CORPORATE LEVEL QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCEDURES

September 2020

SECTION 1

APPROACH TO QUALITY ASSURANCE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT

Section 1:
City of Dublin ETB APPROACH TO QUALITY ASSURANCE, MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT

Introduction

City of Dublin ETB - Provider with Corporate Quality Assurance (QA) Responsibility

City of Dublin ETB now has the responsibility for ensuring corporate governance, oversight and monitoring in relation to quality assurance for the programmes and services delivered through its centres. This means the primary responsibility for QA procedures is with City of Dublin ETB and not with individual City of Dublin ETB Colleges and centres. City of Dublin ETB is obliged to work towards achieving greater levels of consistency in terms of the learner experience and also to co-ordinate our services in pursuit of the most positive learning experience and outcomes for our learners. This does not necessarily means the same approach can be taken in all services as they can be quite different due to having very different cohorts of learners.

Quality assurance is anything that a provider does to maintain, improve and ensure the quality of the learner experience and its outcomes for the learner. Procedures are how one approaches their work'.

City of Dublin ETB QA procedures are how we approach our work to ensure as the provider we maintain, improve and ensure quality services are provided to the learners including quality outcomes for learners are achieved.

QQI QA Guidelines and Review Procedures

City of Dublin ETB as the provider has clear obligations under the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act 2012. QQI issued new Quality Assurance Guidelines in December 2016 and in addition new sectoral specific quality assurance guidelines for ETBs. City of Dublin ETB must develop its procedures to take account of the clear obligations set down by these two sets of QA guidelines.

City of Dublin ETB must review the effectiveness of their own QA procedures while having regard to the new QQI QA guidelines. City of Dublin ETB must also embed self-evaluation processes as part of monitoring and review to take place at all levels of the organisation and across all service spheres. This is a key QA activity designed to ensure service quality is maintained and enhanced on an on-going basis.

1. City of Dublin ETB Corporate Approach to Quality Maintenance & Enhancement

The ethos underpinning the approach to quality assurance maintenance and enhancement is to work with our management teams and staff to find solutions and to promote and support collaboration and innovation. This approach recognises:

- that there should be an appropriate balance struck between corporate oversight and centre autonomy
- the principle of subsidiarity: Allowing decisions within a system of governance to be made at the most appropriate level.
- that all services are not the same, quality assurance procedures should fit and be appropriate within the context of the type of service to which they apply
- the importance of achieving consistency in standards of quality within and across services versus pursuing a wholly standardised approach to quality. A 'one-size fits all' approach cannot work across a diverse range of services.

Strategic Objectives:

In facing that challenge, City of Dublin ETB has set a number of strategic objectives:

1. Develop a more unified approach to QA in consultation with centres while maintaining the quality of the existing system

2. Devise a QA Road Map – contains our cycle of activities from learner recruitment to learner progression

3. Select procedural areas for City of Dublin ETB level review from the cycle of activities in order of priority

4. Consolidate and build on current best practice, recognising and showcasing the quality of existing systems, getting buy in from staff and thus achieving the most positive outcomes for our learners

