Irish Times Training Quality Manual

V6.2 January 2024

Contents

IRISH TIMES TRAINING

1. Introduction

Profile

Irish Times Training (ITT), a 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 highest 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.

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Core Values

Irish Times Training Values

Scope of Provision

QQI Programme Provision

CODE	Programme	PAEC Date	Level	Award Code	Certificate
PG21520	Health Service Skills (Full Award)	14/04/2015	5	5M3782	Health Service Skills
PG15254	5N1364 Digital Marketing Level 5 Minor Award	21/02/2013	5	5N1364	Digital Marketing
PG20667	5N2062 - Principles and Practice of Selling	21/02/2013	5	5N2062	Principle and Practice of Selling
PG21110	6N3326 Training Delivery and Evaluation	02/12/2015	6	6S3372	Training and Development
PG20422	Community Health Services (full Award) Decomissioned since October 2022	05/02/2014	5	5M4468	Community Health Services

PG21308	6N30273 Information, Advice and Advocacy Practice	18/02/2015	6	6M3115	Information, Advice and Advocacy
PG20948	Care Skills - Decomissioned since October 2022	11/07/2014	5	5N2770	Care Skills
PG22975	6N1949 Personal and Professional Development	15/02/2017	6	6M4985	Business
PG24476	Specific Purpose Certificate in Dementia Care and Support	08/04/2021	5	5S21683	Specific Purpose Certificate in Dementia Care and Support

Table 1Major, special purpose and minor awards at Levels 5 and 6 of the NFQ

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 a range of Springboard+ courses from Level 6 to Level 9 in partnership with Ulster University. This offering is dependent on annual funding from Springboard+.

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 annually.

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2. Governance and Management of Quality

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.

Consequently, 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 & Irish Times Training

![IRISH TIMES TRAINING]

ITT GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

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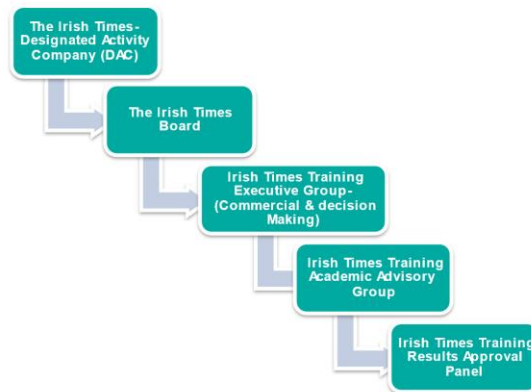
Irish Times Board

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, Head of Systems and Operations 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 Time Board.

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ITT EXECUTIVE GROUP

IRISH TIMES TRAINING
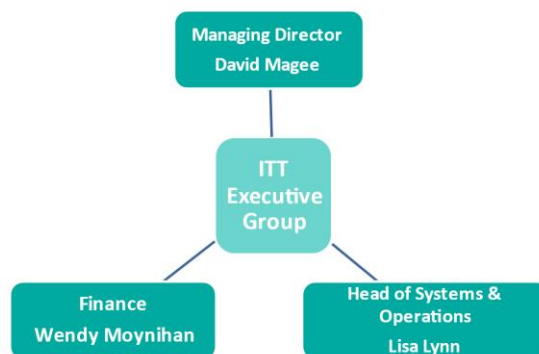
Responsibilities of the ITT Executive Group (in relation to ITT): *(extract from the ITT Executive Group TOR)*

- 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, AAG 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 AAG 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 Advisory Group (AAG)

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 Advisory Group (AAG) (AAG)

The AAG has oversight of all academic activities, protects learner interests and monitors the implementation of the quality processes which are designed to maintain high standards of training provision.

The AAG 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 AAG meets four times a year.

In recognition of the size and scale of ITT, the AAG acts as the de facto Self-Evaluation Panel. The Results Approval Panel reports to the AAG. The AAG 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.

ACADEMIC ADVISORY GROUP
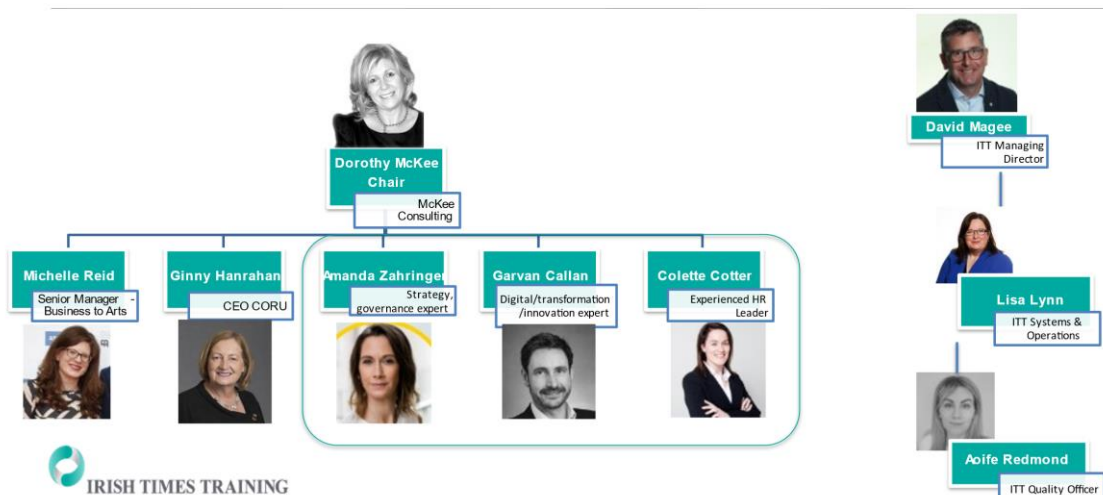
Responsibilities of AAG: *(extract of TOR)*

- 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 AAG composition, to ensure the continued effectiveness of the AAG 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

RAP 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.

