversee work placement arrangements if applicable
- Manage programme financing and budgets

Programme Assistant

Responsibilities

- Provide administrative support for Programme Managers and trainers
- Upload and distribute course notes to trainers and learners
- Support the Programme Managers in ensuring good communication and a continued flow of information
- Coordinate learner supports and the overall learner experience
- Act as the first port of call for programme queries and learner contacts
- Act as the first port of call to trainers and assist with programme scheduling and technical queries
- Support learners with technical queries regarding online delivery
- Coordinate learner enrolment, application and registration processes
- Escalate communications and queries upwards if necessary
- Maintain up-to-date academic and learner records and data adhering to best data protection practices at all times.
- Coordinate learner requests for reasonable accommodation and compassionate consideration
- Track attendance and follow up with any concerns
- Track assignment submissions and follow up with any learners who are not meeting requirements
- Prepare regular reports for programmes teams outlining attendance records and assignment submissions
Overview

ITT is committed to continually improving its processes, programmes and services and to maintaining and enhancing its Quality Assurance System (QAS) in line with awarding body requirements, relevant legislation and the changing needs and expectations of learners and employers.

The QAS is designed and developed to meet the requirements of our key stakeholders in training provision; the learners, trainers, the broader industry, employers, certifying bodies, QQI, and staff.

A documented approach to quality assurance and continuous quality improvement is embedded in our training and education activities at all levels and spans both the corporate and academic domains.

Our QAS addresses the 11 main policy areas set out by QQI in the Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (April 2016) and Sector Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines – Independent/Private.

1. Governance and Management of Quality
2. Documented Approach to Quality Assurance
3. Programmes of Education and Training
4. Staff Recruitment, Management and Development
5. Teaching and Learning
6. Assessment of Learners
7. Supports for Learners
8. Information and data management
9. Public information and communication
10. Other Parties involved in Education and Training
11. Self-evaluation, monitoring and review.

The QAS relates to the whole organisation including corporate governance, finance, human resources, academic standards, administration, and assessment. It is made up of documented policies, procedures and processes, and supporting documents including Guidelines, and Terms of Reference which are available on the ITT Shared Drive. These policies are guided by The Qualifications and Quality assurance (Education and Training) ACT 2012 and the Amendment Act 2019

The core policies and procedures are collated in the Quality Assurance Manual (QAM). This documented system sets out our commitment to quality in terms of programme provision, support and related activities as appropriate. It also refers to arrangements for the internal evaluation, review and continuous improvement of the effectiveness of the policies and procedures. Therefore, staff and key QA stakeholders are aware of how they can meet their respective responsibilities. The ARP provides oversight of the QAS.
Context Specific QAS

The chart below demonstrates our QA policies and procedures which are aligned with our Standard Operating Procedures.

Both the ITT Executive Group and ARP ensure ongoing alignment to the QAS through:

- Utilising the QAS to make business decisions aligned with the organisation’s mission and values.
- Evaluating structures, resources and processes to deliver high quality programmes at agreed standards to learners and the sector.
- Protecting the integrity of academic processes and standards.
- Ongoing programme monitoring and evaluation with documented follow up action.
- Appropriate planning and staff management.
- A systematic and integrated approach to quality assurance with clear communication and feedback mechanisms.
- Benchmarking current standards, processes and programmes to ensure an ongoing commitment to a continuous improvement and quality.

Monitoring the QAS

The Quality Officer is responsible for the regular review and updating of the QAM the repository of our QAS. As part of this process, the Quality Officer benchmarks our QA documentation against the prevailing QQI guidelines and other relevant industry certifying body requirements.

- QA KPIs are agreed by the ARP and subsequently monitored at each meeting.
- We utilise regular formal and informal feedback mechanisms to ensure ongoing fit for purpose programmes, services and supporting QAS. Learner and employer surveys, telephone and email queries and staff feedback are valuable sources of information. Complaints are also an important form of feedback and we have a formal process in place.
• A formal review of the QAS is conducted annually which analyses learner feedback, results of internal audits and evaluating performance against KPIs and follow up actions.
• We engage external expertise to conduct QAS audits, benchmarking ITT policies and procedures against the defined standards and comparable organisations. The Managing Director ensures staff are aware and adequately trained to meet the required standards.
• The Risk Register addresses the output from regular risk assessments and ensures both the ITT Executive Group and ARP’s adherence to QA, their financial and legal responsibilities, and the ongoing delivery of programmes.
• The QAM is updated annually by the Quality Officer following an annual programme/QAS review and the development of the annual quality reports.
• The ARP considers operational feedback from learners, employers and broader industry, changes in legislative and regulatory requirements including QQI, output from internal monitoring and external QA audits.
• Policies and procedures are version-controlled, and date marked, with the Quality Officer recording details of any amendments made to the QAS, where policies or procedures are found to be ineffective, out-of-date or superfluous to its needs.

QA Glossary V0.1 092020

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<tr>
<td>APEL</td>
<td>Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARP</td>
<td>Academic Review Panel</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS</td>
<td>Common Awards System</td>
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<tr>
<td>FE</td>
<td>Further Education</td>
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<td>Higher Education Institute</td>
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<td>Irish Times Training</td>
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<td>Subject Matter Expert</td>
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4. STAFF RECRUITMENT, MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT

ITT has a systematic approach to the recruitment, induction, management and development of staff engaged in programme and service delivery. We ensure staff and trainers are appropriately trained and competent individuals with relevant experience and expertise to fulfil their designated roles.

We ensure that staff have access to support and development opportunities based on an orderly approach to the identification of their training and development needs. We are responsible for the quality of staff and creating a supportive environment that allows them to carry out their work effectively and enhance the teaching and learning environment for learners.

Responsibility for staffing and human resources rests with the HR Department of the Irish Times in conjunction with the Managing Director who approves new resources and ensures that ITT acts in accordance with relevant employment legislation.

The HR department supports the Managing Director with the management of human resources and employee relations including staff training and development, remuneration, staff welfare, personnel administration and industrial relations. Documented Human Resources policies and procedures are in place.

Recruitment of Staff

The Managing Director supported by the central HR department has primary responsibility for recruitment in ITT. The recruitment of staff is governed by the relevant legislation and the HR department ensures that ITT complies with current employment legislation, equality and other relevant legislation and best practices. All supporting documents are stored centrally in the HR department.

Process

We have rigorous procedures in place for recruitment of staff, with job descriptions and person specifications for each position.

- The job description outlines the roles and responsibilities of the position including the main activities and reporting relationships. Based on the job description, the person specification sets out the qualifications, skills, experience, knowledge and competencies required for successful performance in a role.
- The Managing Director identifies the required knowledge, skills, qualifications, competencies and experience levels of staff and the HR manager draws up transparent and equitable staff recruitment and allocation criteria.
- Vacancies are advertised externally (as required) on relevant websites and in the Irish Times Newspaper. This is carried out by the HR department.
- All applicants for a post are assessed based on their abilities and experience against key criteria for the post as outlined in a job description and person specification.
Irish Times Training Quality Assurance Manual 2021

- Suitable candidates are interviewed by a member of the Management team trained in recruitment and selection techniques.
- The qualifications, and/or professional recognition and references of new staff and Trainers are verified by the HR Manager.
- All appointments made are reported to the Managing Director.
- All appointments made are subject to a minimum six-month probationary period. During this probationary period job progress is closely monitored through appraisal meetings between the line manager and staff member.

**Criteria for Appointment of Trainers**

- ITT has set out requirements for the appointment of trainers. Programme Managers source suitably qualified/experienced trainers at networking events and on a referral basis.
- In the case of our health and social care programmes, our collaborative partner provider, Frontline Training assists with the recruitment of trainers. This is done in collaboration with the Programme Manager. Details are set out in the MOU governing this collaborative arrangement.

Normally a trainer is required to have a qualification at least one level above the level at which they are being appointed to deliver, and the minimum criteria are set at:

- A degree in a relevant Level 7 programme (NFQ), or equivalent in a discipline relevant to programmes. Three years’ relevant post-qualification experience.
- Excellent communication and presentation skills.
- A previous track record in delivering training, assessing and course design development.
- Relevant industry experience.
- In the case of health and social care programmes, trainers are required to have a background in the provision of care and for some modules and they must have a nursing qualification.
- In the case of health and social care programmes, trainers must be Garda Vetted.

**Staff Training & Development**

**Induction**

A member of the management team inducts all new team members. Induction includes:

- Introduction to ITT including background, ethos, structures, strategies and plans.
- Academic and administration procedures and regulations (including equality and diversity policy).
- Staff development opportunities.
- Overview of the QAS.
- Overview of the IT systems.
- Data Protection.
- Overview of health and safety requirements.
The Programme Manager provides an additional role-specific induction for all trainers which covers programme-specific information including:

- Roles and responsibilities, including pedagogical expectations, teaching, learning and assessment strategies.
- Trainers responsibilities in implementing the QAS.
- ITT staffing information.
- Information about awarding bodies.
- Learner supports.
- Trainer supports.
- Assessment.
- Programme-specific documents.
- Training on the use of the Litmos LMS system (if trainers are using a blended learning model of delivery)

The Programme Manager mentors newly-appointed trainers, providing them with guidance on pedagogy and assessment.

### Ongoing Training and Development

Development requirements evolve each year in response to needs identified through both strategic planning, programme, academic practices and quality assurance reviews, including staff and learner feedback. This is supported by informal discussion and consultation which takes place on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

**ITT support the training and development of staff and trainers through:**

- Direct financial support for attending once-off training events.
- Partially funded ongoing training.
- Provision of mentoring, supervision and consultation.
- Provision of in-house seminars and workshops.
- Funding or partial funding for attendance at conferences and seminars.

Trainer training covers the following topics:

- Lecture Preparation
- Who are your learners?
- Content selection
- Selecting a structure
- Selecting visual media
- Opening the lecture
- Learner performance
- Active learner learning
- Dealing with questions, nerves and difficult situations
- Relevant Technical Training – training on blended supports including the LMS and ZOOM.

The Programme Manager also provides detailed teaching plans and a range of teaching resources which the trainer is expected to adhere to. Trainers receive feedback from the Programme Manager based on learner feedback.
Assessment training covers the following topics:

- Assessment Process - setting, correction, moderation, rechecks
- Who are your learners?
- Familiarisation of learning objectives
- Content selection
- Writing questions, assignment and exam papers
- Timings
- Correction requirements
- Moderation requirements
- Dealing with questions.

The Programme Manager provides detailed assessment guidance which trainers are expected to adhere to. Trainers receive feedback from the Programme Manager based on

Staff Management & Appraisal

Staff appraisal in ITT is a process which includes:

- Performance review and review of achievement of agreed individual goals and objectives including a formal annual appraisal.
- The implementation of staff development.
- Future planning – the process focuses on future goals, objectives and development plans in the context of evolving operational responsibilities and career development.
- Continuous quality improvement through the provision of meaningful feedback to staff on their strengths and on areas requiring improvement.

Quality Assuring Trainer Performance

The quality of programmes depends to a large degree on the professionalism and competence of trainers. Therefore, ITT places a strong focus on the standards of trainer performance

We have procedures in place to monitor and evaluate the performance of trainers and to deal with instances of poor performance.

Process

- New trainers provide copies of their award certificates/parchment and/or transcript and/or Diploma Supplement and we reserve the right to take steps to validate the authenticity of this documentation.
- Trainers receive a copy of our Trainer Handbook. The Handbook provides a comprehensive overview of our training operation. Trainers are required to read the Handbook in advance of Trainer Induction.
- All trainers are asked to deliver a ‘trial programme’ to assess their suitability and performance.
- Trainer Induction involves a meeting and discussion with the Programme Manager. At the end of the induction session, the trainer is required to read the Trainer Handbook.
- The Programme Manager collects and analyses learner and other relevant feedback on the performance of trainers regularly and acts on it as appropriate. Feedback gathered across all programmes, both formally by paper-based questionnaires and informally through meetings, phone-calls and emails, feeds into the processes for continually monitoring performance.
The performance of trainers is monitored on an ongoing basis by the Quality Officer who discusses any issues of concern with the Managing Director and/or the Programme Manager as appropriate.

Trainers are expected to maintain a record of training and development activities undertaken, provide updated notes when necessary and provide any CV updates for the purposes of tenders.

A member of the Operational team occasionally sits in on a training session to observe the session. The aim of these observations is to provide formative feedback to trainers on their performance, to note examples of best practice, to ensure that trainers are delivering training as required and to get feedback from trainers. Following the observation, the observer will give the trainer verbal feedback.

The Quality Officer reviews certification reports and external evaluators reports for feedback on trainer performance and instigates corrective action as required.

Trainers who are not performing to the expected or required standards are notified of shortcomings by the Programme Manager who, in general, deals with deficiencies on an informal basis through discussion, counselling and appropriate assistance. If, following the informal intervention, the trainer continues to fail to meet the required standards, the business relationship is discontinued.

**Staff Communication**

Good staff communication is essential to ITT’s success as a provider of high-quality training programmes. Therefore, we actively create an open culture with active engagement, resulting in staff and trainers having a clear understanding of what is expected of them.

The Managing Director is responsible for ensuring that staff and trainers are fully informed of issues and events relevant to them.

