



Leading  
Healthcare  
Providers

Skillnet,

# Quality Assurance Manual

2019



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# Section 1: Introduction and Context of our Quality Assurance System

## 1.1 Background and Context

## 1.2 Member Companies

## 1.3 Current Scope of Provision

## 1.4 Mission Statement

## 1.5 Governance Overview

### 1.5.1 Corporate Governance

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### 1.6.2 Role of the Network Manager

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### 1.7.2 Scope

### 1.7.3 Responsibilities

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## 1.1 Background and Context

**Leading Healthcare Providers Skillnet** (LHP Skillnet), a Learning Network of Skillnet Ireland - formally Skillnets Ltd. - is a not-for-profit Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG) which supports the private healthcare sector nationally by up-skilling and training employees through the provision of subsidised education.

Skillnet Ireland, a national agency which supports workforce development, is funded from the National Training Fund through the Department of Education and Skills. Skillnet Ireland allocates funding for workforce development to groups of companies in the same industry-sector through a Learning Network. In order to establish a Skillnet Ireland Learning Network, a company in the relevant sector must agree to act as the Contracting Organisation, understood to be a guarantor and legally responsible for:

- Applying to Skillnet Ireland annually for the funding
- Ensuring compliance with the terms of the funding agreement and general conditions
- Ensuring good corporate governance
- Establishing the Network Steering Group (NSG)

In 2007 a group of private healthcare companies came together to found a Skillnet Ireland Learning Network, in support of the private healthcare sector. They established Leading Healthcare Providers Limited as a Company Limited by Guarantee under the Companies Acts 1963 to 2006. Sonas Nursing Home Management Company fulfilled the requirement of the Contracting Organisation. The application was successful, and funding was granted.

Leading Healthcare Providers Limited began trading as **Leading Healthcare Providers Skillnet** and commenced operation in January 2008. It continues to be co-funded by member companies (through programme fees) and Skillnet Ireland.

## 1.2 Member Companies

Member companies of LHP Skillnet include private hospitals, private nursing homes, private healthcare agencies, general practice, and private home care providers. Our member companies are based throughout Ireland and can avail of subsidised certified education and training through our Training Networks Programmes (TNP). All students who attend our (TNP) QQI-validated programmes are supported by member companies in doing so, and therefore member companies are regularly asked to provide us with feedback on programmes/courses delivered. Our member companies also provide placements for our students enrolled in our Employment Activation Programmes (EAP) who are not currently working in a healthcare environment. The member companies are instrumental in providing strategic direction to LHP Skillnet through their contribution to our learning needs analysis and ongoing networking.

## 1.3 Current Scope of Provision

LHP Skillnet's current scope of approved quality assurance is for programmes in the field of healthcare learning, leading to awards at Level 5 on the NFQ. LHP Skillnet agreed its quality assurance with FETAC in 2008 and currently delivers one Major Award in *Healthcare Support* (see *Figure 1*). In correspondence with Skillnet Ireland's funding eligibility criteria, we have two categories of students who undertake our Major Award or components thereof. The first are those eligible for our *Training Network Programmes (TNP)*. In order to qualify as a TNP student, the individual must be employed in the private healthcare sector. The second are those eligible for our *Employment Activation Programme (EAP)*. In order to qualify as an EAP student the individual must be unemployed and/or in receipt of a social welfare payment. We deliver all our programmes in classroom style, supported with clinical experience either through their existing employment or in the form of a clinical placement provided by our member companies.

In addition, we provide a wide range of courses accredited by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI). NMBI is the independent, statutory organisation which regulates the nursing and midwifery professions in Ireland (see *Figure 2*).



Year	Number of students	Major Award	Minor Award
20 10	550	80	465
20 11	639	163	466
20 12	499	203	296
20 13	854	347	507
20 14	457	175	282
20 15	584	275	309
20 16	571	204	367
20 17	533	246	287
20 18 (up to Oct)	241	92	149

Figure 1: Certification Numbers 2010 to 2018 (Up to October 2018)

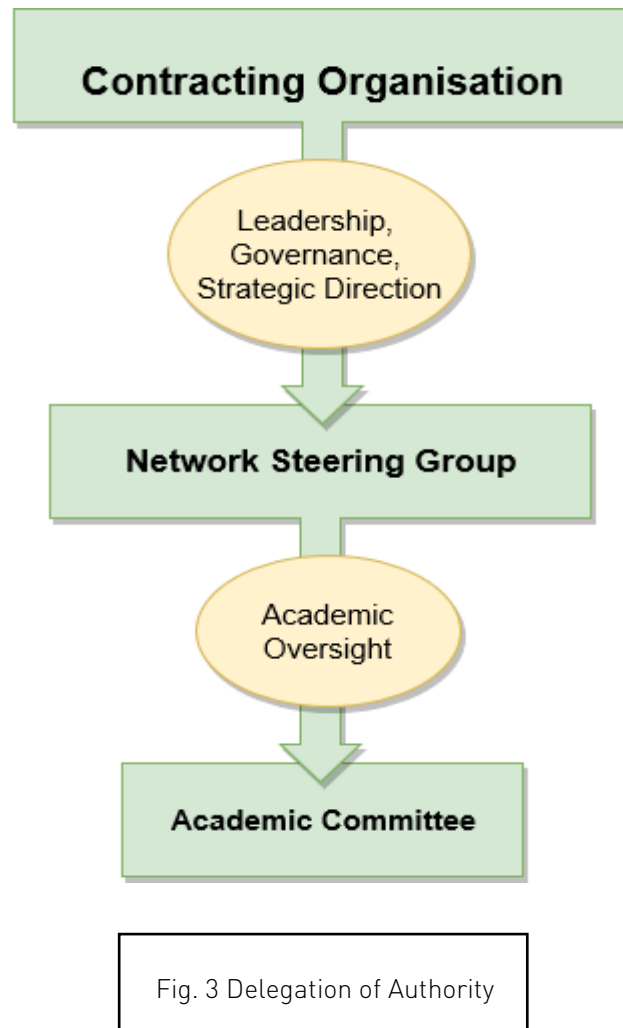
	20 17	20 18
Active Member Companies	123	173
Employed Trainees	898	1,762
Unemployed Trainees	184	142
Employed Training Days	9,695	9,998
Unemployed Training Days	5,404	6,472

Figure 2: Total number of trainees and training days across all network training activity

## 1.4 Mission Statement

Our mission is to facilitate and promote the continuous learning and enhancement of knowledge, skills, and competencies within the private healthcare sector. We aim to support our member companies to provide the highest standard of person-centred care through excellence in the planning, development, and delivery of healthcare educational programmes. LHP Skillnet fosters a climate of the sharing of knowledge, skills, and attitudes within and between network members thus enhancing the quality of service of the individual business

## 1.5 Governance Overview



### 1.5.1 Corporate Governance:

#### Network Steering Group

The Board of Directors of Sonas Nursing Home Management have delegated absolute authority to a Network Steering Group (NSG) to lead, govern, and provide strategic direction to LHP Skillnet. The NSG is comprised of:

- Directors (incl. a minimum of one Director of Sonas Nursing Home Management)
- An Independent Chairperson
- Member-Company Representatives

The NSG has collective responsibility for the oversight of all company operations ensuring business viability and sustainability, and for ensuring standards of excellence in all aspects of programme development, teaching, learning and service provision. The roles and responsibilities of the NSG are detailed comprehensively in the *Terms of Reference* of the Network Steering Group.

Broadly speaking, the functions of the different members of the Network Steering Group are as follows:

1. The Directors, who have expertise in the fields of governance, human resource management, education and finance, are responsible for performing the executive functions of the Network Steering Group. The main executive functions of the Directors are:
  - a. Financial: Executing all financial transactions and
  - b. Human resources: Appointment of various board and committee members and of suitably qualified operational and management staff.
2. The Independent Chairperson(s) offers externality to the Network Steering Group. They are commercially neutral, representing the viewpoint of the healthcare profession's training needs at large. In the event of a split decision, the Independent Chairperson has the casting vote.
3. The Member Company Representatives represent the private nursing home, hospital, and homecare sectors and have a key role in providing strategic direction and planning.

The minimum number of Directors is two and the maximum is seven. The minimum membership of the total Network Steering Group is six and the maximum is twelve. Apart from the appointment process (the sole purview of the Directors), all other matters requiring a decision on behalf of the Network Steering Group are made by consensus. If consensus cannot be found, the Independent Chairperson casts the deciding vote.

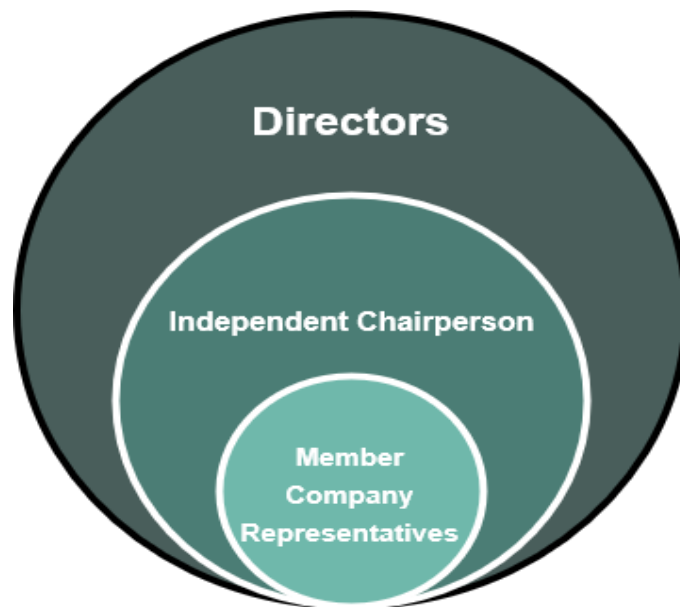


Fig 4. Composition of the  
Network Steering Group

### Financial Governance: Skillnet Ireland

Skillnet Ireland have a significant role to play in the financial governance of LHP Skillnet, a recipient of Government funding. Skillnet Ireland release funding is released on a phased basis and only when compliance with funding agreement is met. Skillnet Ireland govern all financial transactions through monthly desktop monitoring, an independent accountants report, and an annual compliance inspection. The annual compliance inspection also checks that all procurement procedures were adhered to in line with Skillnet Irelands Procurement Guidelines.

The Chairperson of the NSG reports to Skillnet Ireland via the Network Manager and the Contracting Organisation.

## 1.5.2 Academic Governance:

### Academic Committee

The Academic Committee has delegated authority from the NSG to provide oversight of all teaching, learning, and quality assurance activities. The Academic Committee reports to the NSG and makes recommendations independently of commercial considerations. The make-up of the Academic Committee reflects the competences required to make suitable academic and

quality assurance decisions for LHP Skillnet. Its membership, roles and responsibilities, and the scope of its decision-making authority are outlined in the relevant *Terms of Reference* document.

The Academic Committee assumes the role of various panels or nominates members of the Committee to constitute temporary panels, as and when needed. Examples of subordinate panels include:

- Programme Development Panel
- Complaints or Disciplinary Panel

A member of the Academic Committee also sits on the Results Approval Panel.

#### Academic Sub- Committee: Programme Boards

Each QQI validated programme has a designated Programme Board which is responsible for the ongoing systematic review of the delivery and quality of that programme. Members are appointed by the Network Steering Group in consultation with the Academic Committee. The boards prepare and present an *Annual Programme Review Report* and *Programme Improvement Plan* for consideration by the Academic Committee. The assigned functions and responsibilities of the Programme Board are detailed in the *Terms of Reference of Programme Board*.

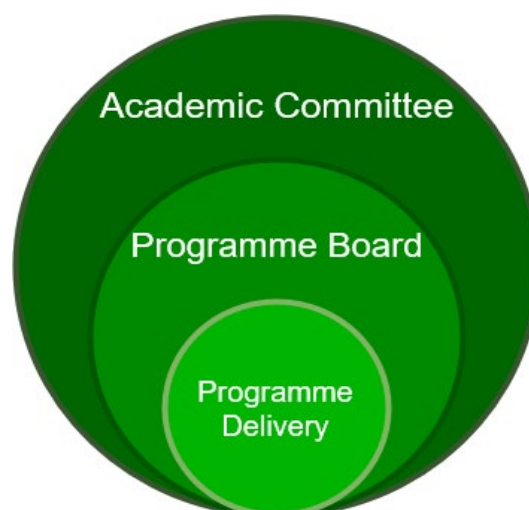


Fig. 5 Programme Delivery and Oversight

## 1.6 Organisation Structure

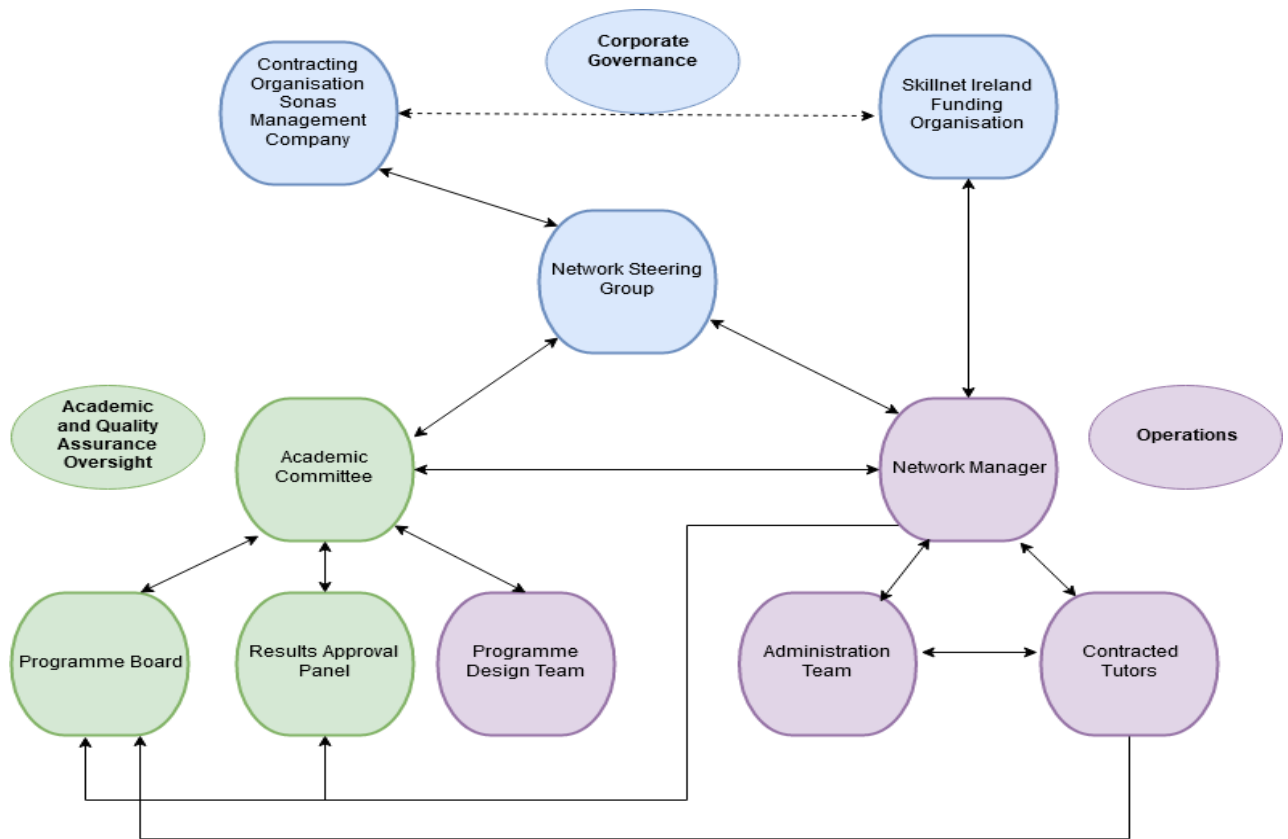


Fig. 6 Organisation Structure

### 1.6.1 Human Resources

LHP Skillnet employs four staff on a full-time basis. The Network Manager, who has overall responsibility for the management of day to day operations, supported by a team of three Administrators. Due to the funding model of the business, all other personnel are contracted to provide a specific educational service to meet the needs of the Network in any given year. We contract all healthcare tutors, subject matter experts, further education professionals, and any other person deemed necessary to ensure that all programmes are developed, delivered and assessed to the highest standard. Below outlines the key role and responsibilities of employees in the implementation of our quality assurance system. Roles and Responsibilities of contracted staff are addressed within *Policy on Staffing*.

### 1.6.1.1 Network Manager

The Network Manager is appointed by and reports to the NSG and is a key link between the NSG and Skillnet Ireland. The Network Manager also assumes the role of Head of Centre in relation to QQI and is the Programme Leader for the programme which leads to 5N4339 award. They also sit on the Academic Committee, Results Approval Panel, Programme Board, and Programme Design Team.

#### Role and Responsibilities

- Liaise closely and work with the NSG to achieve strategic goals
- Ensure all teaching and learning activities are planned, delivered, assessed, and reviewed in line with Quality Assurance Manual
- Provide the necessary supports to the contracted tutors in the delivery and assessment of the programmes.
- Ensure that tutors fulfil their contractual obligations in the delivery and assessment of the programmes.
- Ensure appropriate student supports are provided
- Maintain the QQI Quality Assurance manual of the network as an Educational Provider Centre
- Ensure compliance with the financial elements of the Skillnet Ireland operating guidelines
- Manage the overall Network budget including meeting income and expenditure targets, managing cash-flow and analysing the network budgets and financial management systems on an on-going basis.
- Network with and actively promote LHP Skillnet to Nursing homes, hospitals, Care agencies members and course participants
- Identify training needs of participating member companies and feed this information academic committee

- Develop key relationships with relevant bodies including contribution and participation on specific projects and committees and liaise with trainers, course designers, evaluators, auditors, consultants as appropriate
- Apply for accreditation from professional bodies for new courses when required by members.
- Provide accurate and timely financial and activity progress reports to Skillnet Ireland and the NSG
- Assist with funding application as requested by the NSG
- Ensure all end of year procedures are conducted within the required time frame and work with NSG to prepare for independent accountant's report.
- Ensure that agreed Key Performance Indicators are met as part of our Funding agreement.
- Administrate and co-ordinate procurement and tendering arrangements under advisement of the NSG
- Delegate and oversee relevant duties to the Administration Team
- Participate in the recruitment of administrators
- Ensure potential students are approved in line with Skillnet Irelands eligibility criteria.
- Ensure all online and printed communications are maintained and updated.
- Ensure that the online activity management system (Sonrai) is maintained and updated regularly
- Attend Skillnet Ireland events as required or if requested by Skillnet Ireland.
- Represent the LHP Skillnet at appropriate events in consultation with the contracting organisation and organise occasional network events as required.

### 1.6.1.2 Administration Team

The Administration Team report to the Network Manager and provide administrative/secretarial support at all board and committee meetings.



## Role and Responsibilities

### General

- Liaise with the Network Manager to achieve the Network aims and continually strive to achieve Network targets.
- Assist existing and potential members with all enquires including identification of learning needs
- Assist in the planning, organisation and management of all courses and activities within the Network
- Collect and collate all training course data as required by the Network
- Prepare for and assist with compliance audits and any related tasks.
- Support colleagues, students/trainees and tutors/facilitators
- Actively participate in the marketing and communication plan for the Network
- Adhere to all quality assurance policies and procedures as detailed in our QA manual
- Carry out any tasks requested by the Network manager
- Attend Skillnet Ireland events if required
- Ensure the office is clean, secure and in line with our safety statement
- Always maintain confidentiality

### Event/ Course Management

- Source, book, schedule and confirm all training with training vendors
- Book off-site venues and coordinates service requirements
- Manages all bookings and changes in a timely & efficient manner and keep all records in our course management tools
- Prepares course documentation for facilitators or tutors as required
- Support tutors or facilitator with requests and enquiries [e.g. equipment]
- Follow up all documentation from tutors or facilitators ensuring that all documentation is submitted and in order

- Ensure all Nursing and Midwifery Board Ireland [NMBI] accredited courses have a valid accreditation certificate. Inform the Network Manager in a timely manner (at least 2 months before) of the accreditation certificate expiration date.
- Plan and assist with the organisation of additional network events: EAP/TNP events, network meetings and steering committee meetings etc
- Attend external events as required by the network
- Responds to all phone/email queries in a timely, professional and efficient manner

#### QQI-Specific Administration

- Assist in the organisation and execution of EAP interviews
- Check and process completed Garda Vetting application forms
- Keep record of received garda vetting reports and send same to individuals
- Issue a copy of insurance cover letter to each student on receipt of Garda clearance
- Keep the Network Manager apprised of adverse vetting reports
- Produce and circulate registration and DSP letters to EAP students at the beginning of their course
- Prepare all paperwork required by the tutor for each award
- Conduct Internal Verification at the end of each major award
- Collate, verify, and enter all QQI Module Assessment results on the QQI QBS System and address anomalies as they arise
- Respond to all certification queries in consultation with the Network Manager
- Prepare QQI Module Assessment folders for External Moderation/Authentication
- Complete the QQI Certification process
- Process receipt of QQI Certificates [check, scan and file]
- Archives the course records for QQI & compliance audits in line with GDPR
- Recycle assessment folders after use

- Ensure all paperwork is stored or destroyed as appropriate and in line with our data management procedures
- Arrange and attend Graduation events
- Organise and send certificates via post in line with Network procedures

#### Data Collection and Processing

- Collect and collate all training course data to the relevant spreadsheets and Sonrai
- Ensure Sonrai is up-to-date and maintained with relevant information at all times
- Create and send certificates (digital or in hard copy) to the member companies/trainees who complete our training courses (excluding QQI)
- Ensure all paperwork is stored or destroyed as appropriate and in line with our data management procedures
- Maintain data base of students enrolled on our QQI level 5 programmes
- Archives the course records as required
- Provide accurate and timely activity progress reports to the Network Manager
- Respond to and report any communications from or with Skillnet Ireland to the Network Manager

#### Digital Marketing and Communications.

- Ensure LHP Skillnet website and other related platforms are maintained and updated on a weekly basis with schedules, regular updates, news items etc.
- Creates and disseminates all advertising materials about the network ensuring adherence to Skillnet Ireland branding and communication requirements
- Supports the sales and marketing of all programmes as required

## 1.7 Management of Quality Assurance System

### 1.7.1 Purpose of our Quality Assurance System

LHP Skillnets Quality Assurance System (QAS) has been designed to

- a) Support the on-going development, delivery, assessment, and review of quality programmes of education to enhance the teaching and learning experience of our students, staff, and member companies.
- b) Comply with Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines published by QQI (April 2016)
- c) Embed our commitment to, and culture of, continued improvements to achieve and maintain a quality service through defined processes of internal and external monitoring, reviews, and action plans.
- d) Set out the various organisational roles and responsibilities regarding the implementation of our quality assurance policies and procedures.
- e) Ensure ease of access to our policies and procedures for staff, students, tutors, and other interested parties.
- f) Facilitate diversity within our staff and student cohort.

### 1.7.2 Scope of our Quality Assurance System

Our QAS applies to all activities associated with education and training and to all staff, contracted tutors, students, and other stakeholders involved in education and training for or on behalf of LHP Skillnet.

### 1.7.3 Responsibility for our Quality Assurance System

The Academic Committee has overall responsibility for governing our QAS by:

- a) ensuring policies and procedures are implemented.
- b) reviewing the suitability, effectiveness and continuing relevance of our QAS
- c) Submitting proposals and recommendations to the NSG for resources required to manage and implement our QAS

The NSG is responsible for:

- a) Promoting a culture of continuous quality improvement within LHP Skillnet.
- b) Ensuring that the QAS is embedded in the organisation
- c) Taking on board proposals and recommendations from Academic Committee and for providing the necessary resources to manage and implement our QAS

The Network Manager is responsible for:

- a) The day-to-day operation of the QAS
- b) Ensuring that staff, tutors and stakeholders are aware of their responsibilities with regard to implementing the QAS
- c) Making recommendations to the Academic Committee for resources required to manage and implement our QAS

### 1.7.4 Monitoring the Effectiveness of Quality Assurance System

We are committed to maintaining a QAS which accurately reflects our current operation, that meets the needs of the organisation and most importantly our students. As an organic system, we are continually reviewing and developing our system with the central focus of improving the quality of our programmes and services.

### Internal Monitoring

We encourage all staff (including contracted tutors), students and stakeholders to provide us with feedback regularly on the quality and effectiveness of our programmes and courses.

We request written feedback throughout the programme at the end of each component module. At the end of each major award the Network Manager conducts an end of programme review with both tutor and students. Tutor and students provide written feedback and meeting one to one with the Network Manager.

Feedback from all programmes delivered is presented to the programme board at their annual meeting which informs the report and programme development plan presented to the Academic Committee for review and consideration.

Feedback includes complaints which are managed in line with our *Complaints Policy and Procedures*

We have established systems to facilitate ongoing communication and monitoring between the Network Manager, Administration, and tutors to ensure we are working in alignment with our QA policies and procedures.

### External Monitoring

We have external expertise on our NSG and Academic Committee to ensure the effectiveness of our QAS and its alignment with national standards.

We engage the services of an independent QA consultant to conduct annual audit of our QAS.

## 1.8 Presentation of our Quality Assurance System

We have designed the presentation of our QAS within our Quality Assurance Manual (QAM) to facilitate its ease of access and implementation for staff, students, tutors, stakeholders, and other interested parties.

Section 1 details the background to LHP Skillnet and the context of our quality assurance system.

Section 2 details the policies we have in place which embed our commitment to quality programme delivery and continuous improvement of our validated programmes. The policies are formatted in line with QQI's *Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines* (April 2016)

Section 3 details our operating procedures to ensure adherence to our policies

Section 4 details our supporting documents that facilitate the implementation and on-going monitoring of the effectiveness of our QAS

We have embedded bookmarks within the QAM to enable users to movement between sections with ease. The design and management of our QAM is detailed in our policy on *Documented Approach to Continuous Quality Improvement*

# Section 2 Policies

- 2.1 Documented Approach to Continuous Quality Improvement
- 2.2 Governance
- 2.3 Programmes of Education and Training
- 2.4 Admissions
- 2.5 Access, Transfer, and Progression
- 2.6 Protection of Enrolled Learner
- 2.7 Staffing
- 2.8 Teaching and Learning
- 2.9 Equality and Diversity
- 2.10 Complaints
- 2.11 Assessment
- 2.12 Assessment Appeals
- 2.13 Academic Good Practice
- 2.14 Information and Data Management
- 2.15 Public Information and Communication
- 2.16 Self-evaluation, Monitoring, and review



## 2.1 Policy on Documented Approach to Quality Assurance

### Purpose

Version	2.0	Author	Carmel Kelly
Adoption Date	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019	Expected Review Date	September 2021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

This policy sets out LHP Skillnet's commitment to maintaining a clearly documented approach to our Quality Assurance System which embeds our philosophy and approach to continuous quality improvement.

### Scope

To whom does the policy apply?

This policy applies to the Network Steering Group (NSG), Academic Committee including sub-committees, and all staff, tutors, students and contractors who work on behalf of LHP Skillnet.