ITT Organisational Structure

ITT has full-time staff of 9 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.

IRISH TIMES TRAINING
ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE
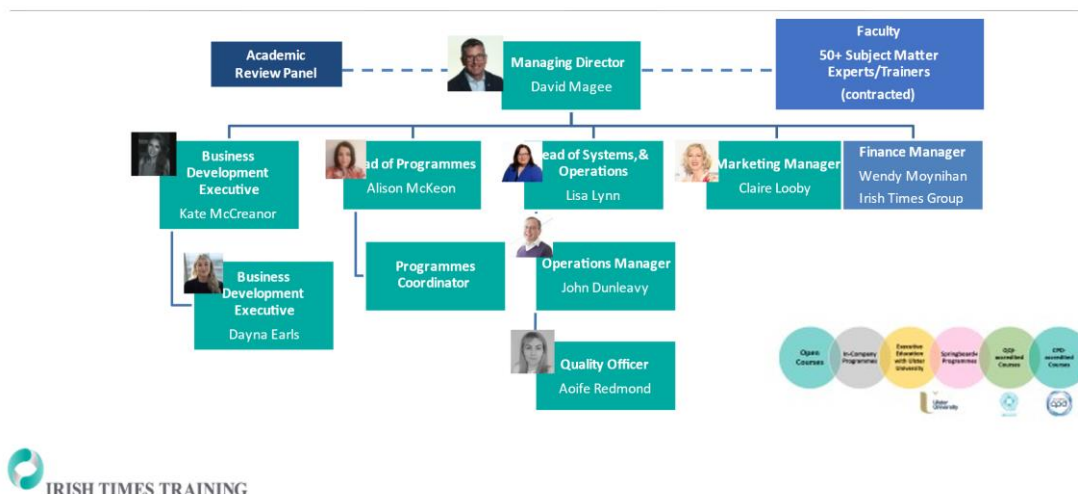
Table 2 ITT Organisational Structure

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)
- 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 Manager
- Head of Systems & Operations

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.
- 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 AAG, programme boards, the results approval and other relevant panels
- Regular reporting to the AAG
- 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. This function manages all social media platforms, website updates 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. The marketing function also has full ownership of all events and brand awareness initiatives. Advertising in Irish Times Group and external publications and platforms is also a function of the marketing department.

Business Development Function

The business development function includes the Business Development Manager and Account Managers. The Account Managers assist in the recruitment for Open programmes, Executive Education programmes and In-Company programmes. They work closely with the Programme Managers to ensure that learners are aware of all programme details.

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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.
- 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 committee

- 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 Advisory Group (AAG)

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

Programmes 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
- 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 Advisory Group (AAG)
- Coordinate programme and programmatic reviews.
- Monitor trainer performance and performance appraisal
- Manage and overseework placement arrangements if applicable
- Manage programme financing and budgets

Student Support / 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

Head of Systems & Operations

As part of this cross-functional role, the Operations Manager is responsible supporting quality assurance and the implementation of the QAS.

Roles and Responsibilities

Operations in conjunction with the Operations Manager and Quality Officer:

- Delivery & Continuous Improvement in Operations
- Oversee all operations and logistics in relation to training delivery both online and in the classroom
- Ensuring customer success and continuously recommending and implementing improvements
- Oversee the implementation of various IT systems. Conduct systems and process audit, providing insights into where and how they can be improved.
- Drive Innovation and Technology ensuring it is used to support and drive customer success
- Drive product and service improvements across all the Irish Times Training systems.
- Oversee the management and further development of ITT's Quality Assurance System (QAS) in relation to online programmes / Blended Learning

Drive Business Improvement and Product Development

- Identify best practice user and customer / learner journeys to ensure foundational excellence of all internal systems
- Manage and make improvements to the new operational and booking system, building LMS functionality that will add to and improve the overall Learner experience
- Recommend and implement new features that improve efficiencies as well as improve the overall Learner experience
- Play a leading role in the development of ITT'S online programme provision including QQI Re/Validation approaches ensuring Blended Learning is incorporated into Irish Times Training offerings where beneficial.

3. Documented approach to Quality Assurance

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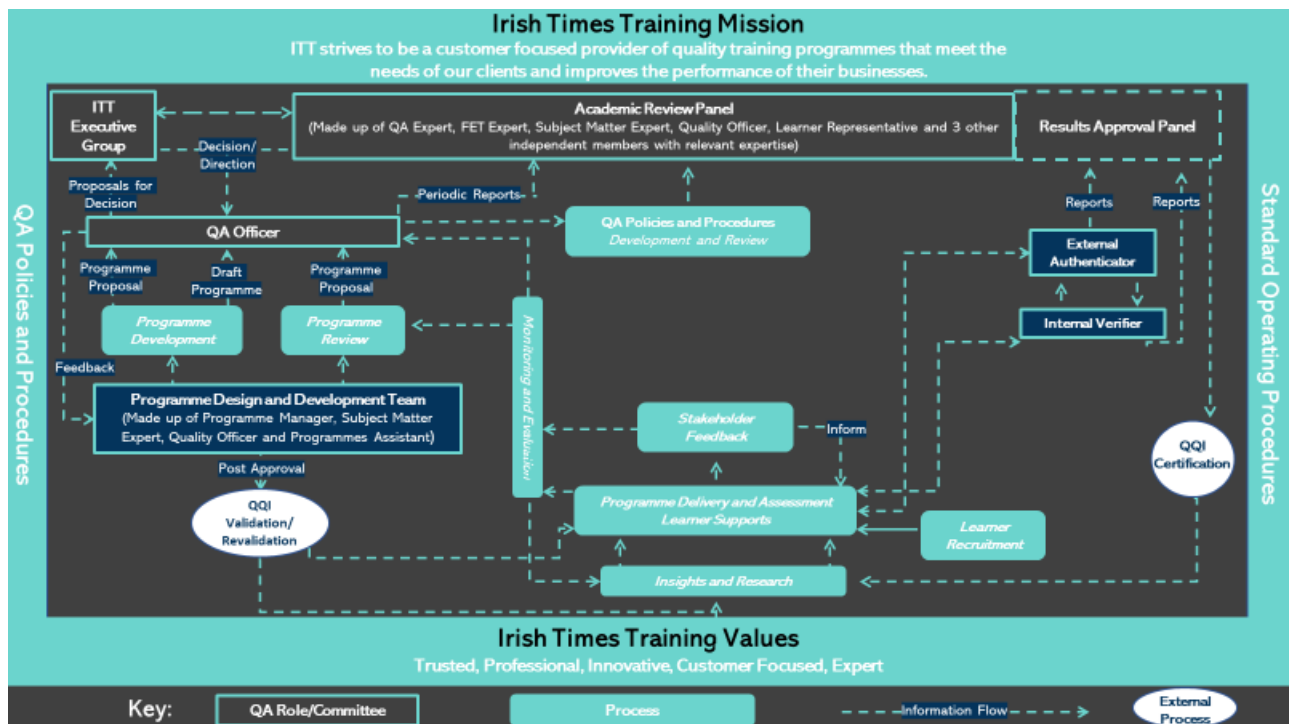
Both the ITT Executive Group and AAG ensure ongoing alignment to the QAS through:

