



## **Fusion ICT Quality Assurance Procedure**

- Fusion ICT is committed to Quality Assurance and believes it is an integral part of the Centre's processes. Fusion have a number of external quality awards including:-
  - BSEN ISO 9001:2000 last audited April 2007
  - Matrix Accreditation – working towards
  - OCR and BCS Awarding Body accreditation
  - Relevant professional body membership including:-
    - Institute of IT Training
    - Institute of Chartered Managers
    - Chartered Institute of Personnel Development
    - CBI – Confederation of British Industry
    - Institute of Directors
    - Chair Skills Group for regional development agency
  
- The focus of the Centre is on candidates with the provision of relevant and flexible quality training programmes and assessment to suit their needs and lifestyles.
  
- The provision is regularly monitored and reviewed by Hilary Caple (Fusion-ICT Quality Assurance Representative).

## **Quality Assurance Systems**

The quality assurance system is designed to promote, monitor and evaluate continuous improvement of the provision, organisation, delivery and support of learning.

The quality assurance framework consists of cycles of activity involving

- A The setting of performance standards and targets**
- B Implementing processes to achieve the standards**
- C Monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the outcomes**
- D Action planning for improvement**

At team or department level this cycle of activity will be repeated frequently throughout the year. At whole organisation level the cycle will be conducted in accordance with the annual planning and monitoring calendar.

### **A Performance expectations**

Performance expectations are set by the company, imposed by external organisations or relate to compliance with legislation.

Performance expectations are articulated in the Development Plan, which articulates the strategic objectives of the organisation, and in charters, policies and quality standards.

These include: -

Development Plan and its supporting business strategies

(Eg. learners, work-force development, community education, Equity and Diversity, information and learning technologies, estate development, finance)

Learner Entitlement statement

Charter for Employers  
Policies  
Quality standards  
Targets  
Awarding Body standards  
Accreditation standards  
Contract requirements

## **B Implementing processes**

Procedures, with accompanying guidance notes and standardised forms, describe the process by which policies are to be implemented.

## **C Monitoring, reviewing, benchmarking, evaluating**

A key element of monitoring, reviewing and evaluating is Programme Review and Evaluation (PRE). Informed by CIS data (enrolment, attendance, retention, and achievement), analysis of customer surveys, Internal Verifier reports, External Verifier reports and other sources, programme teams review and evaluate the quality of provision at three stages during the year. Action plans to remedy weaknesses and build on strengths are produced.

PRE activity and reports are fundamental to, and provide a basis for, annual self assessment. All curriculum areas, learner support services and business support services write contributory self assessment

Observation of learning is conducted according to the company schedule, with resulting action plans for improvement relating to individual staff forming part of their Personal Development plan and informing their Appraisal discussion. The grade profile for a programme area also informs self assessment.

**D Action planning for improvement**

PRE action plans

Self assessment report action plans

Operational plan

Learning observation action plans

Appraisal personal development plans

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

**Quality Assurance is the responsibility of all staff and is an integral part of the job of every employee.**

The **CEO** is responsible to the Board for all aspects of the quality function and for determining how the Quality Assurance System is managed.

The **Quality Manager** is responsible for the development, implementation and maintenance of the Quality Assurance system and for reporting the results of monitoring, review and evaluation activity to the Senior Management Team.

**Heads of Department**, the **Learner Support Manager** and **Business Support Managers** are responsible for the day-to-day operation and monitoring of quality systems within their areas.

**Heads of Department** are responsible for identifying a leader for each of the Areas of Learning. Within each Area of Learning, the leader is responsible for managing the quality of the area by implementing curriculum administrative and review procedures and ensuring that curriculum teams meet regularly in accordance with planned schedules.

**All staff** are responsible for quality control. They maintain quality standards through the implementation of the company's procedures, regular review of teaching and learning and service delivery and the setting of targets for improvement.

The **Senior Management Team**, consisting of designated senior post holders, reviews the effectiveness of the quality system, taking advice from Academic Board.



**Academic Board** advises the CEO on the standards, planning, coordination and development of the academic/vocational work of the company. Policies and procedures relating directly to learners are submitted to Academic Board for approval.

## **Key Elements of the Quality Assurance System**

- ❖ Observation of Learning
- ❖ Programme Review and Evaluation
- ❖ Learner surveys
- ❖ Customer surveys
- ❖ Internal Verification system
- ❖ Learner Entitlements statement
- ❖ Employer Charter
- ❖ Complaints system
- ❖ Self Assessment
- ❖ Development Plan
- ❖ Operational Plan
- ❖ Staff Appraisal

A policies and procedures manual supports the Quality Assurance system.  
Policies and procedures are reviewed, every year and revised as appropriate.