**Formal Communication**

- Formal communication is facilitated through staff meetings, the ITT Executive Group and Operational meetings. Meetings are minute and maintained by nominated staff. Programme review and planning meetings take place annually.
- A range of formal and informal methods for communicating with staff and contracted Trainers are in place, including Shared drive and Dropbox for file and information sharing and we use email, phone, Skype or face-to-face conversations for ongoing communication.
- All programme-specific information and documentation is available to trainers in print copy and via a shared online folder in advance of programme delivery. This includes the programme descriptor, Learner, Trainer and Assessment Handbooks, assessment plans, assessment briefs, and marking guidelines. This helps to ensure consistency and equivalence across all programmes and trainers.
- The Learner and Trainer Handbooks are reviewed and updated annually, and the most recent versions are always available to all members of staff on an online shared folder. Trainers are expected to be familiar with the contents of these Handbooks.
- All members of staff have access to the most up-to-date version of the Quality Assurance Manual. Their role in implementing the QAS is discussed at induction and the importance of being familiar with the sections of the manual which are most relevant to their work is emphasised. The Quality Officer communicates changes/updates to our QAS by email throughout the year if the updates are significant.
- The Programme Manager is in regular contact with trainers about all aspects of our programmes, learner issues and through all stages of programme delivery.
A newly recruited or relatively inexperienced trainer is required to contact Programme Manager at the end of each training day (for their first module) and at the end of each module thereafter to give an update on their progress and to discuss issues or concerns if there are any.

Informal communications

As a small organisation, we place a high value on informal communication.

- The Programme Managers and Programme Assistants are in regular contact with trainers about all aspects of our programmes and learner issues. They maintain a high level of personal contact (face-to-face, telephone and email) with the trainers at all stages of programme delivery and check in regularly with trainers regarding their progress and to discuss any issues of concern.
- We hold regular staff meetings to discuss goals, challenges, or operating plans. These meetings usually last about an hour and include a question-and-answer session. There is a standard agenda for these meetings, and they are usually chaired by the Managing Director.
- In the case of the provision of Health and Social care programmes, bi-annual trainer workshops are organised in collaboration with Frontline Training.

Feedback mechanisms

- Successful communication is a two-way process and staff and trainers are encouraged to give ongoing feedback informally, usually through one-to-one meetings, and more formally, through evaluation forms and questionnaires.
- Feedback is recognised and analysed, with any changes and enhancements made as a result of this feedback and input being reported back.
- If it is not feasible or appropriate to take a suggestion on board, this is explained. If we make a change or enhancement on foot of feedback/suggestion made by a staff member/trainer, we make a point of acknowledging the contribution and reporting back.

Communications Media

- E-mail or telephone is typically used to convey information. However, if the communication involves the development of an interpersonal relationship it may require face-to-face communication in which case, we arrange a meeting. Examples of when we use face-to-face meetings include interviews, induction, conflict resolution, and issues about poor performance.
Policy
ITT is committed to developing and providing the highest standard of programmes and support services possible to learners, ensuring national standards are met and creating a learning environment which is learner-focused and enables learners to achieve their desired goals. ITT considers all aspects of the programme at the design stage to include teaching and learning, assessment, access, transfer and progression, supports and resources. ITT monitors the programme on an ongoing basis and undertakes consultations with stakeholders to identify opportunities to improve the quality and effectiveness of its programmes and services.

Programme Design and Development, Maintenance & Approval

Programme Design and Development

Process
- The Managing Director is responsible for the initiation of new programme development based on systematic needs analysis.
- The Managing Director presents a proposal to the ITT Executive Group. The Group considers the proposed new programme in light of the overall strategic direction of the organisation and the financial (including PEL), legal and organisational implications of introducing a new programme.
- The Managing Director appoints a Programme Design and Development Team (PDDT) consisting of a Programme Manager and a Subject Matter Expert to lead the development of the programme in consultation with the Quality Officer.
- The Managing Director allocates a budget and agrees a timeframe for development of the programme.
- The Programme Design and Development Team develops the programme and engages with outside expertise, stakeholders, members, learners etc. as appropriate.
- If the programme being developed leads to a QQI award, the programme design will be based on QQI Programme Validation Guidelines and the requirements of the award specification (if applicable).
- If the programme being developed is Blended, the programme design will be based on the QQI Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes.
- The teaching and skills expertise required for the programme, the strategies for teaching and learning appropriate to the programme context and objectives and the resource and staffing requirements are considered and addressed at the programme design stage.
- If the programme is Blended, the teaching plan is organised and mapped in line with the learning outcome clusters and the required blended materials are identified.
- A Programme Descriptor is drawn up which includes a programme outline, presentation materials, assessment materials (assessment briefs, marking schemes), online materials if the programme is blended, lesson plans and programme and assessment timetables to ensure consistency in
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delivery. The delivery and assessment methods are designed to meet the needs of the defined learner profile.

- If the programme is Blended, the PDDT designs the supporting materials including audio files, videos and additional content to ensure they are suitable for an online environment.
- Additionally, the transfer and progression options open to graduates of the programme are outlined and the PDDT ensures, where possible, that graduates have the opportunity to transfer or progress, should they wish to do so, either immediately or at a later date.
- If a programme involves a second (or more) provider, the PDDT draws up a Memorandum of Understanding to formalise and approve the arrangements between ITT and the second provider, clearly outlining the areas of responsibility and accountability of all stakeholders involved in this programme.
- The MOU is signed by the Managing Director and a senior representative of the collaborating provider.
- When the Programme Design and Development Team have completed its work, the resulting Programme Descriptor/Validation Manual is presented to the ARP by the Programme Manager for consideration. The ARP acts as the de facto Programme Approval Panel.
- If amendments/edits are agreed by the ARP these are incorporated by the Programme Manager.
- The Programme Manager prepares an application for validation to the awarding body.
- The Managing Director reviews and signs-off on applications for validation prior to submission to the awarding body.

Programme Approval and Submission for Validation

All programme documentation is approved by the ARP before it is submitted to the awarding body for validation or prior to delivery.

Process

- The final draft of the Programme Descriptor, the application for validation (if applicable) and all programme materials are developed by the Programme Manager, proof-read and double-checked by the Quality Officer before hand-over to the Managing Director.
- The Managing Director presents the final drafts of Programme Descriptors, application for validation and all programme materials to the ARP.
- Following approval by the ARP, the Programme Manager finalises an application for validation.
- Applications for validation are reviewed and signed-off by the Managing Director prior to submission to the awarding body.
- Following approval and sign-off, the application is submitted to QQI with the appropriate validation fee paid to QQI by EFT quoting the Programme Code.

Maintaining the Curriculum

ITT designs and maintains programme curriculum to ensure that programmes are responsive to changes and that learners are properly prepared on graduation.
The PDDT designs programme validation documentation, so it is not overly detailed and prescriptive, emphasising outcomes, strategies and blended approaches if relevant rather than a detailed elaboration of learning materials.

We regularly engage with key stakeholders to monitor changes in the sector.

The PDDT reviews the content of each module on an annual basis as part of our annual programme review to ensure that the content and teaching and learning strategies reflect advances in the relevant disciplines and that the pedagogic style incorporates best practice.

The Programme Manager is responsible for disseminating information on innovations in the curriculum to the programme team.

Programme materials and online resources for Blended programmes are updated annually by the trainers to reflect legal and regulatory requirements.

The PDDT review assessment techniques and examinations annually and makes changes as needed to reflect updated work practices and content.

Programme Validation and Re-validation (QQI)

Process

- We secure QQI validation before enrolling learners on any programme leading to a QQI award. Applications for validation are approved and sign-off by the Managing Director before they are submitted to QQI via the QBS.
- We review our capacity to uphold the terms and conditions of validation and ensure that our programmes meet the validation criteria as part of our annual programme review.
- We arrange for the revalidation of continuing programmes every 5 years (or in accordance with the expiry of the duration of the validation if different).
- We carry out a Self-Evaluation programmatic review to coincide with revalidation – data from this review is used to inform and support the revalidation process. As part of this process, we benchmark our programme offering against our competitors using data from the QQI website.
- We understand that a validated programme may be reviewed by QQI at any time and we facilitate such reviews.

Validation Process (QQI)

1. Submission
   ITT submits a programme in a standard format and consistent with QQI requirements as outlined in the published Award Specification, Guidelines for Assessment and Guidelines for Preparing Programme Descriptors for FET Programmes leading to QQI awards.

2. Evaluation
   The programme is evaluated against current validation criteria.

3. Decision
   The QQI Programmes and Awards Executive (PAEC) Committee validate or refuse to validate the programme.

4. Appeal
   Providers may appeal the PAEC decision to refuse validation.

5. Review
   QQI may review the programme at any time. The decision may be to withdraw validation. The provider may appeal this decision.
Programme Admission, Progression, and Recognition

Learner Admissions and Application Process

Admissions Policy

Admission to a programme is subject to:

- Places being available.
- That the applicant is suitable for the programme and meets the minimum entry requirements. However, consideration is given to those who can demonstrate work experience in a healthcare environment. For the Train the Trainer course, we recommend the course for those whose role involves some element of training which could include managers, team leaders, HR professionals etc.
- Learners have the necessary English language level requirement for those whose first language is not English. This is assessed in interview for Open Programmes or in the case of in-company programmes, e.g. the HSE, it is the line manager who undertakes this responsibility.
- That the applicant is considered likely to benefit from completing the programme.
- The applicant learner and employer (as appropriate) agrees to abide by our terms and conditions.

The principle of equality and inclusivity is central to the implementation of our Admissions Policy. We are committed to creating a learning environment in which individual differences are accepted and catered for. Applicants who have any learning support needs are encouraged to provide us with relevant information at the time of application. We treat any such information confidentially.

Entry to Programmes

We set out minimum entry requirements on the website and in each programme brochure. These are:

- Comprehensive, clear and explicit,
- Reflect the level and content of the awards being offered in the programme,
- Justifiable and genuinely required for successful completion of the programme.

Minimum Entry Requirements - English language proficiency

Applicants whose first language is not English, may be required to demonstrate proficiency in English to an appropriate level as specified by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL). The specific level required is outlined for each individual programme as some programmes require a higher level of proficiency than others. Details can be found on individual programme brochures under the heading Minimum Entry Requirements.

The following English language proficiency tests and results are accepted
Recognition of Prior Learning

We recognise the knowledge, skills and competence an individual learner has already acquired for admission to our courses. During the programme development process, the programme development team identifies what prior learning will be accepted for entry/access.

Process

- We make pre-enrolment information available on the ITT website and in promotional materials. This information includes details on entry requirements. We do not register learners on a programme until it has been validated by the appropriate awarding body.
- Queries are submitted by email and telephone. Enquirers are talked through the programme/s by the Business Development Executive and Sales Executive. If they are unable to provide the necessary information, the enquiry is escalated to the Programme Manager.
- We accept applications either directly from individual applicants or from members on behalf of a group of employees.
- Booking occurs when Learners fill in a booking form on our website or when Employers contract us to run a course in-house for employees.

General Direct Application from the Learner

- Applicants are required to complete an online Booking Form which is submitted to ITT.
- An acknowledgement email is issued to the email address provided by the applicant on receipt of an application.
- In relation to Digital Marketing and Train the Trainer programmes, the application is vetted at first instance by the Sales Executive to determine eligibility for admission and full details are given by the learner.
- When the application form has been reviewed and accepted, the Sales Executive forwards the applicant details to the Programme Administrator.
- In relation to the Healthcare programme, each application is vetted by the Programme Manager to ensure full details are given by the learner and to determine eligibility for admission.
- If arrangements for reasonable accommodation have been agreed, this is highlighted by the Programme Administrator/Manager and brought to the attention of the trainer.
- The Programme Administrator/Manager issues an induction email to the applicant. This includes relevant programme information such as: venue, schedule, dates etc.

Application Process for a Group of Employees

A client may book a group of employees onto a programme, through the online booking form.

Application Process for an in-house Programme

A client may book an in-company delivery of a programme for a larger group of staff.
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- The client will first discuss their requirements with a Business Development Executive or Sales Executive initially who, in turn, involves the Programme Manager who will allocate the most appropriate trainer for delivery.
- The Programme Manager ensures that the training venue selected for delivery is safe and suitable. Programmes are delivered on client premises or other public venues if the facilities meet the requirements of the programmes and are judged to be fit-for-purpose. If we use an offsite facility we check the training facilities to ensure that the premises, equipment and facilities meet the needs of our learners and our programmes; that the physical premises/facilities are accessible and maintained in such a manner as to ensure the health and safety of our learners and trainers.
- Once the client agrees on the dates suggested, the Programme Manager will contact the trainers on their availability.
- Once the trainers have been booked, the Programme Manager will forward a completed schedule to the client.
- All necessary notes/folders etc are forwarded to the client for their employees a number of days before course commences.
- Evaluations – if hardcopy evaluations are requested by the Client, the final trainer will get the employees to fill these out at the final module. If on-line evaluations are requested by the client, the Quality Officer requests a Questback evaluation report which is sent to the employees. Once the end date has been reached, the Quality Officer downloads the report, discusses the findings with the Business Development Executive and forwards a copy to the client.

Admissions Appeals

- In the event of an applicant not being offered a place, the applicant is entitled to appeal the decision stating the grounds for appeal. The appeal is considered by the ARP.

Payment and cancellation policies

Programme Cancellation

We reserve the right to cancel a programme where there are insufficient numbers to run a viable programme.

- Programme Brochures clearly state that the programme will run dependent on numbers. The Programme Manager reviews application numbers on a weekly basis.
- If insufficient numbers are registered by a specified cut-off date, the Programme Manager makes a final decision not to run the programme. This is at a minimum 1 week prior to the scheduled commencement date of the programme.
- In such circumstances, the Programme Administrator informs applicants by telephone and email that the programme will not run, arranging refund of any payments according to our Refund Policy.
- Alternatively, we offer places on the next upcoming course if the applicant prefers.

Payments

Payment of the full fee is due one month before the start of a programme. Payment can be made by either credit Card, EFT or cheque. We do not accept cash payments.
Company Payments

We issue an invoice at the time of booking and full payment should be made a minimum of two weeks prior to the start of the programme. In the case of a booking made within 2 weeks of the start date, full payment must be made by credit card or EFT on confirmation of the booking.

Transfers/Change of Date

Companies and individuals may substitute participants prior to the start of a programme without additional payment. Transfer or change of date requires notification by e-mail more than 10 working days prior to the commencement date of the programme. If more than 10 working days' notice is given, we can arrange an alternative date for the learner to attend the programme.