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.

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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 AAG 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 AAG'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 AAG 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.

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.

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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.
- 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.

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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
- Learner profiles
- 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.

5. Programmes of Education & Training

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-focussed and enables learners to achieve their desired goals. ITT considers all aspects of the programme at the design stage; teaching and learning, assessment, access, transfer and progression, supports and resources. ITT monitors its programmes on an ongoing basis and undertakes consultations with stakeholders to identify opportunities to improve the quality and effectiveness of its programmes and services.

Programme Management

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 AAG, detailing the rationale and scope of the programme. If any amendments / edits are agreed by the AAG, these are incorporated into the programme proposal.

With the approval of the AAG, the Managing Director then presents the programme 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 PDDT 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.

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 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 provider (or consortium), the PDDT draws up a Memorandum of Understanding to formalise and approve the arrangements between ITT and the other party, 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.

Programme Approval and Submission for Validation

All programme documentation is approved by the AAG and ITT Executive Group 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 Quality Officer and Programme Manager, 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 AAG.

Following approval by the AAG, 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.

Programme Management 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 Descriptor for each programme is reviewed as part of our annual programme review and updated, as necessary.

The Programme Manager / Programme Co-ordinator books trainers from our approved trainer panel.

The Programme Manager / Programme Co-ordinator and 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/ Programme Co-ordinator 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 Co-ordinator ensures the learner and trainer have a copy of the Trainer and Learner Handbooks in advance of course commencement.

The Programme manager ensures that all trainer deliverables including training marking, assessment & modes of delivery (Online, Digital or in person) are outlined and meet the programme criteria.

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.

ThePDDT 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 and incorporate this into the curriculum.

The PDDT reviews the content of each module 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 ensuring that any outputs of the PDDT reviews are communicated to the wider Programme Team.

Programme materials and online resources for Blended programmes are updated annually by the trainers to both refresh content where needed andto reflect legal and regulatory requirements relating to materials / media used.

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

ITT secures 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

IRISH TIMES TRAINING

Admissions Policy

Admission to a programme is subject to:

Availability of places.

Applicant suitability mapped against the minimum entry requirements. These requirements may vary by programme, and are detailed throughout the application procedure.

Learners must 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, the line manager undertakes this responsibility.

The applicant learner and employer (as appropriate) agrees to abide by our terms and conditions, which are highlighted upon booking / enrolment.

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. Further details are outlined in chapter 7 of this QA manual under Learner Supports.

Entry to Programmes

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

Comprehensive, clear and explicit

Reflective of the level and content of the awards being offered in the programme

Justifiable and relevant 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 minimum level required is the B2 Level. However,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 are accepted:

IELTS Indicator Test

TOEFL iBT Special Home Edition

Cambridge Proficiency in English

Applicants are advised to contact the Programme Manager if they have queries in relation to the English language requirements for the programme.

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.

An applicant may gain a place on a programme, without meeting the minimum entry requirements, on the basis of prior learning. Applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have the capacity to participate successfully on the programme. Evidence of this capacity may include a CV, references, and records of courses attended or samples of work. Evidence is maintained and monitored to ensure consistency of implementation.

ITT'S decision to offer the learner a place on a programme is usually made on the basis of information obtained through an application portfolio which should include evidence of prior learning. Applicants will be informed of the requirements of the application portfolio when they apply, and given a timeframe in which they need to submit their portfolio. The Programme Manager is responsible for reviewing the portfolio and the decision of whether the applicant qualifies for a place.

Admissions Appeals

All applicants to Irish Times Training are carefully assessed on the basis of published policies and procedures, taking into account eligibility for the programme and recognition of prior learning, if relevant. An applicant is entitled to appeal a decision where they feel that the assessment has, in their individual case, not met these standards.

Submission of an appeal does not mean that an appeal will be granted and during the appeal process the applicant is still considered not admitted to the programme of study.

The grounds for appeal that may be considered are:

- incorrect process; specific evidence of irregularity in Irish Times Training applications assessment process
- Specified/stated grounds where Irish Times Training decision was based on misinterpretation of data or information provided as part of the application process

An Admissions Appeal form is available to applicants and outlines the instructions of how to lodge an appeal.

