HCT Learning

Quality Assurance Manual

2020

Document Approach to Quality Assurance

Contents

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1 Document Approach to Quality Assurance

HCT Learning has developed a range of Quality Assurance Documentation in which clearly identifies and shapes our approach towards policies, procedures, practices and guidelines. Each policy wrote under our Quality Assurance Manual has been designed to promote a learner focused quality culture by providing transparent direction and governance.

HCT Learning is committed to quality in terms of programme provision and related activities. In order to safeguard this each of these documents are reviewed periodically and updated where necessary in order to achieve continuous improvement of the effectiveness of policies and procedures to ensure they are effective and fit for purpose. This also ensures that our policies are consistent with legislative requirements.

- HCT Learning has adopted a numbering system to improve version control. The version number will be listed for example: QAV1.10819. QA= Quality Assurance V=Version 1.1=Version number 0819=Date change was made.

The end of the version number will be updated when any changes are made to the QA document for example after an Academic Council meeting. The full version number will be updated after self-evaluation. As a result of these updates the following documentation will be amended and published. An email will be sent the relevant personnel affected by updates or amendments to the QA.

HCT Learning keep a separate manual to be used as a point of reference for updates which have been made.

1.1 Management of the Quality Assurance Manual

Below will outline how the Quality Assurance Manual is managed and reviewed. It will provide a description of process and procedures. The roles and positions responsible for the review and implementation of these policies will be outlined. A description of how this information is gathered and reported on and will also provide information on the various documents used to complete this. Our Quality Assurance Manual has been designed to:

- Demonstrate our provider owned quality assurance systems and mechanisms, that are effective, well communicated and integrated into our embedded culture and daily processes
- Protect the integrity of the academic process and standards towards our development, delivery and assessment of our programmes and our learners who attend
- Self-monitor and review programmes and services to identify enhancements
- Provide clear guidance and procedures for programme development, delivery and review that programmes offered to our learners are fit for purpose and suitable to their needs
- Clearly define structures, departments, roles and responsibilities of management, staff and associated parties
- Support the academic integrity of the training and learning process and to provide learners with confidence through their academic experience
- Ensure the planning, managing and submission of assessments are carried out effectively and in a fair and consistent manner
- Provide our learners with purposeful resources and support systems necessary for successful participation on our programmes
- Communicate clear and transparent information regarding our programmes and services in a range of media which is assessable to those needing or interested in accessing the information
- Develop a purposeful data management system that will enable continuous monitoring, development and improvements of its Quality Assurance programmes and services
- Clearly define other third party's involvement in education and training
- Embrace change in order to improve services and programmes by implementing appropriate self-evaluation, monitoring and review practices

HCT Learning is committed to providing a highly comprehensive, quality assurance system which is compliant with its awarding body and implements recognised programmes and as a result they understand the importance of its quality assurance practices. Their documents have been developed internally based on external feedback from a range of sources.

These include:

- Advice and direction from learners, trainers and our client's feedback, which is used to improve our programmes and services. HCT Learning complete a range of feedback from mid and end client, learner and trainer. Each programme delivered is individually inspected to ensure that standards have been met and where required enhancements can be made.

HCT Learning has used this feedback to review and monitor their quality assurance processes and will continually adapt their practices and identify growth opportunities.

- Class representatives have an active role in ongoing monitoring and programme review, through each programme delivered. Learners attending the programme will be given the opportunity to provide their details and be involved in our council and committee meetings as a learner representative. These learners will attend meetings and will be an integral member and all honest feedback will be taken into account and used to promote better standards and evolvements towards our learners experiences.

- Staff Feedback: HCT Learning promotes a culture of involvement with its staff as a result we conduct both weekly meetings and one to ones with full time staff. The purpose of these meetings are to inform staff of the company's status, QA information and an opportunity for staff to provide feedback on documents developed in order to gain a collaborative discussion on improvements to our existing systems. This feedback will be discussed during our Quality and Monitoring Committee and where appropriate brought to the attention of the Academic Council for approval. Minutes are taken and reported on for all committee meetings. These are stored within our shared files and are protected in accordance with Data Protection laws.

- A Red Flag system has been developed where the identified minimum criteria has not been met within a given area it will trigger an automatic response, as a result areas of improvement towards our procedures will be identified and proposed progression towards these procedures will be developed by the Quality and Monitoring Committee and approved by the Academic Council for amendments. HCT Learning's expectation is that our Red Flag system will be continuously evolving to accompany our pre-existing red flags in order to ensure we recognise areas for improvement and strive for quality on all programmes.