Cancellation and Refund Policy

We do not refund payments to applicants who do not attend classes or who do not complete the programme.

In relation to Company Bookings:

- Full refunds will be given for courses cancelled in excess of 10 working days before course start date.
- Cancellations made 10 working days or less in advance will incur the full course fee.
- No refund will be made to delegates who fail to attend classes or who do not complete the course.

Disclaimer

We reserve the right to cancel or re-schedule any programme at any time. In the unlikely event of cancellation, fees are refunded. We also reserve the right to re-schedule the start dates of programmes and, if necessary, to vary the content. Except where expressly stated, all fees are non-refundable. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information on our brochures and website, it is subject to alteration or amendment in the light of policy changes, programmes updates or other constraints.

Data Protection

We have a privacy policy in place which details how we use, process and protect learner’s personal information in keeping with the EU’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Our privacy policy includes details on:

- the information we collect,
- how we process this information,
- how we store and secure this data,
- the rights of those we hold information on,
- A copy of the privacy policy is available in the supporting documents file.

Access, Transfer and Progression

We are committed to implementing Section 56, Part 4 of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012. It is our policy to do all we can to facilitate learners gain access to
the programmes we offer, transfer to other programmes/providers and progress to programmes leading to awards at higher levels of the NFQ.

- We allocate places on programmes based on objective criteria in a fair, transparent and consistent manner. To ensure this we provide information to applicants and learners regarding Access, Transfer and Progression to help them make informed choices regarding their choice of programme.
- As the programmes offered are for a short term duration, typically transfer queries are addressed by the Programme Manager on an individual basis.
- Learners who successfully complete a programme leading to an award with ITT can progress to programmes at a higher level on the National Framework of Qualifications NFQ. The PDDT is responsible for researching the ATP options at the programme design phase and it will be the responsibility of the programme manager to update these options for progression as part of the annual programme review.

**Programme Planning and Delivery**

We are committed to delivering high quality training programmes. As part of the programme design and development stage, we identify the human, physical and academic supports and resources necessary for delivery of programmes. It is formally set out in the approved programme descriptors and implemented prior to programme delivery.

**Process**

- The Programme Outline/Descriptor for each programme is reviewed as part of our annual programme review and updated, as necessary.
- The Programme Manager/Administrator books trainers from our approved trainer panel.
- The Programme Manager and Head of Business reviews programme brochures, the application process and form to ensure ease of access for prospective learners.
- The Programme Manager/Administrator ensures that the training venue selected for delivery is safe and suitable. Programmes are delivered on client premises or other public venues if the facilities meet the requirements of the programmes and are judged to be fit-for-purpose. If we use an offsite facility we check the training facilities to ensure that the premises, equipment and facilities meet the needs of our learners and our programmes; that the physical premises/facilities are accessible and maintained in such a manner as to ensure the health and safety of our learners and trainers.
- The Programme Manager/Administrator reviews and prepares programme resources, supporting materials, equipment, learner induction pack/presentation, evaluation forms in advance and in consultation with the trainer.
- In the case of Blended Programmes, all supporting material including videos and online content is reviewed and signed off by the Programme Manager.
- The Programme Manager/Assistant ensures the learner and trainer have a copy of the Trainer and Learner Handbooks in advance of course commencement.
- The ITT health and safety statement is reviewed annually. We record details of on-site fire and evacuation drills undertaken during programme delivery. We have a standard fire alarm test weekly in The Irish Times building. We have information on health and safety in our Learner Handbook and we highlight it at Learner Induction. We maintain an accident and incident register.
6. TEACHING AND LEARNING (INCLUDING LEARNING SUPPORTS)

Policy

ITT is committed to providing learners with a high-quality learning experience in a safe training and learning environment, ensuring the highest standards in teaching and learning. Through self-monitoring and benchmarking, we are continually improving the quality of our teaching and learning and associated services.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

Process

- ITT programmes are typically delivered through face to face lectures or through a blended learning approach.
- For Blended Programmes, the face to face learning experiences are supplemented by online learning supports including audio files, recorded lectures and complementary reading and video material.
- The PDDT decide on the delivery methodologies based on the needs and profile of the learners together with the content of modules ensuring a robust pedagogical approach. This has also been reviewed and agreed with the ARP.
- ITT develops a learner-centred approach to teaching and learning with programme content and assessment strategies reflecting learner needs, the range of learning styles of the learners and the different learning environments both on- and off-the-job.
- The teaching and learning strategies for each module and for the programme as a whole are set out clearly in the programme validation documentation with samples of teaching and learning activities provided for each module.
- Adequate guidance and support systems are put in place throughout the programme.

Monitoring Teaching and Learning

Learner Evaluation and Feedback

Learner evaluation and feedback is one of the primary mechanisms to monitor our programmes and identify ways to improve the quality and effectiveness of our programmes and services. We have a structured process for feedback for improvement from learners for every programme we deliver.

Process

- We highlight the importance of learners providing feedback at Learner Induction and in our Learner Handbook.
Feedback Questionnaires form the main source of learner feedback. These are distributed either in hard copy format or online using our online Evaluation System. Trainers are responsible for distributing and collecting the completed forms and returning them to the Programme Administrator. The length of the programme dictates when feedback forms are issued. In the case of Digital Marketing, these online feedback forms are emailed to learners after the first 4 modules, then after 8 and finally after the final module. Train the Trainer feedback forms are distributed at the end of the 5-day course. Healthcare feedback forms are issued after each minor award.

Learners are encouraged to approach any member of staff at any stage of programme delivery to highlight areas of concern and/or give us feedback. Informal feedback is considered as valuable and is included in the Learner Feedback report.

Questionnaire feedback is supplemented by other forms of feedback including regular informal contact through telephone calls and emails to the Programme Administrators and Managers, views of learner and employer representatives, the Complaints register/Log and appeals. Each mechanism is an important component of our monitoring and review processes.

The Programme Administrator collates the feedback after programme completion in Questback Online Evaluation Reports which are reviewed and discussed at operational management meetings. Issues which need to be addressed/acted on are highlighted by the Programme.

The Quality Officer collates and monitors a To-Do List, highlights the necessary steps to be taken and the Programme Manager is assigned to complete the follow up.

The Quality Officer and Programme Manager review the Learner Feedback Form template as part of the annual review and amends/updates, as necessary.

Full analysis of learner feedback is collated and discussed at the annual Programme Review Meeting.

Improvements are recommended and agreed with the ARP.

These agreed improvements are then implemented for the next rollout of the programme.

The Programme Manager discusses feedback on trainer performance with individual trainers as necessary and records details of agreed actions.

If any issue is identified by the Programme Manager, contact is made with the learner.
Managing and Monitoring Work Placements

Responsibility

- The Programme Manager is responsible for the management of programme-specific work placements.

Procedure

Learners are required to undertake work placement for 150 - 200 hours.

- If the learner is not already in relevant employment in a care facility, Garda Vetting must be carried by ITT.
- It is the learner’s responsibility to find their own work using the Guidelines for Sourcing Suitable Placements issued by the Trainer, along with the help and guidance of their trainer via the Workplace Experience/Placement module. Although we encourage learners to find their own work placement, ITT have contacts and will assist learners with their placements if required.
- When the learner has agreed a work placement, they must complete the Learner Details Work Placement form and return it to their trainer. The trainer then sends the form to the Programme Manager by email.
- The trainer gives the workplace supervisor (WPS) a copy of the Agreement confirming details of the placement.
- The Programme Manager emails the employer with their ITT contact details and attaches the work placement arrangements document and indemnity letter.
- ITT Programme Manager contacts the employer within the first week of the placement.
- The Workplace Supervisor is required to sign off the attendance sheet for the learner.
- The trainer conducts an on-site visit with each learner on at least two occasions throughout the placement to check that the learner is keeping their work experience journal up to date and submits reports to the programme manager based on their conversations with the learner and the WPS. The trainer is available to talk to the WPS via telephone, email and face-to-face throughout the learner’s work placement.
- The WPS is required to assess the learner’s skills in the workplace and to complete a Supervisor Report verifying that skills demonstrations have taken place under the direct observation of the supervisor. Skills-based assessments form a percentage of the overall grade in the work experience module. This report is submitted to the trainer on completion of the work placement.
- The learner is required to complete a Work Experience Diary, which is a learner journal providing details of the knowledge and skills they acquired and how they dealt with challenges throughout the work placement.
- The trainer uses the WPS report and the learner journal as part of the assessment process, which accounts for part of the learner’s overall result for this module.
- Learners on both health and child-care programmes are required to complete a Safeguarding Awareness programme to ensure that they understand their role in the protection of vulnerable persons.
- The role of the workplace supervisor (WPS) is clearly set out in a role description included in the Work Placement Guidelines for Host.
- Details of the assessment pertaining to work placements are also contained in the Work Placement Guidelines for Host.
Trainer Evaluation and Feedback

Trainer evaluation and feedback is an integral part of our commitment to high quality teaching and learning. Therefore, regular monitoring and evaluation is a fundamental element to our process of continuous quality improvement through collecting, collating and analysis of feedback from our trainers on programmes.

Supporting Documents

- Trainer Handbook
- Feedback Form Template in Questback as part of the annual programme review
- Feedback Reports with recommendations on programme improvement
- Minutes from ARP Meeting
- Minutes from annual Programme Review Meeting.

Process

- The Trainer Role Description and Trainer Handbook outline the role of the Trainer and highlight the importance of feedback and the mechanism used. It is also addressed at Trainer Induction.
- The most recent version of our Trainer Feedback Form is maintained by the Quality Officer in our online Trainer Resources Folder and updated annually.
- Trainers are required to contact the Training Administrator on a regular basis by email, phone or in person throughout the duration of the training to highlight or discuss any issue of concern that arises.
- The Quality Officer collates, and monitors, a To Do List and Programme Managers follow up as needed.
- The Trainers complete the Trainer Feedback Form as part of the annual programme review returns to the Programme Manager.
- The Programme Manager reviews, collates and analyses all feedback and identifies any issues which need to be addressed.
- Issues of concern raised and/or recommendations for improvements made by the Quality Officer/Internal Verifier and/or the External Authenticator and agreed by the Results Approval Panel are discussed with the relevant trainers.
- Full analysis of Trainer Feedback is collated and discussed at the annual Programme Review Meeting.
- Agreed improvements are implemented for the next rollout of the programme.
- The Quality Officer discusses feedback on trainer performance with individual trainers as necessary and records details of agreed actions.

Learning Support and Resources

Title: Supports for Learners Procedure

Issue Date: 092020  Version Number 1

Responsibility

- The ARP is responsible for overseeing the process of review and evaluation.
- Quality Officer is responsible for implementing the process
Scope

Applies to all learners

Definition

Learner Support focuses on what we do to help and support learners beyond the formal delivery of the programme

Responsibilities

- The Quality Officer has overall responsibility for identifying, sourcing and making available the supports that our learners need to ensure successful participation in our programmes
- The Programmes Manager monitors the adequacy and effectiveness of learner supports and services for their programme, identifies gaps and brings them to the attention of the Quality Officer
- The Programme Assistant co-ordinates learner supports.

Process

- We identify appropriate learner supports at the programme design stage and set out details in the Programme Descriptors.
- Our trainers keep a watching brief on the adequacy and effectiveness of learner supports and services and bring issues to the attention of the Quality Officer or the Programme Manager.
- Details of the supports and services available to learners, both general and programme-specific, are detailed in the Learner Handbook, are outlined at learner Induction and are published on the website.
- We address equality and diversity at Induction and clearly set out our commitment to facilitating diversity and difference.
- We outline our policy with regard to learner support and the provision of reasonable accommodation at our pre-programme briefings. We host these briefings to give interested applicants an opportunity to meet members of the programme team, to find out more about the programme and discuss any specific needs they have on a one-to-one basis with us.
- While we prefer to plan for specific needs in advance of programme commencement, learners are encouraged to discuss a support requirement to their trainer or Programme Manager at any stage of a programme.
- Learners may be asked to provide documentation which verifies their need for specific supports.
- The Quality Officer coordinates requests for additional supports on a case-by-case basis and discusses requests with the Programme Manager and the trainer, recording details of any agreed arrangements.
The Programme Manager contacts learners with additional support needs to confirm the arrangements.

Supports for learners include:
- Learner Induction and Learner Handbook
- Training sites that are accessible, comfortable, well-serviced and maintained, fit-for-purpose and conducive to learning
- We accommodate specific learning needs. Examples of supports available to learners include:
  - Learning materials provided in accessible format.
  - Additional time allocated to complete assessments.
  - Physical modifications to the training location e.g. seating arrangements.
  - Alternative assessment formats.
- Reasonable accommodation/compassionate consideration for assessment e.g. provision of a reader or extra time for exams or assignment completion.
- Access to online material/LMS etc. and training in the use of our LMS/VLE
- The support of the Programme Assistant and/or Programme Manager at all stages of the programme. The Programme Manager meets the learners at induction and provides contact details (the Programme Manager can be contacted by the learners any time between 8.30 am and 6 pm, Monday to Friday). The Programme Manager is also available outside of these hours if a query is urgent.
- Trainers are available to meet learners on a one-to-one basis and can be contacted by email or telephone at any stage during a programme (the trainer records details of these meetings and discusses significant issues with the Quality Officer).

Formative feedback throughout the programme and summative feedback at the end

**Additional Supports/Information to Learners on Blended Learning Programmes**

- We make a revised Induction pack, registration form and Zoom joining instructions available to learners in digital format in advance of the programme start.
- The Programme Manager enters the Zoom meeting on first day of the programme and talks through the content of the induction pack, takes questions about online delivery, informs the learners of what they can expect and gives a comprehensive overview of the assessment strategy and timetable (in addition to the ITT standard induction presentation)
- We offer one-to-one coaching to learners who might be struggling with the use of technology e.g. accessing the LMS or logging on to Zoom.
- The Programme Assistant is available via phone and/or email to answer any questions learner have in relation to the use of technology or blended learning.