The appeal will be considered by the Academic Review Panel (AAG). The appeal will be considered impartially and, where possible, the committee will consist of staff who were not involved in making the original decision. The function of the appeals process is to ensure the rules are applied fairly and it cannot set aside the rules for applicants who appeal for special treatment.

The decision of the AAG will be considered final in all cases.

General Direct Application from the Learner

Based on the type of course they are applying for individual applicants or group bookings complete the relevant online Booking or inquiry Form which is submitted to ITT.

Where a candidate applies via Springboard for a funded or subsidised programme, ITT accesses the application form on the Springboard AMS system.

An acknowledgement email is issued to the email address provided by the applicant on receipt of an application.

Applicants are vetted to determine eligibility for admission and establish that full details have been given by the learner.

If arrangements for reasonable accommodation have been agreed, this is highlighted by the Programme Team and brought to the attention of the trainer.

The Programme Coordinator issues an induction email to the applicant. This includes relevant programme information such as: venue, schedule, dates etc.

In-Company Programmes

A client may book an in-company programme for a larger group of staff. To assess the requirements:

The client will first discuss their requirements with the Programme Manager to agree programme content and trainer. Any programme customization is also discussed at this stage.

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.

The Programme Manager ensures that the training venue selected for delivery is safe and suitable if not onsite with ITT. Programmes can be 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 covering all necessary H&S and accessibility requirements.

All necessary notes/folders etc are forwarded to the client for their employees prior to the programme commencement. Unless agreed otherwise all materials are shared digitally.

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 online evaluations are requested by the client, the Programme Manager requests a Questback evaluation report which is sent to the employees. Once the end date has been reached, the Programme Manager downloads the report, discusses the findings with the Quality Officer and forwards a copy to the client.

Access, Transfer and Progression (ATP)

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 Prgramme 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.

Payment and cancellation policies

Programme Cancellation

ITT reserves the right to cancel a programme where there are insufficient numbers to run a viable programme.

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.

Payment

Individuals / Open Programmes

Payment of the full course fee is due at the time of booking. Payment can be made online by card in our booking tool. EFT can be arranged but places are not confirmed until payment is received. This must be a minimum of 5 working days before course start date. We do not accept cash payments.

Company Payments

For company bookings we will 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 unless agreed otherwise at time of booking. In the case of a booking made within two weeks of the start date, full payment must be made by credit card or EFT on confirmation of the booking unless agreed otherwise at time of booking

Transfers/Change of Date

Change of Delegate / Attendance Date

Companies and individuals may substitute participants prior to the start of a programme without additional payment.

Transfer / Rescheduling

Transferring or rescheduling agreed dates requires notification by email at least 10 working days prior to the commencement date of the programme.

Cancellation and Refund Policy

We do not refund payments to delegates who do not attend classes or who do not complete the programme. This applies to self-funded or company sponsored delegates.

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 individual refunds will be made for group delegates who fail to attend or complete 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 amend / update the programme 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 light of policy changes, programme updates or other constraints.

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-training 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 AAG.

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

The length of the programme dictates when feedback forms are issued
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

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 AAG.

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

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

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 AAG 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.

- Trainers are required to contact the Programme Manager 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 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.follow up as needed.

Learning Support and Resources

Title: Supports for Learners Procedure

Issue Date: 092020 Version Number 1

Responsibility

- The AAG 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 learners have in relation to the use of technology or blended learning.

Supporting Documents
- Learner Induction Presentation
- Learner Handbook
- Lesson Plan Template
- Programme Descriptors
- Reference Documents
- Teaching and Learning AHEAD

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

- <u>Application/Registration Form</u>

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:

  o Learning materials provided in accessible format.

  o Additional time allocated to complete assessments.

  o Physical modifications to the training location e.g. seating arrangements.

  o Alternative assessment formats.

  o 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

• Full Insurance in place.

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

IRISH TIMES TRAINING

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, with supports available if required, and timely feedback provided.

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.

All students must attempt each assignment as this ensures all learning outcomes are assessed. This is a requirement for all learners to be put through for QQI accreditation.

Reference Documents

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

1. *QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines*
2. *QQI Quality Assuring Assessment, Guidelines for Providers, Revised 2013*
3. *QBS Quick Guide for Certification V1*
4. *QQI Key Dates and Information - Awards and Certification*
5. *QQI Statutory Guidelines for Blended Programmes*
6. *QA Assessment Guidelines for External Authenticators*

ETB / FESS
1. *Feedback to Learners in FET Resource List (FESS)*
2. *Academic Writing Handbook for Learners FESS 2019*

The documents below are created and issued by Irish Times Training to support the assessment process:

1. *Learner Handbook*
2. *Trainer Handbook*
3. *Pre-programme assessment briefing*
4. *Glossary of terms and definitions*
5. *Internal Verification Report*
6. *External Authenticator Report*
7. *Results Approval Panel Report*

Overview of the Assessment Process

1. **Assessment**
- The Programme Design Team (PDT) devise assessment instructions, marking schemes and assessment criteria
- The trainers act as internal assessors and carry out assessment
- The trainers mark and grade the assessment evidence
- The paperwork is submitted to the Quality Officer who records the outcomes

2. **Authentication**

- The Internal Verifier confirms that all assessment procedures have been applied and verifies the assessment results
- ITT appoints an External Authenticator (EA)
- The EA moderates assessment results by sampling learner evidence according to our sampling strategy

3. **Results Approval**
- The Results Approval Panel approves and sign-off assessment results
- The Programme Team make results available to learners

4. **Appeals Process**
- Learners are allowed 5 working days to lodge an appeal from when they receive their results
- The Quality Officer processes appeals according to our documented appeals process

5. **Request for Certification**
- The Quality Officer submits all learner results to QQI via the QBS
- Certificates are issued by QQI to ITT to then be posted on to the learners

Assessment Design and Planning

The assessment of each programme is planned by the Programme Design Team (PDT) 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 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.