Who is responsible for implementing the policy?

The Network Manager is responsible for the implementation and effective operation of this policy.

### Policy Statement

We have designed a quality assurance manual (QAM) to provide LHP Skillnet staff, tutors, students and stakeholders with information and guidance in operating our Quality Assurance System (QAS) and to specify the policies and procedures we employ to meet awarding body and organisational requirements.

This QAM acts as a repository for the documented policies and associated procedures and QA supporting documentation that makes up our Quality Assurance System.

We document each policy and procedure using a standard template which comprises of:

Policy/procedure Title: Version Number: Author: Adoption Date: Review Date:  
Approved By:

Each policy/procedure includes the *purpose, scope, definitions (if appropriate)* and the *policy statement/Procedure*. At the end of the document there is a table that has hyperlinks linking the policy to

- other *related policies*,
- the operating *procedures* that ensure compliance with the policy
- *Supporting documents* that facilitate the implementation and on-going monitoring of the policy

We have embedded bookmarks within the QAM to enable users to movement between sections for ease of use.

We ensure we have a single central authorised version of our QAM and maintain an audit trail of modifications of old documents.

Our QAM will be made available to the public via our website and issued to all staff and contracted tutors via a shared drive.

We invite staff and tutors for their views on the effectiveness and ease-of-use of our QAS/QAM as part of our annual review

Amendments are made to our QAM under the advisement of the NSG and Academic Committee.

Our QAS/QAM is reviewed by a suitably qualified independent expert in line with our 5-year self-evaluation.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	
Related Procedures	
Supporting Documents	
Referenced Documents	<i>Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016)</i>

## 2.2 Policy on Governance

Version	2.0	Author	Carmel Kelly
Adoption Date	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019	Review Date	September 2021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose

This policy sets out the governance structures LHP Skillnet has in place. It clarifies the Terms of reference of the Network Steering Group as the primary governance unit, and the Academic Committee which has academic oversight responsibility delegated to it from the Network steering Group.

### Scope

#### To whom does the policy apply?

The policy applies to the overall composition of units which constitute the governance structure of LHP Skillnet.

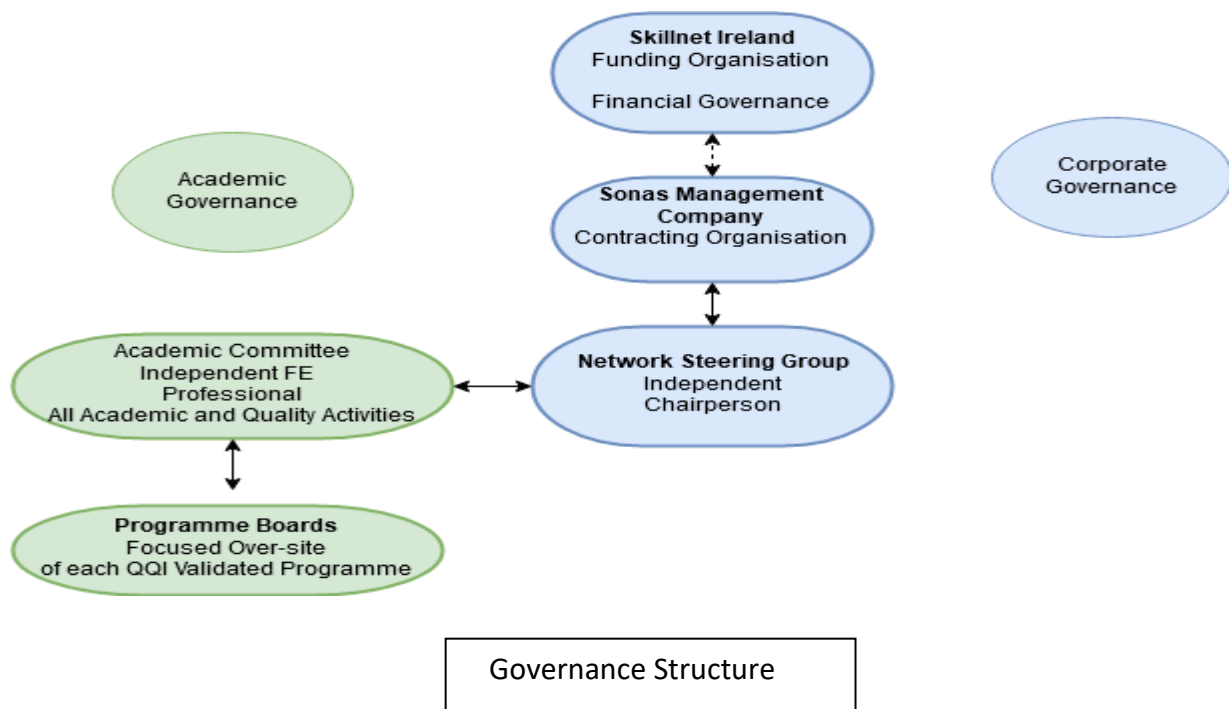
#### Who is responsible for implementing the policy?

The **Network Steering Group** is the ultimate authority in overseeing the implementation of the policy, insofar as the policy establishes the NSG as the primary unit of governance.

The **Academic Committee** implements the policy by exercising oversight on all teaching, learning and quality assurance activities of LHP Skillnet.

### Policy Statement

LHP Skillnet is committed to implementing robust governance structures over all education and training activities that ensure a clear separation between corporate and academic governance.



## Corporate Governance:

### Network Steering Group

The Board of Directors of Sonas Nursing Home Management have delegated absolute authority to a Network Steering Group (NSG) to lead, govern, and provide strategic direction to LHP Skillnet. The NSG is comprised of:

- Directors (incl. a minimum of one Director of Sonas Nursing Home Management)
- An Independent Chairperson
- Member-Company Representatives

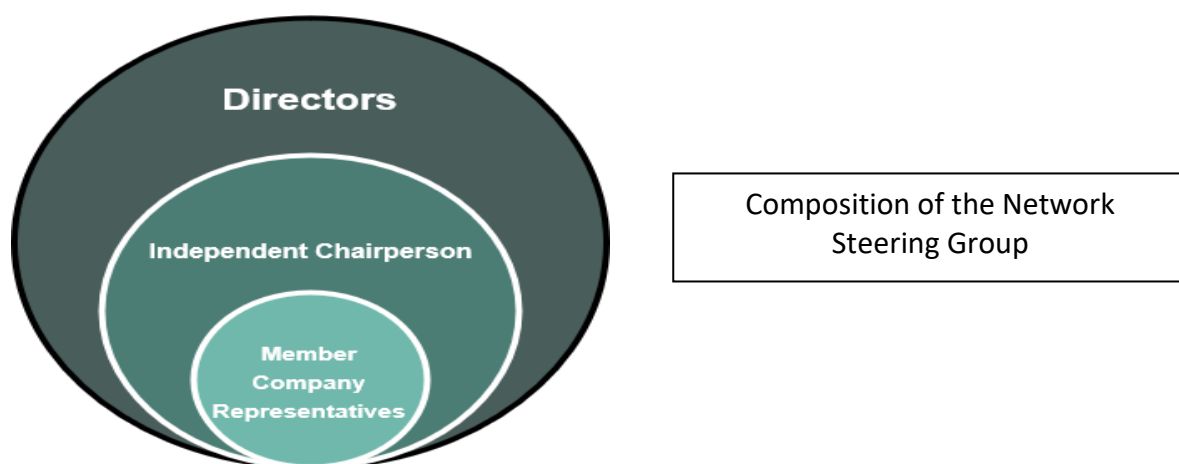
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Broadly speaking, the functions of the different members of the Network Steering Group are as follows:

1. The Directors, who have expertise in the fields of governance, human resource management, education and finance, are responsible for performing the executive functions of the Network Steering Group. The main executive functions of the Directors are:
  - a. Financial: Executing all financial transactions and

- b. Human resources: Appointment of various board and committee members and of suitably qualified operational and management staff.
2. The Independent Chairperson(s) offers externality to the Network Steering Group. They are commercially neutral, representing the viewpoint of the healthcare profession's training needs at large. In the event of a split decision, the Independent Chairperson has the casting vote.
3. The Member Company Representatives represent the private nursing home, hospital, and homecare sectors and have a key role in providing strategic direction and planning.

The minimum number of Directors is two and the maximum is seven. The minimum membership of the total Network Steering Group is six and the maximum is twelve. Apart from the appointment process (the sole purview of the Directors), all other matters requiring a decision on behalf of the Network Steering Group are made by consensus. If consensus cannot be found, the Independent Chairperson casts the deciding vote.



#### Financial Governance: Skillnet Ireland

Skillnet Ireland have a significant role to play in the financial governance of LHP Skillnet, a recipient of Government funding. Skillnet Ireland release funding is released on a phased basis and only when compliance with funding agreement is met. Skillnet Ireland govern all financial transactions through monthly desktop monitoring, an independent accountants report, and an annual compliance inspection. The annual compliance inspection also checks that all procurement procedures were adhered to in line with Skillnet Ireland's Procurement Guidelines.

The Chairperson of the NSG reports to Skillnet Ireland via the Network Manager and the Contracting Organisation.

## Academic Governance

### Academic Committee

The Academic Committee has delegated authority from the NSG to provide oversight of all teaching, learning, and quality assurance activities. The Academic Committee reports to the NSG and makes recommendations independently of commercial considerations. The make-up of the Academic Committee reflects the competences required to make suitable academic and quality assurance decisions for LHP Skillnet. Its membership, roles and responsibilities, and the scope of its decision-making authority are outlined in the relevant *Terms of Reference* document.

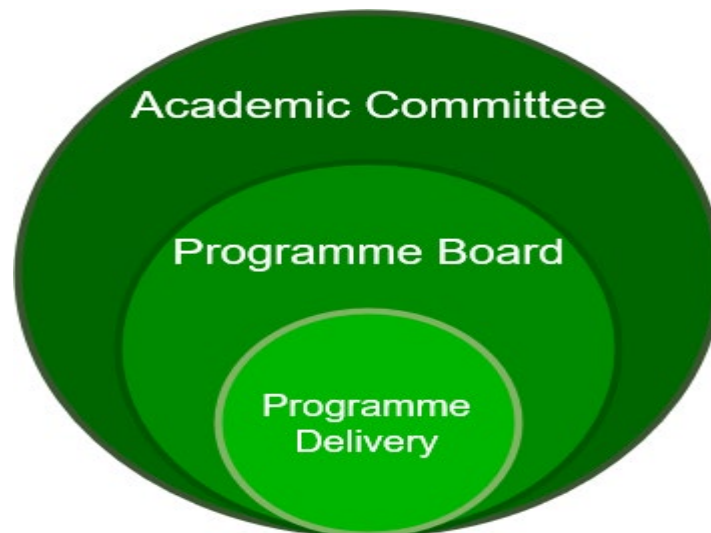
The Academic Committee assumes the role of various panels or nominates members of the Committee to constitute temporary panels, as and when needed. Examples of subordinate panels include:

- Programme Development Panel
- Complaints or Disciplinary Panel

A member of the Academic Committee also sits on the Results Approval Panel.

### Academic Sub- Committee: Programme Boards

Each QQI validated programme has a designated Programme Board which is responsible for the ongoing systematic review of the delivery and quality of that programme. Members are appointed by the Network Steering Group in consultation with the Academic Committee. The boards prepare and present an *Annual Programme Review Report* and *Programme Improvement Plan* for consideration by the Academic Committee. The assigned functions and responsibilities of the Programme Board are detailed in the *Terms of Reference of Programme Board*.



Programme Delivery and Governance

## Related Documents

Related Policies	
Related Procedures	
Supporting Documents	TOR Programme Board
Referenced Documents	<i>Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016)</i>

## 2.2.1 Terms of Reference: Network Steering Group

Associated Policy	Governance		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose

The Network Steering Group (NSG) has delegated authority from the Contracting Organisation (Sonas Nursing Home Management Company) to lead, govern, and provide strategic direction to LHP Skillnet. The NSG has collective responsibility for the oversight of all company operations ensuring business viability and sustainability, and for ensuring standards of excellence in all aspects of programme development, teaching, learning and service provision. The NSG has a mandate to delegate functions/duties of its operations accordingly while retaining responsibility for the delegated functions/duties.

### Membership and Tenure

The skill-set of the members of the NSG must include, Human Resource management, Further or Higher Education, Finance, and Governance. There must be member company representation from the private nursing home, hospital, and homecare sectors. The minimum number of appointed Directors is two and the maximum is seven. The minimum membership of the total NSG is six, the maximum twelve.

#### 1. Directors

- One is appointed by the contracting organisation (ex-officio); the remaining are elected by the directors for a term of one year. Can be re-elected

#### 2. Independent Chairperson

- Appointed by the Directors for a term of one year. Can be re-appointed

#### 3. Member company representatives

- I. Home Care
- II. Nursing Home
- III. Hospital

### Functions and Responsibilities



The key functions and responsibilities of the NSG in assuring corporate governance are to

- Ensure governance and operational structures and systems are in place to support a high standard of education and company service provision.
- Monitor compliance with all policies and procedures
- Provide strategic direction and devise plans to ensure congruence between network provision and sector demands.
- Approve or reject programme proposals and recommendations from the Academic Committee.
- Evaluate new programmes prior to submission to QQI for validation.
- Prepare Skillnet Irelands grant application, in line with devised strategic plan for approval and submission by the contracting organisation.
- Set and monitor LHP Skillnets key performance objectives
- Approve an annual budget plan in line with awarded funding.
- Ensure internal financial control measures are in place and execute all expenditure transactions for LHP Skillnet
- Directors appoint a suitably qualified Network Manager and provide necessary supports and guidance.
- Directors appoint suitably qualified external members of all boards/ committee.
- Procure and award contracts to tutors for programme delivery and assessment.
- Delegate duties/functions accordingly to the appropriate person(s)/committee while retaining responsibility for the delegated duties/functions.
- Approve the terms of reference of all committees/boards
- Champion the network, availing of opportunities to promote LHP Skillnet to key stakeholders in the sector and engage new members.
- Ensures all policies and procedures are operating effectively
- Review governance structures and composition, to ensure the continued effectiveness of the NSG
- Engage in contingency and succession planning to minimize potential interruptions to the normal functioning of LHP Skillnet

## Meetings

Network Steering Group meetings can be held face to face or by electronic means 4 times a year. Additional meetings can be called by the Chairperson or Directors if service demand requires.

All members are required to make reasonable effort to attend meetings, with the quorum of 50% of its membership. Where the quorum is not reached the meeting may proceed but no key decisions can be made inquorate.

Agenda is circulated one week in advance of the meeting so members can be fully prepared.

Date, time and location of next meeting is agreed at close of meeting.

Meetings are minuted by a member of the Administration Team and forwarded to the Chairperson for review prior to been circulated to NSG members.

## Powers of Decision Making

Decisions are made by consensus. The independent Chairperson has the casting vote where consensus is not reached.

Directors make decisions on appointments of

- Directors
- Network Manager
- All committee/board members

All steering group members have an equal vote in all other decisions.

## Evaluation and Review/ensuring governance

The Network Steering Group undertakes a self-assessment of its performance against these terms of reference annually and amends as appropriate.

Skillnet Ireland instruct an independent audit company to carry out an in-depth compliance inspection annually to ensure compliance with its terms of funding agreement.

LHP Skillnet engage an independent accountant to conduct an annual financial audit

## **Process of Appointing Members to the NSG**

### **Director**

Where a skill-set gap is identified, the NSG may appoint a suitably qualified and experienced person with that skillset as a Director of LHP Skillnet

Director candidates can be nominated by any of the Directors or members of the NSG.

CV's must be submitted and reviewed by all Directors against the selection criteria for Directors to the NSG.

Candidates shortlisted are invited for interview which is conducted by at least two Directors of the NSG

Successful candidate offered appointment for a term of twelve months in writing.

Unsuccessful candidates notified by Directors in writing.

Serving Directors can be re-elected annually by the Directors.

### ***Selection Criteria for Director***

To be determined by CV and Interview process the successful candidate must have

- Appropriate experience in the required skillset.
- An understanding of the role and responsibilities of a Director not-for-profit Board.
- Familiar with Skillnet Ireland and their current Statement of Strategy
- Passion for, and commitment to, the LHP Skillnet mission and vision
- Respect and appreciation for a collaborative, group decision-making process.
- Effective written and verbal communication skills, with appreciation of the important role communication plays in successful group dynamics.
- The time, energy and commitment to fulfil the role.

### **Independent Chairperson**

Independent Chairperson candidates can be nominated by any of the Directors of the NSG.

CV's must be submitted and reviewed by all Directors against the selection criteria for Independent Chair.

Candidates shortlisted are invited for interview which is conducted by at least two Directors of the NSG

Successful candidate offered appointment for a term of twelve months in writing.

Unsuccessful candidates notified by Directors in writing.

Serving Independent Chair can be re-appointed annually by the Directors for a term of no more than 5 years

### ***Selection Criteria for Independent Chair***

To be determined by CV and Interview process the Independent Chair must have

- Sectoral knowledge and an academic background
- Appropriate experience of corporate governance issues to provide independent leadership for NSG.
- An ability to run a successful meeting that provides for a safe and open space for discussion, engages everyone in the process and moves the process forward to a logical end.
- An understanding of the role and responsibilities of chairing a non-for-profit Board.
- Familiar with Skillnet Ireland and their current Statement of Strategy
- Passion for, and commitment to, the LHP Skillnet mission and vision
- Respect and appreciation for a collaborative, group decision-making process.
- Effective written and verbal communication skills, with appreciation of the important role communication plays in successful group dynamics.
- The time, energy and commitment to fulfil the role.
- The ability to lead, motivate and hold others to account

### ***Member Company Representatives***

Potential member company representatives can be nominated by any Director and seconded by seconded by any member of the NSG.

### *Selection Criteria for Member Company Representative*

To be determined by a discussion with nominating Director, the person must

- Advocate for the important role education plays within the sector
- Be an active member company of LHP Skillnet
- Be abreast of the knowledge and skills needs within the sector
- Be in a position to speak on behalf of a number of member companies (involvement in national or regional group)
- Be familiar with Skillnet Ireland and their current Statement of Strategy
- Be commitment to LHP Skillnets mission and vision
- Have respect and appreciation for a collaborative, group decision-making process.
- Effective written and verbal communication skills, with appreciation of the important role communication plays in successful group dynamics.
- The time, energy and commitment to fulfil the role.

## 2.2.2 Terms of Reference: Academic Committee

Associated Policy	Governance		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose

The LHP Skillnet NSG is supported in its work in the areas of strategy, governance, compliance, quality assurance and controls by sub-committees. The NSG has delegated responsibility for robust academic governance to a sub-committee of the NSG which operates under the title of the Academic Committee.

The Academic Committee takes direction from, and reports to, the NSG and operates with the understanding that ultimate responsibility for the governance of the LHP Network lies with the NSG

### Membership and Tenure

Members of the Academic Committee are appointed by the NSG on an annual basis and members may be reappointed.

1. Chairperson from the NSG appointed by the NSG.
2. Independent quality professional
3. Further Education Professional
4. Programme leaders
5. Network Manager
6. Tutor with a minimum of 3 years teaching experience with LHP Skillnet

### Roles and Responsibilities of the Academic Committee

- Evaluate LHP Skillnet's quality assurance system's effectiveness in ensuring the quality of education, training and related activities

- Oversee the implementation of LHP Skillnet's quality assurance system and LHP Skillnet's relationships with external awarding bodies
- Advise the NSG on any other matters related to ensuring academic quality and excellence and respond to NSG's requests for advice.
- Advise on the continuing professional development and training needs of all staff (employees and contractors) involved in programme provision
- Consider new programme proposals and make recommendations to the NSG with regard to the development of the programmes (or not)
- Recommend new programmes for approval by the NSG before submission to an awarding body for validation/signed off for delivery
- Review programme activity and quality reports presented by the Network Manager and make recommendations accordingly
- Consider annual programme review reports submitted by the Programme Boards and make recommendations accordingly
- Consider the results of internal self-monitoring and external evaluation and make recommendations accordingly to the NSG
- Dealt with complaints and disciplinary issues escalated upwards by the Network Manager
- Make the final decision on the outcome of assessment and admission appeals
- Act as the Self-Evaluation Panel

### ***Subcommittees of the Academic Committee***

The following boards and panel's report to the Academic Committee and each operates under its own *Terms of Reference*

Programme Board

Results Approval Panel

## Meetings

Meetings are held 3 times per year. Additional meetings can be convened if considered necessary or if there is serious complaint/disciplinary issue to deal with which has been escalated upwards by the Network Manager.

50% of the members constitute a quorum. If there is not a quorum present, the meeting cannot transact business

Meetings are convened and the agenda drawn up by the Chairperson in consultation with the Network Manager. The Network Administrator circulates an agenda at least one week in advance of the meeting. Meetings are minuted by the Network Administrator

## Powers of Decision Making

Decisions are made by a consensus. If consensus is not possible, the Chairperson makes the final decision

## Evaluation and Review, ensuring Governance

- The NSG has the right to alter the operation of the Academic Committee and can, at its discretion, disband or reconstitute the committee
- All members must complete and maintain a Conflict of Interest Declaration.
- The Academic Committee reviews its effectiveness annually
- This Terms of Reference may be amended, varied or modified in writing only after consultation and agreement by NSG.
- Review of the Terms of Reference
- The NSG reviews these terms of reference annually, in conjunction with the Academic Committee and amend as appropriate.
- Any amendments are included in the annual report



## 2.3 Policy on Programmes of Education and Training

Version	2.0	Author	Carmel Kelly
Adoption Date	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019	Expected Review Date	September 2021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose

This policy sets out LHP Skillnet's commitment to developing and delivering programmes to a high-quality standard, and which take into consideration both the needs of our adult student body and the professional demands of the private healthcare sector.

### Scope

#### To whom does the policy apply?

This policy applies to all stakeholders interested in attending or suggesting the creation of programmes delivered by LHP Skillnet.

#### Who is responsible for implementing the policy?

The Academic Committee is responsible for formulating the terms of this policy, and for exercising oversight in the implementation of the policy.

The Network Manager is responsible for implementing the policy and for reporting to the Academic Committee.

The Administrative Team and tutors collaborate under the guidance of the Network Manager to implement the policy.

### Policy Statement

LHP Skillnet is committed to ensuring that all programmes developed and delivered are done so to the highest standard

We are committed to identifying the education and training needs of the private healthcare sector and to developing programmes, in collaboration with our members, to address those needs

The Academic Committee submit detailed proposals for new programme development to the Network Steering Group for review and approval and for allocation of funding to support the programme design stage

We set up dedicated programme design teams for each new programme under development who report to the Academic committee on the progress of the development.

We are committed to engaging with academic and subject matter expertise in the development of new programmes, and the review of existing programmes.

We ensure that programme structure, training methodologies, materials, delivery, and assessment methodologies are designed to meet the needs of our target market, potential students, the requirements of the awarding body (if applicable) and the needs of the sector we operate in.

We aim to facilitate students 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 if they so wish. This is supported by our *Policy for Admission* and *Policy for Access, Transfer, and Progression*

We put in place the necessary human, physical and academic supports, and resources for the optimal delivery of programmes as set out in the approved programme descriptors/applications for validation prior to programme delivery.

We have a *Policy on Protection of Enrolled Learners* in place that details our processes for protecting our students in the event that the Network ceased operating.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	2.4 Policy for Admission 2.5 Policy for Access, Transfer, and Progression 2.6 Protection of Enrolled Learners
Related Procedures	3.1 Procedure for Needs Identification 3.2 Procedure for Programme Design and Development 3.3 Procedure for Programme Approval 3.4 Procedure for Programme Validation and re-Validation
Supporting Documents	
Referenced Documents	<i>Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016)</i>

## 2.4 Policy on Admissions

Version	2.0	Author	Carmel Kelly
Adoption Date	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019	Expected Review Date	September 2021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose

This policy describes LHP Skillnet’s commitments in terms of our evaluation and enrolment of prospective students on to our QQI-accredited programme. It can be read in conjunction with our Policy on Access, Transfer and Progression.

### Scope

#### To whom does the policy apply?

This policy applies to all prospective students who apply to study on our QQI-accredited programme.

#### Who is responsible for implementing the policy?

The Network Manager and Network Administrators are responsible for implementing the policy.

### Definitions

“Prospective student” is any person who engages with LHP Skillnet with the aim of being enrolled on our QQI-accredited programme.

“Skillnet Ireland” is a national agency which obtains grant-funding from the National Training Fund through the Department of Education and Skills, providing subsidised education to Ireland’s private sector workforce.

“Healthcare Support course” refers to our QQI Level 5 Major Award programme, on to which we enrol prospective students who wish to work as healthcare assistants or be otherwise employed in the healthcare sector. It is our only QQI-accredited programme to date.

## Policy Statement

### Prior to Application

LHP Skillnet gives clear and accurate information pertaining to the structure, schedule and admission process of our *Healthcare Support* course available to the public via our website.

LHP Skillnet aims to respond to all enquiries in a timely and honest fashion. Our goal in answering enquiries is to assist the individual to make the best decision possible, based upon their unique circumstances.

### Application and Admission

In accordance with our Policy on Access, Transfer and Progression, we apprise every prospective student of Skillnet Ireland's eligibility criteria and LHP Skillnet's general standards of suitability.

Skillnet Ireland provides strict eligibility criteria of admission, predicated upon one's employment status in the Republic of Ireland. In accordance with these criteria, LHP Skillnet can only enrol prospective students if they are either

- a) employed in the private healthcare sector or
- b) unemployed and/or in receipt of a social welfare payment.<sup>1</sup>

Once the prospective TNP student fulfils Skillnet Ireland's eligibility criteria, LHP Skillnet are satisfied that they conform to general standards of suitability.

Once the prospective EAP student fulfils Skillnet Ireland's eligibility criteria, LHP Skillnet will interview them. The interview is conducted by a healthcare and education professional. The interview process serves to establish if a prospective student is

- a) suitable to provide care to vulnerable persons (supported by Garda vetting process).
- b) likely to successfully complete the programme with the necessary supports.
- c) unlikely to disrupt or otherwise obstruct their fellow students from successfully completing the programme.

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<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed breakdown of the eligibility criteria prescribed for the latter, see the relevant page on Skillnet Ireland's website: <https://www.skillnetireland.ie/about/developing-your-skills/developing-irelands-future-workforce/>

Sample factors influencing the interview recommendation include: IT proficiency, language fluency, and temperament.

Every prospective student is judged equally and dispassionately, according to the norms of their particular cohort.

Access for prospective students with disabilities or additional needs is facilitated, inasmuch as is practicable, but it is incumbent upon the prospective student to share the details of their additional support needs at the time of application.

Decisions which determine the allocation of places on programmes are transparent.

Repeat applications are permitted, but if the factors which disqualified the prospective student in the past have not been addressed, the decision will remain consistent.

In the event of a dispute in relation to enrolment, an applicant is entitled to appeal this decision to the Network Manager, in line with our Procedure for Applicant Appeals.

All offers of enrolment are contingent upon the student's ongoing compliance with LHP Skillnet's ethos, rules and policies.