**Supporting Documents**
- Learner Induction Presentation
- Learner Handbook
- Lesson Plan Template
- Programme Descriptors
Facilitating Diversity

We actively monitor, develop and implement policies and procedures which promote equality and avoid discrimination.

Supporting Documents

- Equality Policy
- Learner Induction PowerPoint Presentation
- Learner Handbook
- Application/Registration Form

Process

- We have an Equality and Diversity Policy in place setting out our commitment to facilitating diversity and difference.
- Equality and diversity are addressed at Learner Induction. Learners can disclose any support requirement to their trainer or Programme Manager at any stage of a programme.
- The Quality Officer address requests for reasonable/special accommodation on a case-by-case basis. The applicant is responsible for requesting reasonable accommodation and for providing supporting documentation which verifies their need.
- The Quality Officer monitors applications and discusses any requests for additional supports with the Programme Manager/trainer, recording details of any agreed arrangements.
- The Programme Manager contacts learners with additional support needs to make the necessary arrangements.
- Examples of supports available to learners include:
  - Learning materials provided in accessible format.
  - Additional time allocated to complete assessments.
  - Physical modifications to the training location e.g. seating arrangements.
  - Alternative assessment formats.
  - Support from a scribe or a reader to complete examinations/assessments.
Premises, Equipment, and Facilities

We deliver public programmes in our purpose-built facilities at the ITT offices in Tara Street, Dublin 2. We regularly deliver training at offsite locations or in client’s offices.

All training locations are vetted against documented criteria to ensure the premises, equipment and facilities meet the programmes requirements and needs of learners.

The criteria are as follows:

- Wheelchair accessible
- Good accessibility with nearby transport links
- Up to date audio visual equipment, adaptor, projector, overhead screens, flip charts
- Flexible desk arrangements
- Fast Wi-Fi
- Capability to provide tea/coffee refreshments at breaks
- Well-maintained, clean, bright, ventilated etc. and conducive to training and learning
- Complies with all fire, health and safety regulations
- Full Insurance in place.

Before confirming any location for a training course, the Quality Officer will vet the venue to ensure that it meets the standards. The venue provider also signs off confirmation of meeting the criteria.

Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation of venue and facilities

- We evaluate the venues we use as part of our ongoing monitoring and evaluation and we ask learners and trainers for their feedback in evaluation forms.
- We review the effectiveness of equipment, training resources and facilities to ensure their continuing adequacy and effectiveness as part of our annual programme review.

Quality Assuring Premises, Equipment, and Facilities

We deliver public programmes in our purpose-built facilities at the ITT offices in Tara Street, Dublin 2. We regularly deliver training at offsite locations or on client facilities. All training sites are benchmarked against criteria to ensure the premises, equipment and facilities meet the programmes requirements and needs of learners.

The criteria are as follows:

- Wheelchair accessible
- Good accessibility with nearby transport links
- Up to date audio visual equipment, adaptor, projector, overhead screens, flip charts
- Flexible desk arrangements
- Fast Wi-Fi
- Capability to provide tea/coffee refreshments at breaks
- Well-maintained, clean, bright, ventilated etc. and conducive to training and learning
- Complies with all fire, health and safety regulations
Before confirming any location for a training course, the Quality Officer vets the training site to ensure that it meets ITTs standards. The Quality Officer and the site owner/provider both confirm that the criteria are met.

**Monitoring and Evaluation of Premises, Equipment, and Facilities**

- We evaluate premises, equipment, and facilities as part of our ongoing monitoring and evaluation and we ask learners and trainers for their feedback in evaluation forms.
- We review the effectiveness of equipment, training resources and facilities to ensure their continuing adequacy and effectiveness as part of our programme reviews.
7. ASSESSMENT OF LEARNERS

Policy
ITT is committed to fair and consistent assessment of all learners. Assessment is an integral part of the learner experience and we ensure assessments are appropriate to both the learning outcomes and content and sensitive to the diversity of learners, proving appropriate and timely feedback.

Assessment procedures are in place that meet QQI requirements, are well understood by staff and learners, and consistent across different assessors to achieve national standards.

To ensure the quality and integrity of all assessments, evaluation mechanisms are in place so that arrangements are valid, reliable, and secure.

Reference Documents
ITT’s policies and procedures in relation to the assessment of learners are informed by the following documents:

- QQI Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers 2013
- FETAC Guidelines for Internal Verification
- NFQ Grid of Level Indicators
- QBS Quick Guide to Certification QQI 2017
- QA Assessment Guidelines for External Authenticators

Supporting Documents

- Assessment Briefs
- Marking schemes
- Learner assessments scripts
- Programme Assessment Plan
- Course Outline
- Learner Handbook
- Learner Induction Presentation
- Programme Material
- Learner Registration Form
- Internal Verification Report
- External Authentication Report Template
- External Authentication Report
- External Authenticator Selection Criteria
- Results Approval Report
- Learner Evaluation Form.
Overview of the Assessment Process

1. **Information to Learners**
   - Learners are clearly informed about the Assessment process from the beginning of their learner journey with ITT.
   - On registration, learners receive the Learner Handbook and a course descriptor/outline for the course they have registered for, with both covering programme Assessment plans etc.
   - At the beginning of each course, learners receive an Induction handout and the trainer gives a verbal induction.

2. **Assessment**
   - We develop and implement assessment policies, processes and procedures.
   - The PDDT devises assessment instruments, marking schemes and assessment criteria.
   - The trainer assesses, marks and grades the learner evidence.
   - The paperwork is submitted to the Quality Officer/Internal Verifier who records the outcomes.

3. **Authentication**
   - The Quality Officer/Internal Verifier confirms that assessment procedures have been applied consistently across all our assessment activities and that our assessment results are recorded accurately.
   - The External Authenticator, assigned by the ARP, based on broad award/field of learning expertise, moderates assessment results by sampling learner evidence according to the sampling strategy (20% of assessment portfolios).

4. **Results Approval**
   - The Results Approval Panel consists of the Managing Director, the Quality Officer, Programme Manager/s
   - The Panel approves and signs-off assessment results.
   - Provisional results are made available to the learners.

5. **Appeals Process**
   - Learners are allowed 10 working days to lodge an appeal of the assessment process or result.
   - The Quality Officer processes appeals according to our documented appeals process.

6. **Request for Certification**
   - The Quality Officer submits all learner results to QQI via the QBS.

**Assessment Planning & Design**

The assessment of each programme is planned in advance of the programme. The range of assessment techniques depends on the programme’s specification and validation requirements. The assessment methods typically used for QQI programmes include hard copy written assignments, presentations, skills demonstrations and examinations. In the case of a Blended programme, should any part of the assessment be online, this is done in line with the QQI Statutory Guidelines for Blended Programmes.

**Supporting Documents**

- Programme Assessment Plan Template
- Assessment Brief Template
- Award Specifications
- Copies of validated programmes applications
Assessment Planning

Process

- The Programme Manager and the Subject Matter Expert reviews the QQI’s component specification, identifies the assessment criteria and develops an assessment brief in accordance with the specification and assessment format.
- Trainers are made aware of the assessment and outcomes that need to be achieved.
- The Quality Officer/Internal Verifier identifies and addresses training opportunities such as assessment methodologies, marking of evidence, consistent marking of assessments, etc.
- The Programme Manager and the Subject Matter Expert reviews the programme assessment, which is based on the validated programme, in line with the award specifications.
- The Programme Plan includes deadline dates for submission of assessments and examination dates.
- The trainer reviews the assessment instruments annually in line with the annual programme review and makes whatever changes/updates are necessary.

Information for Learners on Assessment

We ensure that all information regarding assessment is provided to learners in a timely and open manner to support their participation in assessment.

Supporting Documents

- Learner Handbook
- Programme Outline/Descriptor
- ITT website

Staff

The Programme Manager is responsible for ensuring that the learners have access to any information they need relating to assessment. Trainers have a role in disseminating the information.

Supporting Materials

- Learner Handbook
- Learner Induction Presentation
- Programme Brochure
- Assessment Brief Template
- Assessment Brief
- ITT Website

Process

- There is general information regarding assessment and QQI Awards on the website and in programme brochures.
- We make information regarding assessment and QQI Awards available to learners prior to enrolment, at Induction, in the Learner Handbook and throughout the programme.
Irish Times Training Quality Assurance Manual 2021

- All learners receive joining instructions in which the qualification for a QQI Award is clearly outlined by the Programme Manager.
- Learners are provided with assessment schedules with critical assessment-related dates highlighted.
- Towards the end of the course, the trainer will take the class through the assignments and answer any questions that the learners may have. Assessment and marking schemes are discussed with the learners as well as deadline dates for QQI accreditation. Guidance on use of technology is also provided.
- The trainer and the Quality Officer are available to the learners throughout the assignment period to answer any queries regarding the assignments.
- The Appeals procedures with detailed timeframes and processes are available in the Learner Handbook.
- An Assessment section in the Trainer Handbook is available for trainers to guide them in relation to advising learners. This Handbook is reviewed and updated annually.

Reasonable Accommodation

We aim to ensure a fair and consistent assessment process for all learners, including learners with specific learning requirements, in accordance with their distinct needs and in a manner consistent with academic principles.

Compassionate Consideration

ITT recognises that exceptional circumstances may arise where learners may not be able to submit assessment on the due date/attend an exam e.g. domestic crisis, death of close relative. Where this arises, learners are asked to contact the Programme Manager directly to discuss the circumstances and apply for compassionate/special consideration. We make every effort to accommodate them.

Supporting Documentation & Materials

- ITT Equality & Diversity Policy
- QQI Learner Application Form
- Notes on Internal Verification Reports re Reasonable Accommodation provided
- Learner Handbook

Process

- Details of our reasonable accommodation policy are available in our Learner Handbook and we address it at both Learner and trainer Induction.
- Learners are encouraged to contact a member of the programme team if they may require additional supports upon applying for a place (or at the earliest possible opportunity). It is the responsibility of the learner to inform ITT in sufficient time in order for a Reasonable Accommodation request to be processed and appropriate arrangements put in place.
- We invite learners to inform us by email if they wish to apply for reasonable accommodation. Supporting evidence such as a letter from their doctor or medical professional to confirm their needs in relation to special accommodation(s) may be required.
- Examples of adaptions we can/have made include:
  - Rest periods during examinations.
  - Using a scribe or reader.
  - Oral (as opposed to written) examinations.
  - Extended time to complete assignments.
The Quality Officer reviews requests for reasonable accommodation and signs-off on a request only if it is reasonable and practicable to provide reasonable accommodation and that it does not affect the standards of the given award. We are responsible for any associated costs incurred.

The Quality Officer notifies the learner in writing of the accommodations to be made.

Trainers are guided by the Programme Manager with regard to adapting assessment and providing accommodation for assessment.

The Quality Officer/Internal Verifier informs the External Authenticator about any adaptations made/ reasonable accommodation implemented by noting it on the Internal Verification Reports.

The Quality Officer/Internal Verifier maintains information on reasonable accommodation implemented on the learner record.

The Quality Officer reviews the effectiveness of Reasonable Accommodation provisions at programme review meetings.

Security of Assessment Related Processes and Materials

ITT is committed to ensuring the security and integrity of assessment evidence.

Process

- Learners are required to submit assignments in hardcopy by hand or by post with a signed and dated assignment declaration confirming that all coursework being submitted is their own work.
- To ensure that the learners’ work is their own, ITT insist that all assignments are delivered to ITT in hardcopy. Learners are advised to retain copies of their completed assignments.
- Once assignments are received, they are checked by the Quality Officer/Internal Verifier to ensure that all components of the work are complete.
- The Quality Officer/Internal Verifier keeps a record of all assessments submitted and this is included in the folder for Internal Verification and External Authentication. This record acts as the receipt system for learner work.
- Learners are emailed to let them know that their work has been received and is complete. They are also informed what QQI Certification period they will be submitted for.
- The Quality Officer will assemble all the learners’ assignments into a folder clearly dividing each learner’s work together and ensure they are stored securely.
- All completed assessment materials are maintained in a secure storage area by the Quality Officer/Internal Verifier. This storage area can only be accessed by the Quality Officer or the Programme Manager on a needs-only basis.
- The Quality Officer makes arrangements to deliver the learner assessments to the marker by hand.
- Trainers/marker must return the marked and graded assessments to the Quality Officer/Internal Verifier by secure/registered post who records the outcomes immediately. If marked and graded assessments are returned by hand, they must be signed in by the Quality Officer/Internal Verifier.
- Materials pertaining to any learner results which have been appealed are retained until the completion of the appeals process timeframes. Records of all modules successfully completed by learners, and grades awarded are maintained indefinitely in secure electronic files on the ITT network.
Irish Times Training Quality Assurance Manual 2021

- On conclusion of the Results Approval Panel meeting, hardcopies of all assignments and related materials, which have been ratified by the Results Approval Panel, are treated as the learner’s original assessment and filed as such.
- We have procedures for dealing with incidents of suspected academic malpractice and we address this at Learner Induction and in the Learner Handbook.
- The Programme Manager develops appropriate security procedures for the preparation of assessment briefs and examination papers.
- Examination papers are drafted in a secure environment and submitted to the Quality Officer/Internal Verifier for safe storage.
- Examination papers, model answers, and marking schemes are retained by the Quality Officer/Internal Verifier in a secure manner throughout the process from development to the time the examination is over. The Quality Officer/Internal Verifier is responsible for tracking the progress of examination papers from their development through to the date of examination.
- All assessment material is kept secure at all times and is retained in accordance with ITT’s data protection policy relating to the retention and destruction of learner assessment material.