When designing and planning assessment, the PDT considers;

- The range of specific learning outcomes to be assessed by each assessment technique.
- The assessment techniques and instruments.
- The timing of assessment activities.

- How marks are to be allocated and assessment criteria is to be applied.

The Programme Manager meets the trainer for a pre-programme briefing where all aspects of assessment are discussed and agreed. The assessment timetable is confirmed and any arrangements for reasonable accommodations are discussed and arrangements put in place for such requests.

The Programme Manager ensures that the assessment portfolio and all materials are available and up-to-date ahead of the programme. Trainers are responsible for explaining the assessment instructions to the class, and on a one-to-one basis with learners, if required. We make information regarding assessment available to learners prior to enrolment, at induction, in the Learner Handbook and throughout the programme.

In regards to communicating with learners on their assessment the trainer is responsible for the following:

- Distributing a programme/assessment timetable with critical assessment-related dates, as highlighted at induction.
- Talking through the assignments, the assessment criteria, submission regulations and answer any questions that the learners may have throughout the programme.
- The trainer must be available to the learners throughout the programme and assessment period to answer any queries regarding the assignments.
- Informing the learners of our reasonable accommodation policy.
- Emphasising our academic integrity policy and how ITT deals with incidents of academic misconduct (this is also addressed in the Learner Handbook).
- Highlighting the details of our appeals procedures which are also available in the Learner Handbook.

Learner Supports

Reasonable Accommodation
We do our best to accommodate learners who have a disability/specific need when it is practicable and feasible to do so. In the context of assessment, reasonable accommodation is the adaption of assessment as necessary to cater for the needs of learners whose personal situation means that the assessment would otherwise be unfair e.g., learners with a disability and/or other learners covered by equality legislation.

Procedure:
- We encourage learners who have any additional needs / requirements to speak to their trainer, or the Student Support Officer, before or as soon as a programme begins.
- We publish details of our reasonable accommodation policy in our learner handbook and we address it at both learner and trainer induction.
- The learner must apply in writing using the standard application form and may be asked to submit evidence / supporting documents.

- All applications for reasonable accommodation are assessed on an individual basis by the Quality Officer and relevant Programme Manager.
- The outcome is communicated with the learner.
- The Quality Officer details any accommodations made in the Internal Verification reports which are made available to the External Authenticator (EA).

Extenuating Circumstances & Compassionate Consideration

We recognise that exceptional circumstances can arise where learners may not be able to submit assessment on the due date/attend an exam e.g. illness or family bereavement. Where this arises, we advise learners to contact the Programme Manager directly to discuss the circumstances. We make every effort to accommodate these learners.

Deferral

Learners may be able to defer to a later intake of their programme, although this may be dependent funding. Learners are instructed to contact the Programme Manager to find out if deferral is an available option.

Security and Storage of Assessment Materials & Submissions

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

Assessment Materials

- The Programme Manager develops appropriate security procedures for the preparation of assessment briefs and examination papers. Where an examination forms part of the assessment, examination papers are drafted in a secure environment and submitted to the Quality Officer for safe storage.
- Examination papers, model answers, and marking schemes are retained by the Quality Officer in a secure manner throughout the process from development to the time the examination is over.
- Marks and assessment evidence must be formally received by the Quality Officer who then immediately records the outcomes in the QBS system.
- 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.
- On conclusion of the Results Approval Panel meeting, hardcopies of all assignments and related materials are treated as the learner's original assessment and are managed in line with our data retention policy.

Learners Submissions

In line with our sustainability practices, to reduce printing and transportation of hard copy materials, ITT aims to conduct assessments by digital means as much as possible. Our GDPR/Data Security approach supports the secure management and timely destruction of all learner data held.

In certain circumstances where assessment can only be done in hard copy, the submitted assignments are securely stored either in The Irish Times Building, or in our off-site facility.

Instructions to Learners:

- Learners are given clear instructions on how to format and submit their assignments, and the dates are clearly stipulated on the Programme Timetable.
- Learners are required to submit assignments with a signed and dated declaration that all work being submitted is their own, original work.
- Once assignments are received, they are checked by a member of the Programme Team to ensure that all components of the work are complete.
- The 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 requested to keep a copy of their work for their own records.**

Digital Submissions

Learners' assessments/recordings are submitted via the designated digital channel provided at induction and stored and marked digitally. The Quality Officer is responsible for the management of the online documents. These are kept in a secure, password protected online folder; access will be shared with the Programme Manager, the trainer and/or marker, the Internal Verifier and with the External Authenticator.

Hardcopy Submissions

ITT has transitioned to online digital submissions since the COVID Pandemic. In approved/agreed circumstances where hardcopies are required, we can facilitate.

Dealing with Academic Misconduct

In their submissions and participation in the programme, we expect learners to conduct their studies honestly, ethically and in accordance with accepted standards of academic conduct. Examples of academic misconduct include cheating in exams, plagiarism, presenting falsified or improperly obtained data or being assisted in the presentation of assessment tasks. It is our policy to investigate any form of suspected assessment misconduct/malpractice and penalise learners who are found guilty of academic misconduct.

At the induction of the course, the issue of Plagiarism is explained to learners and when the assignments are being introduced this issue is highlighted again. All learners complete a

Registration Form for QQI accredited courses. This form is signed by the learner and declares that the work submitted is all their own work.

Learners who do not include the declaration will be required to submit their work again and include the declaration form.

Digital support for Academic Integrity
In line with the QQI requirements and our focus on continuous improvement, Academic Integrity in relation to learner submissions will be managed by a digital tool providing an additional layer to submission and enhanced integrity to the learners.

If there is a suspected case of plagiarism, as digital submission is the primary channel the tool deployed by ITT for Academic integrity is the primary support in this area.