### **Garda Vetting**

All of our EAP students must be Garda vetted prior to undertaking work-placements with external healthcare organisations as this bringing them into contact vulnerable adults, in which they assume positions of trust.

All offers of enrolment are dependent upon the results of Garda vetting. Minor infractions, within reason, are tolerable (e.g. a parking fine), subject to review by the Quality Board. Any crime involving violence, aggression, duplicity, or substantial breaches of public or private trust will result in the student's automatic expulsion from the programme.

The details of every Garda vetting disclosure are kept private and confidential, in line with our Policy for Information and Data Management. It is the student's responsibility to share their Garda vetting disclosure with the work-placement.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Access, Transfer and Progression Policy for Information and Data Management
Related Procedures	Procedure for Admissions Procedure for Applicant Appeals
Supporting Documents	Introduction and context
Referenced Documents	<i>Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016)</i>

## 2.5 Policy on Access, Transfer, and Progression

Version	2.0	Author	Tom Lordan
Adoption Date	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019	Expected Review Date	September 2021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose

This policy sets out LHP Skillnet’s commitment to Access, Transfer and Progression (ATP), which refers to the ways in which students can enter, transfer between and progress from our QQI-accredited programmes.

### Scope

To whom does the policy apply?

This policy applies to all students enrolled on a QQI-accredited programme.

Who is responsible for implementing the policy?

The Network Manager and Network Administrators are responsible for implementing the policy.

### Definitions

“Access” refers to the process by which students may commence a programme of education.

“Transfer” refers to the process by which students may move between equivalent programmes of education.

“Progression” refers to the process by which students may advance from one programme of education to a higher-level programme of education.

“RPL” refers to Recognition of Prior Learning, namely the process by which a student’s previous academic qualifications are counted as pertinent to the completion of their current award.

“TNP” refers to Training Network Programme, the term employed to distinguish our *Healthcare Support* course (QQI Level 5, Major Award) available to students employed in the private healthcare sector.

“EAP” refers to Employment Activation Programme, the term employed to distinguish our *Healthcare Support* course (QQI Level 5, Major Award) available to unemployed students or students in receipt of a social welfare payment.

## **Policy Statement**

### **Access**

Every prospective student is informed of the relevant factors which qualify their entry on to our TNP or EAP QQI programmes. Broadly speaking, these factors fall into two categories,

- Skillnet Ireland’s strict eligibility criteria based upon the employment status of the prospective student.
- LHP Skillnet’s standards of suitability: LHP Skillnet identifies certain qualities demonstrated by the prospective student, to judge their suitability for the role of healthcare assistant (in line with the Policy for Admissions).

Access for prospective students who may have disabilities or additional needs is facilitated, inasmuch as is practicable.

Decisions which determine the allocation of places on programmes are transparent.

Prospective students can enter a programme at various stages or with exemptions where they have provided evidence of prior learning (RPL).

### **Transfer and Progression**

Students are permitted to transfer between available QQI programmes, when deemed reasonable. Students are encouraged to transfer to a similar cohort in order to retain a continuous learning environment (e.g. from one EAP cohort to another, in the case of an unemployed student). If their circumstances are sufficiently unique, transfer between different cohorts is permissible (e.g. from an EAP cohort to a TNP cohort, in the case of an unemployed student).

If a student wishes to exit the programme early, their departure is supported and facilitated without impediment.



Programmes are structured such that the modules *Communication* and *Safety and Health at Work* are completed first. These modules can be used to count towards the completion of many non-healthcare QQI Level 5 Major Awards, should the student exit the programme early.

We facilitate students enrolled on the TNP programme to engage with the Major Award in *Healthcare Support* (QQI Level 5) in a modular fashion. The employed student is permitted to attend as many or as few component modules as they can afford per Major Award programme, until they have completed the requisite number.

Students are informed of the utility of their academic achievements in terms of pathways to further and higher education. Successful students may gain access to a variety of third-level programmes via the Higher Education Links Scheme (HELS), or via direct application using the CAO on the basis of their educational qualifications.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy of Admission
Related Procedures	Procedure for Admission
Supporting Documents	
Referenced Documents	<i>Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016)</i>

## 2.6 Policy on Protection of Enrolled Learners

Version	2.0	Author	Carmel Kelly
Adoption Date	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019	Expected Review Date	September 2021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose

This policy sets out the arrangements LHP Skillnet have in place to protect fee-paying students enrolled on a programme to ensure they are not disadvantaged in the unlikely event of a programme ceasing before completion.

### Scope

#### To whom does the policy apply?

- **All fee-paying students/Member Companies**

#### Responsibilities for the policy

- **Network Steering Group** is responsible for ensuring that robust systems are in place to protect students' fees.

### Policy Statement

The subsidised programme fees for students who are enrolled on our programmes are for the most part, paid by their employer (i.e. our member company).

To ensure our student fees are protected we have a number of measures in place

1. In line with the Skillnet Irelands Training Networks Programme Operating Guidelines, the Network cannot and does not offer programmes to our member companies unless and until we have received an official letter stating our approval of funding and the amount of funding guaranteed.
2. We do not require the student fees to be paid in full in advance of the programme. Fees can be paid incrementally over the duration of the programme.
3. In order to further protect student fees, tutors and training venue invoices are paid only on completion of each component module.

4. Each programme has both a lead and support tutor aligned to it to prevent disruption to the students learning in the event of short-term tutor absence.
5. In the event of a lead tutor being unable to honour their contract for any reason, the Network Steering Group appoints a suitable replacement tutor from our existing quality-assured panel of tutors to complete the programme.
6. The financial status of the Network is reviewed on an on-going basis by the Network Manager and by the Directors of the NSG every two weeks when they conduct the expenditure transactions. Skillnet Ireland require monthly bank reconciliations to ensure that we are in financial good standing and have sufficient funds to deliver our training plan.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	
Related Procedures / Processes	
Reference Documents / Resources	

## 2.7 Policy on Staffing

Version	2.0	Author	Carmel Kelly
Adoption Date	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019	Expected Review Date	September 2021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose

This policy sets out LHP Skillnets commitment to ensuring that staff employed (including contracted) have the knowledge, skills, and competencies to fulfil their role to a high standard.

### Scope

To whom does the policy apply?

- **All staff**

Responsibilities for the policy

- **Network Manager** has overall responsibility for ensuring all staff fulfil their roles in line with the terms of the contract.

### Definitions

“Staff” in this policy refers to both LHP Skillnet employed staff and all contracted tutors, external experts, external authenticator, and any other personnel contracted to provide a service to LHP Skillnet

### Policy Statement

We ensure that we have sufficient human resources to provide high quality programmes of education

We ensure that LHP Skillnet staff are capable and competent to manage, administer, design, deliver, support, assess, monitor, and evaluate our training programmes

LHP Skillnet staff at all levels will be recruited and selected on clear and transparent selection criteria and based on qualifications and ability.

We aim to attract and employ the best possible candidates to fulfil the designated roles

We promote, support, and encourage the further upskilling and development of LHP Skillnet staff

We communicate with, manage, and monitor staff performance to ensure that they are in a position to perform their duties to a high standard, to identify areas of best practice and areas needing improvement

We monitor and evaluate tutors' performance which helps to ensure the quality of our programmes

We have supports in place for newly-appointed tutors

At all times, we seek to ensure fair and equal opportunities for all.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Complaints Policy Equality and Diversity Policy (facilitating diversity)
Related Procedures / Processes	Monitoring of Training and Learning Tutor Feedback Student Feedback Feedback from other Stakeholders Learning Resources Student Supports Student Complaints Facilitating Diversity Quality assuring physical premises, equipment and facilities Quality assuring learning off-campus (work placements)
Reference Documents / Resources	<i>LHP Skillnet Student Handbook</i> <i>Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2013), Assessment and Standards, Revised 2013</i>

## 2.8 Policy on Teaching and Learning

Version	2.0	Author	Carmel Kelly
Adoption Date	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019	Expected Review Date	September 2021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose

This policy establishes our commitment to a consistent and *responsive* environment for both teaching and learning. This commitment requires that improvements can not only be accurately identified, but also implemented where appropriate in real-time.

### Scope

#### To whom does the policy apply?

- **All staff** including tutors contracted to deliver the programmes

#### Responsibilities for the policy

- **The Academic Committee** has overall responsibility for ensuring a quality teaching and learning environment.
- The **Network Manager** is responsible for implementing this policy

### Policy Statement

LHP Skillnet is committed to

- Creating a positive educational experience for students and tutors
- Embracing the diversity within our student cohort
- Fostering an open culture which values critical reflection and constructive feedback
- Supporting the personal and professional growth of both students and tutors
- The application of a diversity of teaching practices and methodologies, meeting the needs of a wide range of students with a variety of abilities and competencies
- Facilitating teaching and learning through the provision of supports.

In order to realise our commitments, we have an on-going monitoring system in place. This system identifies areas for change and prompts incremental improvements to the programme over time.

We conduct a comprehensive review with tutors and students at the end of each programme and review all programmes delivered collectively on an annual basis

We actively encourage, seek, and consider feedback from Students, Tutors, Member companies/ host placements, and other relevant Stakeholders at regular interval throughout our programmes

We monitor programmes, programme materials, student supports, tutor performance, the learning environment and the quality of the learning experience on an ongoing basis to ensure continued relevance and high standards and to capture recommendations for improvements.

We are committed to having a comprehensive support and resources system in place which facilitates effective learning, helps to create supportive learning environment and helps our students to achieve their learning objectives.

We support a person's right to make a complaint relating to any aspect of our programmes, services and/or supports and have clear procedures in place for dealing with complaints

We are committed to equality of access and attainment among students and we actively seek to promote equality and avoid discrimination.

We aim to provide training which is suitable to all students including those individuals or groups with additional or diverse needs to enable them to successfully participate in our courses insofar as this is possible.

We are committed to providing [external] training venues which are conducive to teaching and learning.

We ensure that students requiring a work experience placement are placed in a suitable setting that have the necessary supports and structures in place to facilitate clinical teaching and learning.

We conduct a comprehensive review with tutors and students at the end of each programme and review all programmes delivered collectively on an annual basis

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Complaints Policy Equality and Diversity Policy (facilitating diversity)
Related Procedures / Processes	Monitoring of Training and Learning Tutor Feedback Student Feedback Feedback from other Stakeholders Learning Resources Student Supports Student Complaints Facilitating Diversity Quality assuring physical premises, equipment and facilities Quality assuring learning off-campus (work placements)
Reference Documents / Resources	<i>LHP Skillnet Student Handbook</i> <i>Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2013), Assessment and Standards, Revised 2013</i>



## 2.9 Policy on Equality and Diversity

Version	2.0	Author	Carmel Kelly
Adoption Date	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019	Expected Review Date	September 2021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose

This policy sets out LHP Skillnet's commitment to promoting Equality and Diversity across every level of the organisation, in the spirit of civil and social inclusiveness.

### Scope

#### To whom does the policy apply?

This policy applies to all groups and people participating in the LHP Skillnet structure: The Network Steering Group, the Academic Committee (including any panel/sub-committee), the students, and all staff, tutors, and contractors who work on our behalf.

#### Who is responsible for implementing the policy?

The **Network Steering Group** ensure that the principles of Equality and Diversity are promoted at the highest level of the organisation.

The **Academic Committee** oversees that the principles of Equality and Diversity are adopted into the ethos of the programmes delivered.

The **Network Manager** is responsible for the implementation and effective operation of this policy.

The **Administration Team, Tutors** and any other **Contracted Worker** are responsible for acting in accordance with the values of this policy.

The **Students** are expected to treat everyone they meet in relation to LHP Skillnet with respect, courtesy and consideration at all times, and to report any incident of discrimination within the workplace/classroom to the proper authority immediately.

## Policy Statement

We believe that everyone should be treated with respect and dignity, and our philosophy is one of social integration and harmonisation.

We treat all stakeholders in accordance with current legislation, best practice and the philosophy of our organisation.

We make staff and students aware of their shared responsibilities in relation to Equality and Diversity at induction.

Discrimination will not be tolerated. Discrimination is said to occur when any individual draws negative or critical comments/behaviours based upon the fact of their gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, race, sexual orientation, religious belief, or their membership in the travelling community.

In the event that an incident of discrimination is alleged to have occurred, it will count as an allegation of professional misconduct, in line with our *Procedure for Disciplinary Action*.

If a formal investigation demonstrates an incident of discrimination has occurred, those responsible will be punished in proportion to their misconduct.

Training is provided as appropriate to staff to ensure that they are aware of Equality and Diversity issues, such that they have the capacity to promote equality and combat discrimination.

We highlight our commitment to Equality and Diversity by including a short Equality and Diversity statement in the following documents/platforms:

- Student Handbook,
- Tutor Handbook,
- Work Placement Supervisor Handbook,
- On the LHP Skillnet website and
- On display in the LHP office.

The principles of Equality and Diversity do not just apply to social categories, but to individuals with additional or supplementary support needs, such as those with physical or learning challenges.

We strongly encourage every individual to identify their additional support needs where relevant, so that we may deal with all requests for reasonable/special accommodation on a case-by-case basis.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Complaints Policy for Teaching and Learning Policy for Programmes of Education and Training
Related Procedures	Procedure for Facilitating Diversity Procedure for Reasonable Accommodation Procedure for Tutor, Student and Stakeholder Feedback Procedure for Student Supports and Resources Procedure for Complaints Procedure for Disciplinary Action
Supporting Documents	
Referenced Documents	<i>Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016)</i> <i>The Employment Equality Act (1998/2016)</i>

## 2.10 Policy on Complaints

Version	2.0	Author	Carmel Kelly
Adoption Date	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019	Expected Review Date	September 2021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose

This policy sets out LHP Skillnet's commitment to the handling of complaints in a fair, timely and transparent manner. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the steps taken by LHP Skillnet are described in either the *Disciplinary Procedure* (academic or professional misconduct) or the *Procedure for Complaints* (all other subjects of complaint).

### Scope of the Policy

#### To whom does the policy apply?

- All students or prospective students who engage in an LHP Skillnet programme including the application stage.
- All staff including tutors who provide services to and for LHP Skillnet
- Any other persons who engage with LHP Skillnet

#### Who is responsible for implementing the policy?

- **Network Manager** has overall responsibility for implementing the complaints policy.
- The **Academic Committee** has responsibility for deciding the outcome of a complaint escalated upwards by the Network Manager.

### Policy Statement

#### General

We fully support a person's right to make a complaint if they feel they have been mistreated or disadvantaged as a result of engaging with our programme or services. Such a regrettable event may be due to the actions or behaviour of a member of our staff (including contracted tutors) or another student.

A complainant will not be subjected to different or unfair treatment should they make a complaint.

Any complaints (informal or formal) made on behalf of another person will not be accepted.

In the first instance and if possible, a complainant should seek to resolve the issue informally with the person directly concerned. Where a satisfactory resolution cannot be found at this level, the complaint can be escalated to a formal complaint.

### **Formal Complaints**

A formal complaint must be made in writing within 5 working days of the issue arising. Students do so by using the student's complaint form.

The subject of the complaint has a right to be notified of the nature of the allegations made, a copy of the complaint, and the complainant's details.

The complainant is required to substantiate any allegations with evidence.

The subject of the complaint has a right to respond to allegations made within the complaint.

Depending on the nature of the complaint, the complaint may be handled in line with our *Disciplinary Procedure*.

The complainant is permitted to be accompanied by a family member, friend or fellow student when interacting with LHP Skillnet regarding the formal complaint.

The Academic Committee will investigate and make a decision about the issue the complaint raised within 30 days of receipt.

The outcome of the investigation is communicated by the Network Manager to the relevant parties.

Where a complaint results in a disciplinary action, the complainant may not receive details of that action if it is deemed to be in breach of the subject of the complaints privacy.

### **Related Documents**

Related Policies	Policy for Academic Good Practice
Related Procedures / Processes	Procedure for Complaints Disciplinary Procedure
Supporting Documents	<i>LHP Skillnet Student Handbook</i> <i>LHP Skillnet Tutor Handbook</i> <i>Complaints Form</i>

## 2.11 Policy on Assessments

Version	2.0	Author	Carmel Kelly
Adoption Date	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019	Expected Review Date	September 2021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose

To ensure that all students are subject to fair, consistent and transparent assessment processes and procedures regarding any assessment they undertake with LHP Skillnet.

### Scope of the Policy

#### To whom does the policy apply?

- All students undertaking an LHP Skillnet programme leading to awards in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) validated by QQI.
- All staff and tutors with a role in formally assessing students undertaking an LHP Skillnet programme leading to awards in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) validated by QQI

#### Who is responsible for implementing the policy?

- **Network Manager** has overall responsibility for ensuring the implementation of the assessment process.
- **Tutors** are responsible for ensuring all assessment activities are carried out to a high standard and in line with marking criteria
- **Internal Verifier and External Authenticator** are responsible for carrying out their tasks as per agreed guidelines.
- **Results Approval Panel** is responsible for approving results and recommending the final approved results for certification

### Policy Statement

LHP Skillnet is committed to upholding the quality and integrity of all formal assessments undertaken by students.

#### Fairness & Consistency of Assessment

Students are given equal opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of learning outcomes.

Assessment tasks reflect the type and level of the learning outcome(s) being assessed. Students are not assessed on knowledge, skills or competence they have not had an opportunity to acquire.

Students have three attempts to complete any module assessment except where failure is due to incidence of academic misconduct.

Assessment procedures are standardised across all QQI programmes, ensuring that assessment results can be compared uniformly from student to student, programme to programme.

All assessments are marked against robust marking criteria

### **Reliability of Assessment**

Assessments are a genuine evaluation of achievement of learning outcomes incorporating an academic judgement.

Students are assessed by competent tutors. Assessment outcomes are internally verified and externally authenticated.

Assessment procedure and administrative processes are reviewed regularly by the Quality Board to ensure that the processes remain sound.

A variety of appropriate assessment techniques and methodologies are used across programme modules.

Assessment strategies, types and methodologies are regularly reviewed and improved within the scope of the validated programme.

### **Validity of Assessment**

The results of assessment are an accurate measurement of the student's knowledge in the examined subject.

Assessment outcomes are accompanied by written feedback which correlates with the marks awarded

Assessment supports effective teaching and learning

### **Transparency of Assessment**

Students are provided with the following information at the beginning of their programme.

Learning outcomes for each module

Assessment schedule and strategy for the whole programme

Deadlines

Appeals procedure (through the student handbook)

Process for requesting provisions for reasonable accommodation (through the student handbook)

### **Student Responsibilities**

Students are responsible for

Demonstrating their achievement of the learning outcomes

Familiarising themselves with the relevant policies and procedures (through the student handbook)

Complying with the rules relating to assessment

Undertaking assessments in a fair and honest manner

### **Assignment Extensions, Re-submissions & Failure**

Extensions may be granted, where warranted, if the student completes the Assignment Extension Request form at least a week before the submission deadline. Where supporting evidence is relevant e.g. medical certificate in case of sickness, this must also be provided.



Assignments submitted after the deadline where an extension has not been agreed, will be awarded no more than a pass mark (50%) and may not be corrected in time for QQI certification.

Students are given the opportunity to re-submit work that has not reached pass standard (50%).

If the re-submitted assignment does not receive a pass mark, the student can try one more time (the third attempt), with a financial penalty of €20 payable to LHP Skillnet.

If after three attempts the student has failed the module, they can repeat the entire module at full cost.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Staffing Policy Academic Good Practice Policy Equality and Diversity Policy (reasonable accommodation) Teaching and Learning Policy Programme Design and Development Policy
Related Procedures / Processes	Assessment Planning and Design Information to students Security and integrity of assessment Consistency of marking between assessors Reasonable accommodation Internal Verification Process External Authentication Results Approval Panel Issuing of results Certification Feedback to students on assessment Facilitating Diversity Student Appeals (assessment) and Complaints Procedure Programme Validation and Re-Validation
Reference Documents / Resources	<i>LHP Skillnet Student Handbook</i> <i>Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2016), Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016)</i> <i>Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2014), Policy for determining Awards Standards</i> <i>Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2013), Assessment and Standards, Revised 2013</i>

### 2.11.1 Terms of Reference of Results Approval Panel

Associated Policy	Governance		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

#### Purpose

The Results Approval Panel (RAP) meets after External Authentication and in advance of requesting certification. All results are provisional until approved by the RAP. Certification may not be requested from any awarding body in advance of the approval of results by the RAP and sign-off by the Head of Centre/ Chairperson of the Results Approval Panel

#### Membership and Tenure

The Network Steering Group appoints the Chairperson and members of the Results Approval Panel on an annual basis. The role of Chairperson is generally held by the Network Manager who has overall responsibility for the programme. The Panel is composed of a minimum of 3 people to ensure the assessment decisions are valid.

Members of the **Results Approval Panel must have** expertise/experience in:

- Field of learning/National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) Level
- Education with specific experience in assessment
- Delivery of the module/programme under discussion
- Assessment of the module/programme under discussion

#### **Other Members:**

Occasional members will not have voting rights on the approval of results nor participate in the decision-making process.

Internal Verifier/Network Administrator

Academic Committee representative

A tutor

***Occasional Members:*** The Chairperson may invite other members for all or a particular section of the meeting as appropriate e.g. External Authenticator, independent subject matter specialist, independent quality assurance specialist etc.

## **Functions and Responsibilities of the RAP**

Chairperson convenes the Results Approval Panel meeting as required.

The External Authentication report, the Internal Verification report and where applicable, assessors report for each programme are presented by the Internal Verifier

The Panel discuss each set of results including any concerns and suggests appropriate corrective or improvement actions, if required.

Other personnel may be invited to attend for a particular section of the meeting as appropriate.

The Panel considers the reports and approves the final results. Panel decisions are recorded, and the Chairperson arranges for relevant parties to be notified.

The Chairperson arranges for the relevant personnel and learners to be informed of the approved results, ensuring that, where there has been a change to provisional results that the learner is informed of the changed result and is made aware of the appeals process

The Results Approval Panel Report is completed and signed off by the Chairperson on behalf of the fixed panel members who approved the results. This form is the authorisation to submit the approved results to request certification. Report is presented at the next Academic Committee meeting.

Minutes are prepared by the Internal Verifier and kept on file.

The Chairperson ensures that any non-conformances identified are notified and recorded on within the RAP Quality Improvement Plan.

## **Meetings**

Results Approval Panel meetings are held face to face post external authentication of the validated programme or if service demand requires. A full quorum of members is required.

Minutes of the RAP are produced outlining the issues discussed and decisions reached.

The contents of the minutes are confidential and must not be circulated to unauthorised personnel.

Where the Panel has been made aware of /suspects irregularities or malpractice in a particular assessment(s), the head of centre must put an action plan in place to deal with the suspected malpractice.

## **Powers of Decision Making**

Decisions are made by consensus. If consensus is not possible, the Chairperson makes the final decision.

## **Governance**

The NSG has the right to alter the operation of the Results Approval Panel and can, at its discretion, disband or reconstitute the RAP.

All members must complete and maintain a Conflict of Interest Declaration.

The Results Approval Panel reviews its effectiveness annually.

This Terms of Reference may be amended, varied or modified in writing only after consultation and agreement by NSG.

## **Evaluation and Review**

Review of the Terms of Reference

The NSG reviews these terms of reference annually, in conjunction with the RAP and amends as appropriate.

Any amendments are included in the annual report.

## 2.12 Policy on Assessment Appeals

Version	2.0	Author	Carmel Kelly
Adoption Date	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019	Expected Review Date	September 2021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose

This policy sets out the principles, circumstances, grounds and possible outcomes of an assessment review and/or an appeal by a student against an academic decision made by LHP Skillnet.

### Scope of the Policy

#### To whom does the policy apply?

- All students undertaking an LHP Skillnet programme leading to awards in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) validated by QQI who apply for a review and/or appeal an academic decision made by LHP Skillnet.
- All tutors and Academic Committee members with a role in the review and/or appeals procedure

#### Responsibilities for the policy

- **Academic Committee** has overall responsibility for implementing the appeals policy.

### Definitions

A **review** is where a student formally requests the maker of a formal academic decision to review that decision. This applies prior to the internal verification or External Authentication process

An **appeal** is where the student formally appeals an academic decision following the Results Approval Panel stage considering concerns expressed by the student.

### Policy Statement

LHP Skillnet is committed to upholding the quality and integrity of all formal assessments undertaken by students and it is our policy to enable students to formally request a review or

lodge an appeal against an academic decision made by us where a student feels established procedures were not followed.

### Principles for Reviews and Appeals

All reviews and appeals will be conducted by competent personnel in a transparent, fair, and timely manner

A review can be conducted by the original tutor or an independent tutor. We are committed to resolving reviews in a timely manner with emphasis on local resolution

An appeal must be conducted by the Academic Committee whose members are independent of the teaching or assessment of the appellant

We are committed to conducting all review or appeals in a robust and fair manner by giving students the opportunity to voice their concerns in writing or in person.

### Related Documents

Related Policies	
Related Procedures / Processes	<p>Information to students</p> <p>Consistency of marking between assessors</p> <p>Reasonable accommodation</p> <p>Internal Verification Process</p> <p>External Authentication</p> <p>Results Approval Panel</p> <p>Issuing of results</p> <p>Certification</p> <p>Feedback to students on assessment</p> <p>Assessment Appeals Procedure</p>
Reference Documents / Resources	<p><i>LHP Skillnet Student Handbook</i></p> <p><i>Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2016), Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016)</i></p> <p><i>Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2014), Policy for determining Awards Standards</i></p> <p><i>Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2013), Assessment and Standards, Revised 2013</i></p>

## 2.13 Policy on Academic Good Practice

Version	2.0	Author	Tom Lordan
Adoption Date	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019	Expected Review Date	September 2021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the general ethical and academic standards expected of work submitted by students. It also clarifies how academic misconduct is defined, detected and penalised.

### Scope

*To whom does the policy apply?*

Every student enrolled on a QQI programme delivered by LHP Skillnet.

*Who is responsible for implementing the policy?*

The **Academic Committee** is responsible for establishing the standard of what is deemed acceptable academic work. It is also responsible for deciding on disciplinary outcomes, if escalated upwards by the Network Manager.

The **Network Manager, tutor** and **Administrative Team** are each variously responsible for ensuring that the standard is maintained in practice.

### Definitions

An 'ethical standard' relates primarily to authorial independence and honesty. An ethical standard does not measure the intellectual merit of the work, but the degree to which the work was produced as a result of the student's personal and genuine effort.

An 'academic standard' relates primarily to the student's ability to demonstrate their research and writing competencies.

'Academic good practice' refers to the submission of work which abides by both ethical and academic standards.

'Academic misconduct' is said to occur if dishonesty characterises the conditions under which work is submitted/performed, for example:

- cheating in exams,
- plagiarism,
- presenting falsified or improperly obtained data
- being assisted in the presentation of assessment tasks.

## **Policy Statement**

### **Academic Good Practice**

In general, students are expected to act in accordance with common social values - namely fairness, honesty and kindness - in all aspects of their engagement with LHP Skillnet.