Dealing with Academic Misconduct V1 092020

Responsibility: Quality Officer

Scope

- Applies to all assessment

Definition

Plagiarism is defined as a deliberate attempt to pass another person’s content/work as one’s own. This also includes omitting references or acknowledgements in whole or in part without permission or due acknowledgment of the original owner. Plagiarism also extends to where learners have colluded together and submitted the same piece of work or sections of an assignment which has been created by one member of the group.

Cheating can be discovered or suspected in the following ways:

- Observation of copying during an exam.
- Observation of learners using notes during the exam.
- On correction where learners have very similar answers on a number of exam questions
- Practical assessments have clear similarities to another’s work.

Process

- We outline how we deal with suspected academic malpractice at Learner Induction and in the Learner Handbook and the trainer highlights the issue when the assignments are being introduced.
- Trainers must ensure that the training materials they use themselves are correctly referenced and there is no suspicion of using plagiarised materials.
- We give guidance to students and trainers in what constitutes plagiarism and the degrees of plagiarism and on the distinction between acceptable collaboration with others and collusion in plagiarism.
We regard accepting unwarranted support from others (e.g. work colleagues) in preparing assessment elements and submitted as one’s own work as a form of plagiarism.

We make trainers aware of the protocols we have in place for investigating cases where plagiarism/cheating is suspected, and the level of evidence required before an accusation can be considered.

All learners must complete and submit an Assessment Declaration Form when submitting an assignment. This form is signed by the learner and declares that the work submitted is all their own work. Assignments are not accepted if they are not accompanied by the Assessment Declaration Form.

A trainer who suspects plagiarism seeks the advice/reports the incident to the Quality Officer outlining their concerns and including the evidence. This evidence may include for example two copies of assignments where the text is identical.

The Quality Officer conducts an initial investigation of the alleged incident, to determine if there is a case.

If the Quality Officer concludes that there is no case, she notifies the trainer giving a clear statement of the reasons for the decision.

If the Quality Officer concludes that there is a case, the Quality Officer invites learner to attend an interview with the trainer and the Quality Officer. The invitation includes an explanation of the purpose of the meeting and details of the suspected incident. The learner may be accompanied at the interview.

The Quality Officer asks the learner to bring all evidence of their work to give them the opportunity to demonstrate that the work presented is their own original work.

At the meeting, the concerns are raised with the learner and the learner is given a fair opportunity to respond. The rules and sanctions for plagiarism are outlined to the learner and the consequences of a further incidence occurring. For a first offence the learner can resubmit the work but can only achieve a pass grade.

At the interview, the Quality Officer gives the learner is given a clear explanation of what has been alleged, shown a copy of his/her work, given the opportunity to justify the work and invited to admit or deny responsibility.

If the learner admits to plagiarism or if the learner cannot confirm that what is presented is their own original work the piece of work receives a zero mark.

Following the interview, if the Quality Officer is satisfied that the case exists, an appropriate penalty is decided.

The Quality Officer notifies the learner and the trainer in writing, of the decision and any penalty imposed.

If the case is considered to be sufficiently serious, the Quality Officer may refer it to the ARP.

The learner has the right to appeal the decision to the ARP using the appeals process.

If the learner does not engage with the process, by not responding or by refusing to attend an interview, the case will be referred to the ARP.

Where two or more learners present identical pieces of work, the Quality Officer and the trainer interviews all the learners involved.

If the learner who plagiarised admits to it, the other learners’ assessment work is marked as normal while the plagiarised work receives a zero mark.

If learners copy each other’s work both receive a zero mark.

Learners can seek assistance from the Quality Officer to deal with their plagiarism case. If assistance is requested, the Quality Officer appoints an independent advisor to assist the learner.

Supporting Documents

- Avoiding Plagiarism – Guidelines for Learners (under development)
Consistency of Marking
We have systems in place to ensure that there is consistency in marking and grading across assessments and that lecturers are marking and grading in line with national standards.

Supporting Documents/Materials
- Internal Verification Report
- External Authentication Report
- Results Approval Report Form
- Detailed marking schemes for each assessment technique

Process
- We address marking and grading at Trainer Induction, in the Learner Handbook and in the Trainer Handbook.
- Should multiple markers be required, a lead trainer is nominated on a rotational basis to oversee the process.
- Assessment planning includes training in assessment processes and cross moderation/peer review.
- Cross moderation/second marking by a lead assessor of a sample across a range of learners and assessors is completed when there is more than one assessor for a particular module.
  - If the lead assessor identifies a material difference in the standard of marking greater than 5%, the lead assessor has the authority to alter the mark awarded.
  - If significant differences are identified on a consistent basis, further remedial actions may be actioned, e.g. further training, coaching etc.
- We have detailed marking schemes including assessment criteria in place for all programmes, which shows clearly how the learner evidence is to be marked and graded. These are reviewed and updated annually.
- Assessment briefs, examination papers, model answers and marking schemes are devised by the Subject Matter Expert and signed-off by the Programme Manager. Our detailed marking schemes are based on the validated Assessment Plans.
Our Quality Officer/Internal Verifier checks a sample for each certification period. Marking and grading on new programmes or by new trainers are subject to cross-moderation.

The Quality Officer/Internal Verifier samples a selection of each trainer’s marking and grading to ensure consistency across the board and observations are recorded in an Internal Verification Report. Any instances of inconsistent marking are communicated to the Results Approval Panel by the Quality Officer/Internal Verifier.

We ask our External Authenticator to record any observations in relation to inconsistencies in marking in the External Authentication Report. If the External Authenticator has any concerns in this regard, they are discussed at the Results Approval Panel meeting and a decision is made with regard to corrective action.

Any changes made to the trainer’s marking by the External Authenticator are examined and highlighted by the Quality Officer/Internal Verifier.

Internal Verification V1 092020

Responsibility: Quality Officer

Scope

- Applies to all assessment where ITT is the first provider

Definitions

Internal verification is the process by which we monitor assessment processes and procedures relating to planning, managing and operationalising assessment

Procedure

We internally verify both;

- Assessment results to confirm that that our assessment process has been applied consistently across all assessment activities and that assessment results are recorded accurately using ITT’s sampling strategy as applicable.
- The assessment process – this is the responsibility of the Programme Manger supported by The Quality Officer. It is conducted on the days of skills demonstration and/or exams. The Programme Manger observes the tutor conducting the demo/exams and in according with the stated guidelines e.g. clear instructions provided to examination candidates, times for demo adhered to.

The Quality Officer checks for:

- Missing or inappropriate evidence
- Missing or inappropriate assessment briefs
- Data omission, transcription/calculation errors
- Results transferred to relevant files correctly
- Inaccurate data entry – award codes, name spelling, results etc.
- Provisional outcomes.
The Quality Officer samples a selection of each trainer’s marking and grading to ensure consistency and observations are recorded in an Internal Verification Report and highlighted to the Results Approval Panel.

The Quality Officer completes the process by producing the Internal Verification Report which confirms the outcome of the process and documenting any concerns.

The Quality Officer signs the IV Report in advance of authentication and submits it with a copy of the report arising from the peer review process to the External Authenticator and the RAP and also informs the External Authenticator about any adaptations made/ reasonable accommodation implemented by noting it on the Internal Verification Report.

The Quality Officer arranges the External Authenticator visit within a reasonable timeframe before the QQI submission deadline, generally 10-14 working days before QQI’s final submission date. The timeframe depends on the size of the cohort going through for certification and the training schedule.

The Quality Officer liaises with the External Authenticator before, during and after his/her visit and is in attendance during the External Authenticator’s visit to support the process if needed.

The Quality Officer present the Internal Verification report to the RAP and discuss issues highlighted in the Report.

Supporting Documents

- Internal Verification Report Template
- Results Summary Sheet Template
- Assessment Portfolio Checklist

Associated Procedures

- Peer Review of Assessment Results

Reference Documents

- QQI Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers Revised 2013
- FETAC Guidelines for Internal Verification
- QBS Quick Guide for Certification V1
- Key Dates and Information - Awards and Certification (published annually by QQI)

Document History

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<th>Version Number</th>
<th>Version Date</th>
<th>Description of Change</th>
<th>Author Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>V1</td>
<td>092020</td>
<td>Initial Release</td>
<td>QA Advisor</td>
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External Authentication

We have systems in place to ensure that learner assessment is externally authenticated as part of our assessment process. This provides independent confirmation of fair and consistent assessment of learners, that our marking and grading is valid, reliable and in accordance with national standards for the award.

Support Documents

- External Authentication Report Template
- External Authenticator Selection Criteria - we operate from the QQI Registered EA list
- Sampling strategy – EA uses their own
- Completed External Authentication report for each certification signed and dated

Process

- The Programme Manager is responsible for recommending a suitably qualified External Authenticator to the ARP.
- We contract an External Authenticator based on their suitability for the role as outlined in the QQI Policy ‘Quality Assuring Assessment, Guideline for Providers, section 4.3.2, and on the selection criteria we have in place.
- We maintain a panel of External Authenticators and we do not contract the services of the same External Authenticator for more than three successive certification periods.
- Internal verification reports are signed by the Programme Manager and the Internal Verifier. These are made available to the External Authenticator.
- All Learners’ assignments are ordered alphabetically from the QQI reports for easy access for the External Authenticator. All video evidence is clearly marked and named for each Learner if needed depending on course.
- The Internal Verification report is made available to the External Authenticator both in hardcopy and softcopy – whichever is preferable to the EA.
- The EA reviews the Internal Verification report.
- The EA reviews the programme descriptor, assessment briefs and assessment evidence, making a judgement as to whether the evidence presented is marked in accordance with the required standards.
- Authentication is carried out in line with our sampling strategy i.e. 20% of the learner cohort. We allow the EA to use their own sampling strategy.
- Relevant staff/trainers are available to the External Authenticator during the authentication process.
- The EA completes an External Authenticator’s Report, which comments on the Centre’s standard with reference to the National Standard, identifies areas of good practice and recommends areas for development and improvement.
- The External Authenticator Report is made available to the Results Approval Panel.
- We invite our Authenticator to attend our Results Approval Panel meetings (to present a verbal report if the final report is not available), to comment on the outcome of results moderation against national standards. This helps us to identify strengths, gaps and areas for improvement. Any recommendations identified are taken by the QA as an action in conjunction with the relevant Programme Manager.
Results Approval and Issuing of Results

We ensure that results are fully quality assured and signed off by the Chair of the RAP prior to submission to QQI.

Members of the Results Approval Panel

- Programme Manager
- Quality Officer
- Managing Director

Process

- The Results Approval Panel (RAP) formally reviews and approves results data, confirming that our assessment results are fully quality assured and signed-off prior to submission to the awarding body for certification and issuance to the learners.
- The Managing Director acts as the Chair of the RAP and convenes a meeting of the Panel for each certification period. A minimum of 3 people is required to convene a RAP meeting.
- The External Authenticator may attend the RAP meeting to present his/her report if this feasible.
- The RAP reviews the provisional results, learner evidence, IV plan, EA plan, IV report and EA report.
- A report of the meeting is prepared by the Quality Officer and signed by the Chair and retained for auditing and monitoring purposes. The report includes:
  - Formal proposals;
  - Recommendations of IV & EA reports;
  - Approval of provisional results presented to the meeting;
  - Request for certification Period from QQI.
  - The report is signed and dated by all members.
- The Panel highlights any issues identified and improvements recommended by the EA and required corrective action. The Quality Officer monitors these on an ongoing basis, and they are reviewed at the subsequent meeting of the RAP and discussed at programme review meetings.
- The outcome of the results approval process is that final results are submitted to QQI by the Quality Officer via the QBS who confirms that ITT has implemented all elements of the authentication process and adhered to all agreed procedures.
- Results are issued to learners including results appeals information immediately on approval by the RAP.
- The Quality Officer issues award certificates by registered post to graduates as soon as they are issued to us by QQI.
- Results are communicated to the ITT Executive Group and ARP meetings.

Managing and Delivering Learner Feedback

ITT is committed to providing learners with appropriate, specific, timely and constructive feedback on their assessments. It is the trainer’s responsibility to provide information and feedback to Learners (QQI Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers, Revised 2013, (Section 3.1.2, p 8)).

Supporting Documents

- Learner Evaluation Form
- Trainer and Learners Handbooks
- Programme Assessment Plans
Process

- How, when, how often and in what format we provide feedback to learners is agreed at the pre-programme meeting and is set out in the Programme Plan. It is usually given at specific times during the programme and provided in the form of verbal comments on learners’ work or, in some instances, formal written feedback is provided.
- When giving feedback to learners, trainers are expected to use positive language, identify and note strengths, give objective, specific feedback, with examples or direct references and specific recommendations for improvement and use assessment criteria and marking schemes to help them give objective feedback. We include guidelines on providing feedback to learners in our Trainer Handbook.
- Trainers are available at all stages throughout the programme to provide formative feedback to learners on a one-to-one basis and/or group basis.
- Trainers can comment on the assessments when marking and the Quality Officer/Internal Verifier checks for evidence of feedback provided.

Appeals and Complaints (Assessment)
We facilitate learners who wish to appeal an assessment result which they consider to be invalid or unfair or who wish to make a complaint about any aspect of our assessment process.

Supporting Documents

- Learner and Trainer Handbooks
- Correspondence with appellants/complainants – Email generally

Appeal Process

- Learners are informed about the process at Induction, in the Learner Handbook, at the Certification Requirements briefing, and with the statement of results.
- The learner’s results are submitted to QQI and the learner is then notified of their results.
- If the learner wishes to see the assessor’s feedback, we email out their relevant assessment material with the examiner’s comments on the marking sheets.
- If a learner is unsatisfied with the result, they may make a formal appeal in writing, stating the grounds for appeal. This is typically done by email.
- Learners have 10 working days to appeal the result from when they receive their results.
- The appeal request is kept securely by the Quality Officer in a subfolder under the learner’s name.
- The learner’s assessment with the assessor’s comments and marking sheets are sent to an independent External Reviewer. The original assessor has no part in the review.
- The independent External Reviewer will process the appeal within a reasonable timeframe, typically 10 working days from receipt of materials.
- Once the independent External Reviewer has reviewed the delegate’s work, the result of the appeal is recorded and communicated to the learner by email.
8. INFORMATION AND DATA MANAGEMENT

Policy
We are committed to collecting and analysing information and data which is stored securely. This includes all learner and business information. We have procedures and processes in place to ensure the accuracy, security and integrity of data and information we obtain.