5. To review developed policies and procedures on an ongoing basis with our management teams and staff.

6. Establish an effective system for communicating with staff, ensuring that staff are aware of QA policy and procedural development and its impact at centre level.
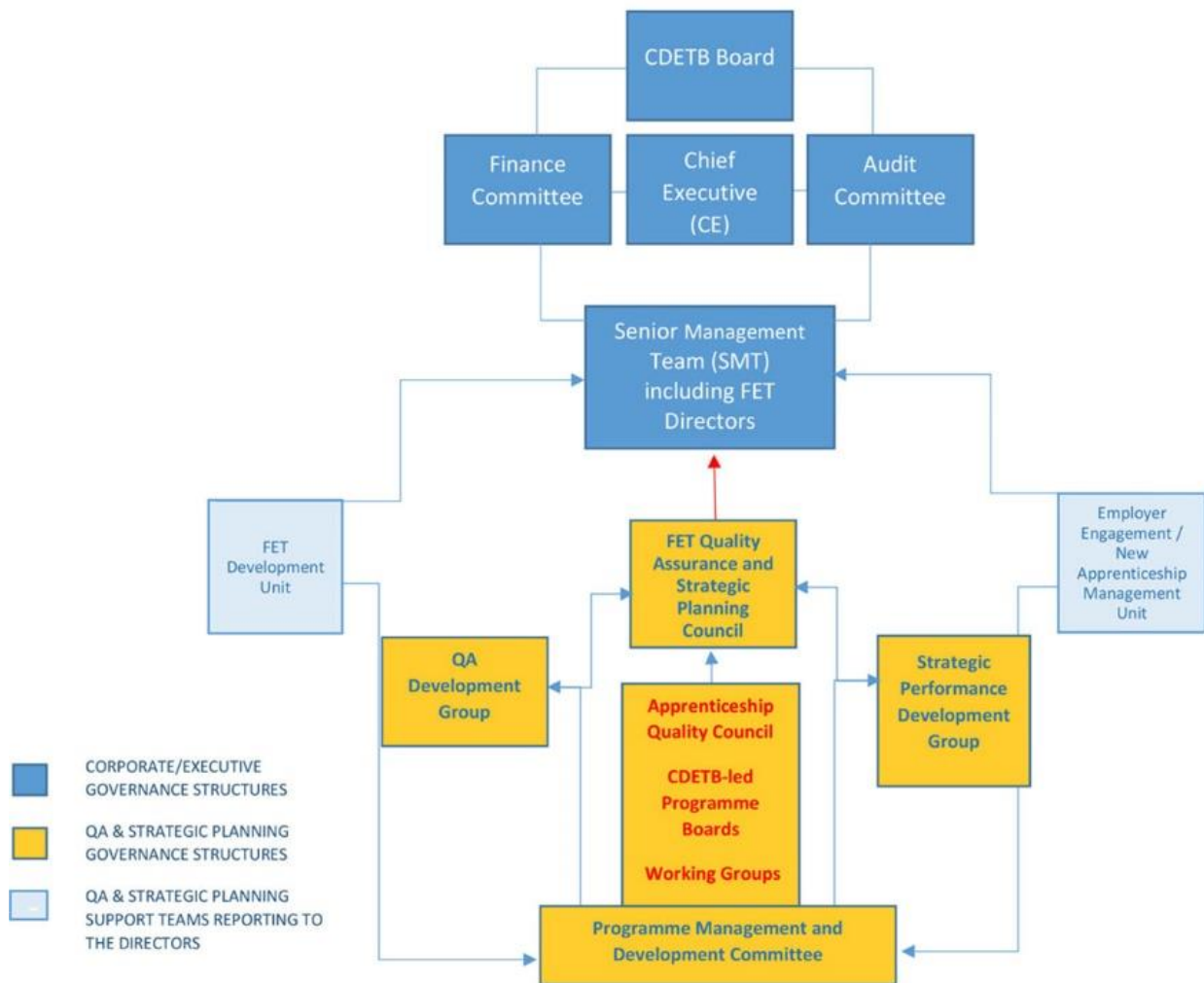
2. City of Dublin ETB Structures

The core governance structures of City of Dublin ETB, are the management teams of the five service spheres; Colleges of FE, Training Centres, Adult Education Service, Education to Prisons and Youthreach, and their staff.

- The Programme Management and Development Committee (PMDC). — to manage the existing City of Dublin ETB programmes validated by QQI and review new programme proposals, oversee the development of programmes and approve submissions for validation to QQI. This will enable quality assured programme development and also facilitate the re-validation of existing programmes in a strategic manner within the context of City of Dublin ETB.

To achieve strategic planning and quality assurance objectives City of Dublin ETB established a number of consultative structures to facilitate the input and participation of staff and management teams from all five service spheres.