In particular, students are expected to abide by common ethical standards in the submission of their work. This means that the student must produce work which is

- a result of their own independent effort,
- ready by the deadlines provided in the timetable,
- written only and exclusively for the assignment submitted.

In addition, students are expected to meet the requirements of our basic academic standards.

The various benchmarks we use to measure academic standards are as follows:

- Clear, concise writing
- Referencing
- Evidence of independent research
- Critical evaluation
- Awareness of class material

In order to facilitate a student abiding by our ethical and academic standards, LHP Skillnet is committed to instructing every student on the meaning and methods of academic good practice.

### **Detection of Academic Misconduct**

LHP Skillnet is committed to detecting academic misconduct in all its forms.

Methods of detection of misconduct include (but are not limited to)

- conducting research online
- the use of text-matching software



- c) physical comparison of students' assignments.

In line with our *Disciplinary Procedure*, if evidence of academic misconduct is found to have occurred, LHP Skillnet can treat the matter *informally* - in the event of a first time or minor infraction - or treat the matter *formally*.

Where appropriate, LHP Skillnet will seek to resolve any breach of good practice without the requirement to invoke formal disciplinary proceedings

In the event that academic misconduct is alleged but not detected directly, LHP Skillnet may temporarily suspend a student if the allegation of academic misconduct implies *severe or persistent* dishonesty. In all such cases, the investigation into the incident is processed as a priority.

LHP Skillnet is not liable for any delay to programme completion as a result of where a reasonable and justifiable decision to suspend was acted on.

### Penalties for Academic Misconduct

Consequences for academic misconduct are proportionate to the offence and can include:

- a) Verbal warning from tutor.
- b) Repeat assessment (50% maximum awarded irrespective of the content).
- c) Fail module, with an option to repeat (at cost for TNP).
- d) Removal from the programme.

### Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Appeals Policy for Assessment Policy for Teaching and Learning
Related Procedures	Disciplinary Procedure Procedure for Appeal
Supporting Documents	
Referenced Documents	<i>Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016)</i>

## 2.14 Policy on Data Management

Version	2.0	Author	Tom Lordan
Adoption Date	March 2020	Expected Review Date	September 2021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose

This policy clarifies what LHP Skillnet's obligations are as a data controller and processor in recognition that information is an asset that must be managed responsibly. To that end, LHP Skillnet is committed to abiding by the data protection standards set out in GDPR 2018 for collecting, handling and storing the personal data of stakeholders.

### Scope

#### To whom does the policy apply?

The policy applies to all interactions between staff members of LHP Skillnet and any training providers we subcontract, our students, former employees, job applicants, etc. in which data is collected or exchanged.

#### Who is responsible for implementing the policy?

The Network Manager, Administrative Team and the tutors/training providers collaborate to implement the policy.

### Definitions

- "Data" is a term that denotes a single or several items of information about an individual or organisation.
- "GDPR" is an acronym that stands for General Data Protection Regulations. These are a set of EU laws that came into effect in 2016, the aim of which is to regulate how commercial bodies use client data.
- A "data controller" determines the purposes for which and the means by which personal data is processed. Companies working in collaboration can be "joint data controllers."
- A "data processor" processes personal data only on behalf of the controller.

## Policy Statement

LHP Skillnet requires that all staff, training providers, and any other collaborators associated with our organisation respect the integrity, security and proper use of data. We handle a range of information, such as names, email addresses, phone numbers, PPS numbers and Garda Vetting disclosures. Our aim is to treat this information with the utmost discretion and confidentiality, to only collect this information for specific and explicit purposes, and to dispose of this information as soon as it makes sense, taking into consideration the needs of our organisation, the students, and whatever institutions may be involved in the training in question.

Generally speaking, data protection laws require the data controller/processor to have a valid lawful basis for processing personal data. Given the nature of our organisation, the basis for our processing data is quite evident, but for the sake of clarity, here are two such bases:

1. **We must process data** in order to discharge our duties as a training organisation that recruits students, teaches programmes, facilitates accreditation, maintains learner records, submits Garda Vetting, submits results to QQI, processes fees, etc.
2. **We must process data** in order to fulfil our legal obligations as an organisation that receives government grant-funding to subsidise the education of the private healthcare sector.

In addition to the above, LHP Skillnet may also process a person's data on the basis of explicit consent, i.e. in circumstances where we ask permission to communicate further educational opportunities to individuals directly. Furthermore, the organisation may process a person's data on the basis of exceptional circumstances, e.g. a medical emergency.

Every basis for processing data also entails its justification for sharing information with third-party companies. That is, LHP Skillnet will share information with third-party companies in the event that it is required to complete the task we process data for. For example, LHP Skillnet will share student information with:

- **Skillnet Ireland**, so that they can check grant-funding payments were properly allocated to subsidise student's education

- **relevant auditing bodies** like the accounting firm, **the** External Authenticator, etc.
- **accrediting bodies** like QQI, so that they can register the student's results and produce certificates
- **training providers** like the IMI or University College Cork, so that they can enrol students on the programme they have selected,
- **credit/debit card payment providers** like Stripe, so that students and member companies can pay for the programme they are enrolled on
- medical professionals, in the event of an emergency

### **Data Management and Security**

Our policy is designed to safeguard our data from risks, which include:

- **breaches in confidentiality**, which involves accidental sharing of information
- **loss**, which involves accidental deletion
- **targeted extraction**, which involves malicious hacking

LHP Skillnet's primary data management platforms are cloud-based and we use them to collect, process and store information. These management systems support our training activities, and are used to record students details for the purpose of grant-funding eligibility analysis and compliance; to facilitate communication and decision-making processes within the organisation; to process payments, etc.

An indicative list of these platforms and their relevance for LHP Skillnet's data activities are as follows:

- **Sonrai**: Skillnet Ireland's database, on which every training event and participant must be recorded, to ensure proper oversight of government grant-funded payments.
- **Website CMS**: contains enquiries submitted by individuals that pertain to the courses we have advertised online.
- **Microsoft Outlook Email**: contains correspondence with every student and healthcare organisation that makes a booking and/or other enquiry.
- **Microsoft SharePoint** and **Google Drive**: contains various internal documents and spreadsheets, including digital registration forms and attendance reports.

- **Microsoft Teams:** contains information required for running individual QQI programmes (including tutor materials and records of attendance) plus groups dedicated to special projects undergoing internal development by LHP Skillnet.
- **Sage:** payment processing software that contains all information relating to invoices, etc.
- **Ticket Tailor:** booking software that contains all information relating to immediate, online payments.
- **Altura:** a VLE/LMS used to deliver bitesize content to learners, monitor learner engagement and progress, etc.
- **Moodle:** A VLE/LMS used to deliver QQI Level 5 course content to learners, monitor learner engagement and progress, etc.

All data management platforms are only accessible to authorised personnel, namely the **Network Manager** and **Administration team**. Access should be carefully monitored. Each platform is password protected, and, where possible, two-factor authentication is in place. Passwords are selected using the following criteria of strength: length; a mix of letters (upper and lower case), numbers, and symbols; and no dictionary words. Our passwords are changed routinely to provide additional security. All servers and computers containing data are protected by an approved security software and firewall.

Those **training providers** who deliver QQI-accredited programmes, whom we refer to as **tutors**, have access to some administrative features on MS Teams and Moodle in order to manage their programme. These features are organised and prepared by the Administration team. The Network Manager and Administration team can revoke the tutors' access to these features at any time. Tutors are provided with @lhpskillnet.ie email addresses for the purpose of managing our QQI programmes and made aware of their data protection obligations by LHP Skillnet staff.

**Learners** studying through online and blended programmes have limited access to MS Teams, Altura and Moodle, for the purpose of attending their chosen programmes. As is the case with tutors' access to MS Teams and Moodle, the Network Manager and Administration team can revoke the learners access whenever they choose. In the event of a data breach, where the student notices that they have access to the data of their colleagues, it is their

responsibility to bring this matter to the attention of the tutor/training provider/LHP Skillnet as quickly as possible.

LHP Skillnet uses several storage units to keep physical copies of some key financial documentation. These storage units are housed in the office, and only LHP Skillnet staff possess keys to the office and a code to the security alarm, which is changed routinely. These storage units are also kept closed and locked for additional security. People apart from LHP Skillnet staff, whether students or training providers, are strongly discouraged from visiting the office. In the event that a visit must take place, LHP Skillnet ensure that no sensitive or confidential information is left out or visible. All permissions and login credentials for terminated employees or individuals who leave the company are revoked on their final day at work.

Personal data relating to employees or students should not be kept or transported on laptops, USB sticks, or similar devices, unless prior authorisation has been received from the Network Manager. Where personal data is recorded on any such device it should be kept close by, somewhere it can't be stolen or misplaced, and the folders and files on the device should be encrypted or password-protected.

### **Data Retention and Accuracy**

LHP Skillnet recognises that the retention of information is paramount for ensuring the smooth educational experience of our students and member companies. As such, LHP Skillnet requires that our data is backed up to the cloud several times a day. This data is also continually cross-checked using our various management platforms to guarantee its accuracy and veracity.

Unless otherwise stipulated, information is stored on LHP Skillnet's data management platforms for 5 years, at which point it is deleted. Hard copies of information collected is destroyed after 1 year. Exceptions to this rule include financial records, which we are legally required to retain for a period of 7 years, and digital records of so-called "high confidentiality" data (see below).

LHP Skillnet is committed to the principle of GDPR that states that all information collected by the data controller must be collected for specific, explicit and legitimate purposes, and

that data should not be kept for longer than is necessary for its given purpose. Once a programme finishes, reasons we may hold students' data include:

- To verify students' awards
- To undergo compliance
- To provide transcripts or academic references for students' workplaces
- To share further opportunities for study

In the event that a certain data-set is no longer required for the purpose initially proposed, LHP Skillnet will cease collecting this information and may expunge all records of that data-set, insofar as it is obsolete.

### **Data Access Requests/Freedom of Information**

All individuals who are the subject of personal data held by LHP Skillnet are entitled to:

- Ask what information is held and why
- Gain access to a copy of that information
- Be informed as to how to keep their information up to date
- Be informed as to how the company is meeting its data protection obligations

The identity of those making the request must be verified before handing over any information.

### **Categories and Garda Vetting**

Data can be categorised according to the impact it would have on the parties involved, were that data to be made public.

- **Low confidentiality**, e.g. member-company administrator email addresses
- **Moderate confidentiality** e.g. meeting minutes or draft documents
- **High confidentiality**, e.g. PPS numbers, disciplinary or Garda Vetting records.

In relation to the 'high confidentiality' category, LHP Skillnet is obliged to collect and process Garda Vetting details and store the Garda Vetting disclosures of our 'Skills Connect' students. Skills Connect students undertake the QQI Level 5 Major Award in Healthcare Support. This obligation is due to the terms of our validation, which requires that every student complete

a clinical placement component. This component consists of work placement and monitored onsite skills demonstrations. In order for our Skills Connect students – who attend the programme for free on the basis that they are unemployed and/or in receipt of a social welfare payment – to complete this requirement, LHP Skillnet has to provide the means to vet the students on behalf of the placement organisation, before the students engage with vulnerable adults.

According to the Employment and Recruitment Federation, which processes the Vettings on behalf of An Garda Siochana, the recommended period for storing a student's Vetting disclosure is one year. We use this guidance as a metric for all digital records of highly confidential data.

### **Data Breach Protocol**

A data breach is the term for any set of circumstances whereby information about a person is disclosed without the person's authorisation or consent, e.g. in the event of an IT system hack. In the event of a **data** breach, the Data Protection Officer and the Network Manager is notified immediately. If the nature of the information is sufficiently sensitive (e.g. credit card details), the Network Manager will contact the person whose data has been disclosed improperly within a period of 48 hours. All such breaches will be documented in an incident report for the Network Steering Group.

### **Training**

LHP Skillnet staff are expected to read and understand our policy on information and data management as part of their induction to the job, and to periodically review the policy for any relevant updates. Furthermore, all staff should receive formal GDPR Awareness training once every two years, to ensure their up-to-date knowledge of issues surrounding data security, privacy, robust reporting techniques, etc.



## 2.15 Policy on Public Information and Communication

Version	2.0	Author	Tom Lordan
Adoption Date	March 2020	Expected Review Date	September 2021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose

This policy refers to LHP Skillnet's approach for communicating its information to the public.

### Scope

#### To whom does the policy apply?

The policy applies to any stakeholder engaging with LHP Skillnet under the condition they are either receiving or requesting information about our services.

#### Who is responsible for implementing the policy?

The Network Manager, Administrative Team and the tutors/training providers collaborate to implement the policy.

### Policy Statement

LHP Skillnet is dedicated to creating transparent and clear channels of communication to the public, ensuring that our role within the private healthcare sector is widely understood. We have developed a range of methods to communicate with the public to this end, including:

- Circulating email newsletters
- Updating our website
- Creating specialised flyers and brochures
- Running campaigns on our social media accounts

We aim to provide accurate and up-to-date information at all times. In the event that an aspect of our service is unclear to the public, or they lack the means to access one or more of the communication channels listed above, the Administrative team are always available to speak to someone directly, whether by telephone or email correspondence, from 9am until 5pm, Monday to Friday.

### Marketing Information

Skillnet Ireland sets out strict guidelines for the correct design, usage and visibility of LHP Skillnet's logo and funding plate. All marketing material is generated by the Administrative team or, on occasion, by the Communications department in Skillnet Ireland. Marketing materials must be formally approved by the Network Manager and, where required, by whichever training provider or representational body the organisation is collaborating with.

### **Modifications to Programme Content or New Programme Developments**

Changes to programme content or programmes under development must be formally approved by the Network Manager and the Academic Committee. If any new course/programmes development should take place the marketing and publicity material are modified to reflect the changes and the material is signed off by the Network Manager.

### **Student Handbooks and Programme Materials**

The process for generation and sign-off of student handbooks and programme documentation parallels that for all marketing materials except the process is overseen by the Administrative team and the Network Manager.

### **Website Content**

Website content is produced by a nominated member of staff. Where updating of the website is required this is subject to a series of checks involving the Administrative team and Network Manager. The website is closely monitored for spelling and accuracy of information, as well as for branding clarity in relation to public programmes.



# Section 3 Procedures

Programmes of Education and Training

Staffing

Teaching and Learning

Assessment

Information and Data Management

Public Information and Communication

Self-evaluation, Monitoring, and review

# Procedures Relating to Policy for Programmes of Education and Training

- 3.1 Procedure for Needs Identification
- 3.2 Procedure for Programme Design and Development
  - 3.2.1 Terms of Reference of the Programme Board
- 3.3 Procedure for Programme Approval
- 3.4 Procedure for Validation and Re-Validation
  - 3.4.1 Roles and Responsibilities of the Programme Leader
- 3.5 Procedure for Programme Planning and Delivery
- 3.6 Procedure for Programme Admissions
- 3.7 Procedure for Admission Appeals



## 3.1 Procedure for Needs Identification

Associated Policy	Programmes of Education and Training		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure sets out to ensure that the programmes and training we provide meet an identified and real needs and the business needs of our members. We ensure that have evidence available to us to help us make an informed decision to progress proposed programmes to design and development.

### Responsibilities

**Network Manager** is responsible for

- a) Networking with member companies, students, and healthcare organisations to identify the education and training needs of the sector.
- b) Reporting findings to the academic committee

**Administration team** is responsible for

- a) Circulating electronic learning needs analysis (LNA) surveys on behalf of the network when requested
- b) Referring any expressed training needs to the network manager

### Procedure

We identify potential new programmes in the following ways:

**Learning Needs Analysis:** We undertake a Learning Needs Analysis annually using an online survey tool which we send to all member companies in relation to their training/up-skilling needs. The returns are analysed by Network Manager and the data collected \is used for two purposes firstly to support our application to Skillnet Ireland for grant funding and secondly it feeds into the design of our programme plan for the following year.

We are required by Skillnet Ireland to regularly review our training plan and conduct learning needs analyses with members and to ensure that the training delivered is based on the training needs of the network's members.

We communicate/obtain feedback from our member companies on an ongoing basis

We monitor changing policy, regulation and legislation relevant to the sector

We review relevant reports and papers and consult with subject matter experts

We discuss the need for new programmes at Network Steering Group, Academic Committee, and Programmes Board meetings

We monitor feedback from students participating on current programmes regarding suggestions for new programmes

We maintain a database of inquiries we get regarding our programme offering and record and monitor inquiries

Collaborating and networking with other training providers particularly with a view to expanding the provision of transfer and progression opportunities for our graduates

Monitoring changes in employment patterns and trends generally

## Related Documents

Related Policies	
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Procedure for Needs Identification Procedure for Programme Design and Development Procedure for Programme Approval Procedure for Programme Validation and Re-Validation Procedure for Programme Planning and Delivery
Supporting Documents	Learning Needs Analysis Survey Student Evaluations Questionnaire Tutor Evaluation Questionnaire Programme Board Report Template Member Company Evaluation Questionnaire
Reference Documents/Resources	<i>QQI Quality Assuring Assessment, Guidelines for Providers, Revised 2013,</i>

## 3.2 Procedure for Programme Design and Development

Associated Policy	Programmes of Education and Training		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure sets out the steps taken to ensure that programme structures, trainings methodologies, materials, delivery, and assessment methodologies are designed to meet the needs of our target market, potential students, the requirements of the awarding body (if applicable) and the needs of the sector we operate in

### Responsibilities

The **Network Steering Group** (NSG) is responsible for

- a) appointing the external members to the *Programme Design Team* taking account of the recommendations from the Academic Committee
- b) Approving the designed programme prior to submission for validation

The **Academic Committee** is responsible for

- Submitting Programme proposal to the NSG for consideration
- Overseeing the work of the *Programme Design Team*,
- Reviewing the document prior to submission to the NSG for approval

The **Network Manager** is responsible for preparing the new programme proposal and for providing support to the programme design team

The **Programme Design Team** is responsible for the design and development of the programme and for preparing all documentation required for the validation application in line with QQI's *Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training* (Nov, 2017)



## Procedure

When a new programme is proposed following needs identification, a new programme proposal is completed by the Network Manager as per the *New Programme Proposal Form Template*.

The programme proposal is presented to the Academic Committee for review prior to submission to the NSG for consideration and agreement.

The NSG assesses the viability of the programme and our internal capacity to develop and deliver the programme

On approval, the NSG appoints a Programme Coordinator to lead the development of the programme with a programme design team. The Coordinator is generally a subject matter expert

The NSG allocates a budget and agrees a timeframe for development

The Programme Coordinator works with the programme design team to develop the programme and engage with outside expertise, stakeholders, clients, etc. as appropriate and draws up a Programme Descriptor

In designing a programme based on published award specification the following are considered and addressed;

- The teaching and skills expertise required for the programme
- Modes of teaching and learning appropriate to the programme context and objectives
- Required programme resources
- Transfer and progression pathways
- PEL arrangements (if applicable)

The delivery and assessment methods are designed to meet the needs of defined student profile

A timetable, lesson plans and schemes of work are developed for the programme

The Programme Descriptor and application for validation is presented to the Academic Committee for review and consideration.

Once approved the Academic Committee presents the completed programme materials to the NSG for approval prior to submission to QQI.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Procedure for Needs Identification Procedure for Programme Approval Procedure for Programme Validation and Re-Validation Procedure for Programme Planning and Delivery
Supporting Documents	New Programme Proposal Form Template
Reference Documents/Resources	<i>Guidelines for Preparing Programme Descriptors for FET Programmes leading to CAS awards (QQI)</i> <i>QQI's Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training (Nov, 2017)</i>

### 3.2.1 Terms of Reference: Programme Design Team

Associated Policy	Programme of Education and Training		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

#### Purpose

To Programme Design team ensures that programme structures, training methodologies, materials, delivery, and assessment methodologies are designed to meet the needs of our target market, potential students, the requirements of the awarding body (if applicable) and the needs of the sector we operate in.

#### Membership and Tenure

The NSG, in consultation with the Academic Committee, appoints a Programme Leader and a Programme Design Team to lead the development of the programme.

- Programme Leader (Chairperson) - generally a subject matter expert
- Tutors
- A subject matter expert (SME) – internal or external
- A quality advisor
- An employer representative/occupational expert (capable of representing the broad interests of the relevant occupation)

The minimum number of members is 3; the maximum is 6

The programme design team ceases to function when the programme is signed off for delivery/validated. Members of the team are usually invited to serve on the Programme Board by the NSG.

#### Functions and Responsibilities

Work within the budget and the timeframe agreed by the NSG for development

Engage with outside expertise, stakeholders, clients, etc. as appropriate

Consider and address the following;

- Programme purpose, aim and objectives
- Teaching and skills expertise required for the programme/programme staffing
- Teaching, learning and assessment strategies
- Modes of teaching and learning appropriate to the programme context and objectives
- Programme materials and resources
- Learner supports/reasonable accommodation
- Transfer and progression pathways
- PEL arrangements (if applicable)

Investigate transfer and progression pathways and include options (if feasible) which present students with the opportunity to transfer or progress should they wish to do so, either immediately or at a later date

Base the programme design on the published award specification and the requirements of programme validation if the programme being developed leads to a QQI award.

Design the assessment instruments to meet the needs of defined student profile and the programme context

Draft a timetable, lesson plans, scheme of work and a reading/resource list

Draws up a Programme Descriptor based on the standard Programme Descriptor Template and prepares an application for validation.

Present the draft Programme Descriptor and application to the Academic Committee for consideration and discussion

Approved documents are submitted to the NSG by the Academic Committee

## **Meetings**

Meetings are held as needed and convened by the Chairperson.

The Network Administrator provides administrative support and is responsible for organising meetings, producing agendas, providing papers and relevant data and maintaining records.

The Network Administrator is also responsible for recording outcomes, decisions and actions plans.

## Powers of Decision Making

Decisions are made by consensus. Where consensus is not reached the Chair has the casting vote.

## Governance

The NSG has the right to review the operation of the Programme Design Team and may, at its discretion, disband or reconstitute the committee

- All members must complete and maintain a Conflict of Interest Declaration.
- The NSG reviews these terms of reference annually, in conjunction with the Academic Committee, and amend as appropriate.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Programmes of Education and Training
Supporting Procedures and Processes	
Supporting Documents	Terms of Reference for the Programme Board New Programme Proposal Form Template Programme Descriptor Template
Reference Documents/Resources	<i>Guidelines for Preparing Programme Descriptors for FET Programmes leading to CAS awards (QQI)</i>

## 3.3 Procedure for Programme for Approval

Associated Policy	Programmes of Education and Training		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure sets out the steps by which a new programme receives approval from LHP Skillnet's Network Steering Group (NSG), after it has passed the design stage. The NSG's approval is necessary in order for the new programme to be submitted for validation by an external authority (i.e. QQI).

### Responsibilities

The **Programme Design Team**, led by the Programme Co-ordinator, are responsible for preparing the new programme for initial review to the Academic Committee.

The **Academic Committee** exercises oversight on the Programme Design Team's project, and they decide when the project is sufficient for the needs of the Network Steering Group's final judgment.

The **Network Steering Group** are responsible for formally approving the proposed programme, such that it can be submitted for validation by an external authority.

### Procedure

The Academic Committee reviews final drafts of all programme materials including

- lesson plans,
- assessment plans
- programme timetables.

The Academic Committee signs off on the final draft of the Programme Descriptors, the application for validation and all programme materials.

The Academic Committee presents the completed programme materials to the NSG for consideration.

Members of the NSG may make suggestions for amendments and the Academic Committee, via the Programme Design Team, makes the required amendments.

The NSG signs off on the Programme Descriptor and the application for validation and gives permission for submission to the awarding body for validation.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Programmes of Education and Training
Supporting Procedures	Procedure for Needs Identification Procedure for Programme Design and Development Procedure for Programme Validation and Re-Validation Procedure for Programme Planning and Delivery
Supporting Documents	
Reference Documents/Resources	

## 3.4 Procedure for Validation and Re-Validation

Associated Policy	Programmes of Education and Training		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by (Name and Title)	Network Steering Group	Signature	

### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure sets out the steps taken to secure validation and re-validation of our awarded programmes in line with QQI's Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training 2017

### Responsibilities

The **NSG** are responsible for

- approving the programme for validation/re-validation
- Appointing a Programme Leader

The **Network Manager** is responsible for the submission of the approved programme to QQI via the QBS

The **Network Administration Team** are responsible for regularly checking the status of the programme on the QBS

The **Programme Leader** is responsible for providing academic and subject matter leadership to tutors delivering the validated programme.

### Procedure

Applications for validation are approved by the NSG before they are submitted to the awarding body for validation

The NSG appoint a Programme Leader who has the expert knowledge to oversee the delivery of validated programmes

Following approval and sign-off by the NSG, the application is submitted to QQI by the Network Manager using the QBS



The status of the application is checked on a regular basis by the Network Administrators

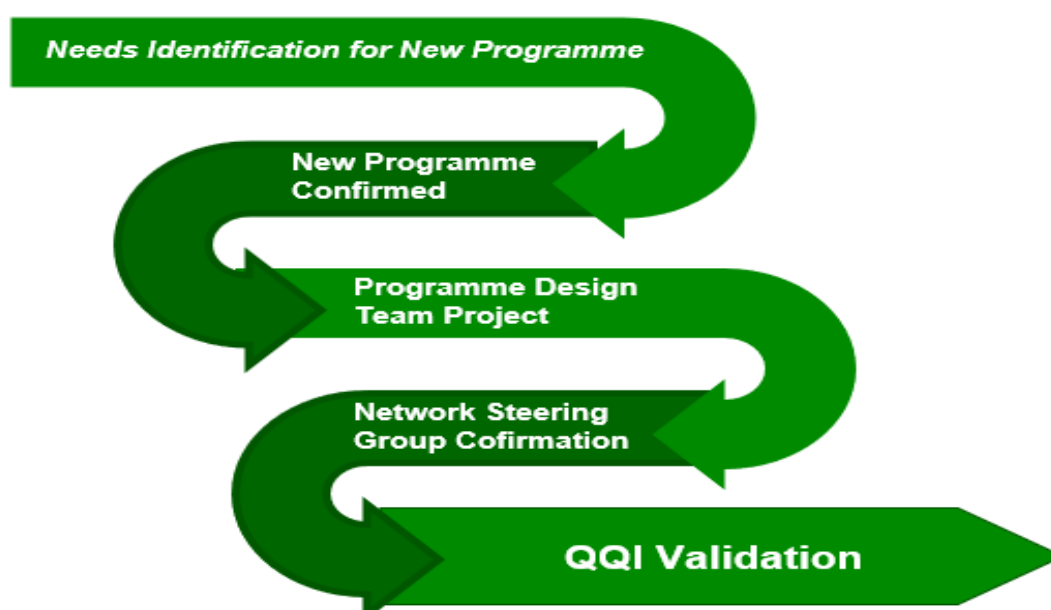
We secure QQI validation before enrolling students on any programme leading to a QQI award

We arrange for the re-validation of continuing programmes every 5 years (or in accordance with the expiry of the duration of the validation if different) noting that validation is for a maximum of five years and then automatically lapses unless renewed through re-validation

At our annual programme review, we review our capacity to uphold the terms and conditions of validation and ensure that our programmes meet the validation criteria.