Reliable and timely information supports informed decision making, identifies areas of best practice, effective performance and areas which need attention and/or enhancement. We have internal supports and external service providers maintaining the IT systems and its integrity. We safeguard the security of personal or sensitive information throughout the information lifecycle covering the variety of media and formats and how they were created, received, stored and disposed of. Therefore, all staff, contractors and consultants are required to maintain and respect the integrity, security and proper use of all data.

Responsibilities
The ITT Executive Group is responsible for the safe management of information.

- All staff, contractors, academic contributors and consultants are responsible for managing information in accordance with ITT’s procedures and related policies.
- The Managing Director has overall responsibility and management for the Data Protection and Retention policies.

Policy and practices are underpinned by both best practice and meeting statutory obligations.

Supporting Materials
- ITT Data Protection Policy
- Irish Times Company Information Communication Technology (ICT) Policy
- Academic Records (including payment records)

Reference Documents
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Regulation (EU) 2016/679)
- Data Protection Act 1988, 2003 and 2018
- “Law Enforcement Directive” (Directive (EU) 2016/680) which has been transposed into Irish law by way of the Data Protection Act 2018
- 2011 “e-Privacy Regulations” (S.I. No. 336 of 2011 – the European Communities (Electronic Communications Networks and Services) (Privacy and Electronic Communications) Regulations 2011)
- QQI Information and Data Management Guidelines.
Scope
The policy applies to the following current, former and prospective individuals:

- Board & Committee members
- Trainers, speakers at conferences, seminars or events run or hosted by ITT
- Learners and prospective learners
- Representatives from employers
- Staff and applicants wishing to become an employee of ITT
- Contractors and consultants.

The policy applies to the following formats:

- Electronic data (e.g. emails, word documents, spreadsheets, databases and web content)
- Hard copy documents
- Video, photos and Audio files.

Data management platforms used by ITT are:

- Cloud-based:
  - Salesforce (CRM)
  - Active Campaign (Email Service Provider)
  - SendGrid (Email Delivery System - Website Bookings)
  - Questback (Questionnaires)
  - MySQL WordPress Database stored on Google Cloud Platform (Bookings)
  - Zendesk (Lead Generation Website Chat Functionality)
  - Sleeknote (Lead Generation Sign-up Functionality)
  - Dropbox (File Sharing)

- Not cloud-based:
  - Microsoft Exchange (Email Server)
  - File Storage (Office Network)
  - Dropbox (File sharing with learners)
  - SAP SAAS (Accounting Software)
  - KEFRON (External Hard-Copy File Storage)

Data Protection
Data Protection is the safeguarding of the privacy rights of individuals in relation to the processing of personal data. Legislation regulates the collection, processing, keeping and disclosure of personal data and the requirement to give individuals access to their data. We respect the privacy and data protection rights of learners, staff and other data subjects by complying with our obligations under such legislation.

The Data Protection Policy is informed by the key legislative frameworks:

- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Regulation (EU) 2016/679)
- Data Protection Act 1988, 2003 and 2018
- “Law Enforcement Directive” (Directive (EU) 2016/680) which has been transposed into Irish law by way of the Data Protection Act 2018
- 2011 “e-Privacy Regulations” (S.I. No. 336 of 2011 – the European Communities (Electronic Communications Networks and Services) (Privacy and Electronic Communications) Regulations 2011).
The Irish Times Data Protection Officer (DPO) is the appointed Data Protection Officer for ITT.

ITT information systems are designed to enable compliance with data protection legislation.

All paper records are stored in secure filing cabinets within designated and locked offices.

All electronic records are stored and filed appropriately on a shared secure drive with appropriate authorisation in place.

All computerised files are held on industry standard servers located internally, with additional data located on a secure enterprise cloud platform. Both internal and external data is backed up, to an encrypted local hard disk drive, and externally to a cloud storage system, on a weekly basis.

All staff records, including documentation pertaining to recruitment, job application, contracts, evaluation, discipline, and salary are managed and maintained and stored centrally with the HR Department in accordance with the Group’s HR policies and procedures.

Finance data is managed and maintained by the Finance Manager and Managing Director.

Data pertaining to the provision of additional supports

We are committed to supporting learners with identified special support needs and providing reasonable accommodation for assessment where possible. The Quality Officer/Internal Verifier maintains data pertaining to the provision of additional supports and the reason for provision on the LRS. This data is accessed by staff members on a strictly need-to-know basis. We inform learners, when applying for additional supports/reasonable accommodation, that members of staff and external experts (in particular our External Authenticator) may be given access to the details and the information they supply in support of their application.

Maintenance and Storage of Learner Files

We maintain learner files for a maximum of six months following certification. The hard copy files (assignments) are then removed from current file storage and placed in file archive for a further 5-year period. After this five-year period of archive storage we destroy the hard copy records and maintain electronic copies of data including: learner name, learner number, programme(s) and period(s) of study, assessment results, and overall attendance records on our secure share drive indefinitely.

Data Protection and Staff

To enrol for an ITT training course, a learner will need to provide their name, address, email address, phone number and in some cases payment information. If a learner’s enrolment is being sponsored by an employer, the name of their Company must be given. Depending on the specific course a learner is enrolling for and the requirements of the professional body accrediting the course, the following information will be required:

- For QQI accredited programmes, a learner’s PPS number and date of birth is required for authentication and fraud prevention purposes. This information is treated as highly sensitive information and is managed in strict accordance with the data management procedures outlined in ITT’s privacy policy. [https://www.irishtimestraining.com/privacy-policy/](https://www.irishtimestraining.com/privacy-policy/)
As part of this policy a learner is informed that their personal information may be shared with our third-party training partners, trainers, external independent examiners and accreditation bodies. All ITT staff members have access to personal data relating to the learners on the secure shared drive.

Staff/trainers have also provided their own personal data as an employee/contractor, for example their bank details, PPSN, their address etc.

We provide the new staff members and trainers with the following documents as part of their induction pack:

- A copy of the ITT Personal Data Protection Policy which informs the staff member about ITT’s process for handling personal data of learners, suppliers and other individuals. It outlines their responsibilities as an employee when handling this personal data.
- Employee Data Protection Policy which informs the staff member how ITT, as the employer, manages personal data relating to staff.
- Privacy Notice for Learners which will detail what personal information is collected from learners, why it is collected, how it is used and how it is protected.
- Privacy Notice for Employees which will detail what personal information is collected from staff members, why it is collected, how it is used and how it is protected.
- During the new staff member’s induction, we highlight the importance of ensuring that personal data is stored in a locked and secure facility to ensure it is secure at all times.
- Staff members are required to let the Managing Director know immediately if they suspect that any personal data might be lost or compromised, so that the Data Breach Procedure can be implemented immediately.
- The data protection policies and procedures and any significant issues related to data protection is discussed at staff meetings.

Use of the Personal Public Service Number (PPS Number)

As a unique identifier for individuals, the PPSN is a valuable piece of personal information that must be respected and safeguarded against misappropriation or misuse.

We uphold data protection principles with regard to the PPSN and take all reasonable security steps with regard to the storage and handling of the PPSN and associated data. We do not disclose a person’s PPSN to anyone, unless we are satisfied that the person making the enquiry is entitled to that information. Use of the PPSN by ITT is confined to staff members who need to use it when inputting learner data on the QQI QBS (the PPSN is used by QQI to uniquely identify individual learners). All staff and trainers who come into contact with PPSNs, through their work, must treat the number confidentially and securely. We understand that it is an offence for any person or body to request or hold a record of a PPSN unless they are permitted by law to do so.

Records Storage and Management

Learner Records

Secure Administrative Systems are in place with up-to-date learner records. The system facilitates the effective collection, management, maintenance and reporting on learner related information.

Overview
Irish Times Training Quality Assurance Manual 2021

- Programme Administrators and Managers use a secure online record system to manage learner records for current use and historical review. These records are securely stored on the ITT shared drive.
- When learners register with ITT, a learner record is created.
- Access to the system is strictly limited to internal staff, with varying levels of access. The system is password protected.
- Each learner record includes a profile, assessment results, academic history and financial record.
- Any other amendments to information held on the system may only be made by authorised staff members following receipt of written confirmation of the required changes.
- The system supports the development of various reports which meet ITT’s corporate governance reporting requirements, support the development and delivery of relevant courses, monitor quality assurance and support continuous improvement.
- The system generates statistical and other reports to meet internal and external information requirements, for example, on the QQI database of programmes and awards as prescribed by the legislation.

**Process**

When a learner registers on a programme, data from the *Registration Form* is inputted onto the database on the ITT shared drive by the Administration staff. This data includes:

- Personal details including education and employment details
- Contact information
- Correspondence
- Fees paid
- Details of reasonable accommodation provided (if any)
- Modules and electives
- Disciplinary issues
- Assessment results
- Complaints/Appeals
- Awards conferred.

Programme specific staff have access to learner records and are authorised to make the following amendments:

- Personal Details: Updates and corrections.
- Registering learners to programmes.
- Entering and verifying assessment data
- Issuing transcripts after the publication of results.
- Withdrawing learners from a programme
- Other activities with the agreement of the Managing Director.

Information held on the ITT shared drive is subject to the Irish Time Privacy Policy and the Data Protection procedures noted below.

**Internal controls**

- Internal controls and systems are in place to manage records through the lifecycle from creation, storage, use and disposal.
- The record system provides quick and efficient retrieval of records.
The record system has appropriate backup arrangements for electronic records (including restoration of backups and disaster recovery if electronic records are damaged), which is managed centrally by the Irish Times IT department.

All computerised files are held on industry standard servers located internally, with additional data located on a secure enterprise cloud platform. Both internal and external data is backed up, to an encrypted local hard disk drive, and externally to a cloud storage system, on a weekly basis.

Data Retention

Records Management ensures effective and efficient use of data while minimising risk.

- Information is stored securely, appropriate to its classification.
  - Assessment results and academic records are maintained electronically.
  - Key business information is stored online in shared filing systems.
  - Electronic information is shared through appropriate use of links.
  - Where possible, duplication of paper and electronic records is avoided.
  - All records are subject to appropriate security measures.

- As a data controller, we meet relevant statutory obligations clearly setting out the length of time we retain personal data and the reasons why the information is being retained.
  - Decisions relating to access are managed and documented, ensuring policy and procedures are consistent, communicated and easily referenced.
  - If the purpose for which we obtained the data has ceased and the personal information is no longer required, we delete/dispose of the data in a secure manner.
  - The Quality Officer reviews the Retention and Destruction timeline/schedule to ensure that files are purged yearly and securely, and that personal data is not retained any longer than is necessary.

- We record details of learners’ academic performance and achievement on the ITT’s shared Drive and maintain them indefinitely; this facilitates the certification of learners’ work through the accrediting bodies as well as facilitating access, transfer and progression for learners.
  - Hardcopy programme application forms are stored by the Programme Administrators for the current academic year.
  - Hard copies of attendance records are retained for the duration of the learner’s studies and destroyed after certification.
  - Hard copies of learner assessment scripts are stored within a secured dedicated storage location until certification and after the appeals period has elapsed – they are then securely destroyed.
  - The Internal Verifier records and maintains electronic copies of authentication reports indefinitely, to facilitate the provision of transcripts and Statement of Results.

- We arrange for the destruction of documents and records using a professional and accredited shredding company.

- Irish Times Tech Support is responsible for creating back-ups of all network drives on a weekly basis using off-site storage to ensure that data can be recovered. Backup logs are checked on a weekly basis to ensure the correct data backup has occurred.
Certification

We have quality assurance procedures in place to manage and maintain the integrity of learner assessment and certification records.

Reference Documents

- A Quick Guide to Certification (QQI)
- 2020 Key Dates and Information - Awards and Certification (issued annually by QQI)

Process

- The Quality Officer is responsible for the management and integrity of results data and for the maintenance of records.
- Each learner is required to complete a Learner Declaration Form.
- The Quality Officer inputs the data on to the QBS user interface (the QBS is the QQI Business System, an online service provided by QQI to facilitate the making of awards to learners), addressing any invalid entries.
- The Quality Officer ensures results are submitted on before the deadline for inclusion in a certification run in any certification period.
- The Quality Officer is saves copies of the Authentication Reports from the QBS in pdf format and stores them securely to provide evidence of the assessment process.

Submission for Certification

- When the Quality Officer is has completed the data entry, quality assurance and data edits for a group of learners, they then submit the results to QQI for certification. Once this is done, the data can no longer be edited (except by QQI). The award certificates issued by QQI are based on the data submitted by the Quality Officer.
- The Quality Officer is responsible for the final step of the submission process i.e. to do a signoff/declaration on the QBS that the data is ready for certification.
- The Quality Officer prints off the Final Statement of Results from the QBS (available after the certification date for the period) and distributes them to individual learners.

Issue of Award Certificates

QQI issues certificates to ITT according to a pre-defined schedule. ITT receives award certificates approximate 5 to 6 weeks after the Final Submission Date for the certification period. Dates for the issue of certificates and final submission are detailed in the QQI Key Dates and Information - Awards and Certification (Published Annually).

Process

- The Quality Officer logs receipt of the award certificates and stores them securely in a locked facility until they are issued.
- The Quality Officer issues the award certificates to graduates by registered post (or they can be collected from the office in person and signed for). Records are maintained.
- If the award certificates are issued (on request) to an employer company for distribution to graduates the following procedure is followed;
  - The Quality Officer sends the award certificated by registered post to a named person in the employer company who must agree to keep them securely in a locked facility.
The Quality Officer contacts the named person to confirm that they have arrived safely and how and when they will be issued to graduates.