- Prior experience and knowledge. HCT Learning has been an established QQI centre for over 10 years and has certified over 25,000 learners mainly in the provision of manual and horticulture based training, as a result, HCT Learning have already got a good understanding of its obligation and standards that should be achieved and maintained. HCT Learning has used this as a good foundation of its approach towards its document control.

- Legislative obligation to include health and safety, human resources, equality, Limited company requirements and employment. HCT Learning has developed all its quality assurance policies and procedures in accordance with all legislative requirements and will make adaptation as and when something has been updated.

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- Academic legislative requirement: HCT Learning's approach towards the development of their quality assurance systems has been designed in compliance and influenced by the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 and is supporting associated documents to include policies and criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training 2017, core QA Guidelines, Access, Transfer and Progression, Protection for Enrolled of Learners, Quality Assurance Assessment Guidelines for Providers revised 2013.

- External experts: These documents produced have been externally examined by an independent QA specialist for recommendations and approval. During each Academic Council meeting an External Quality Assurance Advisor will chair the meeting in order to offer impartial objective advice. This member will form a fundamental part of assuring that continuous development is achieved through reviewing and monitoring the centres Quality Assurance policies, procedures, practices and guidelines.

1.2 Quality Assurance and Monitoring Procedure

HCT Learning has developed a framework of continuous ongoing reflection and advancements to our practices to enable growth, credibility and confidence for learners attending our programmes. As a result the centre has developed a quality assurance and monitoring procedure by ensuring that periodic monitoring will be completed at different intervals during bi-monthly and quarterly reviews on their document development. These frameworks have been built from the following statutory core guidelines and will be revised in a period of 3 years:
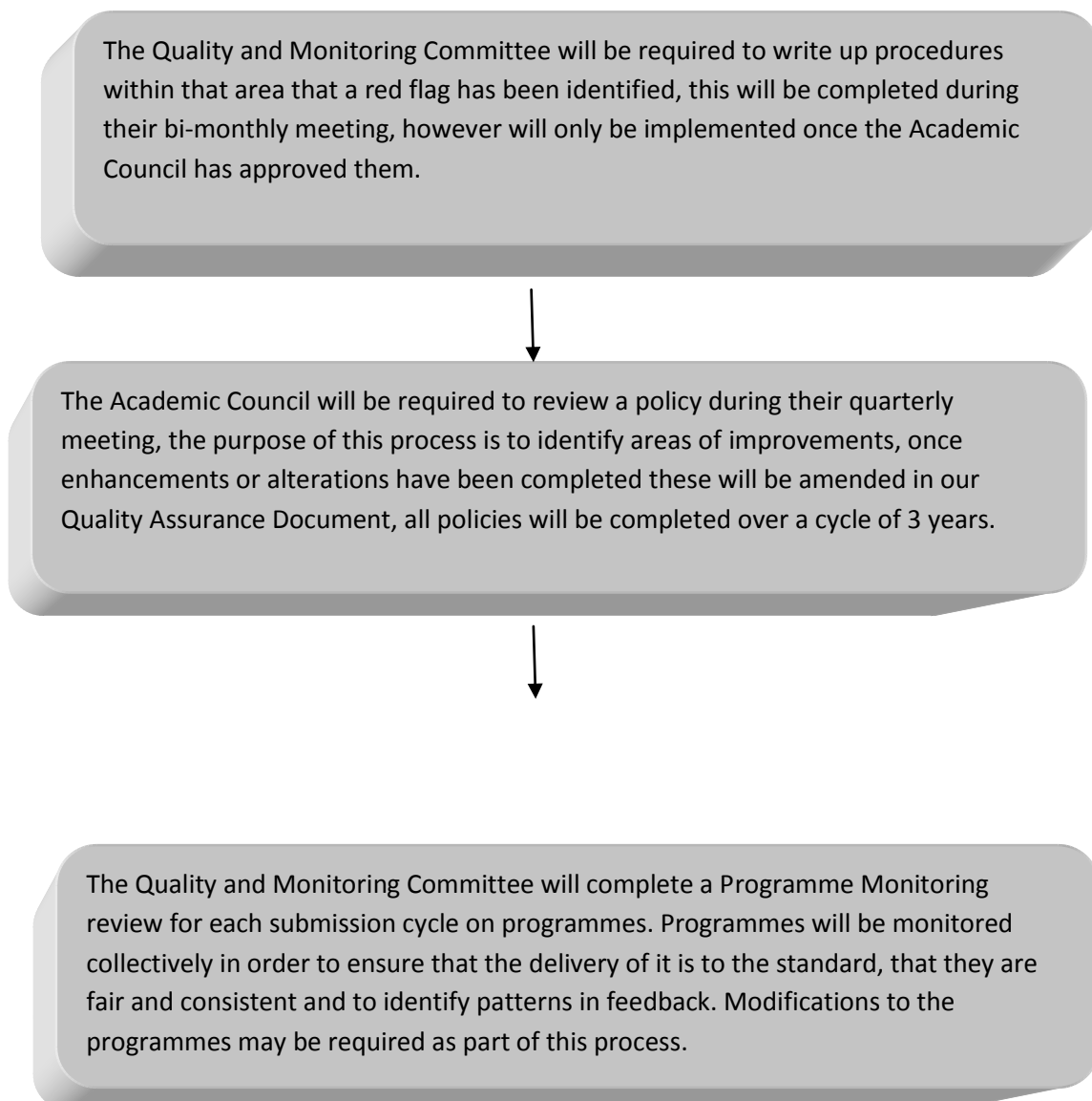
- Governance and Management of Quality
- Documented Approach to Quality Assurance
- Programme of Education and Training
- Staff Recruitment, Management and Development
- Teaching and Learning
- Assessments of Learners
- Supports for Learners
- Information and Data Management
- Public Information and Communication
- Other Parties Involved in Education and Training
- Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