We carry out a Self-Evaluation/5-year programmatic review to coincide with re-validation and the data from this review is used to inform and support the re-validation process.

We will facilitate any request from QQI to review a programme(s)



## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Programmes of Education and Training
Supporting Procedures /Processes	Procedure for Programme Design and Development Procedure for Programme for Approval Procedure for Programme Planning and Delivery
Supporting Documents	Roles and Responsibilities of Programme Leader
Reference Documents/Resources	<i>QQI Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training (November 2017)</i>

### 3.4.1 Role of the Programme Leader

Reports to	Academic Committee		
Tenure	1 year		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by (Name and Title)	Network Steering Group	Signature	

#### Purpose of the Role

The Programme Leader is required to take disciplinary leadership of the programme, supporting other programme team members, management, assessment, review, and ongoing development of the programme. The Programme Leader must have subject matter expertise.

#### Key Duties and Responsibilities

To lead a programme design team in the initial design and ongoing development of the programme. This includes:

- the design of appropriate assessment instruments
- ongoing review of assessment instruments to ensure they are fit-for-purpose
- complying with relevant policies, procedures and standards
- monitoring the adequacy and effectiveness of learner supports and services,
- identifying gaps and reporting these to the Programme Board.

Ensure that the programme has an identified complement of staff (or potential staff) who are available, qualified and capable to provide the programme *prior to enrolling learners*

Review and update lesson plans, programme handbooks and other programme resources annually.

Ensure latest versions of all programme materials are available and in use by tutors

Source and make available relevant learning materials.

Draft and maintain the Programme Module Descriptor

Approve programme information for accuracy prior to publication in hard copy or on website.

Provide support, and guidance to tutors and other programme team members

Lead programme reviews and produce an annual programme review report

Attend the annual programme review

Act as a member of the Programme Board; attend meetings and report on programme activity to the Board

Research and promote progression opportunities open to graduates of the programme (if applicable)

### **Process of Appointing a Programme Leader**

Programme leaders are recommended by the Academic Committee to the NSG.

CV's must be submitted and reviewed by the NSG against the selection criteria for Programme Lead.

Candidates shortlisted are invited for interview which is conducted by at least one member of the Academic Committee and one Directors of the NSG

Successful candidate offered appointment for a term of twelve months in writing.

Serving Programme Lead can be re-appointed annually by the Directors

### **Selection Criteria for Programme Lead**

To be determined by CV and Interview process the Programme Lead must have

- Subject expertise and an academic background
- Knowledge of QQI's Validated Programme
- Understanding of the role and responsibilities of the Programme Lead
- The ability to lead, motivate and guide tutors in the delivery of a high-quality programme.
- Effective written and verbal communication skills, with appreciation of the important role communication plays in successful group dynamics.

## 3.5 Procedure for Programme Planning and Delivery

Associated Policy	Programmes of Education and Training		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure sets out the steps taken for programme planning and delivery prior to the admission of students onto the programme. We identify and put in place the necessary human, physical and academic supports, and resources for the optimal delivery of programmes.

### Responsibilities

The **Network Manager** is responsible for:

- Creating the programme timetable
- Reviewing and updating resources and supports

The **Administration Team** are responsible for

- Securing appropriate venue for each programme
- ensuring the necessary administrative resources are provided

The **Tutors** are responsible for

- checking all the necessary resources are in place prior to the delivery of the programme

### Procedure

The Programme resources necessary are identified and documented at the programme design stage and are detailed in the programme descriptor

The Network Manager develops the timetable in collaboration with the awarded tutor

The Administration Team are responsible for

- booking the appropriate venue in line with the timetable
- Preparing all programme resources and materials,

- equipment,
- student and tutor induction packs,
- all module materials including assessment briefs
- Registration, evaluation forms
- public liability insurance

Each programme has a lead tutor with a support tutor aligned to it. Where the support tutor is newly recruited, they are required to feedback to the lead tutor at the end of each training day.

It is the lead tutors' responsibility to double check that all appropriate supporting materials provided are current and present and that the training equipment is in good working order. Where resources are absent liaise with the Network Administration Team to rectify the matter.

The Tutors develop power-point presentations in line with validated programme and must ensure material delivered is reflective of current practice

All programme content is uploaded in advance to a shared drive for review by the programme leader.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Programmes of Education and Training
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Procedure for Quality Assuring Physical Premises, Equipment, and Facilities
Supporting Documents	
Reference Documents/Resources	

## 3.6 Procedure for Admissions

Associated Policy	Admissions		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by (Name and Title)	Network Steering Group	Signature	

### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure outlines the steps by which a prospective student is admitted on to our QQI programme. Programmes are run on a “subject to demand” basis therefore we maintain a waiting list system and only progress to the admissions process once we have sufficient numbers to commence the programme

### Responsibilities

#### Prospective Student

The prospective student is responsible for:

- Informing themselves about the programme’s structure and schedule as well as the entry criteria, to whatever extent is practicable.
- Providing verifiable evidence that they meet Skillnet Ireland’s entry criteria and for informing LHP Skillnet of all information relevant to their suitability for the programme.
- Their presentation and performance at interview.
- Completing the Garda vetting process in the timeframe required and accepts the financial burden if the vetting process has to be resubmitted due to their inaction/inaccuracy.
- Making themselves available to be contacted, and for responding to all communication from LHP Skillnet in a timely manner.

#### LHP Skillnet

LHP Skillnet is responsible for:

- Ensuring that entry procedures are fair and dispassionately conducted, and for ensuring that equality of opportunity is afforded to all prospective students.

- providing clear and accurate information on the structure and schedule of our QQI programme, and for communicating to all prospective students Skillnet Ireland's eligibility criteria and sample factors contributing to an applicant's suitability.
- providing the prospective EAP student with logistical and practical information about the interview process.
- appointing a suitable EAP interviewer, and for keeping a record of the interview's findings up to a period of three weeks after the commencement of the course.
- issuing offers of programme places.
- Conducting the Garda vetting process and all correspondence and/or disclosures which result therefrom in a timely and confidential fashion, where relevant.

## **Procedure**

### *Expression of Interest/General Admission*

All prospective students must communicate an expression of interest with the Network Administrators via email.

Administration team requests the necessary details in order to determine their eligibility according to Skillnet Ireland's criteria. Once confirmed, the prospective student is added to the relevant TNP or EAP enrolment spreadsheet for consideration at the next available programme identifying the modules they wish to enrol for.

If the prospective student is deemed ineligible according to Skillnet Ireland's criteria, they cannot progress to the next stage of admissions.

We retain the prospective students details on our spreadsheet until such time as we are organising a programme or if the prospective student requests to be removed from the list.

### *TNP Admission*

Once Skillnet Ireland eligibility and programme timetable is confirmed, the prospective TNP student is offered a place on the programme.

On acceptance of their place, they are emailed the programme timetable, with the necessary information needed to attend the first day of their programme.

The following student details are forwarded to the contracted lead tutor

- Name
- Email address

- Contact number
- Employer company
- List of modules enrolled on

The TNP student's place is secured once the first instalment of their fees is paid, on any date before the programme commences.

The TNP student is permitted to postpone their enrolment to a later date, provided that they continue to meet Skillnet Ireland's eligibility criteria.

### EAP Admission

Prospective EAP students are invited to attend an interview. Where possible interviews are held in the venue chosen to host the programme.

The following is required to be presented at interview:

- CV.
- Photo identification.
- Proof of address.
- Evidence of social welfare payment and/or evidence confirming unemployment status.
- Evidence of previous modules (if applicable).

Prospective student completes various items of paperwork and a short comprehension test, based upon their understanding of a health-care related article. These are handed to the EAP interviewer before the prospective student begins interview.

The EAP interviewer records the results using LHP Skillnet's Interview Questionnaire. This document employs an objective point-scoring system, organised into 17 categories. Sample categories include: 'Punctuality', 'Verbal Communication' and 'Fitness to Practice'.

Feedback on interview performance is given to each prospective student immediately along with a timeline for when to expect the formal outcome.

The unsuccessful are informed. Where a decision was made based on literacy or language challenges, details of support services are provided. They are informed of their right to appeal the decision.

Successful applicants are notified, and a deadline is given, by which time they must accept their place on the programme. If they fail to accept their place by the deadline, the offer can be rescinded. On acceptance of their place, the same procedures apply to the EAP student as



the TNP student.

The EAP student is permitted to postpone their enrolment to another programme, subject to availability and provided that they continue to meet Skillnet Ireland's eligibility criteria, within the same calendar year. If the EAP student wants to return in the following year, they must begin the admissions process again.

### Garda Vetting

EAP students complete an invitation to Garda vetting and are given written details on the vetting process (including timeline of 6-8 weeks for completion).

The Administration Team screen all vetting forms to ensure their complete and accurate completion.

Student details are submitted for Garda vetting, following their first day of the programme.

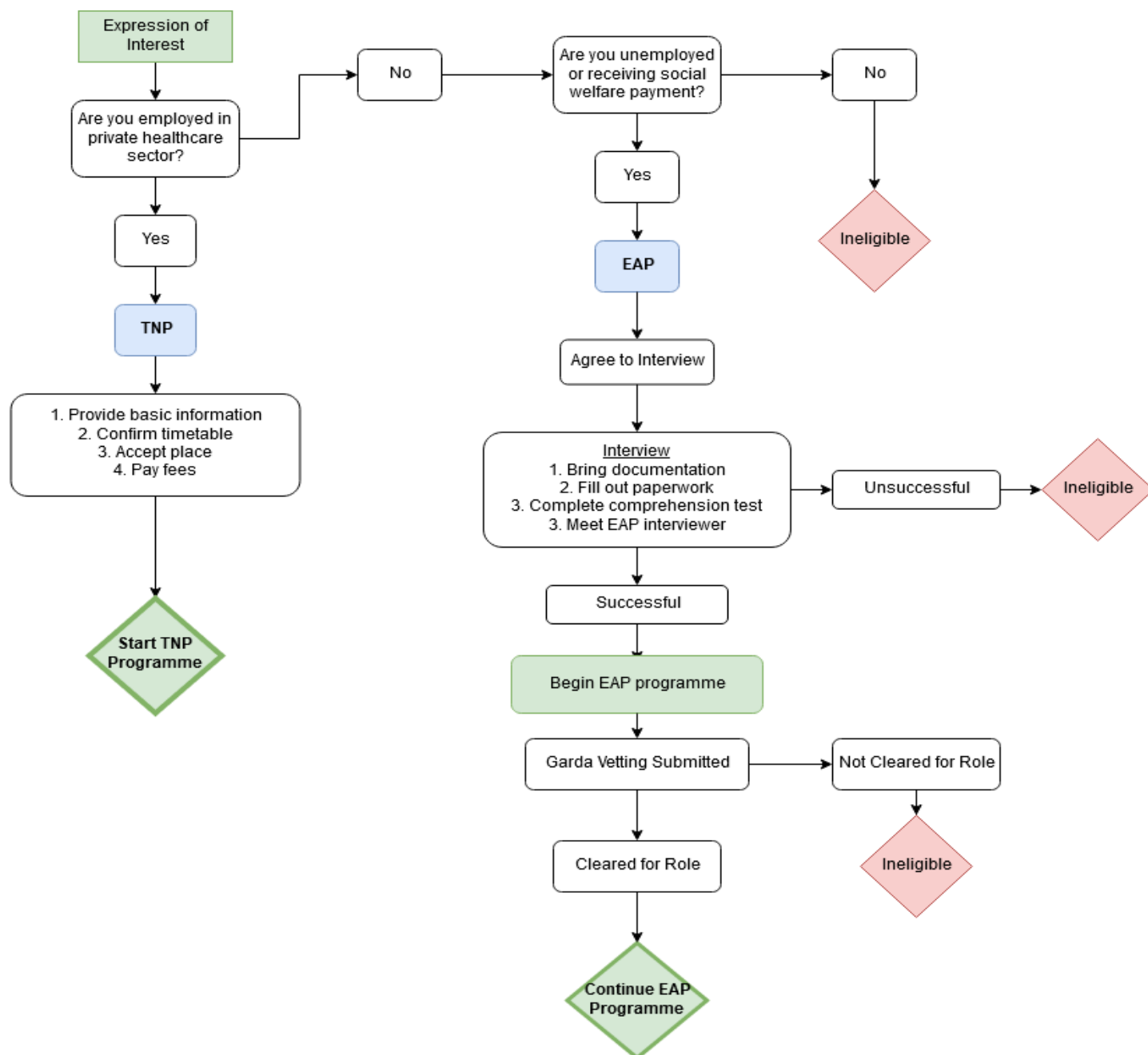
Where a student receives Garda clearance they are issued with a copy of their disclosure and an accompanying Public Insurance Liabilities letter for the purpose of work placement.

Where there are cases pending featured on the disclosure, the student's place on the programme will be suspended until such a time as all outstanding cases have been concluded. Once concluded, the vetting process will begin again.

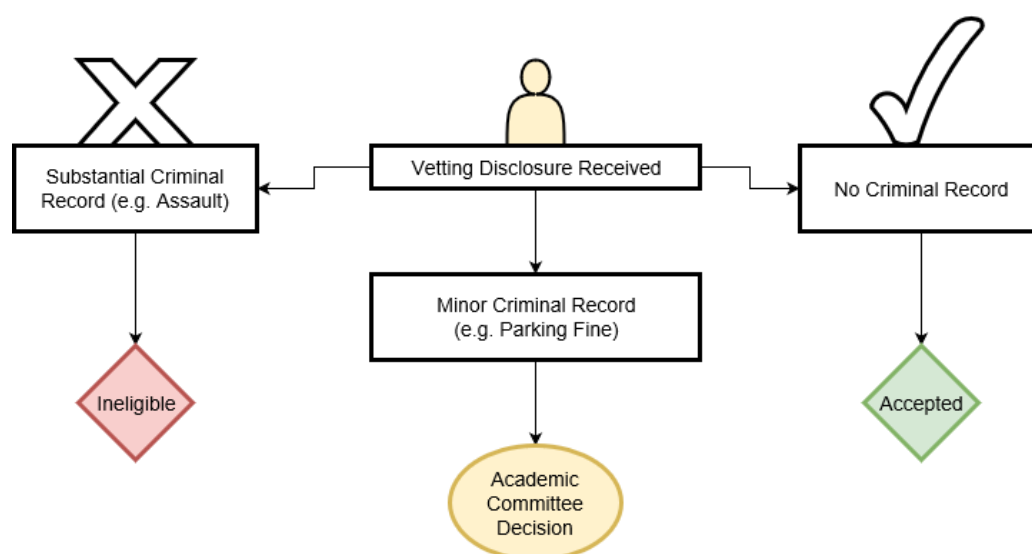
In line with our Policy for Admissions, where there are convictions for minor infractions, the case is referred to the Academic Committee for review and a decision as to whether to allow the student to continue the programme. Where there are convictions for substantial crimes, the student will be automatically expelled from the programme.

The details of every Garda vetting disclosure are kept private and confidential, in line with our Policy for Information and Data Management. It is the student's responsibility to share their Garda vetting disclosure with the work-placement.

## Admissions



## Garda Vetting



## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Information and Data Management Policy for Access, Transfer and Progression
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Procedure for Applicant Appeals
Supporting Documents	
Reference Documents/Resources	

## 3.7 Procedure for Admissions Appeals

Associated Policy	Policy for Admissions		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure outlines the steps involved in appealing a decision by LHP Skillnet to exclude a prospective student from a QQI-programme, where s/he feels that their application for admission has not been dealt with fairly or equitably. There are only two grounds for appeal that will be considered:

- a. An allegation that the steps outlined in LHP Skillnet's *Procedure for Admissions* were substantially neglected.
- b. An allegation that the information provided as part of the application process was misinterpreted by LHP Skillnet.

### Responsibilities

The prospective student is responsible for

- a. During the initial admissions phase, providing LHP Skillnet with a clear and accurate summary of the details required by the *Procedure for Admissions*, as well as any information that might not be directly asked for, which is nonetheless a predictable factor in the decision-making process.
- b. After being denied admission, providing justifiable grounds upon which an appeal can be made, according to the criteria established above, and in line with the steps provided below.

The Network Manager is responsible for appointing an impartial analyst from the Academic Committee to review the appeal, and for taking account of the recommendation arising therefrom in delivering their final decision.

The impartial analyst is responsible for reviewing the case and then communicating their recommendation to the Network Manager.

## Procedure

### Appellant

The appeal must be made in writing by the appellant and addressed to the Network Manager within five working days of the date of the original decision.

The letter of appeal should state in detail the grounds for the appeal and be accompanied by relevant supporting documentation.

### Assessment of Appeal

The appeal will be considered impartially by a member of the Academic Committee on the proviso that they were not involved in making the original decision. The function of their review is to ensure that the rules were applied fairly, and in accordance with the steps outlined in the *Procedure for Admissions*.

The *Procedure for Admissions Appeals* cannot set aside the rules for applicants who appeal for special treatment.

In the majority of cases the appeal will be assessed on the basis of the written submission alone.

If necessary, the appellant may be contacted by either the Network Manager or impartial analyst for further information or to clarify points raised in the letter of appeal.

Unless exceptional circumstances arise (e.g. if requested further information or clarification has not been provided by the applicant) a decision will be communicated to the appellant by the Network Manager within 7 working days of the receipt of the appeal.

The decision communicated by the Network Manager is final.

If the appellant still feels aggrieved at the close of the admissions appeal process, they are informed that they may follow the steps outlined in our *Procedure for Complaints*.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Admissions
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Procedure for Admissions Procedure for Complaints Procedure for Disciplinary Action
Supporting Documents	
Reference Documents/Resources	

## **Procedures Relating to Policy for Staffing**

### **3.8 Procedure for Recruitment**

#### **3.8.1 Roles and Responsibilities of Tutors**

### **3.9 Procedure for Staff Development**

### **3.10 Procedure for Staff Management and Communication**

### **3.11 Procedure for Quality Assuring Tutors and Tutor Performance**

### **3.12 Procedure for Supports for Tutors**

## 3.8 Procedure for Recruitment

Associated Policy	Policy on Staffing		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure outlines the steps in place to ensure that we attract and employ the best possible candidates to fulfil the designated roles. It is our policy to contract tutors who have the requisite knowledge, skills, and experience to deliver, assess, evaluate, and administer our programmes to a high standard and provide the students with the required supports working on their own initiative with the support of the Network Manager and Network Administrator. At all times, we seek to ensure fair and equal opportunities for all.

### Responsibilities

The **Network Steering Group** (NSG) is responsible for evaluating the mini tenders and awarding contracts

The **Network Manager** is responsible for

- Publishing RFT on etenders
- Evaluating responses
- Maintaining the panel database
- Inducting tutor who have been awarded contracts

### Procedure

We use the e-tendering process to recruit tutors for the Healthcare Support Certificate

We draw up or review existing role description and selection criteria and issue a RFT (request for tender) on the eTenders website inviting applications for inclusion on our tutors panel which remains in place for one year.

Tutors who respond to our RFT are rated using our Panel Admission Criteria for Evaluating Tenders.

Based on how closely they match our selection criteria and any applicant who scores over 700 on the scale is deemed suitable and is added to our panel of tutors.

We invite members of the panel to apply to tender for the deliver specific courses as they are scheduled (referred to as our 'mini' tender)

Applications from members of the panel are rated and tutors selected to deliver course (or part of courses) based on their rating.

We select a suitable tutor on the basis of:

- Training/qualifications (tutors recruited *must have* qualifications and experience appropriate to our agreed scope of provision)
- Experience

If we select a tutor from the Panel to deliver a programme who has not delivered training for LHP Skillnet previously, we constitute an interview panel with a minimum of two interviewers to include the Network Manager/Programme Leader and interview the tutor.

New tutors will join a lead tutor on a course and deliver 2 or 3 modules, working in collaboration with the contracted lead tutor (see *Procedure for Supports for tutors*).

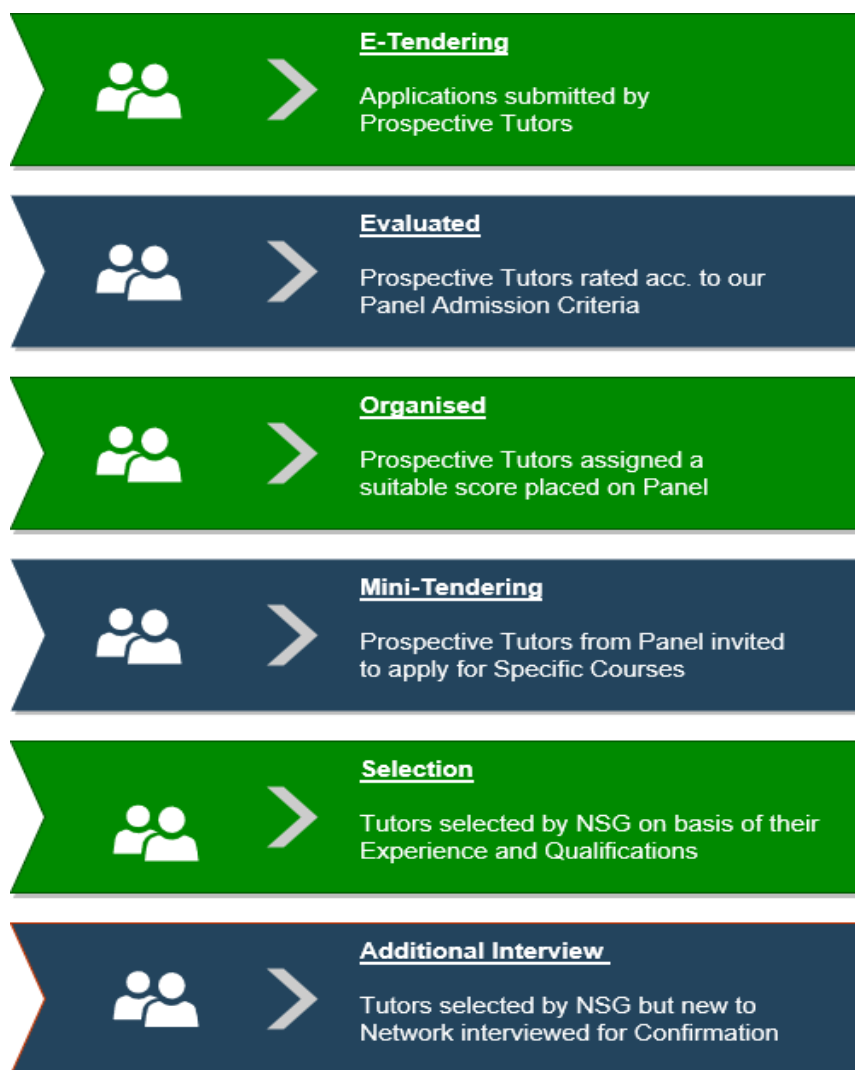
Mini-tenders are evaluated by the NSG using our *Criteria for Evaluating Mini-Tender*

We contact two referees and get verbal and written references as part of the tendering process for new tutors

We ensure that relevant employment contracts are agreed and signed

All new members of staff are given a comprehensive induction by the Network Manager on commencement of employment. Induction includes information about our Quality Assurance System and the inductee's role in implementing it.





*Tutor Recruitment Process*

## Related Documents

Related Policies	
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Procedure for Staff Development Procedure for Staff Management Procedure for Quality Assuring Tutors and Tutor Performance Procedure for Supports for Tutors
Supporting Documents	Panel Admission Criteria for Evaluating Tenders Tutor Handbook Criteria for Evaluating Mini-Tenders Statement of Required Qualifications for Tutors (RFT) Interview Assessment Form Tutor Contracts Tutor Induction Checklist Tutor Documentation Checklist
Reference Documents/Resources	<i>Skillnet Ireland's Procurement Guidelines</i>

### 3.8.1 Roles and Responsibilities of Tutor

Reports to	Network Manager		
Tenure	Duration of the Awarded Programme		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

#### Purpose of the Role

The Lead Tutor is required to deliver, assess, evaluate, and administer our QQI Level 5 Major Award in Healthcare Support to a high standard and in line with our validated programme.

#### Key Duties and Responsibilities

All contracted tutors are required to:

- Be familiar with QQI's Assessment Guidelines and our quality assurance system, particularly those procedures relating to assessment
- Use LHP Skillnet logo/branding on all presentations and handouts
- Confirm the timetable with the Network Manager before the start of the course
- Ensure the smooth running of the course
- Contact the office in a timely fashion to request and arrange collection of the necessary equipment for each module (e.g. collection of practical case for Care Skills, video camera for skills demonstrations).
- Induct the students at the beginning of the course, distribute the student handbooks (including students on stand-alone modules) and get declaration forms signed to say the student handbook has been read. Include in your induction an overview of LHP Skillnet and ensure the students are aware of who we are and how their course is funded/part funded.
- Ensure that classes are delivered according to the timetable.
- Give advanced notice of non -availability for classes/modules. Where we are unable to arrange cover (particularly when short notice is given) it may result in your timetable being amended to make up the missed day. This should be avoided where possible.

- Monitor attendance and keep accurate attendance records
- Submit an electronic copy of the signing in sheet for each module to the Network Administrator within 1 week of the end of the modules
- Facilitate students in making up for missed classes
- Maintain evidence that assignment briefs are distributed and submitted on time
- Provide feedback to students and record evidence of feedback signed by tutor and student (if student is unavailable, feedback must be emailed in a timely manner and indicated on the assessment brief the date the student was emailed)
- Submit an electronic copy of the Component Result Summary Sheet from each module to the Network Administrator within 1 week of marking assignments. Please use the excel template as provide by the network administrator at the beginning of the course. This must only be submitted when all students have submitted their assessments for the module, and all have been marked.
- Advise students about the format, layout, and submission of their assessments
- Ensure that students fully understand assessment guidelines and assessment briefs
- Be familiar with both the Student Handbook and the Tutor Handbook
- Facilitate the resubmission of course work as required
- Provide us with feedback and contribute to course reviews
- Oversee the election of 2 class reps at the beginning of the course and meet the reps as necessary and minute the meetings
- Undertake module evaluations
- Support the Job Seeker students through their clinical placement by getting regular updates from the student and maintain a log of their progress. If a student is unable to source a placement, please notify the office as soon as possible where further assistance will be given.
- Be available to students via email contact outside of class times – you will be provided with an LHP Skillnet email address for the duration of your contract.
- Prepare assessment portfolios for Internal Verification
- Make yourself available if the External Authenticator needs to contact you
- Raise any concerns with the Network Manager as the earliest possible stage
- Provide an academic reference for each student at the end of their course

## 3.9 Procedure for Staff Development

Associated Policy	Policy for Staffing		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the steps taken by LHP Skillnet in developing the professional expertise of staff, including (but not limited to) the contracted tutors and members of the Administration Team.

### Responsibilities

The **Network Manager** is responsible for creating a workplace environment that supports professional development.

The **staff** are responsible for ensuring they meet the professional standards of the role they are employed/contracted to do.