The Quality Officer checks back with the named person of the employer company on an agreed date to confirm that they have been issued to/received by the graduates.

Replacement/Reissued Certificates

We let learners know that QQI does not replace award certificates that are lost or misplaced. QQI provides a Record of Award i.e. a full statement of all certificates, components and their grades. However, these are not reissued certificates. There is an administration fee of €20 payable to QQI for a Record of Award. This fee is payable by learner.

Management Information Systems

Management Information Systems are in place which store and channel the necessary information to facilitate timely analysis considering organisational objectives, key performance indicators and inform academic and management decision-making.

Management Information is considered at Management meetings, ARP meetings, programme reviews, trainer Reviews, benchmarking and self-evaluation exercises.

Key Management Information includes the following elements:

- **Information for Planning**
  - The information contained in the management information system is reviewed holistically from time to time to determine what additional insights are to be gleaned from it.

- **Key Performance Indicators KPIs**

  We have identified appropriate Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to demonstrate how effectively we are achieving our key business, academic and quality objectives. KPIs also facilitate benchmarking the quality of ITT provision and to compare outcomes to national standards.

  The following are the KPI’s we have identified as being relevant to our provision:

  - **Learner Performance**
    - The Quality Officer gathers and analyses the following rates at the conclusion of each programme. Overall learner performance information is considered as part of the annual review. Data on completion rates is included in the annual programme report and is available to external quality reviewers.
      - Learner Enrolments
      - Learner numbers per programme
      - Attendance/Engagement rates
      - Completion rates / Drop-out rates
      - Award levels
      - Grade analysis
      - Mid-course evaluations
      - Post-course feedback
      - Trainer/learner ratios
The Programme Manager contacts learners who exit a programme at any stage prior to programme completion or who fail to submit assignment/attend examinations and invites them to discuss his/her reason/s for the decision to exit the programme.

- If a programme is showing a contrition rate of more than 10%, the Programme Manager investigates the reason/s for this. This investigation involves a discussion with the trainer, and relevant employers if appropriate, a review of communication with learners, a review of assessment results, and learner feedback.

### Assessment

- Number of corrective actions
- Number of changes made to marks/grades
- Number of appeals and % of appeals upheld
- Trainer performance rating by learners
- Minimum and maximum learner numbers per programme
- Learner satisfaction ratings
- Trainer satisfaction ratings
- Learner progression (data on academic and career progression and to assess continuing training needs of graduates)
- Learner attrition or drop-out rates/completion rates
- Graduation/certification rates
- Grade analysis
- External Evaluators Rating
- QQI External Monitoring Rating

### Training Staffing

- Staff turnover
- Number of requests for training/uptake of training opportunities
- Number of CPD events – internal and external
- Trainer feedback following the delivery of a programme
- Comments from External Authenticator on trainer performance
- Number of incidents of poor performance
- Learner assessment of trainer and staff performance.

### Equality and Diversity

- Number of applications requiring additional learning supports/number granted.
- Number of applications for reasonable accommodation for assessment/number granted.
9. PUBLIC INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Policy

ITT understands its responsibility to provide information to the public, learners and other stakeholders about:

- ITT as a provider of programmes leading to awards on the NFQ.
- The programmes and associated services we deliver.
- The quality assurance policies and procedures and evaluations.

We are committed to ensuring that this information is accurate, impartial and objective and that our communications are clear and concise and the documents we produce are user-friendly and accessible.

Responsibility

The ITT Executive Group is responsible for ensuring the quality and the accuracy of the information published and that ITT acts in accordance with relevant data protection legislation.

The Marketing Manager is responsible for communications and public information and is supported by cross functional team staff.

Public Information List

We make the following documents publicly available:

- Annual Reports and Annual accounts
- Programme/Course brochures
- Website Information on programmes and services
- Social Media Channels
- Email Marketing
- Events, Breakfast Seminars and Open evenings
- Advertising
- Flyers and promotional material
- Self-Evaluation Reports and Programme Improvement Plans
- Quality assurance policies/Quality Assurance Manual
- Monitoring Reports (QQI).

Information provided to prospective and current learners

It is our policy to ensure that accurate and objective information is available to prospective applicants and learners to enable them to plan their learning with a clear understanding of each programme in relation to:

- Programme objectives and main topics which are covered
- Learning outcomes
- Learning and assessment methods
- Teaching methods
- The course level within the National Framework of Qualification
The primary sources of programme information are the ITT website and programme brochures.

**Website**

- ITT’s website consists of information about ITT as an organisation, details on the various services we offer and information on all our open courses.
- All content for ITT website is produced by the Marketing Manager
- Programme-related information is verified and signed off by the Programme Managers.
- The website clearly outlines what personal data is collected, for what purpose and with whom it is shared.
- All content aims to provide learners with an idea of what to expect from ITT and the outline of each of our programmes.
- A dedicated programme brochure, which is available to download, is available on many of the course pages.
- For accredited courses, including QQI accredited and Ulster University accredited, details are given as to the award and the level as well as the assessment and course requirements in order to achieve this award.
- The website also contains details of each programme’s entry requirements and our Admissions and Appeals procedures.
- The website also contains details of our terms and conditions which includes:
  - Details on our booking and payment policy
  - Our cancellation policy
  - Our privacy and GDPR policy which is in line with The Irish Times privacy policy which has been developed and verified by the Irish Times Data Protection Officer.

**Course Brochures**

- ITT produce individual programme brochures which outline details of the respective programme which are available to download from our website or as a PDF which is sent to interested clients.
- These brochures outline
  - Course Descriptor
  - Course objectives
  - Who the course is suitable for, entry requirements with a statement of the knowledge, skill and competence needed as a basis for successful participation on the programme
  - the application process including the admissions and appeals procedure pertaining to all accredited programmes
  - arrangements for recognition of prior learning
  - day to day and module breakdown including details of main topics covered
  - teaching approach and learner supports
  - course assessment and arrangements
  - whether or not a programme leads to an award
  - the name of the awarding body
  - the title of the award; whether the award is recognised in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and, if so, the award type and NFQ level
  - whether the programme is subject to procedures for access, transfer and progression and, if so, what these are
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- details of the Protection of Enrolled Learner (PEL) arrangements in place, should PEL be a requirement.

- This content is created by the Marketing Manager in conjunction with our trainers to ensure that all information is up to date and correct.

- This information is then verified and signed off by our Managing Director.

- Each brochure is reviewed on an annual basis and updated if and when course content changes. Samples of these brochures include:
  - Train the Trainer – 5-day QQI accredited Level 5 programme
  - Digital Marketing – 6 Day QQI Level 5 programme
  - Presentation Skills – 2-day programme
  - Coaching for Performance – 2-day programme etc.

- Once a client expresses interest in a particular programme they can:
  - Download the brochure themselves by supplying their name and email address and/or
  - Request details of a particular programme from us by phone, email or through the chat forum.

The following documents are provided to all learners, before or at the commencement of a programme:

- A learner handbook
- A programme timetable/assessment plan outlining the weighting and timing of assessments
- Criteria for assessment, including descriptors of expected standards of attainment for particular marking bands
- Guidance notes for each assessment activity
- Details of the ITT appeals and complaints procedures pertaining to accredited programmes.

Brand Brochures

ITT have a number of ‘brand’ brochures which promote ITT has an organisation and our range of courses. These include:

ITT 16-page general brochure

This brochure includes the following info:

- Who we are
- What we do
- Executive Education - overview of these programmes
- Management and Finance – overview of these programmes
- Quality Assurance – details of our relationship with QQI
- Digital Marketing – overview of these programmes
- What customers say – testimonials
- Business – overview of these programmes
- Let us to come to you – details of our in-company service
- Our clients – details of some previous clients we work with
- Contact Details

Content is produced by the Marketing Manager and is then verified and signed off by the Managing Director.
Social Media Channels

- ITT have active pages on LinkedIn and Facebook. All content for these pages is created by the Marketing Manager.
- ITT actively post updates to include information about our programmes, BLOGs, industry updates and other information that is relevant to our network.
- These pages are actively monitored and checked for any inappropriate content.
- A process is in place to respond to comments and to remove any inappropriate content.

Email Marketing

- ITT actively encourage people to sign up to our database list through our website. In order to sign up, participants are asked to supply their name and contact details and are asked to check a box to confirm that they understand the privacy policy and wish to receive information from ITT.
- This data is then automatically entered into our overall database and sometimes categorised depending on area of interest. All communication with this database includes an unsubscribe option should they wish to opt out of receiving future communication.
- All data is kept and stored in line with the company GDPR regulations which has been drawn up by our Data Protection officer in line with European GDPR regulations.

Breakfast Seminars and Open evenings Events

- ITT run a number of events including Breakfast Seminars and Open evenings.
- Events are promoted to our network and email database which is collected and stored in line with GDPR regulations and on our social platforms.
- We also actively promote these events through paid promotion on social media.
- Information packs containing relevant information on the event and about related programmes is given to participants at these events.

Advertising

- ITT promote our range of courses through print ads through the Irish Times newspaper and online on irishtimes.com, through the Google display network and as well on relevant social media platforms.
- Templates for these ads were created in 2018 by the Marketing Team and signed off by the Managing Director. These templates are used in the creation of all individual course ads and schedule ads which promote the list of upcoming courses.

Flyers and promotional material

- From time to time ITT produce other flyers and promotional material to suit a particular promotion. This content is produced in line with brand guidelines, created by the Marketing Manager and is signed off by Managing Director.

Information Related to QQI

Use of Logo
As a provider recognised by QQI we are obliged to comply with QQI’s requirements. We understand that if we provide enrolled learners with information which is false or misleading in a material respect, we are committing an offence. We understand that QQI is obliged to take appropriate steps to ensure that RIS addresses any issues that might arise in this context and we are committed to responding and addressing any concerns that QQI might highlight.

The Quality Officer is responsible for ensuring that all references to QQI and the NFQ are clear and accurate and that ITT uses only the current versions of the NFQ graphic and the QQI award brand using QQI Brand Guidelines. We do not use the QQI corporate logo at any time.

**Information to Learners – Section 67 Qualifications Act 2012**

Under the terms of the 2012 Act, all provider institutions are requested to specify

- Details of the award
- Name of the awarding body
- Title of the award
- Whether the award is recognised within the NFQ
- Level of that recognition
- Whether the award is a Major, Minor, Special Purpose or Supplemental.

**Protection for Enrolled Learners**

- Currently ITT has no requirement for PEL in respect of the current QQI programme provision. However, should this change, an insurance policy incorporating PEL will be put in place.

**Publication of quality assurance procedures, processes and evaluation reports**

ITT is committed to publishing all QAS information and quality assurance evaluation reports in line with QQI requirements on its website. A dedicated facility for this is being integrated into the development of the new ITT website.
10. OTHER PARTIES INVOLVED IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Policy
We view the establishment of collaborative provision arrangements as being central to our mission to make our programmes as widely available as possible and to open progression routes for learners.

We are committed to ensuring that any accreditations, collaborations arrangements and partnerships we engage with are organised with reputable bodies and are subject to appropriate internal and external quality assurance procedures. We understand it is our responsibility to ensure the quality of all programmes and services we deliver in collaboration with other providers.

Collaborative Provision Relationship

We currently have collaborative provision arrangements with education institutions; Ulster University, LOETB and DDLETB. Specific arrangements are in place with each institution which reflect the requirements of the programmes offered and these arrangements are detailed in formal contracts. ITT is the second provider in the cases outlined above and the responsibility of the QA lies with each of these institutions.

We also have a formal collaborative arrangement with Frontline Training Services for the provision of our QQI Health and Social Care programmes. In this instance, the QA sits with ITT which is clearly outlined in the legal agreement as well as on all learner marketing material in relation to these programmes.

Collaborative Provision Arrangements

- We have the same responsibilities to all learners, whether we deliver programmes ourselves or in collaboration with another provider.
- We monitor the achievement of programme objectives and learner satisfaction on programmes or parts of programmes delivered in collaboration with other providers.
- We have a Memorandum of Understanding with agreed arrangements, detailing the areas of responsibility and accountability of all stakeholders, signed by both parties in place before commencing on any collaborative provision of programmes.
- This agreement will be reviewed annually at a minimum. In the event of any party to the agreement failing to meet the responsibilities detailed, the agreed arrangements will immediately be rendered void.

Responsibility

The Managing Director presents all proposed collaborative arrangements and partnerships to the ITT Executive Group and then to the ARP. The ARP maintains oversight of the implementation of collaborative relationships/partnerships arrangements. The responsibility for managing the collaborative arrangements at an operational level lies with the relevant Programme Manager with support from the Quality Officer.
Researching Prospective Collaborating Institutions

As part of the process of considering whether to work with a collaborating institution, ITT carries out due diligence to assure itself that the collaborator has the requisite legal standing, financial, academic and quality assurance resources.

The Managing Director invites prospective collaborators to supply the following documentation:

- Copy of an annual report and Annual Accounts
- Details of Professional Indemnity insurance cover
- CVs of staff who will be teaching on programmes (where relevant).