The purpose of the quality assurance and monitoring procedure is to assess our performance and identify areas of further development. HCT Learning has implemented clear document control practices by the implementation of:

- Corrective Action Plan Template
- Monitoring of Procedure Template
- Monitoring of Policies Template
- Course Index Confirmation Log
- Programme Monitoring for Submission Cycle Report
- Annual Monitoring on Programmes Template
- Monitoring of Company Template
- Self-Evaluation Plan

These templates will be filed together in our office by their version number.

The following diagram outlines the processes to enhance our practices:

The Quality and Monitoring Committee will be required to write up procedures within that area that a red flag has been identified, this will be completed during their bi-monthly meeting, however will only be implemented once the Academic Council has approved them.

The Academic Council will be required to review a policy during their quarterly meeting, the purpose of this process is to identify areas of improvements, once enhancements or alterations have been completed these will be amended in our Quality Assurance Document, all policies will be completed over a cycle of 3 years.

The Quality and Monitoring Committee will complete a Programme Monitoring review for each submission cycle on programmes. Programmes will be monitored collectively in order to ensure that the delivery of it is to the standard, that they are fair and consistent and to identify patterns in feedback. Modifications to the programmes may be required as part of this process.

The Academic Council will be required to meet at the end of each year in order to review the centres development in relation to the programmes offered. Relevant information will be compiled and presented that contributes to the programme planning, development, delivery and assessments of learners, as a result an amendment of changes to our documentation may be required.

The Boards bi-annual meeting will be required to meet and discuss the company, its governance structure and their document approach towards quality assurance. All aspects of the company and its governance will be reviewed as a result of this meeting. Any changes or alterations will be updated to our Quality Assurance Manual and its relevant supporting documentation.

Self-evaluation is seen as a critical component in ensuring all quality assurance operational procedures are being applied and adhered to throughout the infrastructure of the company. The purpose of the self-evaluation processes is to review the effectiveness of our governance and management systems within our quality assurance processes and procedures. A self-evaluation will be conducted every 3 Years.

Programme revalidation will be completed every 5 years and is seen by the centre as an opportunity to reflect on the programme they have offered and to change or modify the programme in order to strengthen a programme that is already doing well, or identify improvements or alternation to increase learner satisfaction, experiences and overall quality of programme they are attending or related services.

1.3 Communication of Policies and Procedures

Where updates or amendments are identified the Academic Council will make arrangements with the Programme Development and Review Committee to make alterations and details shall be published.