In the scenario where hardcopy submission is facilitated, assumed to be driven by Reasonable Accommodation Requests, then within the marking process the trainer must report any suspicions in writing to the Programme Manager initiating an Academic Misconduct Process outlining their concerns and including the evidence.

This evidence may include, for example, two copies of assignments where the text is identical.

Academic Misconduct Process Overview
- Trainer flags suspected academic misconduct with the Programme Manager.
- An interview is arranged between the learner and Programme Manager. This interview takes place in a one-to-one basis.
- The concerns are raised with the learner and the implications of plagiarism are explained to the learner.
- The learner is given a fair opportunity to respond.
- 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.
- The rules and sanctions for plagiarism are outlined to the learner and the consequences of a further incidence occurring.
- The Programme Manager notifies the learner, the trainer and the Quality Officer of the meeting outcome in writing and any penalty imposed.
- If the case is considered to be sufficiently serious, the Quality Officer may refer it to the AAG.
- 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 AAG. Any decision taken by the AAG is final.
- Full details of our Academic Misconduct Policy are issued to trainers and learners upon commencement of the course. Any decision taken by the AAG is final.

Consistency of Marking

We have processes in place to ensure that the standards of marking and grading is consistent and that marking and grading are in line with national standards.

Process
- We address marking and grading at Trainer Induction and in the Trainer Handbook.
- We have detailed marking schemes, based on the validated assessment plan and learning objectives, in place for all assessments which shows clearly how the assessment evidence is to be marked and graded.
- Assessment briefs, examination papers and marking schemes are devised by the Subject Matter Expert and signed-off by the Programme Manager.
- Learners are provided with marking scheme outlines so they can best structure their work in line with the brief.
- Should multiple markers be required, a lead assessor is nominated on a rotational basis to oversee the process.
- In their role, Internal Verifiers checks a sample for each certification period to ensure consistency. Marking and grading on new programmes or by new trainers are subject to cross-moderation.
- Our quality process also allows for sampling following a completed IV and this is completed by the Quality team.
- 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.
  o 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 i.e. if original mark is 65 and lead trainer reviews and awards 72 marks, the lead trainer's mark of 72 is the given mark.
  o If significant differences are identified on a consistent basis, further remedial actions may be required e.g., further training, coaching etc.
- As part of the IV process, observations are recorded by the Internal Verifier in their IV Report. The Internal Verifier samples a selection of each trainer's marking and grading to ensure consistency and observations are recorded in an Internal Verification Report. Any instances of inconsistent marking are communicated to the Results Approval Panel by the 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 and communicated back to the trainer as part of the process.

Internal Verification

Definitions

Internal Verification (IV) is the process by which we monitor assessment processes and procedures relating to planning, managing and conducting assessment.

We internally verify both;

- The assessment process, where IV is conducted on the days of skills demonstration and/or exams. This ensures the assessment procedures are adhered to in accordance with the assessment guidelines i.e. clear instructions provided to learner, and the assessment uses the techniques indicated in the programme descriptor.
- 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.

Procedure

- The Internal Verifier verifies the assessment process by observing the trainer conducting a skills demonstration / examination. The observation will be detailed in the IV Report along with any recommendations.
- The Internal Verifier 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 Internal Verifier 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 Internal Verifier completes the process by producing the Internal Verification Report which confirms the outcome of the process and documents any concerns.
- The Internal Verifier signs the IV Report in advance of authentication, submits it to the External Authenticator and informs the External Authenticator about any adaptations made/ reasonable accommodation implemented by noting it on the IV Report.
- The Internal Verifier arranges the External Authenticator visit within a reasonable timeframe linked to IV completion and before the QQI submission deadline. The end to end marking, IV and EA process depends on the size of the cohort going through for certification and targeted QQI submission deadline.
- The Internal Verifier liaises with the External Authenticator before, during and after their review to support the process if needed.
- The Internal Verifier presents the IV report to the RAP and discusses any issues highlighted in the report.

External Authentication

External authentication provides independent confirmation of fair and consistent assessment, that our marking and grading is valid, reliable and in accordance with national standards for the award.

Process

- ITT contracts 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 in line with QQI standards**.**
- Internal verification reports (softcopy) are signed by the Internal Verifier. These are made available to the External Authenticator.
- All Learners' assignments are ordered alphabetically by surname for easy access for the External Authenticator. All video evidence is clearly marked for each Learner if digital recordings form part of the assessment.
- 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 QQI's sampling strategy (as detailed in the EA Report template).
- 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 provider's standard with reference to the National Standard, identifies areas of good practice and recommends areas for development and improvement.
- The completed EA Report is returned to the Quality Officer (in softcopy).
- The EA Report is made available to the Results Approval Panel.

External Authenticator Selection Criteria

The external authenticator must have;

- No personal, professional or business interest in ITT or no direct connection with the programme to allow for objectivity and impartiality.
- Broad subject matter expertise and a recognised qualification in the subject area at Level 7 minimum on the NFQ (or equivalent).
- Experience in training and development and understand the principles of adult learning.
- Experience in assessment processes.
- Familiarity with qualifications frameworks.
- Professional and systematic approach.
- Ability to use ITT provided templates and processes.

Sampling Strategy

- Samples are taken from every learner group for each assessment period and must be;
- Sufficient in size to enable sound judgments to be made about the fairness and consistency of assessment decisions.
- Cover the full range of attainment in terms of grades achieved.
- Include a random selection of evidence for each grade/band.
- Identify evidence which is borderline between grades e.g., learners who have not or learners who have only just achieved within the grading band.
- Include assessor decisions made by new tutors.

