

QUALITY POLICY

A RATIONALE

The College's Mission Statement is: 'Inspire, Empower, Achieve' (July 2010). Students, employers and other stakeholders should have the assurance that every effort will be made to provide them with excellent teaching and learning opportunities, support and facilities.

B POLICY STATEMENT

The College is committed to a policy of continuous improvement of standards and performance. This will be achieved through a structured quality assurance, quality improvement and performance monitoring system which regularly reviews the effectiveness of all areas of work. In so doing, the College aims to:

- Improve the quality of the student experience by monitoring, reviewing and continuously improving the quality of our teaching
- Set, monitor and develop standards and targets for all areas of activity and all college teams, benchmarked where possible
- Provide a variety of means for students, employers and other stakeholders to express their views on our services and have them taken into account
- Develop and maintain a college culture which is self-critical, honest and transparent
- Establish and maintain quality assurance systems and procedures that enable us to evaluate our strengths and weaknesses and respond to improvement needs effectively
- Operate within a coherent quality assurance and improvement cycle
- Ensure that staff are able to respond effectively to the challenges of self-assessment, targets and continuous improvement by investing in developing the skills of staff through training programmes

The College will also work with other providers, including local GFE Colleges, in order to share good practice and move towards self-regulation.

C ENTITLEMENT

Students of the College, including those enrolled under partnership arrangements, can expect to receive a high quality and appropriate service and to be given the opportunity to have their views considered by the service providers.

Because of the diverse and complex nature of the services, quality standards are specified in many of the College policies. These are made accessible to students through the College library and via the intranet.

D IMPLEMENTATION

Students are to be informed of relevant quality assurance processes through the Student Handbook and these are to be highlighted during induction sessions at the start of a course.

The mechanisms by which quality assurance and improvement are to be implemented are as follows:

1. **Staff Course File:** A Staff Course File is kept by course teams for each individual course or groups of courses, as appropriate. This contains details of the quality assurance systems and procedures as well as course details, information and records.
2. **Course Reviews:** These are held four times per year to consider students' progress and the work of the course team. Students' views will be sought regularly and they will be given the opportunity to have representation at course team meetings. Standing agenda items will form the basis of on-going course reviews. Action planning through the Course Journal, showing responsibilities and review dates with recorded outcomes, will ensure regular quality improvement measures are taken. These on-going reviews culminate in an end of year self-assessment exercise which feeds directly into the College Self-Assessment Report.
3. **Curriculum and service area performance monitoring:** The work and performance of curriculum and service areas is reviewed by the SLT through Performance against Target Review meetings (PaT Review). Where key performance indicators give cause for concern, intervention strategies will be implemented. The performance of Service areas is monitored by designated members of SLT.
4. **Student / Employer views:** Students' views will be sought at scheduled times throughout the year by means of student surveys and forums. Feedback from employers will also be obtained on a regular basis. Focus Groups are held with students and issues arising from student feedback are to be communicated to curriculum and service managers to determine appropriate action. At course team level, actions in response to student views are to be recorded and monitored via the course journal.
5. **Quality of Teaching and Learning:** Graded lesson observations are undertaken by the internal Lesson Observation team (Curriculum Leaders/Managers and Quality Learning Leaders) with internal verification by the Director of Quality. External verification arrangements will be made depending on need and will take the form of paired observations with external observers. Informal learning walks will also take place on a regular basis by members of SLT. The lesson observation system identifies areas for improvement and good practice which can be shared. Outcomes will inform staff performance reviews and action plans to bring about improvements.
6. **Target Setting:** Targets are to be set at College, curriculum area and course level, for recruitment, retention and achievement. These will be monitored regularly and used to inform curriculum and business planning.
7. **Quality Improvement Plans:** The college, curriculum and service area QIPs are to be updated regularly by managers and to be monitored quarterly by the relevant line managers;

8. **Quality Audits:** All processes are subject to audit by audit teams led by the Director of Quality.
9. **Self-Assessment:** This is to be undertaken annually with staff involvement at all levels. Self-Assessment Reports (SARs) and Quality Improvement Action Plans (QIPs) are to be produced by all curriculum and service areas. These will inform the College SAR and QIP which is to be reviewed quarterly by the SLT.

E EVALUATION

The Standards Committee receives reports on all aspects of Quality Assurance and monitors progress against the College quality improvement action plan. The self-assessment process includes an annual review of the Quality Assurance System.

F RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Other policies, procedures and documents relevant to the implementation of the Quality Policy are:

- Complaints policy and procedure
- Course review process
- Internal Verification policy and procedures
- Assessment appeals policy
- Assessment malpractice policy
- Lesson observation policy
- Staff performance review policy
- Self-Assessment reporting and development plans

Quality Assurance – version control			
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