### Procedure

We encourage all members of staff to engage in Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

in the event that skills- or knowledge-deficiencies are identified (whether by the Network Manager or the staff member in deficit), a way to meet those training needs is discussed and encouraged

A percentage of our annual budget is allocated to fund staff training and CPD. This funding can go toward organising internal training events e.g. a workshop on the implementation of our QAS.

Members of the Administrative Team are required to attend specific external events in line with their duties on Sonrai (Skillnet Ireland's database).

Contracted tutors are invited to attend training events organised by LHP Skillnet where relevant, but insofar as they are contracted to deliver programmes in full, they are ultimately responsible for their own CPD.

Skillnet Ireland assists in providing professional training for Network Managers, by

- a. organising seminars on an on-going basis as part of a Professional Development Programme (PDP).
- b. hosting regional meetings every year to facilitate Network Managers to come together to share best practice advice and discuss current issues.
- c. having a Certification Group (CG) in place for Network Managers who have a particular interest in certification. The current Network Manager Carmel Kelly is a member of the Certification Group (CG)

The Network Manager attends all relevant information events/briefings organised by awarding bodies e.g. Quality and Qualifications Ireland, Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland, the Irish Heart Foundation, etc.

At the end of each programme and as part of the Programme Board's annual review, we

- a. review general staff training needs.
- b. review contract tutors' performance.
- c. ask tutors to reflect on their own professional practice and appraise their performance.

We encourage all staff and particularly tutors to network (formally and informally). This is done mainly by collaborating on programmes.

We review our External Authentication reports to check if there is a need for additional training in relation to assessment and/or Internal Verification.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Staffing
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Procedure for Recruitment Procedure for Staff Management and Communication Procedure for Quality Assuring Tutors and Tutor Performance Procedure for Supports for Tutors
Supporting Documents	
Reference Documents/Resources	

## 3.10 Procedure for Staff Management and Communication

Associated Policy	Policy for Staffing		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the steps by which LHP Skillnet monitors staff performance, in order to evaluate every individual's strengths and weaknesses. Our procedure ensures that professional improvement can be implemented as quickly and respectfully as possible, empowering staff to perform their duties to a high standard.

### Responsibilities

The **Administrative Team** and **tutors** are responsible for consistently sharing information with each other.

The **Administrative Team** is responsible for reporting on the performance of the tutor to the Network Manager, especially with reference to student feedback.

The **Network Manager** is responsible for oversight of the staff's weaknesses and strengths.

### Procedure

We employ a range of formal and informal methods for communicating with staff, to maintain a consistent exchange of information. We use:

- a. Outlook OneDrive Shared folders,
- b. Dropbox
- c. Outlook tutor/office email accounts
- d. Telephone conversations
- e. Skype conversations
- f. Face-to-face meetings

The Administrative Team maintains a high level of personal contact with the tutors at all stages of programme delivery. If there are issues that cannot be dealt with by the Administrative Team, they are escalated to the attention of the Network Manager.

LHP Skillnet collects and analyses students' and other relevant persons' feedback on the performance of our tutors.

LHP Skillnet provides collated, structured feedback to the tutors on their strengths and on the areas, they are required to improve. We monitor areas earmarked for improvement and provide support to tutors not meeting the required standard.

LHP Skillnet provides every tutor with the Tutor Handbook. This document also emphasises the need to meet professional standards, the benefits of CPD, and the necessity of reacting positively to critical feedback.

New tutors are required to report directly to the Network Manager/Lead Tutor at the end of each class (for their first module) and at the end of each module thereafter to give feedback on progress and to highlight issues of concern.

All members of staff are given a copy of our Quality Assurance Manual. We communicate updates to our QAS throughout the year if significant.

All staff are expected to contribute to continuous quality improvement. This is done formally at the end of each programme and during the Programme Board's annual review. Recommendations are discussed, validated, agreed and then incorporated into programmes.

All programme/module-specific information is available to tutors in print and via the OneDrive Shared folder in advance of programme delivery. This includes module descriptor, assessment plans, assessment briefs, and marking guidelines. This ensures consistency across all programmes; whichever tutor delivers the training.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Staffing Policy for Programmes of Education and Training
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Procedure for Staff Development Procedure for Quality Assuring Tutors and Tutor Performance Procedure for Supports for Tutors
Supporting Documents	
Reference Documents/Resources	

### 3.11 Procedure for Quality Assuring Tutors and Tutor Performance

Associated Policy	Policy on Staffing		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

#### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure sets out the steps involved in monitoring and evaluating tutor performance to ensure delivery of high-quality programmes of education.

#### Responsibilities

The **Network Manager** is responsible for

- Inducting all tutors
- Ongoing monitoring of tutor performance
- Guidance and support on continuing professional development

The **Tutor** is responsible for engaging in constructive discussions with the Network Manager regarding their performance

#### Procedure

Each new tutor is provided with a copy of our Tutor Handbook (updated annually). This gives a comprehensive overview of our training operation and all our tutors need to familiarise themselves with their roles and responsibilities in delivering a high-quality programme for the students.

All Tutors are inducted by the Network Manager and this involves a detailed face-to-face meeting and discussion. At the end of the induction session, the tutor is required to sign-off on having read the Tutor Handbook and being satisfied that they have received a comprehensive and appropriate induction.

The performance of the tutor is monitored regularly by the Network Manager using input from the following;

- Student feedback and Class representatives' feedback
- Member company feedback



- Assessment Results
- Student Attendance and Retention rates
- Authentication Reports
- Personal observation
- Review of one-to-one meetings with students
- Progression to employment rates (for EAP students)

We advise, support and encourage all tutors to take ownership for continuing professional development.

Upon completion of any relevant CPD activity, we encourage tutors to explore the opportunities to disseminate learning to other tutors through the Network Manager.

If the Network Manager agrees that there would be benefit in a wider circulation or follow up, she makes appropriate arrangements e.g. circulating relevant resources, a virtual meeting, and inclusion on the website.

We use the expertise available within our organisation to support our CPD activities using peer-based training whenever possible

We encourage our tutors to work collaboratively with each other to share good practice. To facilitate this, we use cloud-based file sharing software (Dropbox) and organise virtual meetings on an occasional basis.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy on Staffing
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Procedure for Staff Management Procedure for Staff Development Procedure for Staff Support
Supporting Documents	Tutor Handbook
Reference Documents/Resources	

## 3.12 Procedure for Supports for Tutors

## Purpose of the Procedure

Associated Policy	Policy for Staffing		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the steps involved in providing the tutors, and especially the new recruits, with the necessary professional and academic supports they might need.

## Responsibilities

The **Administrative Team** are responsible for engaging directly with the tutors to facilitate the smooth delivery of each ongoing programme.

The **tutors** are responsible for communicating to either the Administrative Team or the Network Manager what they believe is necessary for them to exercise their duties as well as possible.

The **Network Manager** is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the tutors and for considering what additional supports they may need.

## Procedure

Every tutor is supplied with a Tutor Handbook, in which the major elements of their duties are described.

Newly appointed tutors receive a comprehensive induction from the Network Manager as well as routine advisory sessions for an open period, depending on the tutor's confidence and competency.

Newly appointed tutors are supported by more experienced tutors through a 'buddy' system.

In the event of an unscheduled tutor absence, the attendant Lead or Support Tutor is obliged to make themselves available. If neither Lead nor Support Tutor are able to deliver a session, the Network Manager arranges cover by appointing a replacement tutor from our tutor panel.

All tutors are encouraged to make regular contact with the Network Manager, to update the

latter on their progress.

The Administrative Team provides administrative support to tutors where required.

The tutors have access to all files and documents pertinent to the running of their programme, through the use of the cloud-based OneDrive Shared folder.

If the tutor is suitably qualified, there exist opportunities for progression to the post of Lead Tutor and membership on the Programme Board.

Tutors not performing to the expected standards are notified by the Network Manager. In general, the Network Manager will deal with deficiencies on an informal basis through discussion, counselling and appropriate assistance in the first instance.

Following the informal counselling stage, if the tutor continues to fail to meet the required standards then the tutors' contract could be terminated.

Tutors are provided with a comprehensive documentation pack prior to the commencement of the programme (see Tutor Documentation checklist for details)

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Staffing
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Procedure for Staff Development Procedure for Staff Management and Communication Procedure for Quality Assuring Tutors and Tutor Performance
Supporting Documents	Tutor Handbook Tutor Induction Checklist
Reference Documents/Resources	

## **Procedures Relating to Policy on Teaching and Learning**

3.13 Procedure for Monitoring Teaching and Learning

3.14 Procedure for Tutor, Student, and Stakeholder Feedback

3.15 Procedure for Student Supports and Resources

3.16 Procedure for Complaints

3.17 Procedure for Disciplinary Action

3.18 Procedure for Facilitating Diversity

3.19 Procedure for Quality Assuring Physical Premises, Equipment, and Facilities

3.20 Procedure for Quality Assuring Off-Campus Learning (Work Placement)

### 3.13 Procedure for Monitoring Teaching and Learning

Associated Policy	Teaching and Learning		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

#### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure sets out the steps taken to monitor programmes, programme materials, student supports, tutor performance, the learning environment and the quality of the learning experience

#### Responsibilities

**Network Manager** is responsible for induction and support to tutors. Regular contact with tutors for updates on programme progression. Review of all feedback pertaining to the full programme

**Tutor** is responsible for the provision of feedback in line with tutor guidelines, full programme review incorporating feedback from associated parties

**Student** is responsible for evaluating the teaching and learning associated with their programme

**Stakeholders** are responsible for providing feedback on students' performance in the clinical setting.

**Programme Board** is responsible for conducting an end of year programme review which includes review of feedback and the development of a programme improvement plan which is presented to the quality board to be reviewed and actioned.

#### Procedure

We internally monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching, assessment and learning primarily by accessing data collected from module reviews, annual programme reviews, student surveys and reports on completion, retention, and progression rates. We review this data for trends and themes and highlight areas which will be the focus for improvement.

We collect, collate and analyse feedback data from tutors, students, and other stakeholders on an ongoing basis

We monitor tutor performance and effectiveness using student feedback, tutors' feedback and evaluation of their performance, feedback from external authenticators and member company feedback

Tutor evaluation forms are reviewed and summarised after each programme. These questionnaires include a self-reflection on the tutors' own performance and overall programme effectiveness.

We have an annual programme review where we look collectively at all feedback pertaining to the validated programme. Programme development plans are devised at this meeting and submitted to the Academic Committee for consideration.

We liaise with member companies including placement host member companies to get feedback on the quality and effectiveness of the programme.

We carry out a comprehensive review of our programmes using an external expert every five years as part of our self-evaluation. The outcome of this review is detailed in a report that feeds into our re-validation procedure.

We facilitate the sharing of examples of best practice and support the use of innovative training and learning methodologies amongst tutors through the use of shared files, virtual meetings, and at our annual programme board.

We ensure that the modes of teaching and learning we use are appropriate to the programme context and objectives.

Tutors check-in regularly with their students to check that the students fully understand the learning objectives of their programme.

We encourage our tutors to use an appropriate mix of training methodologies e.g. lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, skills-practice etc.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Procedure for Tutor, Student, and Stakeholder Feedback Procedure for Student Supports and Resources Procedure for Complaints Procedure for Disciplinary Action Procedure for Facilitating Diversity Procedure for
Supporting Documents	<u>Tutor Handbook</u> <u>Student Handbook</u>
Reference Documents/Resources	<i>QQI Quality Assuring Assessment, Guidelines for Providers, Revised 2013,</i>

## 3.14 Procedure for Tutor, Student, and Stakeholder Feedback

Associated Policy	Teaching and Learning		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure sets out the steps of how LHP Skillnet collect, consider, value and utilise feedback for continuous quality improvement.

### Responsibilities

**Network Manager** is responsible for induction and support to tutors. Regular contact with tutors for updates on programme progression. Review of all feedback pertaining to the full programme

**Tutor** is responsible for the provision of feedback in line with tutor guidelines, full programme review incorporating feedback from associated parties

**Student** is responsible for evaluating the teaching and learning associated with their programme

**Stakeholders** are responsible for providing feedback on students' performance in the clinical setting.

**Programme Board** is responsible for conducting an end of year programme review which includes review of feedback and the development of a programme improvement plan which is presented to the quality board to be reviewed and actioned.

### Procedure

#### Procedure for Tutor Feedback

- Tutors are provided with the contact details of the Network Manager including email,



telephone and mobile number and are encouraged to discuss any concerns or issues throughout the duration of the programme. Written and verbal feedback are welcomed

- Tutors are requested to provide feedback on induction and in line with the tutor handbook. Following the completion of a module the tutor will review and evaluate the module along with the Network Manager.
- The tutor will complete an End of Module Evaluation Form which includes a self-evaluation.
- Tutor will liaise with relevant Stakeholders who provide work placements for students to obtain feedback on the students' performance
- Tutor will attend an Annual Programme Review where collated feedback from tutor, student, Stakeholders, Internal Verifier and External Authenticator is presented. Collaboratively from this review, agreed improvements are framed in the form of a Course Improvement Plan. This Plan is presented to the Quality Board for approval of changes

### **Procedure for Students Feedback**

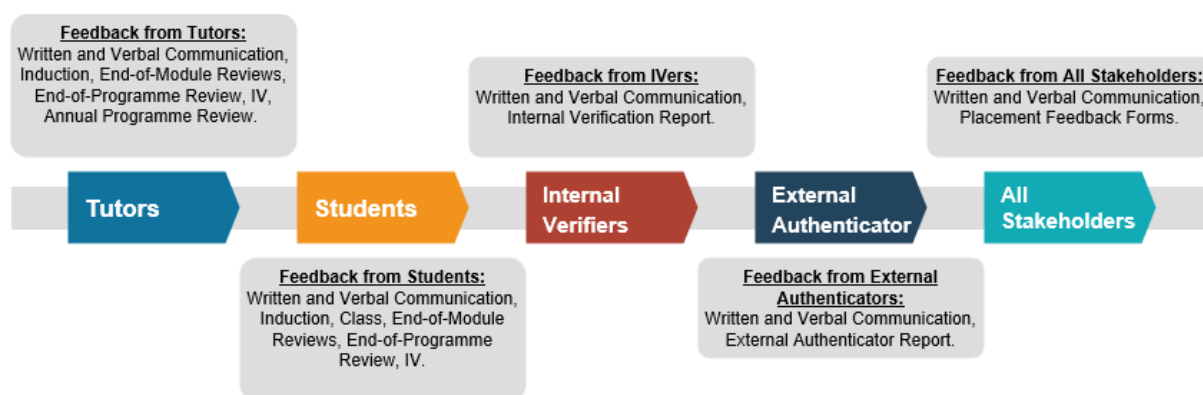
- Students on induction are informed of the need and benefit for feedback throughout the programme. Both verbal and written feedback are welcomed.
- They are provided with contact details for Tutor, Network Administrators and Network Manager and are encouraged to feedback on their experience throughout the programme.
- It is LHP Skillnet's aim to resolve any concerns immediately at local level by the tutor and if it cannot be resolved at local level support from the Network Manager is sought.
- At the end of every module the student will provide anonymous written feedback on all aspects of teaching and learning associated with the module.
- The tutor will assess the student feedback and report back to the Network Manager for further discussion.
- All hard copies of feedback are submitted at the end of the programme.
- Students are given an opportunity to feedback to the Network Manager and/administration Team independent of the tutor at the end of the programme.

- The student will complete the End of Programme Evaluation Form

### Procedure for Stakeholders Feedback

- Stakeholders who engage with LHP Skillnet are provided with the contact details of the relevant Tutor, Network Administrator and Network Manager. Feedback is encouraged at any stage throughout their association.
- Written feedback regarding student performance on placement is sought from the Stakeholder.
- A Member company evaluation form is also provided for written feedback

An Annual Programme Review is held where collated feedback from tutor, student, Stakeholders, Internal Verifier and External Authenticator is presented to the programme board. Collaboratively from this review, agreed improvements are framed in the form of a Course Improvement Plan. This Plan is presented to the Quality Board for approval of changes.



### Monitoring through Feedback

### Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Teaching & Learning
Supporting Procedures and Processes	
Supporting Documents	<u>Tutor Handbook</u> <u>Student Handbook</u>
Reference Documents/Resources	<i>QQI Quality Assuring Assessment, Guidelines for Providers, Revised 2013,</i>

## 3.15 Procedure for Student Supports and Resources

Associated Policy	Teaching and Learning		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

LHP Skillnet is committed to providing support and resources to all students to enhance their experience and provide them the best possible opportunity to successfully complete their study.

### Responsibilities

**Network Manager** is responsible for

- ensuring adequate and effective student supports and resource.
- assessment of these resources and implementation of new supports/resources when gaps exist.

**Tutor** is responsible for the provision of ongoing advice, support and direction both in class and outside.

**Administration Team** is responsible for administrative support.

### Procedure

#### Network Manager

Ongoing review of supports/resources available to the students

Incorporates student support/resources in the budget and reviews these supports/resources at programme board meetings

Inducts tutors to the supports and resources available to the students and actively seeks feedback and/or further propositions that may enhance student supports/resources.

#### Administration Team

Process associated paperwork for registration including Garda Vetting forms.

Provide students with insurance letters and confirmation letters relevant to the course

Support students who may have administrative concerns

### Tutor

Induct students at the start of the programme, introduce students to LHP Skillnet, the awarding body and to the programme. Provide a contact email and telephone number

Provide students with a Student Handbook that details the supports and resources available to them. It includes information on what to do should they require any specific support.

Presents students with timetables, assessment brief, reference list/supporting material and administration detail along with a textbook to support learning.

Deliver an academic workshop to support students in researching, writing, assignment layout, referencing/plagiarism and presentation of work.

Affords reasonable accommodation for assessment e.g. provision of a reader or extra time for exams or assignment completion.

Accommodates special needs to ensure that students who may need additional support have the opportunity to access and benefit from the courses insofar as this possible

Conduct one-to-one meetings if a student has a particular concern or issue they wish to raise in confidence. The tutor records details of these meetings in a **Tutor and Student Meeting Record** which is submitted to the Network Manager and details are recorded on the student record (if issues are considered significant by the tutor)

Offer compassionate consideration where help and guidance on administrative or personal issues (e.g. delay an assignment because of sickness, bereavement) is required. Tutors do all they can to ensure that students succeed while meeting the academic standards of our courses

Encourage student to interact with other students as a source of support and to work in groups as well as individually. Students guided to elect a representative who can provide feedback on supports/resources provided.

Facilitates referrals to support agencies e.g. NALA for students who may have issues with literacy, ETB ESOL for English language support.

Support students and work with them to find suitable work placements if necessary (having informed them that it is part of their learning to source a suitable placement)

Advises students who seek guidance on future plans

### Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Teaching & Learning
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Procedure for Providing Reasonable Accommodation
Supporting Documents	Tutor and Student Meeting Record
Reference Documents/Resources	<i>QQI Quality Assuring Assessment, Guidelines for Providers, Revised 2013,</i>

## 3.16 Procedure for Complaints

Associated Policy	Complaints		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure outlines the steps to be taken when a complaint is made under the *Policy for Complaints*. Complaints are resolved informally where possible.

Depending on the nature of the complaint, the steps taken by LHP Skillnet are outlined in different procedural documents. If the nature of the complaint is such that it relates to either *academic misconduct* or *professional misconduct*, then the steps outlined by the *Disciplinary Procedure* must be followed.

### Responsibilities

The **Academic Committee** is responsible for making a decision on complaints if the issue is escalated upwards by the Network Manager.

The **Network Manager** deals with complaints in the first instance. If a complaint is considered sufficiently severe, the Network Manager can escalate the issue upwards to the Academic Committee.

The **complainant** is responsible for initiating the process within the defined timeline and for providing any evidence in support of their complaint

### Procedure

#### Informal complaints

An informal complaint can be made either face-to-face, via the telephone, or via email and should be raised with the subject of the complaint as soon as an issue arises.

The issue raised is discussed between the two parties in the hopes of a mutually agreed

resolution.

If the complainant feels unable to raise or discuss the issue with the subject of the complaint, the Network Manager (or tutor if the issue is between two students) can mediate informal communication.

No records are required where the informal complaint is satisfactorily resolved.

Where an informal complaint is raised during a pre-scheduled tutor/student meeting, the tutor may document the nature of the informal complaint and the satisfactory outcome. This does not constitute a formal complaint and will not be investigated further.

Where a satisfactory resolution is not found, the complainant can initiate a formal complaint.

### Formal complaints

#### Step 1

- Formal complaints are submitted to the Network Manager in writing within 5 days of the issue arising. Students must use the *Student Complaints Form*.
- To be deemed a valid submission, the complaint must be factual, specific, detailed and supported by evidence. It must include the complainant's name, and all information relevant to the complaint such as dates, location and details of witnesses. It must also include any details of efforts made to resolve the issue.
- Where the submission is deemed invalid, the Network Manager notifies the complainant in writing of the decision including the reasons and evidence.

#### Step 2

- The Network Manager acknowledges receipt of the valid complaint as soon as possible.
- The Network Manager conducts the initial investigation whereby they
  1. Inform the subject of the complaint of the complaint's details and invites them to submit a response, if applicable.
  2. Make contact with the complainant to establish facts and gain clarity regarding details within the complaint.
  3. Arrange and conduct a meeting with all parties involved including witnesses. A member of the Administration Team takes notes.
  4. Circulate a summary of the meeting's discussion to relevant parties for

confirmation of accuracy.

5. Prepares a report of the initial investigation.
6. If considered sufficiently grave, the Network Manager escalates the issue to the Academic Committee or Network Steering Group, as appropriate, for their decision.

#### Step 4

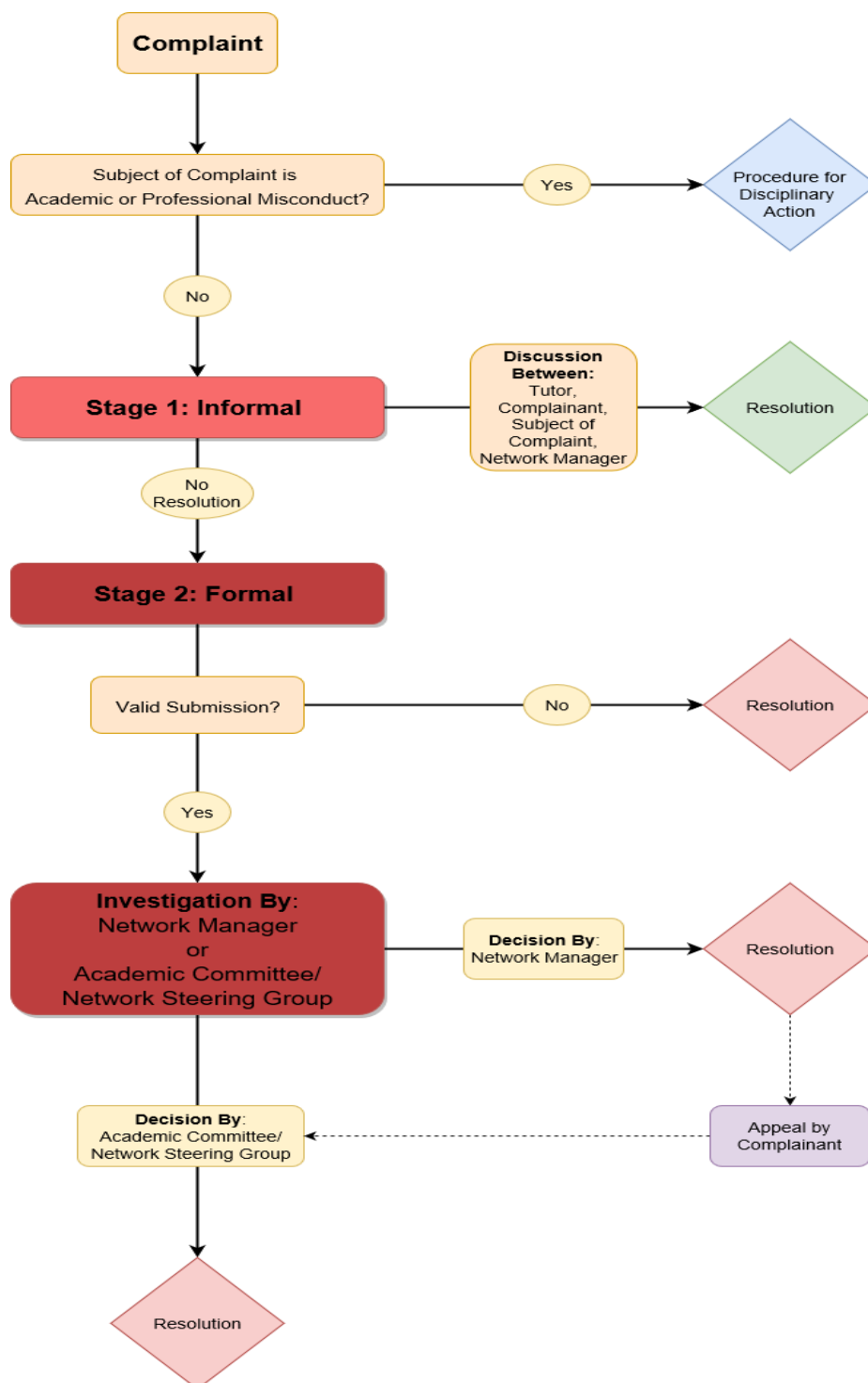
- The Network Manager writes to all relevant parties to inform them of
  1. The findings of the investigation
  2. The decision made by the Network Manager/the Academic Committee/Network Steering Group
  3. The reason for that decision
  4. The actions required by any party
  5. The right to and means of appealing the decision of the Network Manager
  6. The Decision of the Academic Committee or the Network steering Group is final

#### Step 5 Appeal Network Managers Decision

- Appeals must be made within 5 working days of receipt of outcome
- Appeals are reviewed by the Academic Committee/Network Steering Group within 30 days and a decision is made.

### **Complaints Flow Chart**





## Related Documents

Related Policies	
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Disciplinary Procedure
Supporting Documents	Students Complaints Form Complaints Log
Reference Documents/Resources	QQI Quality Assuring Assessment, Guidelines for Providers, Revised 2013,

### 3.17 Procedure for Disciplinary Action

Associated Policy	Academic Good Practice Complaints		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

#### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure outlines the steps to be taken when dealing with an allegation of academic or professional misconduct.

**Academic misconduct** is defined in our *Policy for Academic Good Practice* and is said to occur if dishonesty characterises the conditions under which work is submitted/performed (e.g. plagiarism).

**Professional misconduct** relates to inappropriate behaviour between persons engaged with/by LHP Skillnet. The following are examples:

- aggressive behaviour, language, or body language
- threatening behaviour, language, or body language
- inappropriate behaviour or language
- bullying
- discrimination
- persistent poor timekeeping
- poor attendance,
- breach of confidentiality, or
- any other behaviours deemed inappropriate or unsuitable for the healthcare environment.

We evoke the right to implement our disciplinary procedures should any incident of misconduct occur. Any person found guilty of misconduct may be removed from the course/have contract withdrawn without refund or remuneration. The person will have the right to appeal.