- FET Quality Assurance and Strategic Planning Council (QASPC): —to reflect on the City of Dublin ETB QA Plan and Strategic Performance Plan and associated actions/initiatives and to advise and make recommendations to the Senior Management Team (SMT) on the strategic planning and the quality of the Further Education and Training provision in City of Dublin ETB. Governance and reporting structures focus on issues, trends, and analysis of data from all Governance Groups PLSS, RAPs, Certification data, Self-evaluation reports, Quality Team reports and Strategic Performance Agreements. **Open consultation with representation from across the all services in City of Dublin ETB.** The QASPC will form Subgroups reporting into it as required.

- Quality Assurance Development Group (QADG): will focus on the development and enhancement of the QA Policy and Procedures.

- Strategic Performance Development Group (SPDG): will have overall responsibility for monitoring and supporting the achievement of agreed City of Dublin ETB-SOLAS FET targets.

- City of Dublin ETB-led Programme Boards: — will report on the quality and delivery of validated programmes for which City of Dublin ETB is the lead/ co-ordinating provider.

- **City of Dublin ETB priority areas for quality improvement are captured in the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)**

CDETB Quality Assurance Governance and Strategic Planning

City of Dublin ETB has also put in place a service to support governance structures and centres.

FET Development Unit: The FET Development Unit is primarily a support service, which is aimed at enabling City of Dublin ETB and its staff to meet the challenges and opportunities which are presenting themselves within the FET Sector, while maintaining our educational ethos and core values. The FET Development Unit is committed to having a supportive presence at all levels of the organisation and across its different service spheres.

There is also a newly established Employer Engagement Unit: This Unit has a remit for the development of new Apprenticeships and Traineeships and to respond to the needs of employers. This unit also has taken on the central co-ordination role in terms of the development of new Apprenticeships and Traineeships.
City of Dublin ETBs Research and Data Analytics Unit provides the data to inform and support the direction of the organisation.

3. Procedure for Development of New Quality Assurance Policy and Procedures

The current QA procedures will be reviewed and priority areas for revision or development will be identified by City of Dublin ETB in consultation with management teams. City of Dublin ETB colleges, centres or services may also identify and request assistance in developing City of Dublin ETB policy and procedures in certain areas.

QA Policy and Procedure Development and Enhancement Process:

1. Development of a policy and procedure paper on a particular issue, area of work, service through focused consultation.

2. Issue Draft Consultation Paper for wider consultation - Management Team Meetings, Centre QA Teams, QA Development Group, FET QASPC, All Centres and Staff.

3. Receive Feedback, Make Amendments and Issue for operational testing. Piloting may occur in one centre, a cluster of centres or all centres

4. Review with Management Teams and Centres and other structures where appropriate

5. Issue Final Policy and Procedure Paper for implementation

6. On-Going Review as part of self-evaluation procedures

Policy and Procedure Papers which have been developed collaboratively through ETBI enter at Stage 2. All QA policies and procedures are adopted in City of Dublin ETB via the above process.

Policy and Procedure Area	Development	Issue Draft	Receive Feedback	Review	Issue Final	On-going Review- SE
Advertising Courses – Policy and Procedures	X	X	X	X	X	X
Appeals Policy and Procedures (incl viewing of transcripts)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Course Approval Policies and Procedures – Assess Centres and Streamline Delivery (FET FORM)	X	X	X	X	X	X
CDETB Programme Management Development Policies and Procedures – Application and Consultation Process for Modifications and Development (Ps)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Programme Validation and CDETB Course Approvals Policy and Procedures (Restatement)					X	X
Centre Course Review Procedures issued to support Programme Validation and CDETB Approval systems and Information to Learners	X	X	X	X	X	X
Exam Boards, Course Reviews and Results Approval Panels (RAPs) Policies and Procedures	X	X	X	X	X	X
Assessment Guidelines Policies and Procedures, & Repeats	X	X	X	X	X	X
Access, Transfer and Progression Policy and Procedures	X	X	X			

Appendix 1. QA Activities Mapped to Learner Experience

1. **Recruitment**
   a. **Advertising /Open Days/Career Guidance Counsellors/Careers Events/ Learner Queries to Centre**

2. **Selection Process**
   a. **Interviews/RPL/Offering of Places/Enrolment/Registration/Fee collection**