HCT Learning has ensured that their policies, procedures, practices and guidelines can be accessed through a range of different Medias in order to ensure that learners can locate the relevant information; as a result HCT Learning has developed the following provisions:

- Our QA Manual will be published online through our website and also in hard copy in our office, accessible to all staff or third parties if required. Our QA Manual will be present during each Board, Academic Council, Quality and Monitoring/Programme Development and Review Committee and will also be provided to any External Authenticators during their visits to our centre. Staff working at HCT Learning will use the QA Manual in their daily activities.

- Staff working in HCT Learning will be fully trained and communicated on our Quality Assurance practices. Once a new member has started staff will be required to attend an extensive induction where practices will be fully explained. Staff will then be monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure they understand each of these policies, procedures, practices and guidelines, no matter what their role is within the company. HCT Learning believes in promoting complete understanding and transparency towards their approaches and practices. During each weekly team meeting a member of the Quality and Monitoring Committee will be required to introduce a procedure and provide practical examples as a result promoting inclusiveness and feedback from staff working at HCT Learning.

- Staff Employment Handbook: This booklet has been collectively developed by HCT Learning and Peninsula to apply employment policies which are fair, equitable and consistent. This handbook contains a range of information including our recruitment and selection process, training, promotions, equality, terms and conditions of employment, discriminatory acts to include harassment, bullying and disciplinary rules and procedures along with other important regulations. Each member of staff working at HCT Learning will be issued with a Staff Employment Handbook once employment commences. Updates to this handbook will be issued to staff in hardcopy and will require a signature of agreement in which will be placed in the staff personnel file.

- Trainer QA Handbook: HCT Learning has developed a Trainers QA Handbook that will be presented to them during their comprehensive induction day. The Trainer QA Handbook has

been designed purposely around the information that the trainer will need to access and understand as a result of delivering programmes for HCT Learning. The trainer handbook will be issued to the trainer in hard copy – but will also be accessible through the trainer's portal. Updates to this handbook will be issued to trainers in hardcopy and will require a signature of agreement which will be placed in the trainers personnel file.

- Programme Information Pack: Learners will be presented with the learner programme information pack twice during their programme attendance and certification, learners will first have access to their programme information pack once they have confirmed their place on the programme, this will be sent to learners by soft copy, the second will be provided during their induction on the first morning of the programme. This will include a range of information regarding the programme the learners are attending including the assessment and certification process along with their responsibility and support services available.

When an amendment or update has been made to a policy or procedure an email will be sent out to the relevant personnel to communicate to them that an amendment has been made to that version of the policy or procedure.

MyHCT web application has been developed in order to take full accountability and commitment for the Quality Assurance Manual, as a result, HCT Learning has designed a range of supporting documents, templates, forms, reports and emails that are fit for purpose and standardised to insure that information being received is consistent nationwide and to allow for the operational implementation of our Quality Assurance Manual. Below is an example of some of our templates accessible through MyHCT:

	Templates for Trainers
🖫	Trainer's Login Details Email Template
🖫	Trainer's Programme Confirmation Email Template
🖫	Trainer's Change of Programme Details Email Template
🖫	Trainer's Programme Cancellation Email Template
🖫	Certification Tutor Summary Email Template
🖫	Trainer's Email Template (Booklet and Signing Sheets updated with names)
🖫	Automatic Morning Email to Trainers Template
📕	Certification Tutor Summary Report Template PDF
📕	Trainer's Invoice Template PDF
📕	Verification Booklet Template PDF (1 Example of 18)
📕	Trainer's Contract Template PDF
📕	Assessment Specification Sample PDF
📕	Component Specification Sample PDF
📕	Exam Answers Sample PDF
📕	Exam Assessment Sample PDF
📕	Portfolio Assessment Sample PDF

	Templates for Learners
🖫	Extension Form for Individuals Email Template

	Internal Templates
🖫	Internal Attendance Update Email Template
🖫	Discount Email Template
🖫	Programme moved to ACTUALS Email Template
🖫	Programme moved to LEADS Email Template
🖫	Programme moved to PROVISIONALS Email Template
🖫	PPCI to Salesperson Email Template
🖫	Email to Salesperson (from Group Page) Template

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Appendix

Documented Approach to Quality Assurance	
Corrective Action Plan Template	A31
Monitoring of Procedure Template	A79
Monitoring of Policies Template	A78
Programme Monitoring for Submission Cycle Report	A98
Annual Monitoring on Programme Report	A7
Monitoring of Company Template	A77
Self-Evaluation Plan	A124

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