## Responsibilities

- c) **Network Manager** is responsible for implementing the disciplinary procedure
- d) **Students/staff** are responsible for conducting themselves in a professional manner and for engaging in their studies/work ethically and honestly.

## Procedure

We deal with all allegations of professional or academic misconduct in accordance with procedures which satisfy the requirements of natural justice.

Nothing in these procedures prevents us from referring matters to An Garda Síochána where we consider this to be necessary.

While the accountability of students is primarily to their tutor and the Network Manager, disciplinary proceedings can be invoked by the tutor arising from an allegation by one student against another student.

Where circumstances warrant it, we may suspend a student/staff member pending the completion of inquiries without prejudice to the outcome of disciplinary procedures.

Where a disciplinary action results in the imposition of a sanction against the person, we note this fact on their record, and it will be taken into account by us in responding to requests for references if we deem it relevant and appropriate.

Allegations of professional or academic misconduct are dealt with through a staged process.

- Stage I – Informal
- Stage II – Formal (We initiate formal disciplinary procedures in the event of **serious** breaches of our code of conduct)
- Stage III – Appeal

### Stage I - Informal

- If we observe an incident of professional or academic misconduct, the staff member

concerned raises the matter with the individual with a view to resolving the issue informally.

- The tutor/staff member keeps a record of the incident and details of the agreed resolution.
- A verbal warning can be issued at this stage, advising that recurrence will result in escalation to stage II
- If informal efforts fail to resolve the issue satisfactorily or where there is a recurrence of a previous incident, we proceed to Stage II.

## Stage II – Formal

### Step 1

- The staff member concerned details in writing the alleged incident and forwards them to the Network Manager (*academic/professional misconduct form*).
- A student can lodge an allegation of professional misconduct against a tutor or staff member through the formal complaints procedure.
- To be deemed a valid submission, the allegation must be factual, specific, detailed and supported by evidence. It must include name of persons involved, and all information relevant to the allegation such as dates, location and details of witnesses. It must also include any details of efforts made to resolve the issue.
- Where the submission is deemed invalid, the Network Manager notifies the person making the allegation in writing of the decision including the reasons and evidence.

### Step 2

- The Network Manager acknowledges receipt of the valid submission as soon as possible.
- The Academic Committee is informed, and conflict of interest is sought.
- The Network Manager conducts the initial investigation whereby they

1. Inform the subject of the allegation of the details and nature of the allegation made and invites them to submit a response.
2. Make contact with the person making the allegation to establish facts or to gain clarity regarding details within the allegation, if required.
3. In the case of professional misconduct, arranges and conducts a meeting with all parties involved including witnesses. A member of the administration team attends the meeting to take notes.
4. Circulate a summary of the meeting's discussion to relevant parties for confirmation of accuracy.
5. In the case of academic misconduct, reviews the academic work or organises with a tutor independent of that student to review the academic work.
6. Prepare a report of the initial investigation and forwards it together with the allegation to the Academic Committee Chairperson.

### Step 3

- The Academic Committee meets to agree the findings and to determine a fair solution.

### **Possible outcomes**

- Written final warning with penalties indicated for recurrence

### Academic misconduct

- Repeat assessment (50% maximum awarded irrespective of the content)
- Fail module with an option to repeat module (at cost for TNP)
- Removal from the programme

### Professional misconduct

- Withdrawal or restriction of certain rights

- A requirement to pay compensation for any damage caused
- Moved to an alternative programme (in the case of conflict with one other individual). Cannot be considered if the incident effected a number of people
- Permanent exclusion of the student from the programme and any other programmes in the future
- Termination of staff contract

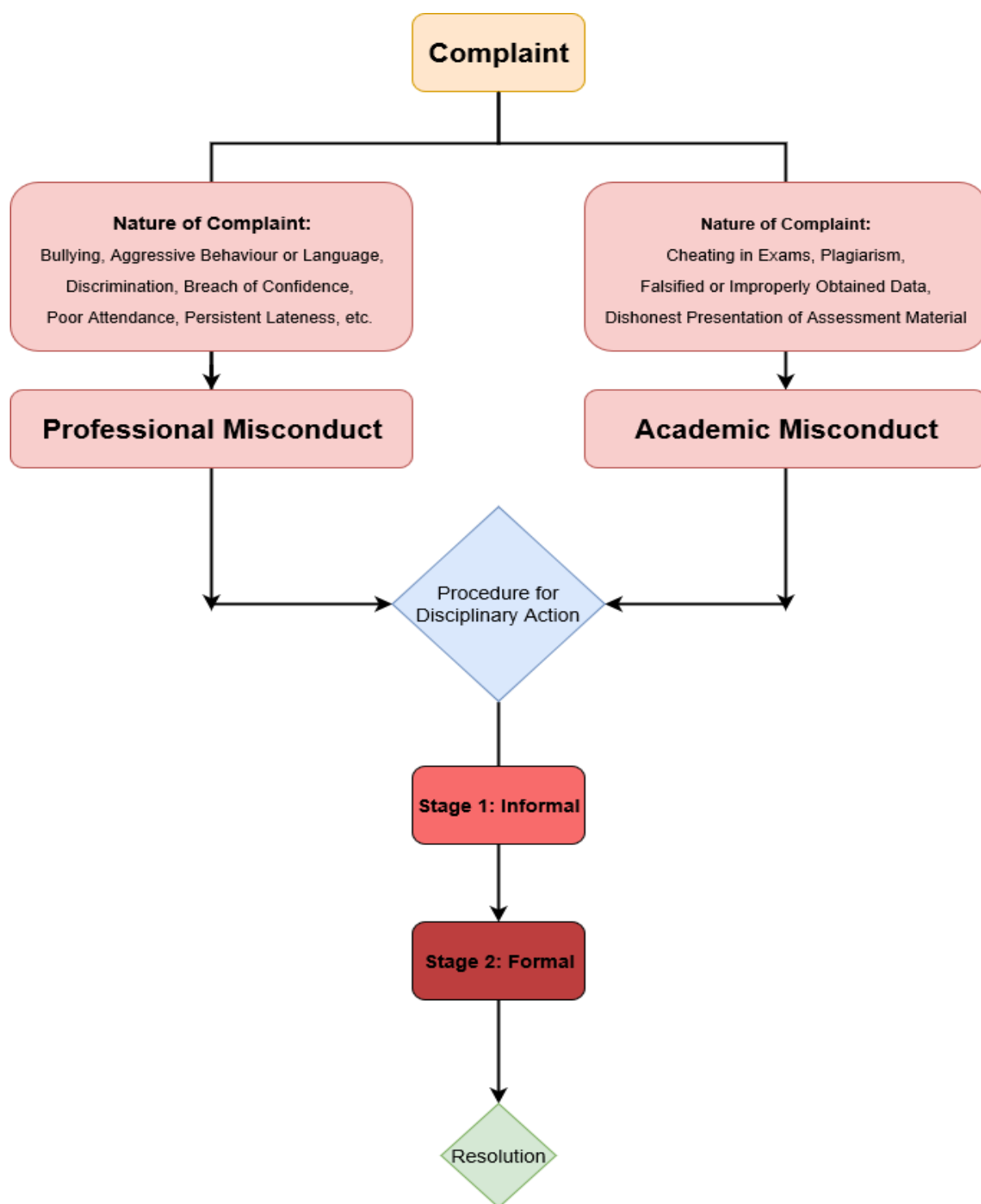
#### Step 4

- The Network Manager writes to all relevant parties to inform them of
  1. The findings of the investigation
  2. The decision made by the board
  3. The reason for that decision
  4. The actions required by any party
  5. The right to appeal the decision

#### **Stage 111 - Appeal**

The person may appeal the outcome of Stage II within 14 days by confirming his/her wish to appeal in writing to the Network Manager. The person must detail substantive grounds for appeal and submit evidence to support their appeal if appropriate.

#### **Disciplinary Action Flow Chart**



## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Appeals
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Procedure for Appeals
Supporting Documents	
Reference Documents/Resources	<i>QQI Quality Assuring Assessment, Guidelines for Providers, Revised 2013,</i>

## 3.18 Procedure for Facilitating Diversity

Associated Policy	Policy for Equality and Diversity		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the steps involved in promoting Equality and Diversity, while simultaneously prohibiting discrimination.

### Responsibilities

The **Network Steering Group** ensure that the principles of Equality and Diversity are promoted at the highest level of the organisation.

The **Academic Committee** oversees that the principles of Equality and Diversity are practically adopted into the delivery of our QQI programmes.

The **Network Manager** is responsible for effective operation of these procedures.

The **Administrative Team, tutors** and **students** are responsible for acting in accordance with the values of Equality and Diversity.

### Procedure

Equality and Diversity issues are covered as a crucial part of the training tutors receive at induction.

Equality and Diversity issues are also described in our Student and Tutor handbooks, and at student induction.

We review Student Evaluation forms and all complaints files for details of any incidents of discrimination and act on them accordingly.

LHP Skillnet regularly reviews the IHREC website and we subscribe to the IHREC newsletter.



LHP Skillnet is fully compliant with the Employment Equality Act 1998 (updated March 2016).

Equality and Diversity issues are a crucial part of the Programme Board's annual review. At this meeting we investigate the need for training on new and revised legislation for staff and tutors

As part of our self-evaluation we review our quality policies and procedures to ensure that our commitment to Equality and Diversity is embedded in all our QA processes and procedures.

In line with both our *Policy for Equality and Diversity* and our *Procedure for Reasonable Accommodation*, we can accommodate students with additional support needs.

Students are explicitly offered two opportunities to relate to us their additional support needs: upon initial application (see the *Student Registration Form*) and at course commencement.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Equality and Diversity
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Procedure for Reasonable Accommodation
Supporting Documents	
Reference Documents/Resources	

## 3.19 Procedure for Quality Assuring Physical Premises, Equipment, and Facilities

Associated Policy	Policy on Teaching and Learning		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

LHP Skillnet uses external venues in the delivery and assessment of programmes; these venues are either conference facilities in hotels, other educational institutions or member company premises. This procedure sets out to ensure that programmes are taught and assessed in a suitable environment conducive to learning and maintains the integrity of the assessment process.

### Responsibilities

**Network Manager** is responsible for ensuring that all premises, equipment, and facilities are fit for purpose and conducive to teaching, learning, and assessment.

**Administration team** is responsible for

- Maintaining database of suitable venues
- Conducting site visits to new venues
- Booking venues for programmes

**Tutors** are responsible for

- Providing feedback on the suitability of venues and equipment
- Informing students regarding facilities, housekeeping, safe access and egress including fire assembly points at induction
- Respecting the venue and adhering to their health and safety procedures

**Students** are responsible for

- Providing feedback on the suitability of venues

- Respecting the venue and adhering to their health and safety procedures

**Venue** is responsible for

- Providing us with the facilities as agreed
- Ensuring that the necessary equipment is available and in working order
- Room layout requested is adhered to
- Notifying us in good time if there is a change to the original room allocation  
allowing time for site visit if required

## Procedure

Potential venues are initially shortlisted based on the following

- location
- access to public transport
- cost

Shortlisted venues are checked against the Training Venue Checklist (*fig 1.1*).

Venues deemed suitable are added to the venue database, identifying the facilities and equipment available at each location.

When a venue is booked, the Administration Team provides the venue with details of requirements including

- dates and times required
- number of students enrolled on programme
- room layout required for each day of the programme
- equipment required for each day of the programme

Venues must confirm all bookings in writing including details of the above.

Students and tutors are encouraged to provide written feedback on venues at regular points throughout the programme.

Tutors are permitted to discuss any minor changes, such as a change to room layout or the addition of extra students, with the venue manager.

Any changes such as room allocation, date, or the use of equipment or services provided by the venue at a cost must be made through the Administration Team.

### Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy on Assessment
Supporting Procedures and Processes	
Supporting Documents	
Reference Documents/Resources	

## 3.20 Procedure for Quality Assuring Off-Campus Learning (Work Placement)

Associated Policy	Teaching and Learning		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure sets out the steps taken to ensure that off campus learning for EAP students is conducive to clinical teaching and learning for the student and facilitates their progression on the programme.

### Responsibilities

The **Network Manager** is responsible for

- Collaboration with member companies in regards hosting students
- Approving the suitability of member companies to host placements

The **Network Administration Team** is responsible for

- maintaining a database of approved work placements hosts
- Necessary administrative paperwork for placement
  - Guidelines for Host Placement Supervisor
  - Feedback Forms

The **Tutor** is responsible for

- Providing the student with the supports they may need to prepare for clinical placement
- Providing the host placement with contact details
- Contacting the host placement at intervals through-out student placement for feedback
- Monitoring feedback from the students including hours completed, reflection on learning, and their experiences whilst on placement

- Assessing potential host placements for suitability

The **Student** is responsible for provide constructive honest feedback about their host placement

## Procedure

The Network Manager in collaboration with the programme leader and member companies determine the necessary teaching and learning requirements of students on an EAP programme

Member companies who request to host a student are assessed on their suitability. Work placements must be meaningful, and must not fill an existing vacancy or displace an existing employee

Sourcing of suitable placements for students begins prior to the programme commencing

Once the location of a programme has been approved the Network Manager arranges to meet with member companies in that area to determine suitability. The criteria used for assessing the host company includes:

- The support structures in place to support learning
- The commitment of the host to clinical teaching and learning
- Positive HIQA reports
- Access to a dedicated mentor for the student for the duration of the programme
- A willingness to provide ongoing constructive feedback to both the student and LHP Skillnet on student's progression
- Ability to facilitate 300 hours work placement
- The flexibility with students work placement shifts
- A willingness to conduct interviews for selection and as part of the students learning

A database of approved work placements is developed, and students are advised of same at programme induction.

Once the student has chosen a suitable work placement, as part of their learning they are required to arrange interview, negotiate roster and agree a start date.

If the student is experiencing difficulty securing a suitable work placement, they can approach the tutor for assistance who will collaborate with approved host placements

If a student requests to complete work placement in a facility that has not been approved by the Network Manager e.g. (HSE establishment), the tutor must determine suitability of the potential work placement using the same criteria for assessing a host member company.

If a student requests to complete their work placement in two approved facilities, they must inform their tutor, so both facilities are provided with the necessary detail and follow-up. The student must maintain the required paperwork for both facilities.

Students who require work placements must undergo Garda vetting and receive Garda Clearance prior to commencing their placement.

All EAP students are provided with insurance cover while on work placement

Students must complete a *Work Placement Confirmation Form* and submit it to the tutor to have it counter-signed prior to commencing the placement.

The tutor reviews the work placement confirmation form and if they are satisfied that the placement is suitable, they will sign-off on the Registration Forms. If they are not satisfied, they will revert to the student and advise them accordingly.

The tutor forwards the work placement host a copy of the *Guidelines for Host Placement Supervisor(draft)*.

The Tutor follows up with a phone call to confirm receipt of guidelines and to confirm that the host supervisor understands their role and responsibilities in relation to the teaching and assessment of the student.

The Tutor checks in with work placement host during the placement to confirm that all is in order. Any issues or concerns are brought to the attention of the Network Manager

Once the student has completed the allocated hours, the host supervisor completes and signs the *Work Placement Supervisors Report* and returns it to the student who submits it to the tutor

The work placement supervisors report is reviewed by the tutor and any issues or concerns are brought to the attention of the Network Manager.

At the End of Programme Review with the Network Manager/ Administration Team/Tutor/student, the student is required to provide feedback on their work placement. This feedback is valued as it helps determine suitability of host placement for future programmes

The work placement is required to provide feedback on the overall success of work placements and to identify any areas that may need improvement.

The work placement supervisors report is made available to the External Authenticator by the Internal Verifier.

The work placement process is reviewed by the Programme Board as part of our annual review.

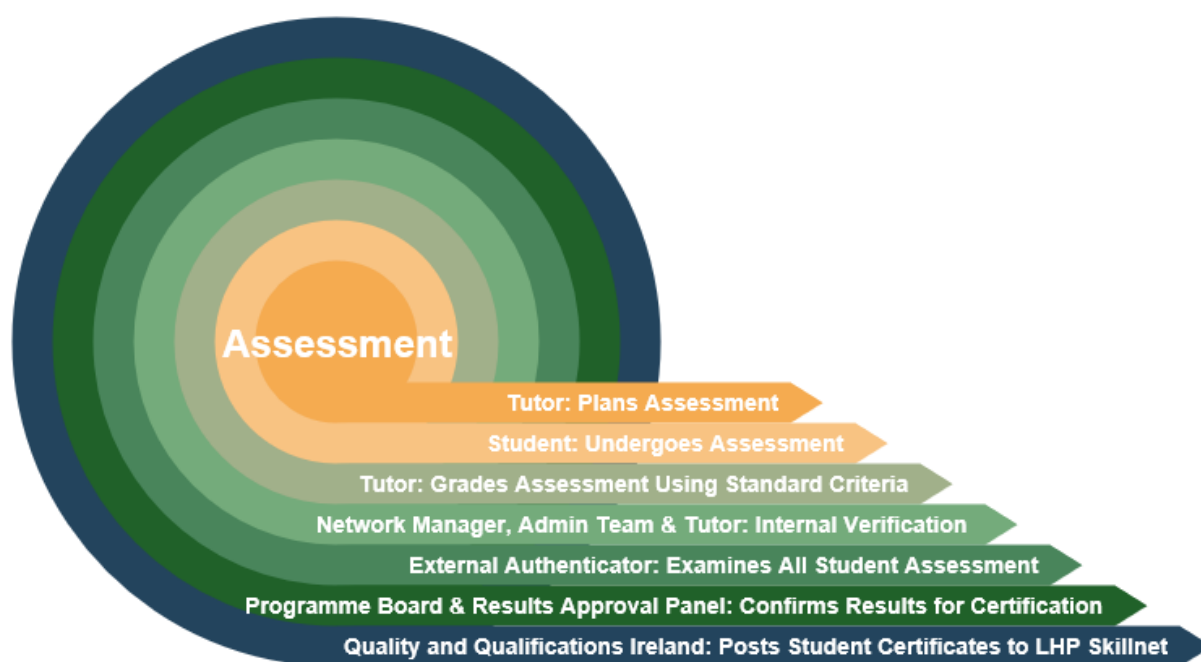
## Related Documents

Related Policies	
Supporting Procedures and Processes	
Supporting Documents	Guidelines for Host Supervisor (draft) Work Placement Confirmation Form Work Placement Supervisors Report Work Placement Time Sheet End of Programme Review Student Feedback Host Placement Feedback Form
Reference Documents/Resources	



## Procedures Relating to Policy on Assessment

- 3.21 Procedure for Assessment Planning and Design
- 3.22 Procedure for Providing Assessment Information to Students
- 3.23 Procedure for Maintaining Security and Integrity of Assessments
- 3.24 Procedure for Consistency of Marking between Tutors/Assessors
- 3.25 Procedure for Providing Reasonable Accommodation
- 3.26 Procedure for Internal Verification
  - 3.26.1 Role and Responsibilities of Internal Verifier
- 3.27 Procedure for External Authentication
- 3.28 Procedure for Results Approval and Issue of Results
- 3.29 Procedure for Certification
- 3.30 Procedure for Providing Feedback to Students on Assessment
- 3.31 Procedure for Assessment Appeals



## 3.21 Procedure for Assessment Planning and Design

Associated Policy	Assessment		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure aims to ensure that all validated assessments are planned and conducted in line with LHP Skillnet's Policy for Assessment. A range of assessment methodologies are incorporated in the Major Award in *Healthcare Support*. They are

- I. Assignments
- II. Collections of work
- III. learner records
- IV. Skills demonstration
- V. Exams

### Responsibilities

**Academic Committee** is responsible for ensuring that assessment instruments and processes are designed, reviewed and implemented in a fair and consistent manner, and in line with QQI award specification.

**Programme Leader** is responsible for ensuring tutors are inducted and conversant with all policies and procedures relating to assessment. The Programme Leader sets the assessment schedule for each programme.

**Tutors** are responsible for

- providing students with information on assessments
- ensuring the security and integrity of the assessment process
- collecting (and returning) equipment and setting up the assessment area for skills demonstrations
- **Administration Team** are responsible for coordinating the venues, invigilator,

reasonable accommodation supports, and materials for assessments

- **Invigilator (for exams and skills demonstrations)** is responsible for conducting the assessments in line with policy and procedures

## **Procedure**

### **Assessment Planning Pre-Programme**

The Programme Leader sets out the assessment schedule in advance of the programme ensuring that assessments are distributed evenly to avoid overloading the students.

The Administration Team ensures all suitable venues are booked and secured for exams and skills demonstration assessments.

The Administration Team book the assessment invigilator for the required dates.

Where applicable reasonable accommodation supports approved for a student is secured and the tutor/invigilator is informed.

Once venues and invigilator are confirmed the assessment schedule is included in the programme timetable and distributed to the tutor.

The timetable (including assessment schedule) is made available to all tutors heading active programmes, to facilitate students who may need to repeat.

The Administration Team prepare all the assessment briefs in individual student folders (1 assessment brief per student per module).

On induction tutors are provided with a secure box containing all assessment briefs (together with lesson plans and marking guidelines and criteria) and the procedure for maintaining security and integrity of assessments.

Once a student's enrolment on the programme is confirmed, the administration team send an electronic copy of the confirmed timetable including assessment schedule. A printed version is provided for each student on day one of the programme with.

### **Assignments, Collections of Work, Learner Records: Assessment Planning**

Assessment brief is distributed to students at the beginning of each module.

In addition to the assessment questions, the brief includes the following

- Submission date
- Marking guidelines
- Guidelines on presentation of work (font, size, spacing)

Time is allocated during each contact day to discuss the assessment

Time is allocated for tutors to review drafts

To support students an academic workshop is held within the first 2 weeks of the programme which addresses

- Academic writing
- Researching
- Referencing

### **Exam: Assessment Planning**

The Administration Team rechecks the venue and invigilator's availability at least 2 weeks before the exam date and, where applicable, the reasonable accommodation supports approved for a student are reconfirmed.

Programme Leader selects the exam papers from the pool of papers and notifies the Administration Team of his/her choice within 5 days of the exam date.

The Administration Team print and place exams in a sealed, signed envelope along with the exam signing-in-sheet and invigilator's report for collection by the invigilator no earlier than 48 hours prior to the exam. Once printed, the sealed envelope is stored in a locked unit in the office.

The invigilator returns completed exam papers, signing-in-sheet and the invigilator's report to the office immediately following the exam, where the Administration Team pass them on to the tutor for marking.

Completed exam papers are secured in a locked unit in the office.

### **Skills Demonstration: Assessment Planning**

The Administration Team rechecks the venue and invigilator's availability at least 2 weeks before the assessment date.

All equipment required for skills demonstration are stored in the LHP Skillnet office. As each programme is planned and timetabled the Administration Team ensure that there is sufficient stock to facilitate the teaching and assessment of skills. Replacement stock orders are placed with the Network Manager in good time to allow for order and delivery.

Prior to the skills assessment the Administration Team gather all of the necessary equipment required (including recording equipment) and place them in a container.

Tutors are notified when the container is ready for collection.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Assessment
Supporting Procedures	Quality Assuring Physical Premises, Equipment, and Facilities Security and Integrity of Assessments Assessment Planning Process Tutor Induction Reasonable Accommodation
Supporting Documents	
Reference Documents/Resources	

## 3.22 Procedure for Providing Assessment Information to Students

Associated Policy	Assessment		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure sets out to ensure we provide students with clear, timely and up-to-date information regarding all aspects of the assessment process to help them to complete assessments successfully.

### Responsibilities

**Network Manager** is responsible for ensuring that all students receive the necessary information on the assessment process in a clear, concise and timely manner

**Administration Team** is responsible for

Ensuring all students enrolled receive an electronic and printed copy of the assessment schedule

Printing a copy of the student handbook for each student.

Ensuring that the information on our website is up to date

**Tutors** are responsible for providing students with the assessment information at induction and at the beginning of each module, reiterating throughout the module

**Students** are responsible for

- Adhering to the assessment schedule
- Adhering to the assessment procedures
- Notifying the tutor at the first opportunity of any request for reasonable accommodation

## Procedure

The timetable includes assignment submission deadlines, dates for skills demonstrations, and examinations as applicable for each module

Students are provided with an electronic copy of the timetable, pre-programme and a printed copy on induction.

On the first day the tutor gives each student a copy of the student handbook with the timetable. The tutor explains the handbook and timetable to the students, making sure everyone is clear what is required regarding assessment.

The tutor gives details of the QQI grading system.

The tutor informs students of their right to request reasonable accommodation.

The tutor highlights the different methods of assessment for each module and the difference between formal assessment, which must be carried out for certification purposes, and informal assessment, which is carried out at the tutors' discretion and which does not impact on students' marks/grades for the purposes of certification.

At the beginning of each module the student is given the assessment brief which includes the marking criteria and guideline for completion. The tutor reiterates the guidelines pertaining to the methods of assessment for that module.

Time is allocated on each class day to address the assessments

Students are informed of the following regarding assignments, learner records, collection of work

- They may submit a draft of their assignments to the tutor for feedback within the first 2 weeks of the module.

**Requirements** for presentation of work which is as follows

- The assessment briefs must be submitted with the relevant assignment and in the correct order, in the assignment folder. Completed folders only will be accepted

- All coursework should be typed in New Times Roman, font 12, double lined spaced with page numbering (sample of which is typed at the front of the brief)
- Ensure that student name, date of submission, registered course code is on all submitted coursework
- Students are advised to keep a copy of all coursework for their own records.
- We do not accept handwritten work unless asked of within the brief.
- **Deadlines:** Assessments must be submitted on/before the dates set out on the timetable
- Assessment items submitted after the due date may be subject to a penalty unless an extension has been granted.
- **Extensions:** Requests for extensions (granted only in exceptional circumstances) must be submitted at least one week in advance of the submission date (using **Assignment Extension Request form**) with supporting evidence if relevant e.g. medical certificate in case of sickness.
- Assignments submitted after the submission deadline where an extension has not been agreed, will be awarded no more than a pass mark (50%) and may not be corrected in time for QQI certification.
- Where a student has been granted an extension, we aim to ensure that the student graduates with their own group.
- **Re-submissions:** Students are given one opportunity to re-submit work that has not reached pass standard (50%).
- If the re-submitted assignment (**2<sup>nd</sup> submission**) is not at a pass level, the student can resubmit one more time (**3<sup>rd</sup> attempt**), with a financial penalty of €20 payable to LHP Skillnet.
- If after three attempts the student has failed the module, they can repeat the entire module at full cost.



- Any resubmitted work will be awarded no more than a pass mark (50%) regardless of the content.

Guidelines for examinations are given to students where examinations feature as an assessment method.

Students are also informed regarding our other policies pertaining to assessment and how to access them namely;

- Appeals
- Complaints
- Academic Good Practice

An abridged version of each policy is included in the student handbook

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Admissions
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Request for Reasonable Accommodation Request for Extension
Supporting Documents	
Reference Documents/Resources	

## 3.23 Procedure for Maintaining Security and Integrity of Assessments

Associated Policy	Assessment		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure sets out to ensure we have systems in place to maintain the security and integrity of assessments processes, materials, instruments and records. Records include paper documentation, electronic records / files, databases, photographs and/or digital footage

### Responsibilities

**Network Manager** is responsible for ensuring the security and integrity of assessments processes, materials, instruments and records is maintained.