Results Approval and Issuing of Results

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

Procedure:

- The Chair of the RAP convenes a meeting of the Panel for each certification period.
- A RAP meeting must meet quorum, which is 75 % of the members.
- The External Authenticator may attend the RAP meeting to present their report as required.
- The RAP reviews the provisional results, learner evidence, IV report and EA report.
- 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.
- 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:
  o Formal proposals
  o Recommendations of IV & EA reports
  o Approval of provisional results presented to the meeting
  o Confirmation of QQI certification date
  o The report is signed and dated by the Chair
- 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) following approval by the RAP. Results are confirmed directly by email and are sent by Programme Team / Quality Officer.
- ITT issues a certificate of attendance to the learners, on request, in the time between results confirmed and certificates issued by QQI.
- The Quality Officer issues award certificates by registered post to learners as soon as they are received by ITT from QQI.
- Results are communicated to the ITT Executive Group and AAG meetings.

Managing and Delivering Learner Feedback

Trainers are required to give feedback on assessments and on learners' progress on a one-to-one basis and in groups at various stages throughout the programmes. In addition, we advise learners that they can approach trainers for advice and direction, particularly in relation to assessment at any stage.

How, when, how often and in what format trainers provide feedback is agreed at the pre- programme briefing with the Programme Manager. Feedback is usually given at specific times during the programme and may be communicated in the following contexts:

o Classroom based / virtual classrooms
o Group meetings
o Individual meetings
o Written feedback on assignment(s)*
  * Trainers are expected to write comments on the assessments when marking and the Internal Verifier checks for evidence of feedback provided.

In giving feedback to learners, trainers are advised to:

o Use positive language.
o Identify and note strengths.
o Give objective, specific feedback, with examples or direct references.
o Use assessment criteria and marking schemes to help to give objective feedback and to suggest specific options for improvement.
o Provide feedback in a timely manner.

We ask learners to confirm that they have received and are happy with the quality of the feedback given in our Learner Evaluation Forms.

Appeals and Complaints - Assessments

If a learner is unhappy with the results of their assessment, they are advised to contact the Programme Coordinator who will explain how the assessment was marked and graded. If the learner then wishes to appeal this result, they can submit an appeal. The procedure is also outlined in the Learner Handbook, which is circulated with all learners on our QQI accredited courses.

Procedure:

- Learners are informed about the process at Induction, in the Learner Handbook, at the Certification Requirements briefing with the trainer, 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 done by email and sent to the Quality Officer.
- 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.
- ITT must initiate an external review process within 10 working days of the appeal being accepted.
- 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 10 working days from receipt of materials from Irish Times Training.
- 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 Privacy Policy https://www.irishtimestraining.com/privacy-policy/
- Irish Times Company Information Communication Technology (ICT) Policy
- Academic Records (including payment records)

IRISH TIMES TRAINING

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:
  - CourseCo (Training Management System)
  - Active Campaign (Email Service Provider)
  - SendGrid (Email Delivery System - Website Bookings)
  - Questback (Questionnaires)
  - Microsoft Exchange (Email Server)
  - O365 Storage (ITG Provisioned Cloud Network)
  - Zoom VLE
- Not cloud-based:
  - 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 is strict accordance with the data management procedures outlined in ITT's 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

- 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 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, AAG 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
- Assignment submission rate
- Learner progression paths
- Satisfaction ratings
  - The Programme Manager contacts learners who exit a programme at any stage prior to programme completion or who fails 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
- Entry level requirements arrangements.
- 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, 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
    - 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
- 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.

Learner Handbook

In relation to QQI accredited programmes, the Learner Handbook is also highlighted on the course page. This handbook details QA policies and procedures relevant to the accredited programme:

- the application process including the admissions and appeals procedure pertaining to all accredited programmes
- arrangements for recognition of prior learning
- teaching approach and learner supports
- learner requirements including attendance and assessment

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.

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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 and insights, , 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 are created by the Marketing Manager 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.

Protection for Enrolled Learners
Irish Times Training has Protection for Enrolled Learners in place for qualifying programmes. The insurance provider is notified upon commencement of a programme of the enrolled learners, and the arrangements are implemented and communicated with the insurers and individual learner/client.

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 Quality Assurance page is publicly visible and mapped on our website. This includes a link to this Quality Manual, as well as the QQI re-engagement report and other key publications, the ITT Learner Handbook.

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 AAG. The AAG 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 AAG.

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.

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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 and evaluates processes through the collection and analysis of data and reports, and subsequently reviews the standards and effectiveness of our programmes and services. This monitoring and review supports our efforts for the continuous improvement of our programmes and services and the enhancement of quality.

QA Responsibilities

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

Forum/Position	Responsibility in relation to Self-Evaluation, Monitoring, and Review
Academic Advisory Group	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.
ITT Executive Group	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.
Managing Director	Manage all processes and report to the ITT Executive Group.
Head of Systems and Operations	Responsible for operations including quality processes, and systems and tools to support QA framework.
Quality Officer	Implementation of the processes at an organisational level and acts as the Self-Evaluation Coordinator.
Programme Manager	Implementation of the processes at Programme level and manages the Programme Co-ordinators and trainers
Programme Coordinators	Provide administrative support to the Quality Officer and the Programme Manager and support the implementation of processes

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

- External Authentication reports

- QQI monitoring / Results 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 fortnightly 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 on a risk register generated in the meeting.

- Any actions arising are taken up by the Quality Officer and the Programme Manager.

- Programme Manager is in regular contact with trainers via email, phone and through face-to-face and virtual meetings and manage the relationship. The Quality Officer will step in where any quality issues need attention from a process perspective.

- 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.

- The AAG meets thrice yearly and is updated on the outcomes and evaluation

Involvement of Learners in the Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation of Programmes

- Leaners 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 AAG.

Programme Review and Evaluation

Responsibility

- The AAG 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 ensuring that all Programme review and evaluation activities are supported by underpinning processes using the framework and tools as outlined by QQI

Scope

Applies to all programmes.