A Quality Assurance System Schedule shows quality assurance activities through the academic year.

## **Observation of learning**

Observation of Learning encourages staff to review current practice and enables staff to identify, develop and share good practice. Discussion of these issues will be included in the Appraisal review meeting. Through observation, staff development needs are identified. The results of observation, with grades aggregated at the level of Areas of Learning, inform the self assessment process.

All observers must be trained in the use of the companies' procedure and documentation.

### **Formal internal observation** (graded)

All full-time and fractional part-time staff are observed, at least once every two years.

### **External observation** (graded)

Staff may be observed by an external observer, who is external to their company for the purposes of moderation and standardisation of grades. Such observations may be conducted by a pair of observers.

### **Peer observation** (not graded)

Peer observation can be a useful method of sharing good practice and of providing support to colleagues.

Heads of Department must keep records of all graded observations completed in their areas.

In order to make judgements about teaching, learning and attainment, observers will need to talk with learners and examine assessed work of learners.

## **Learner Surveys**

Analysis from three learner questionnaires is used in conjunction with the three stages of the PRE process

Learners starting a new course	provides evidence for PRE stage 1
Teaching and Learning	provides evidence for PRE stage 2
Learners completing a course	provides evidence for PRE stage 3

Other questionnaires, based on those listed but tailored to particular courses or client groups, such as short courses or Learning Centres, are also used.

Heads of Department agree their survey requirements with the Quality Manager at the start of the year so that surveys can be organised, distributed and analysed by the Quality Unit according to the company's schedule.

Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that training staff return completed questionnaires by the required deadlines.

A report on the process and outcomes of the surveys is presented to the Senior Management Team each year by the Quality Manager.

## **Responding to Complaints**

Learners, employers, partner organisations and members of the public have access to the Complaints process. All staff have a responsibility to try to resolve issues promptly. Formal complaints, whether received in writing or verbally, are documented, logged and tracked to ensure that complainants receive a response. An annual report, with an analysis of complaints and response times, benchmarked against previous years, is produced.

**Quality Assurance covers the following key areas:-**

**Staff Development**

- Fusion ICT policy for Equal Opportunities and diversity is followed and monitored throughout the recruitment and staff development process
- All staff receive a full induction and staff handbook including quality policies and procedures which they are agreeing to adhere with
- All staff undergo regular appraisal and training needs analysis to support our skills matrix and organisational needs.
- All staff have access to relevant training and development opportunities, both internally and externally, including continuous professional development (CPD). All training/CPD is recorded and reviewed.
- All staff have access to a grievance procedure
- All staff development takes place in line with our BSEN ISO 9001:2000 standards

**Candidate Recruitment**

- Fusion ICT policy for Equal Opportunities and diversity is followed and monitored throughout the candidate recruitment process
- All client engagements and contact are recorded in our online CRM (customer relationship management) IT system which is regularly reviewed and monitored by the Sales and Marketing Director
- All contact with clients and candidates is scripted and recorded
- All candidates are provided with our terms and conditions of business including our complaints procedure and access to learning support
- Customer service evaluates our service provision monthly with a variety of feedback methodologies including satisfaction surveys and 1:1 dialogue

**Candidate Learning**

- Fusion ICT policy for Equal Opportunities and diversity is followed and monitored throughout the candidate learning journey

- All candidates complete and on-line TNA with their qualified tutor using an electronic software which is securely recorded
- All candidates have access to the same training and coaching provision including initial 1:1 consultations to discuss their learning requirements.
- All candidates interventions are recorded in our online e-portfolio
- All training is immediately evaluated and reviewed by the Training Director
- All candidates have access to the same training materials
- All candidates have access to learning support
- All candidates work is kept electronically in a secure environment
- An Internal Verification process is in place to ensure that consistent testing and assessment standards are maintained by cross-marking.
  
- Internal Verification of invigilators is carried out on an on-going basis.
  
- All cases of borderline achievement are Internally Verified.
  
- At least 10% of other assessments are checked across all markers and modules.
  
- Where a new marker is testing, all work is double marked until Danny McAteer (Fusion ICT Centre Manager) is satisfied with the standard.
  
- All new invigilators are observed conducting at least one test to ensure that test regulations are followed.
  
- Existing invigilators are observed conducting a test at least once a year.
  
- Internal Verification is recorded on candidate work and records and on central recording systems.



- Information from the awarding body is disseminated to all members of staff involved in testing.
- All assessors, trainers and verifiers are appropriately qualified and experienced in line with the awarding bodies requirements.
- Fusion ICT policy for Equal Opportunities and diversity is followed and monitored.