**Administration team** is responsible for

- Ensuring all records of assessment are uploaded and stored securely
- Printed assessments are maintained in a locked unit
- Ensuring that each tutor is provided with

**Tutors** are responsible for keeping all assessments securely throughout the programme and for the submission of all assessments to the Network Manager/Administration Team at the end of the programme

### Procedure

We maintain a secure electronic student record database where we record, store and access students' assessment records. Access to this database is password protected and limited to key staff members.

We provide our tutors with a secure box to store student assessments while it is in their possession. Tutors are always informed at induction of the need for safe and secure storage of student assessments while it is in their possession and this is clearly detailed in the Tutor Handbook.

We have procedures in place for detailing with incidents of academic misconduct

### **Assignments, Learner Records, Collection of Work**

All assessment briefs are store electronically and print prior to the commencement of the programme. They are stored securely in LHP Skillnet office whilst waiting on collection.

Students are required to confirm in writing on receipt and submission of assessment briefs – record kept in office file.

Students are required to confirm in writing that all assessment work submitted is their own.

We advise students to retain a copy of all assessments submitted for reference (we do not return student evidence)

### **Exam security and integrity**

We use randomly selected questions from an examination questions database resulting in a different exam paper for each sitting.

All our examination papers are sight unseen. The papers are printed by the Administrator Team and placed in a sealed envelope. The seal is signed by the Administrator who prepared them. The envelope of papers is stored in a locked unit in the office until collected by the invigilator and transported to the examination hall.

Two students sign on the Invigilators Report to confirm that the envelope was sealed when it arrived in the examination hall prior to the examination

We retain signed records of the seating and invigilation arrangements for each examination session

The invigilator for each exam is required to submit a signed invigilators report after each examination sitting

We have a signed attendance sheets for all exams and we match this against the number of scripts handed up by candidates.

Post exam all exam papers are returned to the office immediately and store in a locked unit awaiting collection for marking by the programme tutor.

### **Skills demonstration security and integrity**

Tutors video record skills demonstrations and store them on a USB. They are made available for Internal Verification and External Authentication, and for the Quality Board if required.

We provide and second assessor (invigilator) were students are working in pairs or groups

### **Results security and integrity**

All student evidence/assessment portfolios are collected from the training venues in person by the Network Manager and/or Administration Team, transported by them to the administration office and securely stored in the office until External Authentication. Only the Network Manager and Administrator Team have access to student evidence/assessment portfolios.

We store assessments in a secure location throughout the assessment validation process until the final date for appealing a result has elapsed.

## **Related Documents**

Related Policies	Policy for Information and Data Management
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Assessment Planning Academic Good Practice
Supporting Documents	
Reference Documents/Resources	

## 3.24 Procedure for Consistency of Marking between Tutors/Assessors

Associated Policy	Assessment		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure sets out to ensure we have consistency in marking and grading of assessments in line with our *Assessment Policy*.

### Responsibilities

**Programme Leader** is responsible for

- the review of all assessments, marking schemes and guidelines
- ensuring all assessments are marked consistently and fairly between assessors.

**Network Manager** is responsible for inducting tutors on the policies and procedures pertaining to assessment.

**Administration team/Internal Verifiers** are responsible for conducting the Internal Verification procedure in line with *Procedure for Internal Verification*

**Tutors/Assessors** are responsible for

- marking and grading of assessments in line with the marking criteria
- presenting all marks awarded accurately on the results summary sheets.

### Procedure

Standardised instruments are designed at programme development stage and reviewed by the Programme Leader at the annual Programme Board Meeting.

All tutors, who must be experienced assessors at QQI level 5, are inducted by the Network Manager. This induction includes detailed information on assessment procedures and

guidance on marking and grading. This is supported by the tutor handbook which is given to each tutor when their contract is awarded.

The tutor is guided through each of the module's assessment brief, marking criteria and assessment guidelines which are based on the Assessment Plans set out in our Programme Descriptors/Validated programmes.

All tutors use the same assessment instruments which results in a standardised approach to assessment and consistency in marking and grading

Skills Demonstration assessments are video recorded for review by the EA and we provide a second assessor for larger groups.

### **Peer Review System**

We implement a peer review system with newly recruited tutors or where it is noted that there is a significant deviation from the norm in the marks submitted by a tutor/s.

Electronic copies of the student's assessments are emailed to a tutor independent of that programme where they will mark a sample (25%). The marks awarded and feedback given are compared.

Where inconsistencies are found during peer review the Programme Leader will review and highlight assessment with the External Authenticator. The issue will be raised with the Results Approval Panel and at the annual Programme Board meeting.

### **Post Programme**

Two weeks following the programme the assessments are internally verified. The Internal Verifier monitors any discrepancies/irregularities or deviations from the normal distribution of marks and highlights any discrepancies/irregularities in marking and grading to the Network Manager.

Where there is any discrepancies/irregularities or deviations from the normal distribution of marks, the Network Manager implements appropriate follow-up action; reviews the marking and follows up with the tutor/s.

Any issues identified by either the Internal Verifier and/or the External Authenticator in relation to inconsistencies in marking or any changes made to the tutors' marking by the External Authenticator are detailed in their respective reports and discussed by the Results Approval Panel and appropriate action agreed

The outcome is communicated by the Results Approval Panel to tutor/s via the Network Manager.

Marking and grading of student assessments is an agenda item at our annual Programme Board meeting.

### Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Information and Data Management
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Procedure for Internal Verification Procedure for External Authentication Procedure for Results approval panel Academic Good Practice
Supporting Documents	
Reference Documents/Resources	

## 3.25 Procedure for Providing Reasonable Accommodation

Associated Policy	Policy for Equality and Diversity		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure outlines the steps by which reasonable accommodation is made for those requiring additional supports for the purpose of their attendance and assessment.

### Responsibilities

The **Network Manager** is responsible for monitoring the operation of our reasonable accommodation services.

The Administration Team, tutors, and students are responsible for maintaining open lines of communication concerning students' additional support needs.

### Procedure

When designing training sessions and training materials, the tutors are required to bear in mind the needs of all participants, including those with additional support needs.

LHP Skillnet provides clear and concise public information concerning the content, assessment and demands of each programme. This ensures that prospective students will make informed choices regarding their ability to participate and successfully complete our programmes.

Students are requested upon application and at course commencement to identify their additional support needs, where relevant. This is done using our *Student Registration Form*.

Students are also encouraged to disclose any additional support needs at any time during their course. We advise students who encounter any difficulties at any stage to talk to their tutor at the earliest possible opportunity. If requested, the student is entitled to a one-on-one meeting to discuss their specific needs.



We deal with requests for reasonable/special accommodation on a case-by-case basis. Applicants are responsible for requesting reasonable accommodation and for providing documentation that verifies and confirms their need.

Individual student's needs are reviewed and identified at the start of the course and appropriate resources and/or strategies provided to respond to those needs effectively.

The Administration Team monitors applications and discusses any requests for additional supports with the relevant tutor and records details of any agreed arrangements.

The Network Administrator contacts students with additional support needs to agree the necessary arrangements.

If a tutor identifies during a programme that a student needs additional support, the tutor provides as much assistance as possible, working within the constraints of programme delivery.

Examples of supports that can be made available to students include, but aren't limited to:

- a. Physical modifications to the training location e.g. seating arrangements etc.
- b. Learning materials provided in accessible format where possible.
- c. Additional time allocated to complete assessments.
- d. Alternative assessment formats
- e. Support from a scribe or a reader to complete examinations/assessments.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Equality and Diversity
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Procedure for Facilitating Diversity
Supporting Documents	
Reference Documents/Resources	

## 3.26 Procedure for Internal Verification

Associated Policy	Assessment		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure sets out to ensure that our assessment procedures have been applied consistently across all our assessment activities and that our assessment results are recorded accurately in line with our *Assessment Policy*.

### Responsibilities

**Programme Board** is responsible for reviewing the Internal Verification process and reports.

**Network Manager** is responsible for

- the induction and training of Internal Verifiers
- ensuring the process is carried out in line with the policies and procedures pertaining to it.

**Internal Verifier** is responsible for

- conducting the Internal Verification procedure and producing a report.

**Tutors** are responsible for

- preparing all assessments and marks summary sheet for the internal Verification Process.

### Procedure

#### General Information

An Internal Verifier is allocated to each programme by the Network Manager

Adequate time and resources are allocated to enable the completion of the internal verification to a high standard.

Internal Verification process is conducted in the same venue where the programme was held.

The process is conducted following the close of course session where each student is given the opportunity to review all assessment folders and marks awarded.

Newly recruited Internal Verifiers are inducted and trained by the Network Manager and are shadowed by an experienced Internal Verifier until deemed competent and confident to fulfil the role independently.

We use a 25% sample strategy of the assessment folders.

The Internal Verifier carries out verification using our Internal Verification step-by-step process

The Internal Verification Report contains a detailed checklist which acts as a guide for the Internal Verifier.

Tutors must be available for consultation during the procedure.

### Tutor Preparation for Internal Verification

All folders are presented per module

- **Per module** - All assessment folders are arranged in alphabetical order by surname as per component results summary sheet
- Accompanying each module is a separate folder which includes the following in order
  1. Results summary sheet (typed) and include all exemptions for modules completed pre-January 2014 ONLY on the results summary sheet (QQIs QBS system changed in January 2014 and all component modules post January 2014 will automatically link. Modules completed pre-January 2014 will need to be manually exempted by the network administrator)
  2. Evidence of exemptions where module was completed pre-2014
  3. Sign in sheets including exam signing in sheets where applicable and all missed class forms for that module
  4. Extension request forms
  5. Evaluation sheets
- In each assessment folder check all course work is present and in presented in the correct order [cover sheet, **followed by brief and assignments with feedback signed by student**] and in folder

- In the **Work Practice** module assessment folders ensure that all 300 work experience hours are accounted for and placed in the back of the assessment folder. This may include
  - A letter from an employer stating that the person is employed as a Healthcare Assistant giving their start date and approximate number of hours contracted per week.
  - The completed record of work placement hours (for EAP students)
  - Where work placement hours are not complete by the close of course the student must present a letter from the host placement stating that they are facilitating the remaining hours and give an approximate completion date. This must be filed in the back of the folder along with a copy of the record of placement hours completed to date.
  - Where a student (EAP) gains employment whilst on work placement, they may submit the record of placement hours completed to the date of employment plus a letter from their new employer stating the number of contracted hours.
- In a separate Tutors folder include the following
  - Timetable signed
  - Class rep meeting minutes
  - Marking criteria used for each module
  - Early exit forms
  - Tutor evaluation form

Submit recorded evidence of the skills demonstration assessments as appropriate ensuring that each recording is labelled with the students' name

### Internal Verification Procedure

Before beginning the procedure, the Internal Verifier must

- Consult the QQI award specifications which indicates the assessment techniques to be used in order to confirm that these are the techniques that were used to assess learners.

- Consult our validated programme which describes how assessment evidence is generated in terms of the technique/s to be used, the weighting of each technique, the time allocated to the learner to complete the assessment, the format the assessment will take and broad assessment criteria which will be applied when marking the assessment material.

Check and confirm

- Information on assessment was provided to students
  - information on dates for submission of assessment material
  - examination dates, times, locations, conditions, regulations
  - skills demonstration dates, times, conditions, regulations
  - how we deal with incidents of academic misconduct
- Appropriate documentation was issued to students
  - assessment briefs and assessment criteria
  - examination papers
- Appropriate documentation was used to issue student results
  - Each assessment folder has a marking sheet complete which is signed and dated by the assessor attached to the front of the folder
  - Each module has a *Results Summary Sheet*

All students who attended the module has submitted an assessment folder

All video evidence is available, and each video file is labelled correctly with the student's name.

Any missing assessment folders or evidence must be accounted for by the tutor with written evidence of communication between tutor and student regarding failure to submit. This must be noted in the report

The results submitted for every student on the *Results Summary Sheet* correlates with the marks awarded on the assessment folder

Any discrepancy must be recalculated. This must be noted on the report

For a sample of assessment folders (25%) that all marks are totalled and calculated correctly, marks are transferred correctly to *Results Summary Sheet*, and that marks and grades are consistent with QQI grading bands.

If any error or miscalculation is noted, correct them and note it in the report.

Where more than 2 miscalculations are noted within the same module, all assessment folders for that module must be recalculated. Outcome is noted on the report.

Complete and sign the *Internal Verifiers Report* which include any issues or irregularities found during the process

Discuss outcome with the appropriate tutor/assessor and report to the Network Manager.

Report is made available to the External Authenticator and the Results Approval Panel

Place all assessment folders in a secure container and transport to the office where they are stored in a locked unit until the External Authentication.

### **Post Internal Verification Procedure**

In the LHP Skillnet office, internally verified results are uploaded to the QBS system.

Authentication Reports are printed out by Learner Group by Minor Award Results sheet(s) from the QBS (required in the event of an appeal)

Place authentication reports with the Internal Verifiers report ready for the External Authentication.

### **Related Documents**

Related Policies	Policy for Information and Data Management
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Procedure for External Authentication Procedure for Results approval panel
Supporting Documents	Tutor Induction Checklist Tutor Handbook
Reference Documents/Resources	<i>QQI Quality Assuring Assessment, Guidelines for Providers, Revised 2013,</i>

### 3.26.1 Role and Responsibilities of Internal Verifier

The Administration team assume the role of the Internal Verifier

Internal verification is undertaken prior to External Authentication and the results approval processes. Internal verification of assessment procedures and assessment results takes place on a sampling basis based on our sampling strategy (25%)

The Internal Verifier must be familiar with the:

- Assessment requirements of the appropriate award
- Our quality assurance procedures, specifically in relation to assessment of learners

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The role of the Internal Verifier is to

- Verify that the provider's assessment procedures have been applied across the range of assessment activities
- Confirm assessment results by:
  - Checking learner evidence exists
  - Confirming marks and grades are recorded accurately
  - Checking that the QQI facility for gaining exemptions for other certification is properly implemented
- Identify any irregularities, notify the Network Manager and take corrective action if required as per agreed procedures
- Complete an Internal Verification report
- Prepare for External Authentication

## 3.27 Procedure for External Authentication

Associated Policy	Assessment		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure sets out the steps taken to verify that all assessments are externally authenticated to ensure our student evidence has been fairly and consistently assessed, that our assessment process is fair, consistent, and valid and that our results meet the national standards for the awards in line with our *Assessment Policy*.

### Responsibilities

**NSG** in consultation with the **Academic Committee** is responsible for the appointment of the External Authenticator and for reviewing their findings.

**Network Manager** is responsible for

- sourcing potential suitable qualified External Authenticators and make recommendations to the Academic Committee.
- ensure that the external authentication is conducted in line with our policies and procedures and that reports are made available to the Academic Committee.

**Administration Team** is responsible for

- Confirming the date of the external authentication,
- Booking a suitable venue
- Informing the tutors of the date
- Uploading the Internal Verified results to the QBS system and printing the authentication reports.
- Ensuring all materials and resources are made available for the External Authenticator.
- The safe transporting of all evidence of assessment to and from the office



**Tutors** are responsible for making themselves available for consultation during the external authentication process.

**External Authenticator (EA)** is responsible for

- Providing us with independent authoritative confirmation of fair and consistent assessment of learners in accordance with national standards
- Establishing the credibility of our assessment processes
- Confirming that our assessment results are marked in a valid and reliable way and are in line with the requirements for the award.
- Conducting the external authentication procedure in line with *QQI's Quality Assuring Assessment, Guidelines for External Authenticators, Revised 2015*

## Procedure

### Selection and Appointment of External Authenticator

When selecting and appointing an EA the NSG in consultation with the Academic Committee ensures that the authenticator will be;

- Independent of the programme under evaluation to allow for objectivity and impartiality.
- Experienced in healthcare programme design, delivery and evaluation.
- Familiar with the programme/s we deliver
- Competent in the activity of evaluation.
- An expert in subject matter and hold a recognised qualification in health education
- Capable of comparing the quality of programme(s) being evaluated with that of similar programmes
- Experienced in training and development and understands the principles of adult learning.
- Able to contribute to the development and enhancement of the programme(s) being evaluated
- Familiar with qualifications frameworks and the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) in particular
- Knowledgeable of evaluation procedures and methodologies and quality assurance systems
- Professional and systematic in their approach.

Once selected and approved by the NSG the EA is issued with a contract and guidelines setting out our expectations. They are placed on our External Authentication panel.

We rotate the EA after 3 certification periods

We implement a sample strategy of 25% of submitted assessments per module

At programme scheduling the certification period is identified

The Administration Team

- contact an approved EA from the panel and agree a date for the external authentication ensuring sufficient time is available to conduct the Results Approval Panel meeting before submission deadline.
- Secure a suitable secure venue
- Inform the tutor of the date agreed.
- Provide the external authenticator with any information or documents they may require prior to the authentication.

On the day, a member of the Administration Team or Network Manager transports the assessment folders and video evidence to and from the office to the venue along with the supporting documentation as requested by the EA

The programme leader and tutor(s) are available for consultation if required.

Upon completion the EA completes the external authentication report, signs it and returns it to the Network Manager in time for the Results Approval Panel meeting.

The EA is invited to attend our Results Approval Panel Meeting to present the External Authentication report (draft format if necessary) and clarify any issues highlighted in the Report.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Information and Data Management
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Procedure for Internal Verification Procedure for Results approval panel
Supporting Documents	
Reference Documents/Resources	<i>QQI Quality Assuring Assessment, Guidelines for Providers, Revised 2013,</i> <i>QQI's Quality Assuring Assessment, Guidelines for External Authenticators, Revised 2015</i>

## 3.28 Procedure for Results Approval and Issue of Results

Associated Policy	Assessment		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure sets out to ensure that results are formally reviewed and approved, and to confirm that our assessment results are fully quality assured and signed-off prior to submission to the awarding body for certification in line with our *Assessment Policy*. This procedure also ensures that formal results are issued to students in an accurate and timely manner.

### Responsibilities

**Programme Board** are responsible for

- reviewing the findings of the results approval panel
- considering any recommendations made when undertaking the programme review.

**Results Approval Panel (RAP)** (see Terms of Reference for details) is responsible for

- ensuring that all assessment results submitted to the Panel are comprehensively and thoroughly reviewed and are fully quality assured and signed off by Head of Centre/ Chairperson of the Results Approval Panel prior to submission to the relevant awarding body.

**Administration Team** is responsible for

- Uploading (or amending) and submitting the final results via the QBS system following the results approval panel meeting
- Issuing a statement of results for each student
- Providing information on how to appeal

### Procedure

The Network Manager convenes the RAP meeting after the External Authentication and before the QQI submission deadline

The External Authentication report, the Internal Verification report and where applicable, assessors report, for each programme are presented to the panel

The Panel discuss each set of results including any concerns and suggests appropriate corrective or improvement actions, if required.

Other personnel may be invited to attend for a particular section of the meeting as appropriate.

The Panel considers the reports and approves the final results. Panel decisions are recorded.

The Chairperson authorises for the relevant personnel and students to be informed of the approved results, ensuring that, where there has been a change to provisional results that the student is informed of the changed result and is made aware of the appeals process.

The Results Approval Panel Report is completed and signed off by the Chairperson on behalf of the fixed panel members who approved the results. This form is the authorisation to submit the approved results to request certification.

Minutes are prepared by the Administration Team and kept on file.

The Chairperson ensures that any non-conformances identified are notified and recorded on our RAP Quality Improvement Plan for addressing at the Programme Board meeting.

Following the RAP meeting the Administration Team upload or amend any results and submit the final approved results via the QBS system.

A statement of results is generated, downloaded and issued to each student electronically.

The statement of results is accompanied by a letter giving information on

1. Grade awarded
2. Method and timeline for appeals (7 days)
3. How to check personal details are correct and how and when to report incorrect detail

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Information and Data Management
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Procedure for Internal Verification Procedure for External Authentication
Supporting Documents	
Reference Documents/Resources	<i>QQI Quality Assuring Assessment, Guidelines for Providers, Revised 2013,</i>

## 3.29 Procedure for Certification

Associated Policy	Assessment		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure sets out to ensure that certificates are received and stored securely whilst awaiting distribution or collection.

### Responsibilities

**Network Manager** is responsible for ensuring that all certificates are received and stored securely whilst awaiting distribution or collection

**Administration Team** is responsible for

- Logging, scanning, uploading, and filing QQI certificates and transcripts of training onto our system securely
- Storing originals securely in a locked unit
- Preparing certificates for distribution at the graduation ceremonies
- Issuing requested certificates by registered post and logging same
- Arranging collection time for students to collect in person
- Contacting students who have not arranged collection 6 months after the certification period

### Procedure

QQI issue award certificates to LHP Skillnet by post for distribution to the students **except** those flagged by LHP Skillnet as being under appeal

The Administration Team;

- Logs receipt of the award certificates in the Award Certificate Register
- Scans award certificates and transcripts and file them in line with our *Policy for Information and Data Management* for future reference.
- Stores the original certificate securely in a locked unit which has restricted access whilst awaiting distribution

Certificates are issued to students in one of 3 ways

- At a graduation ceremony (primary and preferred method of distribution)
- Collection from the LHP Skillnet office in-person (students are advised that certificates can be collected by appointment free of charge)
- Via registered post on email request only (the student bears the cost of registered post)

Prepares an envelope for each graduate which contains their certificate and transcript of training as they confirm attendance at the graduation ceremony

Stores these envelopes securely in a locked unit in the office

Transports the certificates and transcripts to the graduation ceremony.

Post certificates by registered post as soon as possible following receipt of email request. There is a fee of €5 for postage

Makes a record of posted certificates in the Award Certificate Register

Makes a record of certificates collected in person in the Award Certificate Register. Certificates collected in person must be signed for

Certificates which are not collected/requested are stored securely in a locked unit until requested.

At 6 monthly intervals following the certification period, the Administration Team contacts the students who have not collected their certificate to remind them and arrange distribution.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Information and Data Management
Supporting Procedures and Processes	
Supporting Documents	Award Certificate Register
Reference Documents/Resources	<i>QQI Quality Assuring Assessment, Guidelines for Providers, Revised 2013,</i>

## 3.30 Procedure for Providing Feedback to Students on Assessment

Associated Policy	Assessment		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

### Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure sets out to ensure that we provide our students with appropriate, timely and constructive feedback on their assessments which aims to enhance their participation and success on the programme.

### Responsibilities

**Network Manager/Programme Leader** is responsible for

- ensuring that time is allocated within the programme timetable for feedback

**Tutor** is responsible for

- providing timely and constructive written and verbal feedback to students at regular and appropriate intervals throughout the programme

**Student** is responsible for

- taking on-board, and acting on, the feedback provided in the manner with which it is intended

### Procedure

Tutors make time available at the beginning and/or at the end of each contact classroom day to provide formative feedback on a one-to-one basis and/or group basis to students. This includes feedback on areas for development, gaps in their learning or direct feedback on draft assignments completed during the programme.

While marking assessments tutors are required to comment on the assessment scripts. The written feedback must correlate with the marks awarded, highlighting where marks were awarded or lost

At the end of each module and once marked by the tutor the assessment folders are returned to the students to review in the classroom. Students are asked to review the feedback, sign to say they have received feedback and return the assessment folder to the tutor. Students are not permitted to remove the folders from the classroom.

Students are advised to raise any concerns or issues with the provisional result at this point.

If a student has a concern, tutors implement the *Procedure for Assessment Appeals*

Our Internal Verifier checks for evidence of feedback provided by the tutor on the scripts

All feedback is available for review by the External Authenticator.

We ask students for their views of the adequacy of feedback provided on our Student Evaluation Questionnaire.

Students are given additional feedback at the *End-of-Programme Student Review* session where they are given the opportunity to review feedback and results from all assessments submitted over the course of the programme. At this point students are again advised to raise any concerns regarding marks awarded.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Information and Data Management
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Procedure for Assessment Appeals
Supporting Documents	End of Programme Student Review
Reference Documents/Resources	<i>QQI Quality Assuring Assessment, Guidelines for Providers, Revised 2013,</i>

## 3.31 Procedure for Assessment Appeals



## Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure sets out the steps taken when a student who wish appeal an approved result

Associated Policy	Assessment		
Version	2.0	Author (Name and Title)	Carmel Kelly Network Manager
Adoption Date	01092019	Review Date	092021
Approved by	Network Steering Group		

which they consider to be invalid or unfair or who wish to make a complaint about any aspect of assessment

## Responsibilities

**Academic Committee** is responsible for

- implementing their decisions within the timeline ensuring that the outcome is communicated clearly to the student

**Student** is responsible for

- initiating the appeals procedure within the defined timeline and for providing all the relevant evidence

## Procedure

Following the issue of the statement of results students have up to 7 days to formally lodge an appeal. We notify students of the closing date for receipt of appeals and approximate date of issue of award certificates

The appeals process can be enabled when: -

- The results have been approved through the Results Approval process
- Students have been issued with the approved results
- A request for an appeal has been received within 7 days of the issue of approved result

Our Appeals process enables students to appeal: -

- The assessment process, if they consider that there have been irregularities or inequality in its implementation
- The assessment results

### **The appeals process is as follows:**

The student is asked to contact us to discuss the result in the first instance within 7 days of receipt of approved results

Following our clarification of how the assessment was marked and graded and if the student is still not satisfied, they can opt to formally appeal by submitting a completed Assessment Appeals Application Form and an appeal fee of €30 (the fee is refunded if the appeal is successful).

We review the assessment result and undertake a second marking of learner evidence where appropriate. The assessor is independent of the original assessment decision

We review the internal verification and external authentication report to check if there any references to the specific case under appeal.

The only evidence which may be presented by the student at appeal is that which has already been presented for assessment. New evidence may not be added by the student for an appeal.

We notify students of the outcome of an appeal within 10 working days

### **Outcome of an Appeal**

If there is no change in grade, then the student is informed and the opportunity to appeal through the QQI national appeals process is flagged.

If the appeal is upheld, we issue the student with a letter indicating the outcome of the appeal and return the appeal fee to the student and QQI is informed of the change in grade and a request is made for an amended certificate.

We securely retain assessment evidence for as long as necessary while there is the possibility of appeal.

### **The QQI National Appeals Process**

Students can appeal a result directly to QQI on the basis that: -

- The provider's appeals process has been completed and

- It is an appeal of the assessment process, not the result.
- QQI accepts appeals from providers only, on behalf of students (and not from students directly).
- QQI will not accept an appeal on behalf of a student until that appeal has gone through 'due process' within the provider's appeals process and all opportunities to appeal within this process have been exhausted.

## Related Documents

Related Policies	Policy for Information and Data Management
Supporting Procedures and Processes	Procedure for Consistency of Marking Procedure for Internal Verification Procedure for External Verification Procedure for Results Approval Panel
Supporting Documents	Assessment Appeals Application Form
Reference Documents/Resources	<i>QQI Quality Assuring Assessment, Guidelines for Providers, Revised 2013,</i>