To support and substantiate this information, other sources of information will be investigated as follows:

- Prospective collaborators website.
- The Quality Officer undertakes a review of relevant websites, including QQI to investigate whether there have been any reports relating to the prospective collaborator.
- Information from appropriate organisations about the standing of the prospective collaborator and whether they have any existing collaborations with other training providers.
- A review of the information systems provided by the prospective collaborator (where appropriate) to ensure that required data on learners can be held securely and exchanged appropriately.
- Ensure data protection arrangements are satisfied to ensure that learner data can be released for submission to awarding bodies

Collaborator Approval Process

The Managing Director meets prospective collaborator representatives. If the collaborating provider’s facilities are to be used, the Quality Officer meet the prospective collaborator representatives onsite. The purpose of the visit is to explore arrangements in-depth and/or seek clarity if needed. The visit to the prospective collaborator involves the following:

- Consideration of the quality of the teaching and learning facilities in relation to the proposed programme(s), including training facilities and learning resources.
- Meeting key teaching and other staff of the proposed partner where relevant.
- Consideration and discussion of a range of academic issues relating to the arrangements including:
  - arrangements for managing the partnership
  - proposed quality assurance arrangements for the programme(s)
  - arrangements for seeking the views of learners
  - assessment arrangements
  - learner complaints and appeals procedures
  - learner welfare support and facilities
  - admissions arrangements, including admissions criteria, registration procedures and the minimum and maximum size of a cohort
  - arrangements for marketing of and recruitment to the programme (including website and publicity material)
  - staff training and development, and staff appraisal
  - discussion of a draft Memorandum of Agreement
  - where appropriate, an observation of teaching
where appropriate, meeting a group of existing learners.

Following the conclusion of this process, the Managing Director produces a report for consideration by the ITT Executive Group and ARP.

**Reciprocal Due Diligence**

ITT ensures that the due diligence process is carried out to meet its quality assurance obligations. However, in order to act in a transparent way and to encourage the development of a partnership, we provide the following documents to a prospective collaborator on a reciprocal basis:

- A copy of the ITT Prospectus
- A copy of ITT’s most recent Self-Evaluation
- The Irish Times Group Annual Report
- Details of Professional Indemnity insurance cover.

**Advertising and Recruitment**

Recruitment, publicity and marketing materials for collaborative programmes may be produced by ITT or by the partner institution, or both, subject to the conditions set out in the agreed MOU. Advertising and recruitment for the programme should not, however, formally begin until the agreement has been finalised and signed by the Managing Director and by the partner institution. It must be made clear to the learner where the responsibility of the QA sits in all marketing material. The Quality Officer maintains oversight of the advertising of collaborative programmes and checks relevant websites and printed materials at regular intervals.
11. SELF-EVALUATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

Policy
ITT is committed to monitoring and evaluating programmes and services on an ongoing basis to ensure that they meet the needs of our learners, employers and the requirements of awarding bodies. ITT monitors, evaluates and reviews processes involving the collection and analysis of data, reviewing and reporting on the quality and effectiveness of our programmes and services leading to the enhancement of quality.

QA Responsibilities
The Table below summarises the responsibilities of key ITT stakeholders in relation to self-evaluation, monitoring and review.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forum/Position</th>
<th>Responsibility in relation to Self-Evaluation, Monitoring, and Review</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Review Panel</td>
<td>Ensure that our programmes and services are evaluated, monitored and reviewed and the resources are in place to ensure ITT’s responsibilities can be met.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITT Executive Group</td>
<td>Responsible for the quality and excellence in the organisation as a whole and has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the quality assurance system (QAS) is implemented; promoting a culture of quality throughout the organisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing Director</td>
<td>Manage all processes and report to the ITT Executive Group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Officer</td>
<td>Implementation of the processes at an organisational level, acts as the Self-Evaluation Coordinator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Manager</td>
<td>Implementation of the processes at Programme level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Administrators</td>
<td>Provide administrative support to the Quality Officer and the Programme Manager.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Internal Evaluation and Monitoring
To facilitate monitoring the performance of programmes and to support continuous quality improvement, we seek feedback on all aspects of programmes, review that feedback and implement recommendations for continuous improvements. Results and findings from the on-going monitoring and evaluation activities feed into annual programme reviews and into a 5-year Programmatic Review.
Monitoring & Evaluations Metrics/KPIs:

- Attendance Records
- Completion and drop-out statistics
- Marks and grades
- Learners’ feedback – focus groups, questionnaires, class reps
- Trainers’ feedback
- Employers’ feedback
- Complaints and appeals
- Accident and Incident reports
- Risk Register
- Authentication reports
- QQI monitoring reports
- Other stakeholder feedback
- Insights and benchmarking.

How do we do it?

- Questionnaires/evaluation reports
- One-to-one meetings
- Onsite visits.

Key ongoing monitoring activities

- Quality is a standing agenda item on the weekly team meetings to monitor and evaluate the programmes delivered, recording and addressing any issues of concern arising in relation to a programme, service, learner or trainer.
- Any actions arising are taken up by the Quality Officer and the Programme Manager.
- The Quality Officer and the Programme Manager are in regular contact with trainers via email, phone and through face-to-face and virtual meetings.
- ITT undertakes end of programme completion evaluations and in some cases a mid-programme evaluation (depending on length of programme).
- The Quality Officer monitors complaints to identify any recurring issues and to ensure that any issues raised are resolved and closed off.
- The Programme Manager maintains attendance records to track learners’ engagement. Poor attendance may be an indicator that there is a problem with a programme. The Programme Manager reviews the attendance records on a daily basis and raises any issues of concern with the Quality Officer.

Involvement of Learners in the Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation of Programmes

- Learners are invited and encouraged to provide feedback on quality of programmes and services in feedback questionnaires.
- One-to-one meetings with learners.
- Correspondence from individual learners may also contribute to the evaluation.
- Representation from a learner on the ARP.
Responsibility

- The ARP is responsible for overseeing the process of review and evaluation.
- The Programme Manager leads the review and evaluation of their respective programme.
- The Quality Officer is responsible for implementing the processes.

Scope

All programmes, courses and workshops

Process

- The ITT Executive Group ensures programmes are reviewed regularly in some cases after each iteration with the aim of continuously improving programmes and supports.
- The Programme Manager leads the review and evaluation of their respective programme. At the end of each programme cycle, the Programme Manager invites feedback from learners, trainers and other relevant stakeholders.
- The Quality Officer undertakes an analysis of learner, trainer, stakeholder, external authenticator and RAP feedback and the Complaints and Appeals registers.
- The PDDT:
  - Reviews the programme content as part of the programme review to ensure that the content, teaching and learning strategies reflect advances in the relevant disciplines and that the pedagogic style incorporates best practice.
  - Reviews the effectiveness of equipment, training resources and facilities.
  - Reviews our capacity to uphold the terms and conditions of validation and ensure that our programmes meet the validation criteria.
  - Reviews the ATP options and update these options if required.
  - Reviews the assessment instruments and makes whatever changes/updates are necessary.
- The Quality Officer collates and analyses the data and prepares a draft report which identifies recommendations for improvement in the programme and related supports and services.
- The SMT reviews and comments on the draft report. The Quality Officer incorporates feedback from the SMT and then produces the final report.
- The Quality Officer submits the final draft to the ARP for comment and sign-off.
- The Managing Director presents programme reports to the ITT Executive Group.
- The Quality Officer working with the Programme Manager monitors the implementation of the recommendations contained in the review reports/improvement plans on an ongoing basis.
- The Quality Officer updates the Programme Descriptor following the review if necessary.

Supporting Documents

- End-of-Programme evaluation form
- Programme Review Report Form Template
- Complaints Register
- Appeals Register
Reference Documents

- FESS Self Evaluation Resource

Document History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version Number</th>
<th>Version Date</th>
<th>Description of Change</th>
<th>Author Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V1</td>
<td>092020</td>
<td>Initial Release</td>
<td>Managing Director</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Self-Evaluation/Programmatic Review

Supporting Documents

- Self-Evaluation Report (SER) Template
- Programme Improvement Plan Template
- Selection Criteria External Evaluator
- External Evaluator Guidelines/Contract.

ITT has a self-evaluation system in place which facilitates the review and reporting on the quality of programmes and related services. The views of learners, stakeholders, members of the programme team and of independent evaluator/s, who have the necessary expertise to compare ITT programmes with similar programmes offered elsewhere, are included in each self-evaluation.

Aims of the Self-Evaluation Process

- To identify and highlight areas where we are doing well.
- To identify and highlight where there are gaps and where we need to improve.
- Measure how effective our QAS is in achieving a consistent and high-quality service.
- Ensure we are meeting the needs and expectations of our learners and other stakeholders.
- Measure the success of our learners in reaching the intended learning outcomes.

Steps in our Self-Evaluation Process

- Plan and Prepare
- Carry out evaluations with stakeholder groups
- Document what we are doing well and areas where we need to improve
- Document evidence
- Acknowledge success
- Prioritise areas for improvement/decide on actions
- Collate, distribute and publish self-evaluation reports
- Implement actions.
We undertake a Self-Evaluation/Programmatic Review every five years. This is a wide-scale comprehensive review of all aspects of the programme and the syllabus which may lead to changes in the programme/curriculum and is timed to coincide with programme revalidation. This process involves self-evaluation, reflection, reviewing and reporting on the quality and effectiveness of our programme and services combined with the input of an independent external review. The learning from this process and the data collected is used to improve, develop and inform future practices to meet changing needs.

**Academic Review Panel - Self-Evaluation Panel (SEP)**

ITT evaluates all programmes every five years in line with revalidation. The ITT ARP carries out the functions of a Self-Evaluation Panel (SEP). A formal self-evaluation process is in place.

The process involved is presented below:

- The Quality Officer is responsible for implementing the process of Self-Evaluation and usually acts as the Self-Evaluator Coordinator for each self-evaluation exercise.
- The ARP meets at the outset of the process to agree on a timeline and plan for the process and agree on the appointment of the Self-Evaluation Coordinator (usually the Programme Manager) and a suitably qualified External Evaluator.
- The ARP ensures that the resources are in place to undertake an effective evaluation – time, budget and expertise.
- The Self-Evaluation Co-ordinator contracts the services of the agreed External Evaluator and agrees on the terms of reference with them.
- The Self-Evaluation Co-ordinator invites all stakeholders to complete a Self-Evaluation questionnaire.
- The Self-Evaluation Co-ordinator facilitates and records findings from a focus group of learners undertaking the relevant programmes to determine their experiences about the quality of the programme.
- Employers and other relevant stakeholders are invited to input into the process and to give their opinions on the programmes.
- The Self-Evaluation Co-ordinator collates and analyses all data collected.
- The Self-Evaluation Co-ordinator conducts a review of the data collated during the 5-year period being addressed by the review. This data is contained in the annual reports. A summary report is compiled from this data, which details the recommendations for improvements made and the current status of each recommendation. This summary report will provide an accurate representation of the current state of the programme.
- Based on the findings from the questionnaires and the outcomes from the discussions with the trainers, learners and others, the Self-Evaluation Co-ordinator completes the Self-Evaluation Checklist.
- The Self-Evaluation Co-ordinator arranges an on-site meeting with the External Evaluator at which the Self-Evaluation Checklist, the data collected, and the findings are discussed in detail. This meeting is attended by the Programme Manager.
- We ask the External Evaluator to review and comment on the summary report.
- The External Evaluator submits an External Evaluation Report following this meeting and a review of all information presented and a review of our quality assurance manual.
- Following receipt of the External Evaluation Report, the Self-Evaluation Co-ordinator considers the findings and draws up a first draft of the self-evaluation report (SER) and a Programme Improvement Plan(PIP) based on the evidence and findings and the External Evaluator’s input, taking care to ensure that all strengths, areas for improvements and recommendations are identified and highlighted.
The Self-Evaluation Co-ordinator circulates a copy of the draft SER and PIP to members of the ARP for consideration before the ARP meet.

The Self-Evaluation Co-ordinator considers feedback from members of the ARP and makes suggested modifications as appropriate.

The ARP meets to agree and sign-off on the reports.

A copy of the PIP is circulated to relevant staff.

The implementation of the PIP is a recurring agenda item for ARP and operational team meetings.

A copy of the agreed SER and the PIP is forwarded to the ITT Executive Group for their information.

As part of this process the following are considered:

- Findings of the annual reviews.
- Findings of awarding body monitoring reports.
- Legislative changes to be incorporated into the programme.
- Feedback from all stakeholders.
- Effectiveness of procedures for the assessment of learners.
- Recommended modifications to the existing curriculum, modules, and assessment processes.
- External authenticator and evaluator reports to ensure suggested changes are implemented.
- The levels of training and assessment skills available to the programme to ensure they are sufficient and appropriate.
- Suitability and appropriateness of the physical facilities and anticipate changing needs in the future.
- Current programme entry requirements and confirm their appropriateness for the current context.
- Learner progression and completion rates, retention, withdrawal and graduation rates and causes across the period of the review.
- Any issues raised about particular sites or with particular modules or other elements of the programme.
- Recommendations for modifications to the delivery process and the operational management procedures based on feedback from stakeholders.

Selection of External Evaluator

ITT contracts an independent external evaluator to input into our self-evalautoon process. ITT contract an evaluator based on their match of the stated selection criteria and our assessment of their ability to make a positive contribution to the programmatic review and evaluation process. In sourcing an External Evaluator, the Self-Evaluation Coordinator seeks referrals and recommendations from other providers and consults with the Programme Manager. If possible, ITT contracts a person from another provider who is capable of giving an informed view on the success of the programme and able to contribute to its improvement. ITT sets out the details of the arrangements with the selected evaluator in a contract which is signed by both the Managing Director, on behalf of ITT, and the evaluator.
External Evaluator Selection Criteria

According to the QQI QA guidelines document, “the role of the External Evaluator is to offer objective comparisons with similar programmes available elsewhere. This role of this person should be that of a ‘critical friend’, i.e. someone who can bring support, recognition and positive suggestions for improvement.”

An External Evaluator:

- Must be independent of the programme and of the ITT centre
- Be able to compare the quality of programme with that of similar programmes elsewhere and giving an informed view on the success of the programme.
- Be able to make constructive recommendations for improvements.

The External Evaluator must have:

- Experience of having delivered and managed similar programmes validated by QQI.
- An understanding of evaluation procedures and methodologies.
- Programme knowledge and subject matter expertise.
- No personal, professional or business interest in our centre or no direct connections with our trainers.
- Experience of training and development processes.
- Experience in quality assurance systems.