### **Systems and Information Management**

Fusion-ICT operate a completely paper free environment with the exception of manual records required to be retained through our contractual requirements with the Lsc. The candidates journey from employer engagement through to training needs analysis, training delivery, 1:1 coaching and support, uploading evidence, feedback and evaluation through to awarding body certification is captured and retained using a secure online integrated ICT system

## **Appeals Procedure for Candidates**

During any stage of the Appeals Procedure the candidate is entitled to be represented or accompanied, should they wish.

All candidates who are being assessed by Hilary Caple (Fusion ICT) Approved Centre Assessor, have the right to appeal if they disagree with an assessment decision. In the event of a dispute the following stages should be followed: -

### **Stage 1**

The candidate should appeal in writing to the Assessor clearly stating their reasons for disagreement and the evidence in the portfolio which the candidate believes meets the competence requirements of the Fusion ICT ITQ knowledge and understanding and skills and techniques. The Assessor will meet with the candidate within 10 working days and go through the assessment process, clearly explaining the outcome. The Assessor will confirm the outcome in writing to the candidate.

### **Stage 2**

Candidates who are not satisfied with the outcome from Stage 1 may then appeal in writing to the Internal Verifier. Danny Taylor (Fusion ICT) Internal Verifier will meet with the candidate and the Assessor within 10 working days and will confirm the outcome in writing to the candidate.

### **Stage 3**

Candidates who are not satisfied with the outcome after Stage 2 and have exhausted all of the internal appeals procedures of the Fusion ICT ITQ Centre may then appeal in writing to the Awarding Body. At this point the Awarding Body's Appeals Procedure will be followed. The Centre will be requested to provide reports from Stages 1 and 2.

## **Customer Complaints**

Fusion-ICT have a formal complaints process, in addition to their candidate appeals process, which is accessible by all customers from our web site in the public domain. Fusion-ICT take all customer complaints seriously and promise to investigate ethically and with integrity.

### **Stage 1**

- Complaints can be received in any format including e-mail, telephone, letter or web form.
- We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 5 working days of receiving it.
- We will tell you the line manager who is dealing with your complaint.
- You will receive a full response within 10 working days. If this is not possible, we will send you a letter explaining why there is a delay and saying when you will receive a full response
- The response will give you the chance to have your complaint dealt with in the 2nd stage of the complaints procedure if you are still unhappy. It will ask you to explain why you are not satisfied with the stage 1 response.

### **Stage 2**

Investigation by a senior manager from another department

- Complaints can be received in any format including e-mail, telephone, letter or web form.
- We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 5 working days of receiving it.
- We will give you the name and phone number of the senior manager who is investigating your complaint. This will not be the same person who has investigated stage 1 of your complaint. They will work independently of the service area involved in your complaint.
- The senior manager will contact you to arrange an interview so they can talk to you about your complaint and find out what you think we should do to put it right.



- The senior manager will investigate your complaint in line with our Good Practice Guidelines and write a report on their findings.
- They will send the report to the relevant head of service to make a decision.
- You will receive a full written response within 30 working days of us receiving your letter, or we will tell you about any delay and give you a new date for when you should receive a response.
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### **Stage 3**

Investigation by a senior director from another department

- If you are not satisfied with our response you should contact one of our Directors stating why you are not satisfied and the matter will be investigated by a Director outside of your service area.
- The Directors decision will be final and you will be notified of their investigation report within 30 days.

**Initial Assessments** are conducted using objective online software tools supported by appropriately trained assessors. Initial assessments are fed back to clients for client approval. Training provision is based on the TNA tool and candidates are re-tested after training delivery to ensure closure of the identified learning gap. Where a gap still exists remedial training through 1:1 coaching is provided.

**Learning** – in addition to the procedures outlined earlier within this document we use the Kirkpatrick 4 stage learning model of ensuring feedback is taken immediately after training has been delivered, knowledge retention is tested 10 days after training delivery through the on-line TNA tool, the candidates mentor is asked to provide evidence of improvement to performance as a result of enhanced skills and finally objective evidence is sought to illustrate the improved work candidates are now able to produce as a direct result of the training; these are used as evidence towards the qualification.

**Reviews** – all candidate and client interactions are captured electronically and Directors/senior managers review key performance indicators on a weekly basis to ensure compliance to the contractual delivery plan. Touch points within the candidate's journey are reviewed monthly by objective QA staff against our QA standards and continuous improvements are documented.

**Progression Opportunities** are available both to our own staff and candidates. Our own staff are encouraged to develop their skills which updates the organisational skills matrix. Candidates are also encouraged to enhance their skills in line with a clear career progression route. Candidates are encouraged to progress onto other relevant qualifications as identified within the Organisational Needs Analysis; some of which may be funded some may not. We would use the referral process initially to try and route appropriate candidates through to the skills brokers if we were unable to offer a viable alternative.