3. **Admission**
   a. **Induction; student handbooks, informing students of what we expect from them and what they should expect from us, team building exercises for new classes**
   b. **Timetabling and scheduling of course**
   c. **Identify learners in need of reasonable accommodation**
   d. **Referrals to support services where appropriate**
   e. **RPL where appropriate**

4. **Programme Planning**
   a. **Course Department preparation and planning**
   b. **Assessment planning and co-ordination across programme**

5. **Course commencement**
   a. **Teaching and Learning begins ; --- How we deliver our courses and engage learners;**
   b. **Monitoring student performance begins; attendance, meeting deadlines, behavior (academic/non-academic), trips, student progress reports. Dealing with performance issues**
   c. **Teacher self-evaluation; Teacher to teacher; giving and receiving feedback official--- cross moderation, reflective and consultative practices**

6. **Assessments**
   a. **Assessment Plan**
   b. **RPL**
   c. **Assignment Briefs with marking schemes**
   d. **Cross Moderation of assessments**
   e. **Assessment and feedback to learners, scheduling feedback at the right time; Teacher--- Learner, Learner--- Teacher; oral, formal written and annotated feedback.**

7. **Student Progress Monitoring**
   a. **Attendance, meeting deadlines and class participation**
   b. **Work based learning**
   c. **Interim results**
   d. **Feedback taken from learners**

8. **End of Programme**
   a. **Exams devised with marking schemes and moderated**
   b. **Assessments/Exams Collected**
   c. **Scheduling and holding of Exams – May**
   d. **Supervision of Exams and information to Learners of regulations**
   e. **Issues of Cheating/Plagiarism**
   f. **Repeat Exam/Repeat Assessments identified**

9. **Secure storage of Assessments/work**
   a. **Hold Assessment Material until after appeals**
   b. **Maintain Final Results Indefinitely**

10. **Preparation for External Verification/Authentication**
    a. **Preparation for QQI Internal Verification**
    b. **Preparation for QQI External Authenticators/External Examiners**
    c. **Preparation for: --- Centre Course Exam Boards.**

11. **End of Year: – in-put of grades to QQI and other Awarding bodies**
    a. **Preparation for QQI Internal verification of assessments and other awarding bodies**
        i. **Inputting grades to QBS**
        ii. **Internal Verification as per: - QQI Internal verification**
        iii. **Adjusting grades errors or miscalculations on QBS**
        iv. **Print Submission Summary from QBS for college/centre records**
    b. **Internal quality checks as per: – QA agreements with Awarding Bodies (other)**
    c. **Inputting grades to Non QQI Awarding bodies.**

12. **External Authenticator / Awarding Body External Examiner Visits**
    a. **Recruitment & selection of External Authenticators**
    b. **Schedule of External Authenticators/EE visits**

13. **End of Year: - Exam boards**
    a. **Chaired by Principal or Deputy Principal**
    b. **Focus of Exam Board**
        i. **Individual learner performance across whole programme**
        ii. **Course/Programme performance - self-evaluation**

14. **Provisional Results**
    a. **Issue provisional results**
    b. **Inspection of Scripts**
    c. **Repeats**

15. **End of year: - Results Approval Panel Meeting**
    a. **Meeting to Oversee of Centre/College current results, assessments and operations**
    b. **Final sign off of Results**
    c. **City of Dublin ETB review of results data on a periodic basis to ensure consistency across centres**
       + between programmes
    d. **Put Learners forward for certification**

16. **Centre Self-Evaluation:**
    a. **Data Collection methods**
    b. **Findings examined with improvement measures Identified**
    c. **Actions to be taken**

17. **External Appeals; processing of appeals to meet QQI early July deadline for CAO offers to FE students**
    a. **Review of assessment at Centre level**
    b. **N10 application forms to progress appeal**
    c. **Remittance Advice Procedures: Office Administration Staff**

18. **Programme Development (arising from self-evaluation and review)**
    a. **New Course Applications; Changes to Course Title;**
    b. **Modifying Programmes; New Programme Proposals;**
    c. **New Award Proposals**

21. **Learner Queries**
    a. **Issues with progression; Admin Staff essential for Red Alert Responses to any progression issues e.g. CAO**