Process

- Irish Times Training 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 of accredited programmes.

- The Quality Officer collates and analyses the data and prepares a operational dashboard for identified KPIs on course performance.

- The Managing Director reviews key KPI's monthly in the Programmes Operations report.

- A summary of KPI performance is included in the AAG meeting

- The Managing Director also presents programme KPI performance to the ITT Executive Group.

- Any key themes called out in evaluations need to be populated on the Programmes Risk Register where a CAPA or acceptance of the risk can be tracked.

- The Quality Officer updates the Programme Descriptor & marketing materials following the review if necessary. These sit across the Quality and Programme Teams.

Supporting Documents

- <u>End-of-Programme evaluation form (Questback)</u>

- <u>End of Programme Evaluation form Online Course (Questback)</u>

- Programme Improvement Plan Template

- Complaints Register

- Appeals Register

Self-Evaluation/Programmatic Review
Supporting Documents

- Self-Evaluation Report (SER) Template

- Programme Improvement Plan Template

- Selection Criteria External Evaluator

- External Evaluator Guidelines/Contract.

- ITT Risk Quality Risk Log

-

- ITT has a self-evaluation system in place which facilitates the review and reporting on the quality of programmes and related services in line with revalidation activities. The views of the stakeholder groups i.e. learners, trainers, 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

- Acknowledge successes as well as areas for improvement

- 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.

Approach:

The PDDT

- o 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.

- o Reviews the effectiveness of equipment, training resources and facilities

- o Reviews our capacity to uphold the terms and conditions of validation and ensure that our programmes meet the validation criteria.

- o Reviews the ATP options and update these options if required.

- o Reviews the assessment instruments and makes whatever changes/updates are necessary.

Academic Advisory Group / Self-Evaluation Panel (SEP)

ITT evaluates all programmes every five years in line with revalidation. The ITT AAG 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 AAG 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, Programme Manager and a suitably qualified External Evaluator.

- The AAG 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 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 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 a meeting with the Programme Manager and the External Evaluator at which the Self-Evaluation Checklist, the data collected, and the findings are discussed in detail.

- 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 AAG for consideration before the AAG meet.

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

- The AAG 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 AAG 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 modules or other elements of the programme.

- Recommendations for modifications to the delivery process and the operational management procedures based on feedback from stakeholders.

- GDPR / Data Privacy

Selection of External Evaluator

ITT contracts an independent external evaluator to input into our self-evaluation 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.

10.   Appendix I

Documents History

Procedure		Version Number	Version Date	Description of Change	Author Name	Approved by
Internal Verification		V1	092020	Initial Release	QA Advisor	

Internal Verification	V2	042021	Responsibility transferred from Programme Manager to Quality Officer. References to Peer Review removed – process not required as private provider.	Quality Officer	
IV	V3	291021	IV of assessment process not required for each iteration of a programme.	Quality Officer	
Section 7	V4	170222	Section 7 fully reviewed and updated to reflect current ITT policies and procedures. Content refined and detail added to address online submissions and storing of digital materials.	Quality Officer	
Section 5	V5	07032022	Section 5 fully reviewed and updated to reflect current ITT policies and procedures.	Quality Officer	
Full Quality Manual Review	V6	20072023	Full revision of Quality Manual changes as below: Updated ITT Executive Group Chart AAG Chart Updated Organisational Structure Chart Updated Trainer Handbook reviewed Job Spec for the following updated - Monitoring Teaching and Learning – Process Updated Work Placement Reviewed with Programmes team Section 67 Qualifications Act removed and to be inserted in Trainer Handbook PEL updated	Aoife Redmond Quality Officer	Lisa Lynn

QM		V6.2	10/01/2024	ARP updated to AAG throughout the document to reflect the name change		
QM		V6.2	10/01/2024	TOC revised for normal and headings	Lisa Lynn	Lisa Lynn

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11.   Appendix II

Glossary / QA Glossary V0.2 072023

APEL	Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning
AAG	Academic Advisory Group
CAS	Common Awards System
FE	Further Education
FETAC	Further Education and Training Awards Council
HEI	Higher Education Institute
ISCE	International Standard Classification of Education
ITT	Irish Times Training
MER	Minimum Entry Requirements
QA	Quality Assurance
QAM	Quality Assurance Manual
QAS	Quality Assurance System
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
RAP	Results Approval Panel
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
TLA	Teaching, Learning and Assessment
SME	Subject Matter Expert

IRISH TIMES TRAINING

12.   Appendix III

Work Placement Guidelines for Hosts

Period of Work Placement:	4 weeks
Days/Hours of work:	Agreed between host company and candidate
Host Company:	The host company is asked to assign a supervisor/mentor to support and guide the participant during the work placement. The host company will be asked by the participant to sign attendance sheets.
Irish Times Training	The Course coordinator will call and/or email the named contact at the host company periodically to check on the progress of the participant.
Participant:	If for any reason the participant cannot attend work, the participant is required to call their employer by 9.00am on the morning of absence and also call Irish Times Training by 9.30am to explain their absence. A doctor's note is required for absence of 3 days or more.
Health & Safety	Host companies should be aware that pursuant to the provisions of current Health and Safety Legislation, trainees must be treated (for health and safety purposes) as if they were the host company's own employees. The trainee should therefore complete an appropriate induction. Host companies should give the trainee access to the company's Safety Statement and ensure there are procedures in place to verify the trainee's understanding of the matters addressed in the Safety Statement. In case of an accident/incident involving a trainee, the host company should inform: The Health and Safety Authority (as appropriate); and/or

	Irish Times Training and the host company's Insurance Company
Irish Times Training Contact	**Programme Manager**: Alison McKeon amckeon@irishtimes.com 01-4727107 **Operations Assistant:** Amy Woodsmith awoodsmith@irishtimes.com 01-4727122